

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

THE EVOLUTION OF THE COMMERCIAL LANDSCAPE IN NORTH AMERICA
FROM STREETCAR SUBURB TO MALL OF AMERICA AND BEYOND

BY

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A Practicum

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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
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ABSTRACT

This study explores the evolution of the suburban shopping centre in North America. The objective is to identify the factors responsible for the shaping of its constituent spaces, either for relaxation, gathering or shopping, and determine what, if any, value this might provide in the consideration of future shopping centre landscapes.

In its infancy, the shopping centre provided outdoor, landscaped spaces for the relaxation and comfort of shoppers. Increasingly, these spaces became internalized, offering ever increasing potential for spatial and functional development. This period, from the 1950s to the 1980's, was characterized by rapid standardization and simplification of the shopping centre 'formula'. However, experimentation did continue and the process of standardization has left some interesting anomalies behind. Throughout this period the shopping centre displayed a remarkable ability to reflect, assimilate and commodify larger social and architectural contexts. In the 1980s, the shopping centre demonstrated its ability to reinvent itself, in response to changing economic fortunes. Regardless of greater changes in the concept of the shopping centre, there has been evidence throughout its evolution of a consistent approach to the planning, design and articulation of individual spaces.

The consistencies evident in the evolution of the shopping centre allows for an accurate prediction of its future, while its flexibility encourages a redefinition and reconceptualization of this future. To this end, the study concludes by positing several directions for the future shopping centre, as a means to direct further research and experimentation.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This study traces the evolution of the commercial landscape of North America. Within the context of this study, 'commercial landscape' refers to the landscapes, both outdoor and indoor, of the shopping centre. For the purposes of this study, the shopping centre is defined as a group of commercial establishments under common ownership and management, typically with a consistent architecture, and amenities ranging from on-site parking (Clausen 1984, p 146) to exclusively pedestrian areas free of cars and other distractions (Gruen 1960, p. 146).

Victor Gruen (1960) reminds us that the marketplace has been an integral part of the commercial and civic life of cities since Greek and Roman times. However, the distinct socioeconomic conditions of North America in the 20th century created a wholly new marketplace in the form of the suburban regional shopping centre. Rapid suburbanization made possible by abundant land and private transportation would create for developers a market of affluent shoppers searching for alternatives to decaying central cities.

The range and mix of services and amenities would make the shopping centre an incredible success, and the shopping centre industry was born. In the late 1980's, after some 30 years of exponential growth, new shopping centre development would slow, as a response to maturing markets, and in 1990's, a severe economic recession. Reinventing itself, the shopping centre would once again embrace community priorities, becoming something of a town centre. In this incarnation, open space and the exterior landscape once again became integral to the concept of the shopping centre.

It is this reinvention of the shopping centre and in particular, the embrace of open space, that has provided the impetus for this study. This study is intended to trace the evolution of the shopping centre in North America and in particular, its constituent spaces of circulation,

shopping, and gathering. Through the use of examples, the study examines the planning, function and imagery of these spaces, as a reflection of specific concepts, goals and contexts of shopping centre development. The study identifies and synthesizes broad trends in the evolution of the shopping centre, and these trends serve as a basis to propose a future for the shopping centre, which is illustrated through the use of examples and original sketches.

Conducting this study has two main purposes. Firstly, the study creates a concise history of the spaces of the shopping centre, which does not appear elsewhere. More importantly, the propositions for the future shopping centre provide meaningful direction for future academic research and architectural experimentation.

Following this introduction, Chapter 2 places the contemporary shopping centre in its historical context, exploring commercial precedents in suburban North America from the early 1900's to the 1950's. Chapter 3 examines the first clear predecessor of today's shopping malls, the open-air regional centre. Chapter 4 discusses the ensuing transformation to the enclosed shopping centre, and the emergence of the climate controlled centre court. Chapter 5 looks at the further evolution of the enclosed regional shopping centre, and the impact of postmodernism as an architectural concept. Chapter 6 examines the continued impact of postmodernism, and the allusion to a pleasure dome, in which entertainment and retail freely mix. Chapter 7 discusses the most current theme of shopping centre development, which is an embrace of community, and a return to outdoor space. As a means of conclusion, Chapter 8 imagines future developments in the shopping centre and discusses the possibilities and implications for designers and planners.

Chapter 2

EARLY PRECEDENTS

The shopping centre in North America evolved out of a number of early commercial precedents, including the shopping village, the strip centre, and the suburban department store. Examples have been selected within each category that demonstrate to varying degrees the emergence of open space. The only other commonality in the examples is the context in which they were conceived: the massive and rapid suburbanization of North America, and in particular the United States. In spite of the variation in location, and function, there is evidence of a borrowing of ideas between developments. Thus, the evolution of the shopping centre would begin. Ultimately, the very best attributes of each of these early precedents would be synthesized into the forerunner of the contemporary shopping mall: the open-air regional centre.

CONCEPT

These early commercial precedents all emerged in the United States during a period of unprecedented suburban growth. Consequently, the concept behind each of these early types would be tied to the needs and lifestyles of these affluent suburbanites.

The rapid growth of the suburbs beginning in the early 20th century represented rapid population growth, paralleled by the flight from decaying, congested urban centers (Clausen 1984, Crawford 1992). The growth of suburbia was made possible on one hand by abundant and inexpensive land on which speculative residential developments would be constructed, and on the other, by the growing mobility of the population. This mobility would rapidly increase as transportation evolved from the public horsecar to the streetcar to the private automobile (Liebs 1985).

At the same time, advances in mechanization created a variety of innovations for the home, from labour saving devices such as the electric iron, to appliances such as the refrigerator (Giedion 1948). As a result, suburban housewives would be freed from their domestic obligations, and the opportunity arose to transform shopping from a chore to a leisurely activity.

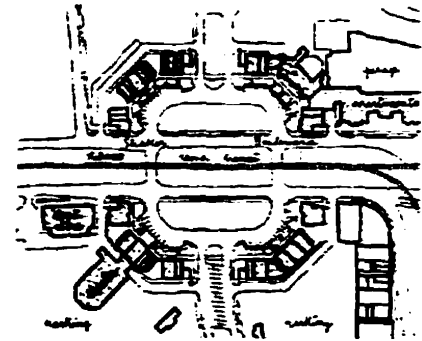
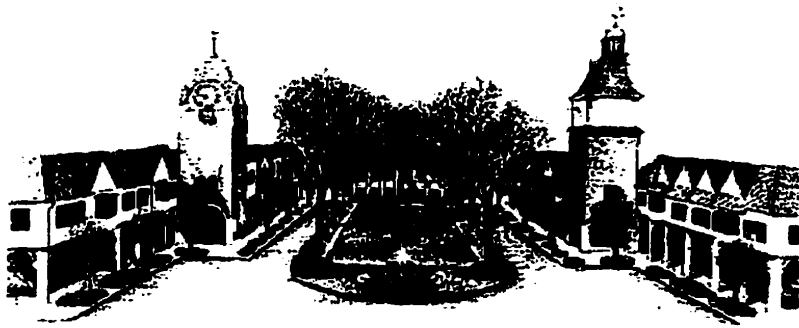
To tap this burgeoning suburban market, the majority of these early centres fulfilled a variety of functions, combining community centers and post offices with restaurants, shops, and services. Almost without exception, these centres would feature a grocery store and often a variety store or a junior department store. Eventually, large scale department stores would migrate to the suburbs. These stores were almost exclusively geared to women, featuring fashions and housewares in lavish and sophisticated settings (Baker and Funaro 1951).

SHOPPING VILLAGES

The shopping village, like other types of commercial development, would be characterized by a grouping of stores and services within a unified architectural composition. The unique feature of the shopping village, however, was an inward focus, turning its back on surrounding streets and neighborhoods. This internalized space was allocated for parking, or in some cases, landscaped to create a kind of 'village green' for the growing suburb.

An early example of the shopping village is Market Square, in Lake Forest, Illinois (figure 1). Considered to be the first planned shopping centre (Pearson 1993, p. 86), Market Square opened in 1916, consisting of several buildings grouped around a central green space. Whether this space served for functions is not known; however, the formality of the store grouping and the open space suggests a strong symbolic role for the space, lending a civic quality to the development.

Shaker Village, in Cleveland, Ohio (figure 2), illustrates a similar evocation of a civic space at the heart of a planned suburb. Stores are grouped around a large 'village green' that creates both a civic image and a 'history' for the fledgling suburb. The use of formality and ordering in the layout of building and open space further



establishes this commercial development as the focus of the suburb. While its creation of a 'civic image' appears particularly effective, its success as a shopping centre was less so. The village green created excessive distances between stores, separated further by a roadway and streetcar tracks.

Figure 1.

Market Square. View
(Kowinski 1985, p. 165).

Both Shaker Village and Market Square utilize landscape and architecture to evoke an ideal suburban aesthetic (for house and garden) and an embrace of elite culture (Liebs 1987, p. 53).

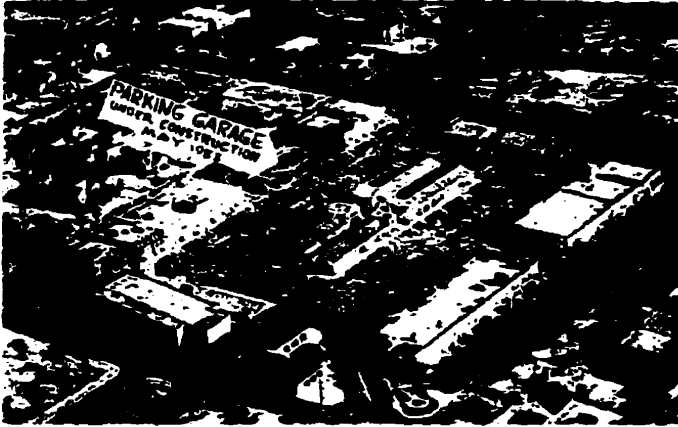
Figure 2.

Shaker Square. Site plan
(Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 184).

Highland Park Village, in Dallas, Texas (figure 3), represents a deviation in which provisions for parking are integral to the concept of the centre. Turning away from surrounding through streets, Highland Park Village created an internalized space for a more appropriate mix of cars and people. A meaningful connection to place is created through the use of the metaphor of a traditional Texas County Seat, strengthened with Spanish colonial architecture (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 91).

Unlike the previous shopping village examples, there was little provision for open space at Highland Park Village. Spaces for pedestrian use were limited to points of connection with the surrounding community, where the orthogonal buildings give way to diagonal access streets. Interestingly, landscaping was introduced as a means to mitigate the service and delivery areas of the project, which in their peripheral locations are directly adjacent to residential areas (McKeever 1953, p. 39).

As a means of comparison, Bellevue Shopping Center, in Bellevue, Washington, serves as an excellent example of creating interesting and active outdoor spaces for pedestrian use (figure 4). In this example, a large and graceful crabapple tree existing on site was not only spared in



the design of the project, but carefully integrated in the design (and merchandising) of the centre. The building mass was deflected for the tree, and this deflection provided a location for outdoor seating for what became a popular restaurant.

Farmer's Market, in Los Angeles, California, represents the first of a distinctive variation in the shopping village- an internalized and completely pedestrian space. Farmer's Market was a chain that sprung up in southern California during the depression of the 1930's. This original Farmer's Market created a network of pedestrian spaces within a dense environment of market stalls (figure 5), filled with produce, meats, and other goods (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 94). In this development, considerable amounts of parking were provided around the perimeter of the market. Although the spaces were utilitarian, they were nonetheless active, and successful spaces, "reduced to a calculated congestion and an intimate scale more reminiscent of the soukhs in a near-eastern bazaar (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 94)."

The Town and Country Village Shops, in Sacramento, California (figure 6), was conceived and built during World War II (Baker and Funaro p 100). Ringed by a large parking area, this development is oriented to a regional market of shoppers. The Town and Country Village Shops provided a variety of spaces similar in scale to the Farmer's Market, but executed in a decidedly more picturesque manner. Built from salvaged materials during war shortages, the result was a "rustic charm and informality (Rowe 1991 p. 121)", evoking a connection to a simpler time. The nostalgic reference to the market suited the family owned and operated stores, which offered the potential for haggling and bartering.

Figure 3.

Highland Park Village. Aerial view. The open spaces exist adjacent to the angled access roads, visible at lower center and left center (McKeever 1953, p. 38).

Figure 4.

Bellevue Shopping Center. View of restaurant (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 230).



Figure 5.

Farmers Market. Aerial view (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 95).

Town and Country, in Palm Springs, California (figure 7), created a pedestrian realm which is executed with unprecedented sophistication. The majority of this large space is in the form of a raised plaza interspersed with an irregular pattern of planting beds. The central focus of this space is a broad staircase, made quite dramatic through palm trees and a cantilevered planter. Of note is the use of shallow steps and their grouping in smaller, angled arrangements to “make for an easier looking climb (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 102).”

Figure 6.

Town and Country Village Shops. View of interior (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 101).

Like previous examples, the space is clearly aesthetic, appealing to the sophistication of clientele. The particular expression of Town and Country might be referred to as ‘california modern’, and represented a desired ideal of sophistication and lifestyle, perpetuated through popular culture via film, television, and print media.

Figure 7.

Town and Country. View of court. Stairs to second level visible at center (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 103).





STRIP CENTRES

Whereas shopping villages were often considered as integral parts of newly planned suburban developments, the precedent of the strip center emerged as an early example of speculative development. Located in advance of suburban growth, strip centers would occupy land until its value warranted more lucrative development (Liebs 1987, p. 12). Reflecting the environment of roads and highways, the strip centre consisted of a strip of stores, one store deep, stretched out along the roadway to maximize exposure. The economic formula of the strip centre was simple: a group of stores, mostly convenience and service oriented, 'anchored' by a junior department, variety or grocery store. This anchor would constitute the major draw of the strip centre, and was placed in a prominent location.

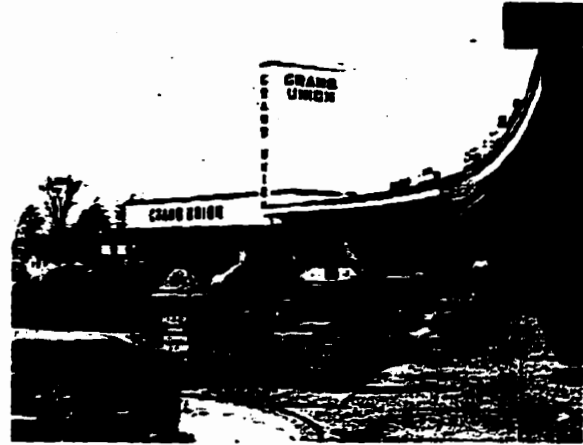
Foster Village, in Bergenfield, New Jersey, provides a fairly typical example of the strip centre precedent (figure 8). This centre, like many, adopted an L-shape, with the anchor grocery store in the corner, to provide maximum visibility from the roadway. Built in 1947 as part of a larger residential development (Rowe 1991, p. 112), the centre incorporated an arcade to provide access to an adjacent community green space (figure 9). This axis continued through the parking lot to the main thoroughfare.

Like many strip centers and shopping villages, Foster Village appropriated modern stylings for its dominant architectural image. Not only did modernism embody the optimistic spirit of the times (Liebs 1985,

Figure 8.

Foster Village. Aerial View.
Village green visible at centre
(Baker and Funaro 1951, p.
270).

FOSTER VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTER



p. 57), but it provided several advantages for retailers. The dominant, horizontal overhang provided a convenient ordering device for signage, bringing cohesion to the centre (figure 10). More importantly, the overhang would minimize glare on storefront windows, maximizing visibility.

With few exceptions, open space was not an important component of the strip centre. An interesting exception is the centre planned for Hackensack, New Jersey (figure 11). While the form of the centre is a typical L-shape, one arm of the L is brought in contact with the adjacent arterial. At this location an open space is proposed which appears to serve a number of functions, including a waiting area for buses, a gathering area for movies, and perhaps a seating area for a restaurant. At a minimum, the space proposes the introduction of soft landscaping into the strip environment. Also of note in this project is the fusion of the bus stop shelter, and signage for the centre. The interaction and juxtaposition of the planes creates a dynamic, and eye catching piece of sculpture.



Figure 9.

Foster Village. View of arcade (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 271).

Figure 10.

Foster Village. View of storefront, showing overhang, sign (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 271).

Figure 11.

Planned Centre, Hackensack, New Jersey. Open space visible at right centre (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 123).



SUBURBAN DEPARTMENT STORES

Beginning as early as the 1920's, national department stores, long a fixture in downtowns, began to locate branch stores in the suburbs (Clausen 1984, p. 146). To the landscape of suburbia, these department stores brought a more substantial and sophisticated vision of the landscape.

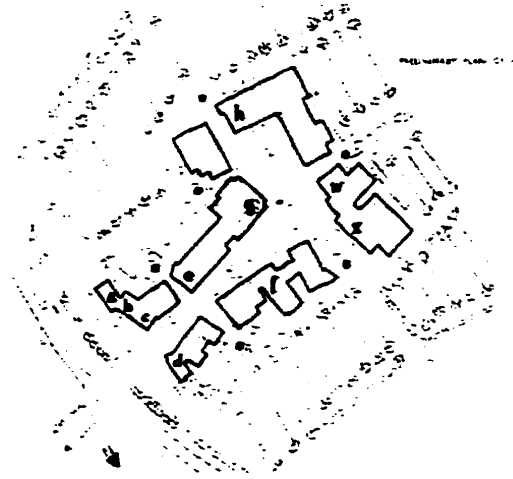
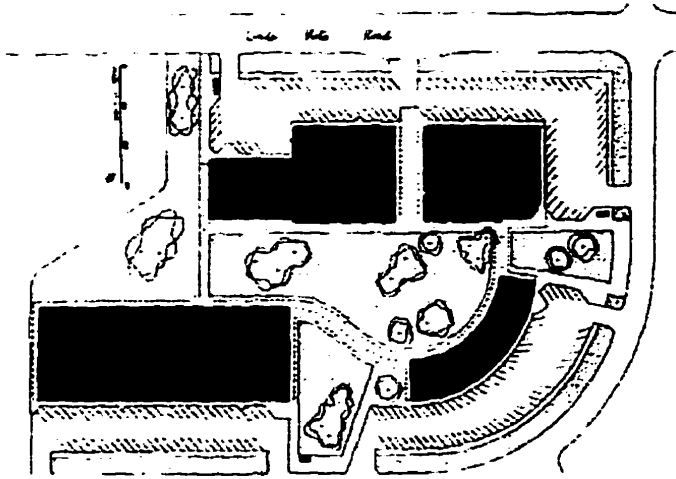
Bullock's, in Pasadena, California, provides an excellent example of the innovations brought by the suburban department store. Like Town and Country, the landscape at Bullock's would, along with the architecture, evoke a sense of sophistication to appeal to its affluent clientele. The shopper, pulling into the parking lot, would be met with lavish landscaping, and a formal approach to the building, lined with trees and accent lighting (figure 12). Broad, shaded forecourts were intended to greet customers arriving by cars, and patio areas evolved to create pleasant spaces as extensions of the store (and its merchandise). They were spaces that, finished in rich woods and rugged flagstone, and outfitted with comfortable chairs, both responded to and shaped the ideal of sophisticated, yet relaxed, suburban (and Californian) lifestyles (figure 13).

Figure 12.

Bullock's-Pasadena. View (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 77).

Figure 13.

Bullock's-Pasadena. View of terrace (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 69).



GLIMPSES OF THE MALL

Several examples exist of shopping centres which clearly represent transitions between these early precedents, and the emergence of the regional shopping centre. Two examples, of town centres in Linda Vista, California, and Park Forest, Illinois present what was at the time an unprecedented synthesis of retail programming, site planning, and spatial design- most importantly, a pedestrian-only realm.

Linda Vista, California, was designed as a planned community to house industrial workers during World War II (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 237). The town centre (figure 14) consisted of a number of smaller tenants, as well as a department store. The town center is essentially a strip center turned inward on a treed courtyard, ostensibly to serve as a community amenity. At breaks in the surrounding building fabric, the landscape extends outwards, through parking areas, to the surrounding neighborhood. The transition between the courtyard and these outward connections is marked by a colonnade, which extends throughout the centre.

The town centre planned for Park Forest, Illinois (figure 15), creates internalized space similar to that of Linda Vista. The centre was planned to serve both a local and regional clientele, and this duality can clearly be seen in the form of the centre. While one portion of the centre is surrounded by an efficient organization of parking, the whole complex is pulled to the east, to interface with the surrounding neighborhood. To this end, the axis

Figure 14.

Linda Vista Town Center. Site plan (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 238).

Figure 15.

Park Forest Shopping Center. Site plan (Baker and Funaro 1951, p. 269).

established by a main thoroughfare extends into the internal space of the town centre. This axis extends through the pedestrian mall, to connect with an informal green space to the west of the town centre.

This pedestrian mall is intended to evoke the image of the community green, the idyllic focal points of many early American communities (Rowe 1991, p. 124). The green analogy, along with a variety in building masses, embraces the notion of a town center growing and evolving (Rowe 1991, p. 124).

It is in these early commercial precedents that one finds the roots of the contemporary regional shopping centre. What these early precedents share is the innovation of open space for use and enjoyment by patrons, and this open space would form a key component of the open-air regional centre. A common trend in these centres would be the attempt to draw some connection to their specific suburban context, creating a sense of community for the rapidly growing residential developments. Unfortunately, this trend would be passed over in following years, as the shopping centre evolved to embrace a more regional orientation.

Chapter 3

OPEN AIR REGIONAL CENTRES

The first clear evolutionary step towards the contemporary shopping mall was seen in the development of open-air centres, beginning in the early 1950's. This type emerged after the end of World War II, and paralleled the prosperity, suburban growth and increased mobility of this post war era. Drawing on a regional market, these centres would grow to an unprecedented size, and provide a wide array of conveniences and amenities, the most important of which was an exclusively pedestrian realm: landscaped courts and malls free of cars and trucks, noise and pollution.

CONCEPT

The open-air centre represented an attempt by developers to attract increasing numbers of shoppers from an increasingly dispersed suburban market. This vast market was quickly becoming accessible to developers thanks to increased automobile ownership (Liebs 1985), coupled with massive infrastructure programs such as the Interstate Highway System in the United States (Wilson 1991, p. 30). These new centres would have to provide enough attraction to draw shoppers from a wide region. The centre would include enough shops to fill several hours of shoppers' time, as well as entertainment, eating and service facilities (Urban Land Institute 1949 p. 38). However, the main attraction in this new regionally-oriented centre would be a large department store, typically a branch of an established chain. These centres would also have to draw shoppers away from downtown areas: the competition. One means to do this was through the provision of abundant, and free, parking. The other means was through the creation of an open space amenity unlike that seen in previous precedents: completely free of cars and trucks, noise and pollution, and provided the opportunity for rest and relaxation as well as gathering.



Translated into architectural form, the plan of the regional shopping centre revolved (often literally) around the location of these department store 'anchors.' These locally and nationally-known department stores would constitute the major attraction of the shopping centre, and smaller stores would be located in the path of traffic from parking towards this anchor (McKeever 1953, p. 19). In centres with one department store such as Northgate, built outside of Seattle, stores would be placed along pedestrian malls emanating outward from the centrally located anchor (figure 16). The two anchor shopping centre, which would come to be known as a 'dumbbell plan', would locate each department store at either end of this linear pedestrian mall. In later centres, with 3 and 4 department stores, 'y' and cruciform plans would be adopted.

The visibility of the department stores from adjacent roadways would be critical. In the dumbbell plan, and its variations, this visibility would be achieved by virtue of the anchor locations at the ends of the mall. In one anchor centres, such as Northgate, the department store would be pulled to the front of the building, to become the dominant element. In this example, the importance of this tenant would be reinforced through the creation of a forecourt in front of the department store. This forecourt is sunken, and articulated with planted areas which reinforce a cross axis.

Figure 16.

Northgate Shopping Center.
Aerial view. Bon Marche
department store at center
(Baker and Funaro 1951, p.
220)

SPACES

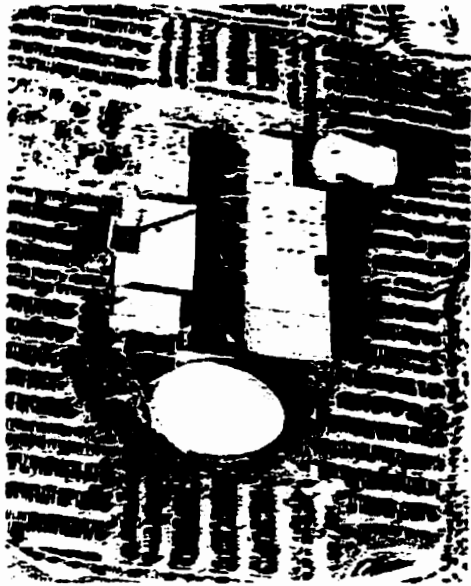
As previously suggested, the internalized and exclusively pedestrian spaces of the shopping centre were integral to the its attraction to suburban shoppers. As a result, their planning and design received considerable attention. Functionally, these spaces would evolve quickly from simple circulation spaces to host a myriad of activities. While the spaces could become places of rest and relaxation, they would be primarily conceived as places of activity (Gruen 1960). Similarly, the spaces were articulated in such a way to maximize the visual activity and quality of the space, through landscaping, fountains, art and sculpture. Ultimately, these active spaces would be conceived to host gatherings- integral to the marketing and promotion of the centre as a community space (Gruen 1960).

The Mall

The dominant space in the open-air regional centre was the mall, a predominantly linear space in which people and activity are compressed. Adapted in the shopping centre, the mall would originate as a simple circulation space, eventually becoming a space in its own right.

The first use of a mall (as a substantial space) in a regional shopping centre was at Shopper's World, in Framingham, Massachusetts (figure 17). This central mall was planned to connect two department stores; smaller tenants along the mall would benefit for the 'pull' between these two anchors. The central mall consisted of a lawn, interrupted by meandering pathways, and regularly bisected by second level walkways connecting the two halves of the mall (figure 18). Informal plantings, fountains, and benches complete the space. Although the space had the potential to serve community functions, activity was generally concentrated along the edges of the mall. Furthermore, the size of the mall prohibited cross traffic, and the stores suffered as a result. Later shopping centres would plan malls considerably narrower.

Clearly the space is more symbolic than functional, and contributes to the notion of a community green (Architecture Forum 1951, p. 181). This use of an existing landscape typology and civic reference would provide a



familiarity to not only a new realm of shopping, and social intercourse, but to the new architectural aesthetic of modernism as well.

Northgate Shopping Center (figure 16) followed considerable study of earlier types- including Shopper's World- by its architect, John Graham (Clausen 1984). A conscious reaction to projects such as Shopper's World (Clausen 1984), Northgate utilized a linear mall, but at a significantly narrower width. The linear mall also corresponded to the underground tunnel running the length of the centre. The central mall, and the shopping centre in general, was designed with the goal of maximizing sales.

Therefore, pedestrian foot traffic was maximized through the creation of a narrow mall (figure 19). As well, the mall received little design attention, with few benches and minimal landscaping. To Graham, free parking was more important to shoppers than the design of the pedestrian mall. The economic success of Northgate proved Graham correct (Clausen 1984), and the retail and architectural patterns pioneered there would be adopted by many developers in the future.

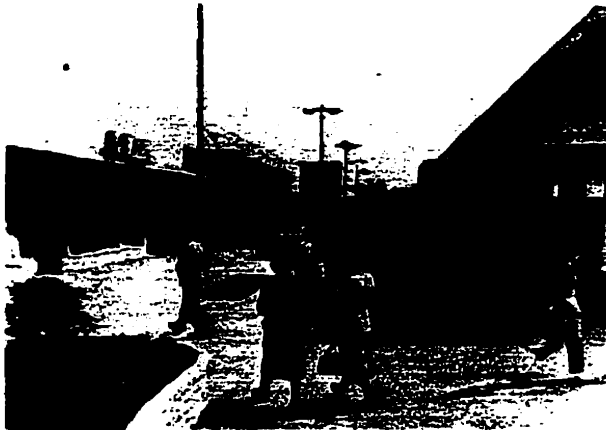
As the number of shopping centres in any one region increased, so did the competition. This in turn led to greater attention being placed on the design of the mall spaces, in the hopes of creating a greater amenity for shoppers. Roosevelt Field Shopping Center, in Nassau County, New York (figure 20), clearly exemplifies this higher standard of design. Raised pools and fountains enriched the shopping experience, and provided places for

Figure 17.

Shopper's World. Aerial view
(Rowe 1991, p. 127).

Figure 18.

Shopper's World. View of mall
(Liebs 1985, p. 32).



informal seating. Furthermore, amenities such as the covered arcade provided shoppers with comfort, while embracing the dominant modern architectural expression of the time.

As regional shopping centres became more spatially complex, malls evolved into larger court areas, capable of handling gatherings. It is difficult to distinguish between the two, proportion being the only notable difference. The shopping centre was slowly evolving into a complex matrix of network of spaces, which freely flowed into each other. Northland Shopping Centre, in suburban Detroit (figure 21), was characterized by this type of informal grouping of spaces (variably called malls, courts, arcades, and terraces) determined by the overall planning and design of the centre. The architect of Northland, Victor Gruen, intended the spaces to be used for a variety of uses, the most important being community gatherings, concerts, and shows (Gruen 1960). To this end, the spaces were designed to be flexible- raised planters and fountains were located to maintain pedestrian movement, while at the same time they provided considerable amounts of informal seating for these events (figure 22).

Gruen (1960, p. 147) recognized that an important compliment to the functional diversity of shopping centre spaces was the creation of visual stimulation and activity. This was achieved by the extensive use of landscaping, pools, fountains, murals and sculpture to completely “surround the shopper with pleasure experiences (Gruen 1960, p. 148)”. Gruen would pioneer the extensive use of art in the shopping centre, ostensibly to reinforce the civic quality of the centre previously established through the role of community gathering space. In reality, however, architects and

Figure 19.

Northgate Shopping Center.
View of mall (Clausen 1984, p.
157).

Figure 20.

Roosevelt Field Shopping
Center. View of mall (Gruen
1960, p. 244).



developers chose pieces which communicated humor, movement and lightheartedness rather than subjects with controversial themes. Not surprisingly, abstract sculpture and sculpture with animals and children as subjects would therefore become the dominant types of artwork found in the shopping centre.

Furthermore, the network of open spaces at Northland was treated as one 3-dimensional space, executed in the modern style. The change in scale and treatment of different scales created a variety of space and experience which was part of the visual attraction and in turn the 'image' of the shopping centre.

Later centres such as Old Orchard Shopping Center, in Skokie, Illinois, would abandon theme and variation and create a variety of spaces, intended for distinctly different uses.. On one hand, spaces would exist that through their scale and sense of enclosure, provided places for intimate interaction, as well as respite from the bustle of the mall (figure 23). On the other hand, large and unencumbered spaces served as venues for large gatherings (figure 24). Ostensibly, the use of grass as one of the surface materials in this space is able to handle the occasional traffic of a large event, while avoiding the impersonal and cold quality of a hard surfaced space. All the outdoor spaces at Old Orchard are tied together not only through materials, but two geometric motifs (and variations): the circle, and the grid formed by the structure of the building.

Figure 21.

Northland Shopping Center.
View of mall (Gruen 1960, p. 151).

Figure 22.

Northland Shopping Center.
View of mall (Gruen 1960, p. 148).



Entry Courts and Forecourts

Important spaces within these open-air regional centers were entry courts and forecourts. Located at the periphery of the shopping centre, these spaces provided transition from parking areas to the pedestrian mall or department store. As well, these spaces were often the location of bus stops and taxi stands. As an extension of the mall, the entry court (figure 25) was given the same attention to design, and articulated with trees, planters, seating and flags. At the same time, entry courts provided an appropriate sense of separation between the mall and parking areas, through the use of architectural elements such as decorative screens and spaceframes, and landscaping.

Department store forecourts served a similar transitory function as entry courts. However, their formal and monumental quality, as well as their lack of vegetation and other amenities, clearly suggests greater

Figure 23.

Old Orchard Shopping Center. View of court (Hornbeck 1963, p. 137).

Figure 24.

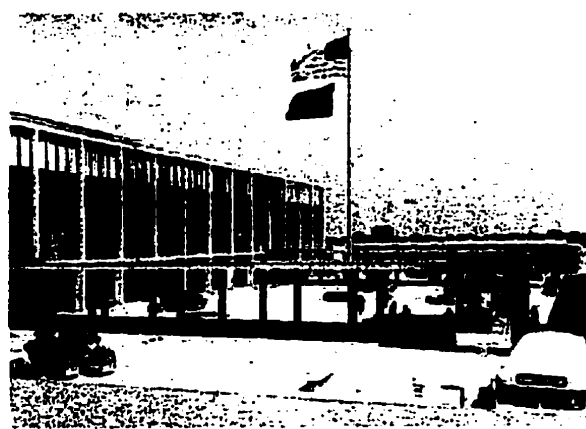
Old Orchard Shopping Center. View of court (Hornbeck 1963, p. 132).

Figure 25.

Capitol Court. View of entry court (Gruen 1960, p. 237).

Figure 26.

Northland. View of entrance to Hudson's (Gruen 1960, p. 130).



emphasis on a formal role. In the case of Northland (figure 26), the court was placed immediately in front of the Hudson's store, and ensured its visibility (from the highway), and communicated something of the stature of the department store.

Pedestrian Walkways and Parking Areas

The last component of the spatial matrix of the open-air regional center would be pedestrian walkways, which emanated outward from the shopping centre (figure 27). These walkways, while not significant spaces in themselves, represented an attempt to connect to adjacent neighborhoods (Rowe 1991, p. 140), and provided shoppers arriving by car a pleasant alternative to walking through the parking lot. To this end, these walkways were often heavily landscaped with shrubs and trees, to provide enclosure and scale within the otherwise featureless landscape. In rare cases, these walkways would be covered over. Finally, these pedestrian walkways, as integral parts of the pattern of open space in the regional shopping center, set up an appropriate sequence of arrival, culminating in the entry court. The result would be a grand entrance to the centre.

It should be noted that in these earliest centres, the landscaping of parking areas would receive considerable attention. Gruen (1960, p. 162) noted that existing vegetation and other natural features (landforms, rocks) should be maintained for their beauty, but also their functional potential.

Figure 27.

Northland. View of pedestrian walkway through parking lot (Rowe 1991, p. 141).



Not only could these features break up parking areas, but they could provide shade and block sound and wind.

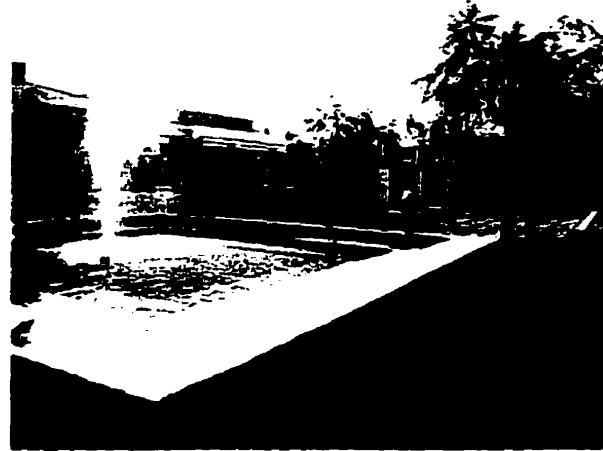
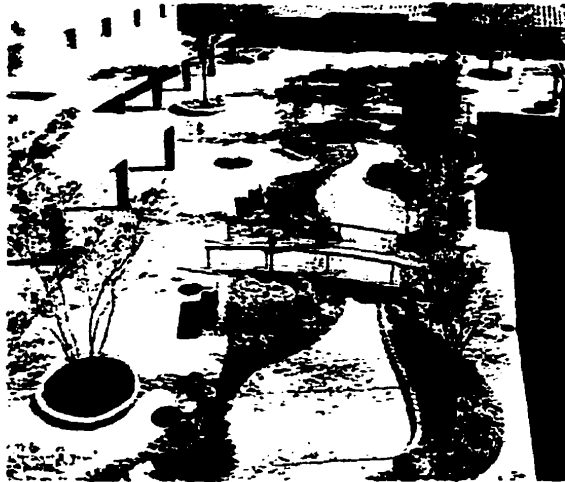
ARCHITECTURE AND IMAGE

The open-air regional shopping centre would embrace specific architectural imagery as an integral part of its attraction and image. Imagery was often selected that echoed the values and desires of those living in the suburbs, away from the city. Embodying popular architectural expressions, as well as other recognizable imagery, made the shopping centre an exciting, and familiar, place to be.

An Urban Alternative

Clearly, the most important sets of images were intended to reinforce the regional shopping centre as a desirable alternative to existing downtown areas. Centres such as Northgate (figure 16) utilized principles and elements of modernism to create an image of the suburb as a kind of idealized urbanity. Of Northgate, Clausen (1984) observes that the emphasis on horizontal forms provides a distinct divergence from the density and verticality of the traditional city. In addition, the more informal nature of materials contributed to a “relaxed, unassuming, suburban character (Clausen 1984 p. 157).” Victor Gruen suggests that the spaces of the shopping centre should represent an ‘essentially’ urban environment (Gruen 1960 p. 147). This idea is seen at Northland (figures 21 & 22) where, like many centres, the diversity and activity of the city is provided free of its congestion, crime, and filth.

As a comparison, shopping centres such as Old Orchard (figure 28) provided an alternative to downtown through the creation of a distinctly suburban character, aligned with the predominant values, tastes and styles of the suburb at that time. Architecturally, the centre uses more rustic materials such as fieldstone in addition or as an alternative to concrete. Most importantly, however, Old Orchard introduces landscaping on an unprecedented scale, to create the image of a bucolic, rural landscape as a setting for suburbia. The centre was densely planted with trees (suggesting



a woodland), devoted large areas to grass (a meadow), and embraced a stylized creek bed. The name 'Old Orchard' itself is a clear example of the association drawn to a simpler time.

As the center of life for the new town of Irvine, California, Fashion Island (figure 29) was designed as a focal point of gathering as well as leisure activities, in addition to a shopping centre (Redstone 1973 p. 165). The role of park extends through the project, yet the specific expression of the space is less pastoral landscape and more suburban office or university campus. This particular expression is created through the loose arrangement of buildings, the rolling landscape of grass and trees (and the lack of hard surfaces), and the presence of pools and fountains.

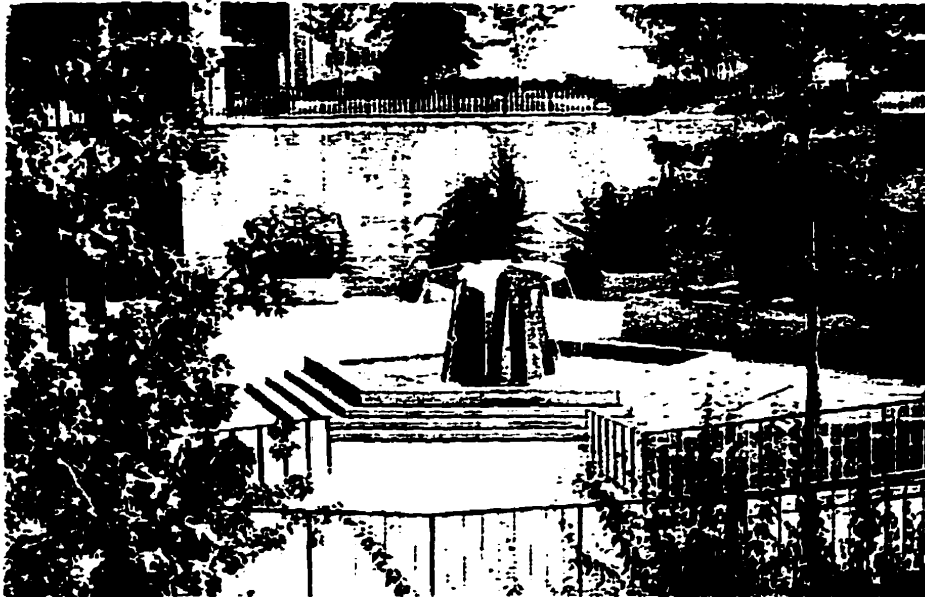
During this period, there are examples of a more urban orientation in the spaces of the shopping centre. Northwest Plaza, in St. Louis, Missouri (figure 30) clearly makes reference to plazas being built in cities at that time, as parts of urban revitalization strategies (Interestingly, the landscape architect of many of these well known plazas, Lawrence Halprin, designed the spaces at Northwest Plaza). These urban plazas, like the example of this shopping centre, were characterized by hard surfaces softened with plantings and water features, and assuming a geologic quality through the use of numerous level changes and angles. Ultimately, Northwest Plaza suggests more than anything the ideal city.

Figure 28.

Old Orchard. View of court
(Hornbeck 1963, p. 135).

Figure 29.

Fashion Island. View of court
(Redstone 1973, p. 57).



Class Consciousness

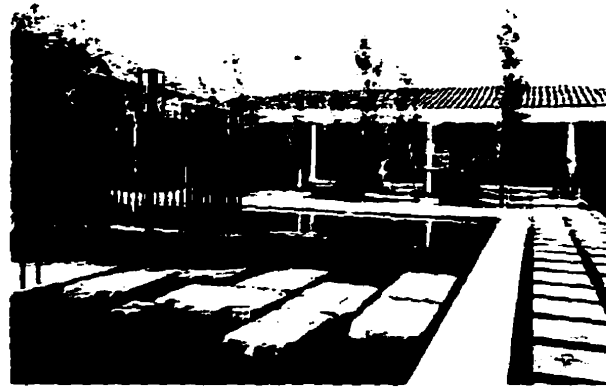
An important consideration in the design of open space in the shopping centre was the appropriate reflection of its clientele's affluence and social standing. While the merchandising of the centre in large part reflected this, the design of elements and forms with the open spaces of the centre were appropriately modified to compliment this intention. For example, Northland Center, in Detroit (figures 21 & 22), catered to an affluent clientele, and as a result its spaces were more formal, and more reserved. In comparison, Eastland Center, also in Detroit (and also by Victor Gruen) catered to a wider income range of shoppers, and therefore was articulated in a more informal manner, through the use of curves in planting beds, as well as looser groupings of stores (Gruen 1960 p. 230).

Sense of Place

A less common trend in the open-air regional shopping centre was to create a connection to its particular location. Generally, this 'sense of place' was created by using recognizable building types and architectural styles that, while not indigenous to the particular region, are strongly connected to it. At Del Monte Center, in Monterey, California (figure 31) the topography and vegetation existing on the site were retained, and this

Figure 30.

Northwest Plaza. View of court (Redstone 1973, p. 189).



Mediterranean quality inspired an allusion to an Italian hillside village. Subsequently, buildings would be placed in groupings clustered around various sized open spaces, articulated with fountains to complete the allusion.

A similar Mediterranean influence, common throughout California architecture, is seen at Fashion Island. One of the many spaces in the centre (figure 32) recall the landscape of a Roman villa. A community building assumes appropriate architectural features, including overhangs, columns, and clay roof tiles, while the strongly formal space features a reflecting pool and a grove of upright poplar trees.

The period of the open air regional centre was characterized by the use of open space as an integral component of the attraction of the regional shopping centre, in the attempt to lure suburban shoppers. Furthermore, these open spaces became an important part of the merchandising and promotion of the centre. The use of imagery in the shopping centre would reinforce the notion of the centre as an alternative to downtown, while in other cases, directly appeal to the aesthetic tastes and lifestyles of suburbanites. This period would also see the beginning of a trend to create a connection to place. The outdoor spaces proved to be extremely popular, as witnessed by the amount of pedestrian traffic in the centre when it was closed. Unfortunately, the open air mall and court would succumb to economics, as developers realized the potential to create spaces of year-round comfort and undertook the next experiment with the shopping centre: the enclosed center court.

Figure 31.

Del Monte Center. View of court (Redstone 1973, p. 152).

Figure 32.

Fashion Island. View of court (Redstone 1973, p. 167).

Chapter 4

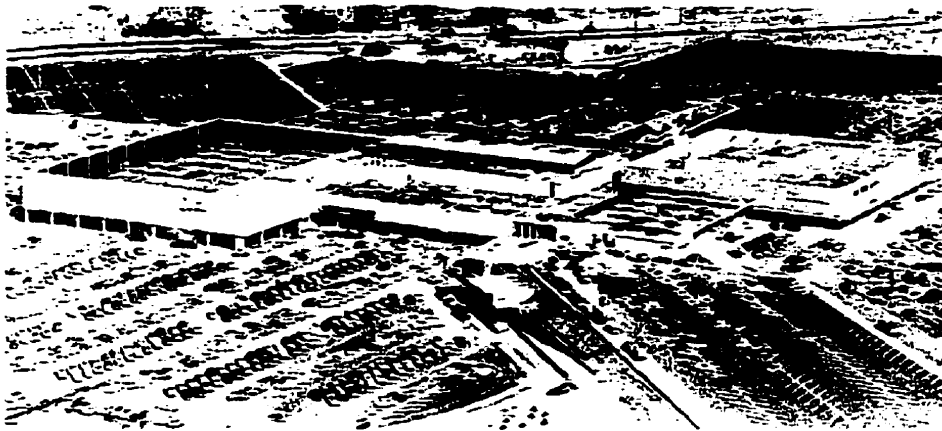
ENCLOSED CENTRES

The next phase in the development of the regional shopping centre was characterized by the enclosure of mall and court areas as a means to address customer comfort in the more extreme climates of northern and southern areas (McKeever 1953, p. 25). Appropriately, the first enclosed centre, Southdale, opened in Edina, Minnesota, in 1955 (Rowe 1991, p. 128). By the 1960's the enclosed shopping centre would represent the majority of commercial developments. In this process of enclosure, the center court would emerge as the focal point of the shopping centre, a characteristic that continues today.

CONCEPT

The enclosure of the shopping mall was little more than a means to maximize the amenity provided by the pedestrian areas of the shopping centre, including the mall and the court. Providing protection from the elements, including the heat of the southwest and the cold of the north, would maximize shopping traffic, and therefore revenue, year round. Furthermore, enclosing the shopping centre provided the potential for greater retail and promotional use of this space, allowing the centre to host important gatherings.

The enclosed shopping centre emerged in the mid 1950's, and became the dominant type of shopping centre in the 1960's. Interestingly, the shopping centre continued to reflect mainstream values, with little reference to the radical social changes of that time, beginning with the student protests and the civil rights movement at the beginning of the decade. Important developments during the decade, including the environmental movement, feminism, anti-war sentiment and hippie culture all questioned the capitalist and materialist bases of modern society (Morgan 1991), and it



appears that the shopping centre was in return oblivious to these shifts in values.

The continued economic success of the shopping centre meant that new developments would feature more shops, and understandably, more anchor department stores. The very concept of the shopping centre would begin to change, as furniture and hardware stores would be eliminated in favor of more tenants selling fashion and accessories (Crawford 1992). This would foretell the gradual removal of grocery and drug stores, and hence everyday necessities, from the mall.

The form of the shopping centre evolved during this period to reflect the changes in its concept. The overall shape of the shopping centre became more regular and compact, as at Southdale Shopping Center, in metropolitan Minneapolis, Minnesota (figure 33), to minimize the expense of creating climate controlled spaces. As a result, a dominant trend during this period would be toward compact, two-storey centres (Maitland 1985, p. 11). Later, shopping centres expanded horizontally, and adopted 'Y' or cruciform plans to accommodate greater number of anchor department stores. In these more centrifugal centres, the length of the malls received considerable attention, and were eventually limited to distances comfortable for walking.

The planning and design of the site would similarly evolve during this period, to help create the most efficient pattern of shopper traffic throughout the centre. Like in previous examples, the building would be placed in the middle of the land parcel, with equal amounts of parking on all sides, and serviced by a ring road. The major development during this period accompanied the rise of the two-storey center. In the example of

Figure 33.

Southdale Shopping Center. Aerial view. The enclosed center court is visible at center; also visible is the vertical separation of parking levels to evenly distribute shoppers (Gruen 1960, p. 79).

Southdale (figure 33), the ring of parking is broken into 4 equal quadrants, and alternately slope up or down to each floor (Maitland 1985, p. 11). Shoppers would therefore be equally distributed over the shopping center. The spaces between these quadrants would be devoted to pedestrian walkways.

SPACES

Exclusively pedestrian space continued to be a dominant element of the regional shopping centre. With enclosure, significant changes occurred in the planning and design of these spaces. The centre court became the focus of these internalized spaces, and provided new opportunities for functions. In turn, mall areas became greatly simplified. Only later would malls slowly return to being spaces in themselves.

Center court

Clearly, during this period of enclosure the center court would emerge as the dominant space in the regional shopping centre. Like their open air counterparts, the center court would be able to serve a variety of functions, including informal and formal gathering, as well as serving as a location for retail opportunities, i.e. kiosks and sidewalk cafes. With enclosure, these opportunities would become more important to the mall year round. It also meant that, free of the constraints of climate and season, ambitious functions such as concerts and fashion shows could be held at the mall, and become important components of the centre's image.

In terms of design, the functional possibilities of the center court necessitated a flexibility of space, with more permanent elements such as raised planters and pools moved to the periphery (Redstone 1973, p 51). To compliment this activity, the architectural character would similarly evolve to include "such various exciting features as glass space-frame domes, special lighting fixtures, sculptural fountains, landscaped areas, specially designed staircases, escalators, glass-enclosed elevators, and important art work (Redstone 1973, p. 51)."



Southdale Shopping Center (figure 34), became the first fully enclosed regional shopping centre when it opened in 1955. Its center court provided a variety of activity and amenity for shoppers. A major feature of this court was a sidewalk cafe, an important social space. The center court could provide space for temporary kiosks and public displays, and at the same time, could hold major events (figure 35). At Southdale, these events ranged from concerts to fashion shows, to the Annual Minneapolis Symphony Ball (Rowe 1991, p. 140).

To create a visual sense of activity, the vertical nature and drama of the two-storey space would be emphasized. Trees, an aviary, light fixtures, sculpture would be designed to lead one's eye (and feet) to upper levels. Stairs, escalators, and overhead bridges would further animate this space. At the same time, the enclosure of the centre court at Southdale provided the opportunity to create tropical landscapes, as counterpoint to the hustle and bustle of centre. Pioneering the use of tropical and subtropical plantings, the center court was filled with plants such as orchids, azaleas, and palm trees (Clausen 1984).

The contemplative potential of center court areas is clearly seen in the example of Cherry Hill Mall, in Cherry Hill, New Jersey (figure 36). In this centre, the potential for activity is balanced by the desire to create a

Figure 34.

Southdale. View of center court (Gruen 1960, p. 147).

Figure 35.

Southdale. View of court, and the staging of a concert (Gruen 1960, p. 149).



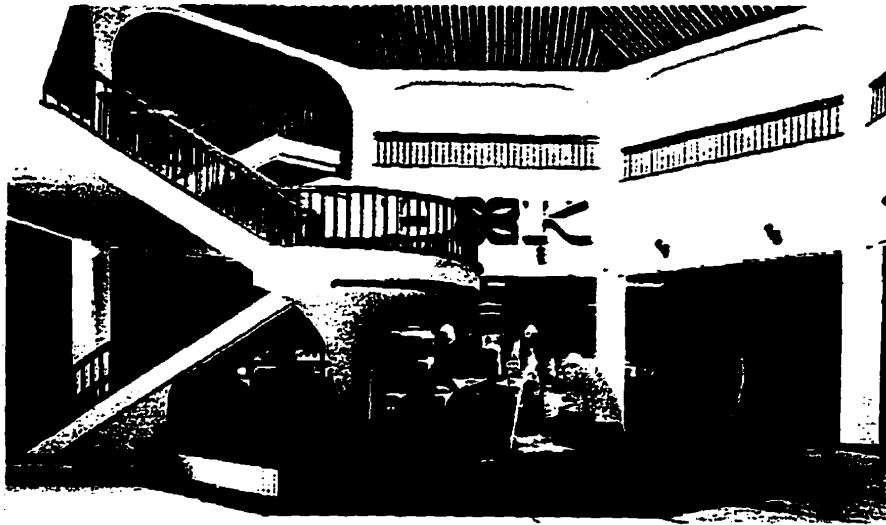
psychological and visual 'escape' as counterpoint to the mall (Gruen, in Hornbeck 1962, p. 165). The notion of contemplation is explicitly communicated through the inclusion of a Japanese garden, "complete with arching bridge and running water, and a fanciful wood gazebo (Hornbeck 1962, p. 165)."

Figure 36.

Cherry Hill Mall. View of center court, and Japanese garden (Hornbeck 1962, p. 164)

Department Store Courts

Another important spatial development in the enclosed regional shopping centre was the department store court. Much like the entry court or forecourt of the open-air centre, the purpose of the enclosed department store court was to provide an appropriate sense of entry into the department store. In the enclosed centre, this also meant providing an appropriate transition from internal mall areas. Unlike centre courts, these spaces were not intended for a diversity of activity. Instead, they were typically intended to communicate something of the stature and importance of the department store. In the example at York Mall, in York, Pennsylvania (figure 37), the court appears as grandiose and formal, extending through



both levels of the mall. A raised pool features a fountain and sculpture, creating a focal point as well as embodying a sense of sophistication.

The Mall

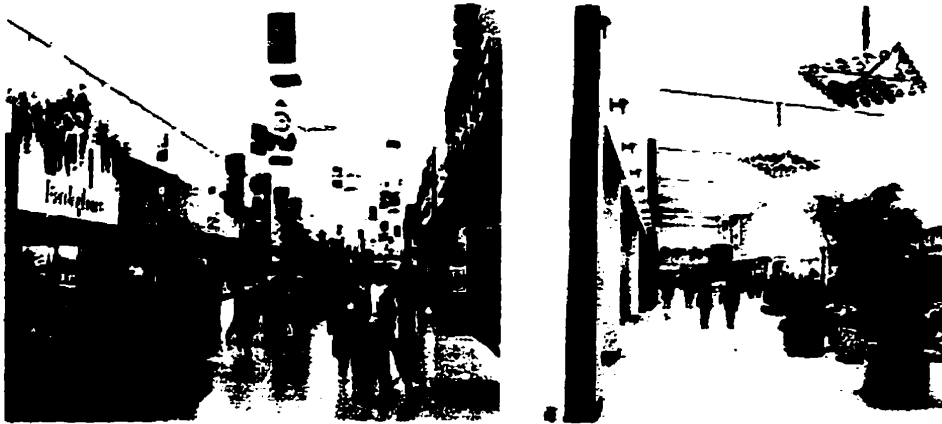
Unlike in the open-air regional shopping centre, malls in enclosed centres were reduced in function and importance to emphasize the new and novel enclosed center court. In this incarnation, the mall was envisioned as a circulation conduit, a 'street of stores'. Only in later developments would the mall regain some of its importance as a space.

The early enclosed malls were conceived as analogs to the outdoor street, with similar dimensions, and lit naturally with clerestory windows running the length of the mall (Maitland 1985, p. 13). An excellent example is Yorkdale, in metropolitan Toronto, Ontario (figure 38). Typical of many early centres, storefronts in this mall were all aligned to maximize visibility. Similarly, amenities such as seating and plantings were minimized, and relegated to the middle zone of the mall. Unfortunately, the mall at Yorkdale was too wide, and the clerestory lighting created excessive glare on the storefronts (Maitland 1985, p. 13).

Successive developments created malls which were considerably narrower than Yorkdale, and more importantly, controlled natural light. The spaces of the malls in Southland Center, in suburban Detroit, Michigan (figure 39), illustrate this evolution. The mall retained the height of

Figure 37.

York Mall. View of department store court (Redstone 1973, p. 66).



previous models, yet is considerably narrower. Natural light is carefully modulated through a sequence of deeply set skylights.

In this period, lighting levels were kept low to shift emphasis to the artificially lit storefronts (Speakman, in Fisher 1988) and to increase the drama of the adjacent, naturally lit center courts.

In time the mall began to evolve into more of a space in itself. Elements such as seating, lighting, raised planters and artwork would become integral (and permanent) components of mall areas. The example of West Towne Mall, in Madison, Wisconsin (figure 40), typifies such developments in mall spaces. A seating area is defined as separate from the circulation areas of the mall. Raised planters and a seating wall merge in a composition which provides a base for a sculpture. Trees and lighting are introduced, which provide a sense of scale to the seating area.

The spatial anomaly of Somerset Mall, in Troy, Michigan (figure 41), provided a glimpse into the future evolution of the shopping centre. In this example, court and mall areas were fused into a grandiose space. The only relief to the monumental scale of the space was a central sunken space, with a fountain, as well as smaller courts at either end, featuring modern sculpture. Clearly, the intention in this use of space and artwork is to communicate a sense of luxury and sophistication, evidenced in the store groupings within of the centre (Redstone 1973 p. 210).

ARCHITECTURE AND IMAGE

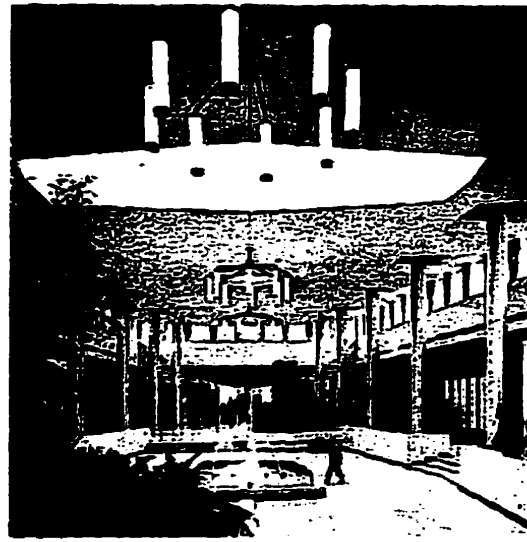
Like the open-air regional shopping centre, the enclosed shopping centre embraced imagery as a necessary component of attracting and keeping

Figure 38.

Yorkdale Centre. View of mall (Maitland 1985, p. 14).

Figure 39.

Southland Center. View of mall (Redstone 1973, p. 209).



customers. Like before, the image of the ideal city would find expression in a large number of developments. During this period, though, the greatest addition to the image repertoire of the shopping centre would be that of a tropical escape, which is still in use today.

The City

The dominant image expressed by the architecture of the enclosed regional centre was that of the city. Like in the open-air centre, the particular use of materials, scale and elements such as fountains, and the integration of various activities, would emulate urban spaces. Most importantly, the enclosed centre would rely on the sense of the vertical to draw a connection to the diversity and vitality of the city. Sculpture, escalators, and overhead walkways would create visual activity in three dimensions (Crawford 1992).

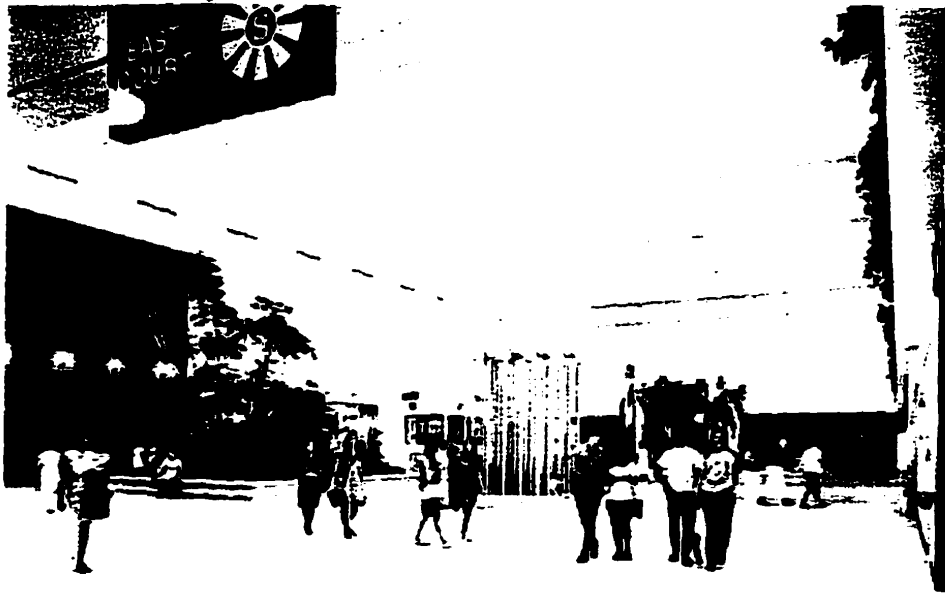
In the spaces of the enclosed centre associations could be drawn to places of public meetings and public celebration, such as airports, train stations, galleries, concert halls. This notion can be seen in the example of Southland (figure 42), in which the reduction of plantings, artwork and benches creates a monumental and grand space appropriate for more public activities. By emulating the city and its spaces, the shopping centre continued to appeal to people's desire urban experience, and as a result of enclosure, free of the dirt and noise of the real city.

Figure 40.

West Towne Mall. View of mall (Redstone 1973, p. 76).

Figure 41.

Somerset Mall. View of mall (Redstone 1973, p. 211).



An important component of this illusion of the civic would be the continued role of artwork in the enclosed shopping centre. Conveniently, the modern, abstract sculpture and supergraphics of the day avoided the explicitly whimsical messages of art programmes of previous eras, and provided on the surface a more compelling embrace of the civic by the shopping centre. Shopping centers would introduce abstract pieces which, by their nature, were non-representational, avoiding the social commentary typical of the period (Goldwater 1969, p. 102). Furthermore, these works added a dynamic quality to the shopping centre, adding to the sense of visual activity. This is clearly apparent in the prevalence of kinetic sculpture, including mobiles by noted sculptor Alexander Calder (figure 43) in a number of shopping centres across the United States (Redstone 1973).

Place and 'Other Place'

A trend which found continued use in the enclosed centre was the direct allusion to place, often near, but also often far away. More explicit connections to place would be made in situations in which a region had a dominant architectural tradition. For example, in the Los Arcos Center, in Scottsdale, Arizona (figure 44), a distinctly Spanish flavor is evoked in the creation of a fountain and gazebo, fabricated out of wrought iron, stained glass, and located in the center court area. In addition, materials such as

Figure 42.

Southland Center. View of center court. Sculpture visible at center (Redstone 1973, p. 209).



hand painted Mexican tiles also create a connection to the region (Redstone 1973, p 178). Of concern has to be the romanticization and appropriation of this particular history, especially in this instance, when the food vendors in the mall included a Bavarian restaurant and an English pub.

A trend that would emerge during this period and dominate shopping center design for some time would be the creation of realms that directly mimic exotic places. Obvious examples include Southdale (figure 34), which alluded to a tropical paradise, and Cherry Hill Mall (figure 36), which recreated a Japanese garden. The allusion to these tropical and subtropical landscapes was made possible by the enclosure of the center court and the potential to grow tropical plants and trees. This allusion was supported by the inclusion of birds and fish into center court areas. This escapes from the outside would prove “compelling enough to ensure that enclosed malls soon flourished even in the most temperate climates (Crawford 1992, p. 22).”

Indeed, the enclosed center court was one of the great innovations of the shopping centre, and its use continues today. The enclosure of the shopping centre represented escape from the weather, the city, and more importantly, reality, thanks in part to the removal of everyday items from the shopping centre. Eventually the activity and vitality of the center court would spread to other areas of the shopping centre, as postmodernism begins to exert its influence on the shopping centre.

Figure 43.

'Untitled' by Alexander Calder. Located at Franklin Park Mall, Toledo, Ohio (Redstone 1973, p. 86).

Figure 44.

Los Arcos. Detail of fountain (Redstone 1973, p. 179).

Chapter 5

POSTMODERN SPACES

This period, beginning in the mid-1960's, is characterized by the further spatial evolution of the shopping centre, and its changing use of imagery. During this period the spaces of the shopping center have become less separated and more interconnected, richer and more complex. In addition, towards the end of this period the shopping centre began to appropriate imagery from historical galleries and markets. What these two trends illustrate is a shift away from modernism, and an embrace of postmodernism as an architectural concept.

CONCEPT

During this period the shopping centre continued to tap the ever-growing and increasingly affluent population of suburbia, complete with its mainstream values and beliefs. Planned during the end of the 1960's, these shopping centres became increasingly insular, with a greater separation of inside and outside (Maitland 1985). Arguably, this represents a reaction to the radical social changes during the period, the shopping centre becoming a protected bastion of mainstream consumer culture.

A critical development during this period would be the energy crisis of the early 1970's. Following an oil embargo against many countries as a result of international conflict, many American states instituted policies to reduce energy consumption (Maitland 1985, p. 38). Shopping centre owners would be forced to rethink infrastructures, and look for alternative energy sources.

The economic success of the shopping centre and the prospect of continued growth ensured the continued use of the long established retail and spatial 'formula', and its enlargement. Shopping centres added more shops and more anchor department stores; the prospect of larger and larger centres prompted architects to consider new designs and layouts. New centres were

almost exclusively two levels in order to create more compact buildings. Similarly, innovations in building layout made more efficient use of space, moving people through the centre more efficiently. A continuous loop of circulation was used in several centres as an alternative to the typical cruciform plan. At Sherway Gardens, in Toronto, Ontario, a 'figure 8' layout was created to move shoppers through the centre (Maitland 1985). In addition to a number of smaller courts, a center court would be maintained as the dominant gathering space. Scarborough Town Centre, Scarborough, Ontario, eliminated the center court altogether, instead creating four two-level courts at each corner of an essentially square plan (Maitland 1985).

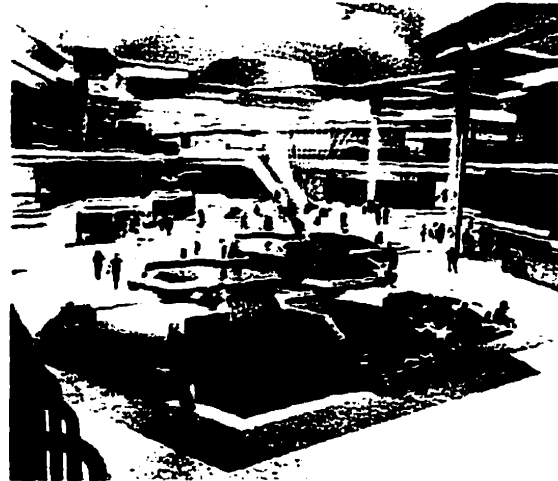
SPACES

In addition to innovations such as the continuous loop arrangement of stores, the spaces of the shopping centres themselves would be designed in such a way to create a similar compression of space. Spatial devices were used to alter perception, and mall and court areas were combined to create more fluid and interconnected spaces.

Center Courts

An important change in the center court was its shift away from the more monumental and austere spaces of the 1950's to a more varied landscape of spaces and functions. Both permanent and informal seating areas were provided, and small amphitheatres seated larger crowds for gatherings. Amenities in the center court now included pools, fountains, and plantings. These elements ensured a diversity of activity while contributing visually to the vitality of the space, making it the true focus of the shopping centre.

At Woodfield Mall, in Schaumburg, Illinois (figure 45), the center court reveals an unprecedented diversity of amenity and activity. In addition to pools and fountains, landscaping and seating areas, the center court features an amphitheatre for gatherings, including concerts by the Chicago Symphony (Kowinski 1985, p. 113). Rather than creating a flexible realm which could accommodate the full range of function, center courts such as



the one at Woodfield simply accommodated all of the various functions. The result was a centre court area of unprecedented size.

Even more awesome is the example of Eastridge Center, in San Jose, California (Figure 46). At the center of the monumental court is a large pool, complete with modern sculpture. Informal seating is provided, and the remaining space is left open, ostensibly to offer flexibility in the programming of functions and promotions.

One of the innovations during this era was the fusion of the center court with adjacent mall areas to create a continuous space throughout the shopping centre. This spatial experiment was intended to minimize the apparent size of these new, larger centres and reduce the perceived distance of anchor stores from the center court (Maitland 1985).

Malls

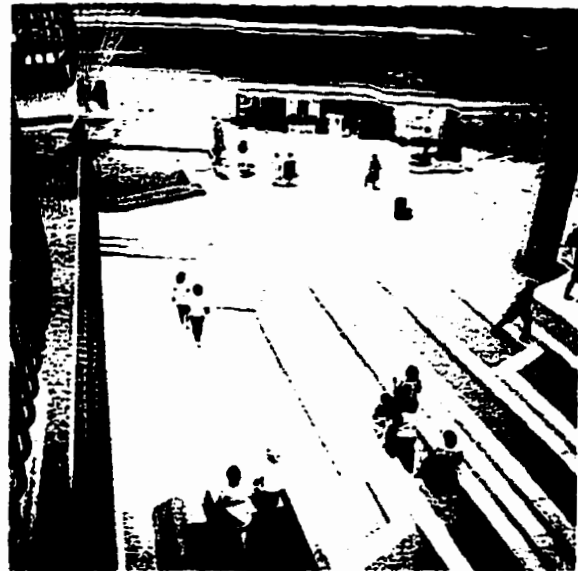
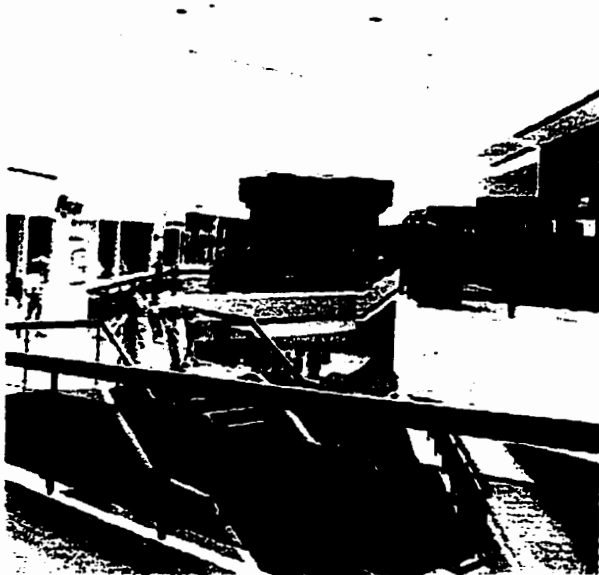
In conjunction with the spatial evolution of the center court, malls underwent a similar transformation. Like the center court, malls were designed in such a way to counteract the excessive distances in this era of ever larger shopping centres. At Woodfield Mall (figure 45, figure 47), the use of angles in the location of level changes and ramps, add interest, and lead one's eye down the mall, while avoiding the 'tunnel effect' of earlier centres (Redstone 1973, p. 68). At the same time, the apparent length of the mall is lessened through the undulation of storefronts and floor levels, and the geometric patterning of ceilings and skylights (Redstone 1973, p. 71).

Figure 45.

Woodfield Mall. View of centre court. (Maitland 1985, p. 27).

Figure 46.

Eastridge Centre. View of centre court. (Redstone 1973, p. 161).



Eastridge Center (figure 46, 48) provides an excellent example of this spatial integration. Materials, level changes and geometric patterns are all used to create a continuous realm extending from the centre court outward through the mall areas. Furthermore, the patterns formed by these level changes creates a sense of movement and help to direct one's eye appropriately.

The ultimate fusion of space in the shopping centre is illustrated in Fox Hills Mall, in Los Angeles, California (figure 49). The centre adopted a linear form due to site constraints, and the internal space freely flows from one end of the mall to the other, in large part due to the skillful articulation and manipulation of storefronts, mezzanines, ramps, overhead walkways, and smaller court areas.

Department Store Courts

Department store courts became important spatial components of centres such as Sherway Gardens and Square One, which pioneered the use of the continuous loop for mall circulation. Many of these centres took advantage of their multiple courts and embraced differing themes and architectural expressions, as a means to create variety and interest (Redstone 1973, p. 51).

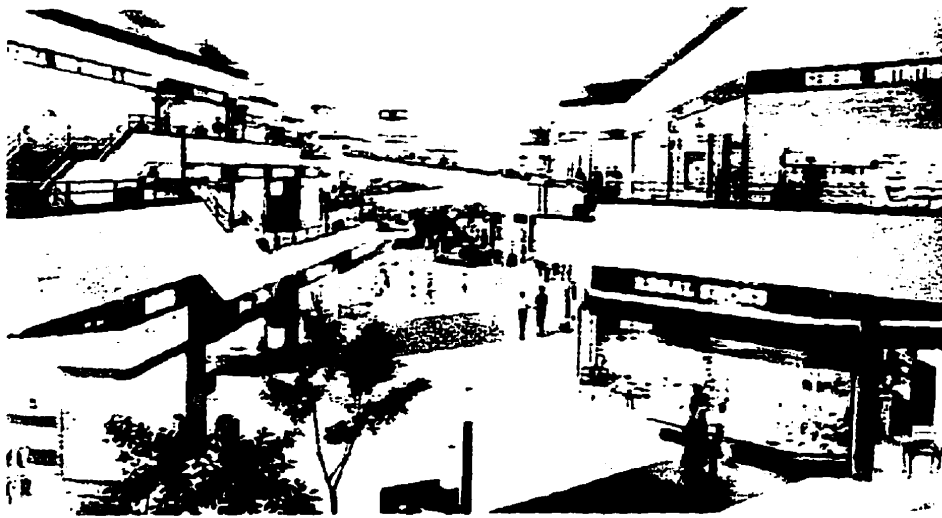
Sherway Gardens, in Toronto, Ontario, offers a variety of such spaces, ranging from a cactus/desert garden to a Japanese garden (Redstone 1973).

Figure 47.

Woodfield Mall. View of mall. (Maitland 1985, p. 27).

Figure 48.

Eastridge Center. View of mall. (Redstone 1973, p. 161.)



Like shopping centres before them, these spaces create interest through their suggestion of exotic locales. One of the more interesting courts at Sherway Gardens is the transitional space into the Simpsons department store (figure 50). In this particular example, the space is unusually dramatic and powerful. The round shape of the space is emphasized through banding and similar patterns on the ground plane. The absence of elements, and in turn scale, as well as the use of mirrored surface, creates both a surreal and minimal space, which becomes a piece of art, communicating a certain sense of sophistication of the anchor store.

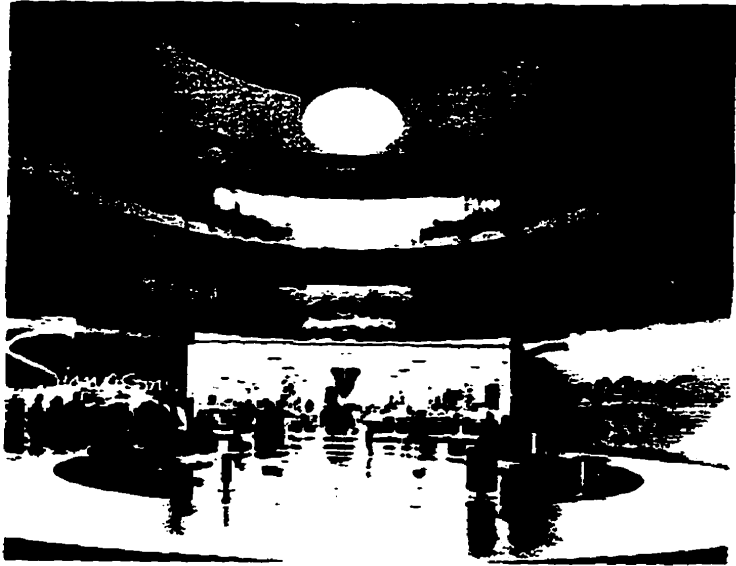
The use of drama is also seen in the example of the Scarborough Town Centre. In this two-storey centre each of the courts has an implicit function to lure people between levels. In one case, hot air balloons rise and fall through the space, evoking a sense of fantasy. In another space (figure 51), the centerpiece of the space is a glass enclosed elevator which rises on a dramatic, mirrored and specially lit structure. An elevator ride becomes an event; its glass enclosure allows shoppers to see the dramatic space, while being on 'display' for others.

ARCHITECTURE AND IMAGE

This period of development illustrates the influence of postmodern architecture on the imagery of the shopping centre. Two dominant trends would emerge— the creation of complex space, and the use of historical precedent. The spaces themselves are created in the postmodern manner,

Figure 49.

Fox Hills Mall. View of central mall (Maitland 1985, p. 37).



and more importantly, select a ideal view of the city as specific reference points for imagery.

The Postmodern City

Projects such as Woodfield Mall, Eastridge Center and Fox Hills Mall (figures 45-49) exhibit a three-dimensional spatial complexity which illustrates a clear departure from the regularity of modernism. In these projects, spaces intermingle, and floor, wall and ceiling planes are thoroughly distorted, in this case to alter the perception of space and distance. These spaces also exhibit a clear geomorphic and subterranean quality, and in this regard, draw a connection to urban plazas of the day (such as those designed by Lawrence Halprin) and the ideal of urban regeneration.

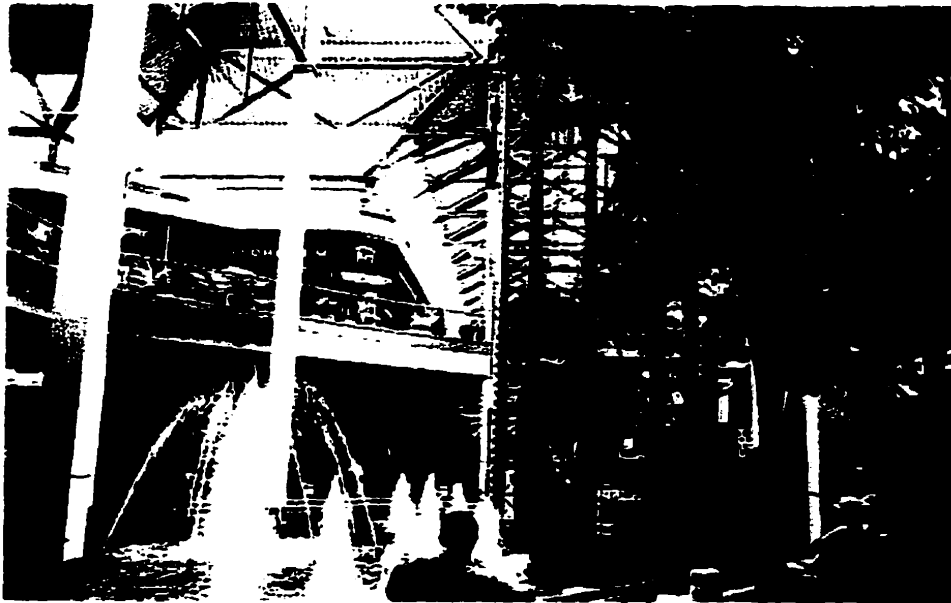
An emerging trend in this period of development was the adaptation of historical types to the shopping centre, as a reaction to policies regarding energy use and conservation. White Marsh Center, outside of Baltimore, Maryland (figure 52), illustrates the use of this spatial precedent. A light, industrial roof system sits on a series of simple bolted trusses, and into this roof is inserted a series of skylights. The placement of skylights was carefully considered to reduce glare on storefronts. This particular structural system appears as separate from the storefronts below; this

Figure 50.

Sherway Gardens. View of Simpsons court (Redstone 1973, p. 206).

Figure 51.

Scarborough Town Centre. View of court (Mairland 1985, p. 33).



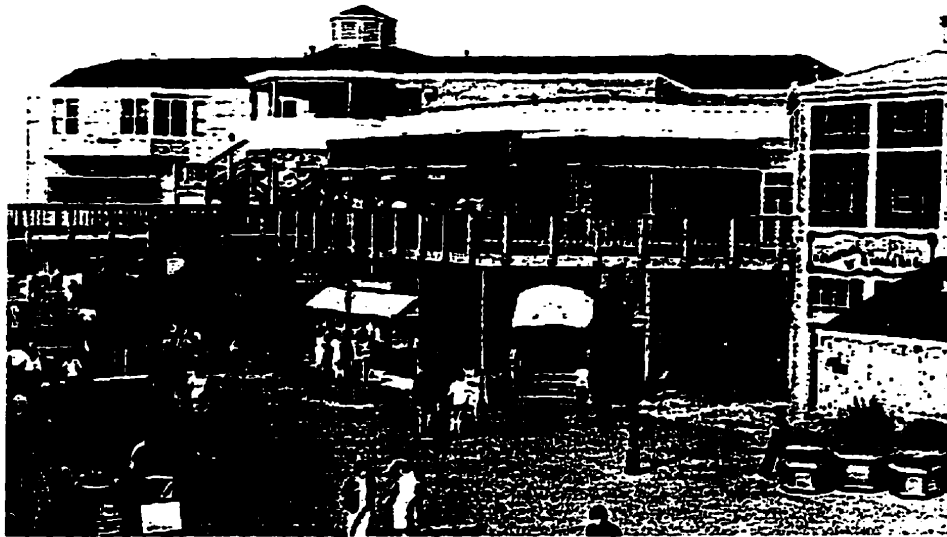
dramatic spatial quality extends throughout the shopping centre, creating one continuous open space. The integration of skylights allows trees to be reintroduced throughout shopping centre. The resulting space creates a clear connection to British market halls, which similarly grouped stores and open space under one continuous roof system.

Both of these architectural expressions- complex space and historical precedent- share a further connection, which is a link to urban revitalization projects of the era. Projects such as Pier 39, in San Francisco, California (figure 53), and Faneuil Hall Marketplace, in Boston Massachusetts (figure 54), typify the redevelopment of blighted urban areas by private developers alone and in concert with local government agencies. In some cases these projects involved the rehabilitation of historic buildings, and in other cases new buildings were conceived as contextually sensitive. Although these urban revitalization projects take varying approaches, they share an adoption of many of the principles of shopping centre planning and design, including safety, comfort and predictability (Kowinski 1985, p. 310).

The point of this comparison is that the designs of the shopping centres of this era often bear considerable resemblance to urban redevelopment projects. What this reveals is a continued representation in the shopping centre of an idealized urban experience. Unlike previous eras, however, this new urban experience has evolved directly out of the shopping centre.

Figure 52.

White Marsh Center. View of centre court with mall beyond. (Maitland 1985, p. 57)



The dominant trend during this period was the influence of postmodernism, and its two particular manifestations within the landscapes of the shopping centre- the trend towards greater complexity of space, and the trend towards the use of historical imagery, in order to re-create some kind of idealized urbanity. This evolution provides strong evidence of the flexibility of the shopping centre model, and its ability to selectively appropriate architectural and aesthetic trends to suit economic ends. Furthermore, the examples presented in this chapter suggest that these spatial and symbolic trends have been put to full advantage in the

Figure 53.

Pier 39. View (Mallard 1985, p. 77).

Figure 54.

Faneuil Hall Marketplace. View (Mallard 1985, p. 70).

spaces of the shopping centre. Interestingly, the trend towards the creation of complex, postmodern space in future shopping centre developments gives way to the desire to utilize historic imagery, as a means to reflect ongoing value shifts within our postmodern culture.

Chapter 6

PLEASURE DOMES

The shopping centre of the 1980s was characterized by the continued allusion to the gallerias and markets of yesterday. Completing the allusion, shopping centres incorporated entertainment amenities on an unprecedented scale. The inclusion of entertainment in the shopping centre would culminate in projects such as West Edmonton Mall and the Mall of America. These projects became the modern equivalent to the pleasure domes of Victorian England, such as Blackpool's Winter Gardens. When it opened in 1875, the Winter Garden's enclosed arcade featured theatres, ornamental gardens, a shooting range, thematically decorative lounges and a ferris wheel (Davis 1991).

CONCEPT

The 1980s were prosperous years: baby boomers were beginning to enter their prime working ages, women were entering the workforce in increasing numbers and families were getting smaller. The net result was a vast increase in disposable income (Hahn, in Rathbun 1986, p. 6). At the same time, people had less and less leisure time due to family commitments, self employment and commuting (Langdon 1994). People were understandably interested in convenience, and as a result, less and less time was spent at the shopping centre.

During this period, maturing markets and finite land resources (Hahn, in Rathbun 1986, p. 6) led developers to shift their attention towards the redevelopment of existing centers, and focusing on aesthetic upgrades as well as expansions (Rathbun 1990).

In addition to more and more stores being added to shopping centres, new stores would open that commodified many of the values and ideals emerging within the general public: the global village and cultural harmony (Benetton), escape/leisure lifestyle (Banana Republic) and interest in the environment (The Nature Store (Price 1995)).

To address the lack of leisure time and the corresponding interest in convenience, the shopping centre positioned itself as a leisure and entertainment destination, providing the full range of amenities to attract families and keep them there longer. Multi-plex movie theatres were added to many centres, as were food courts, as a means to keep customers in shopping centers during lunch and supper hours (Fisher 1988). As part of this attraction, shopping centre owners and managers also increased the number of promotional and community events; the latter in response to the maturing suburbs and the lack of appropriate venues for community life (Speakman, in Fisher 1988, p. 96). This shift would result in a reconfiguration of center court areas (Fisher 1988).

The most distinctive addition to shopping centres in the 1980s would be leisure and entertainment amenities. These amenities would be modest at first, and typical of an amusement park (carousels, miniature golf). The attractions continued to evolve, to a point that these 'mega-malls' contained an entire theme park (complete with roller coasters, submarine rides, white water rafting). Clearly derived from popular tourist destinations such as Disneyland/Epcot Center and Las Vegas, a critical component of these entertainment amenities was the simulation of distant places and previous times, the fragments collaged together into a disparate assemblage of time of place (Thayer 1994). The marketing of these mega-malls would no longer be limited to the neighborhood or even the region; these gargantuan centres were being marketed as tourist destinations for shoppers from all over the world. Hotels and conference centres therefore became integral components of this new retail formula.

These new leisure and entertainment amenities would be integrated into existing shopping centre morphologies with only slight modifications. In both new and renovated centres, food courts and theatres became anchors, located to generate traffic in slow areas, such as upper levels and other peripheral areas (Fisher 1988, p. 98). These new entertainment amenities were at first also located in peripheral locations to act as traffic generators. Very quickly, however, these amenities became more closely integrated with mall and court areas.

SPACES

In this period of development, the addition of entertainment and leisure amenities added a considerable number of new and reconfigured spaces to the shopping centre. While amenities such as theme park rides were limited to larger centres, most shopping centres underwent a more modest transformation, including the reconfiguration of center court and the addition of a food court.

Center Courts

The most basic and broad-ranging spatial development in this period was the reconfiguration of the center court to increase its flexibility as a gathering space for community and promotional events. Examples such as Valley View, in Roanoke, Virginia (figure 55), show little evolution from previous models such as Woodfield Mall and Eastridge Center (figures 45 and 46, respectively) - the center court continues to function as a space for both rest and gathering, featuring amenities such as seating, plantings and fountains. The noticeable difference between this and previous examples is in its more formal expression. As a result, the center court at Valley View takes on an aesthetic or symbolic role equally important to its functional role. Later in this period, the center court evolved into a more spacious and unencumbered area, to host various types of events and gatherings, and in turn, increase the attraction of the centre (Fisher 1988, p. 98). In the example of Stonestown Galleria, in San Francisco, California (figure 56), seating and plantings were relocated to the periphery of the space to maximize floor area. Furthermore, the center court and other areas of this centre were glazed over, resulting in dramatic vertical spaces, as much of an attraction as the stores themselves.

Food Courts

Begun as a means to attract and hold shoppers during lunch and dinner hours, the food court offered a large open area with seating, surrounded by numerous vendors serving primarily fast food, often of different ethnic



backgrounds. The food court also came to replace the center court as the prime social space of the shopping centre.

Spatially, the food court held a large number of patrons in a small area through a close proximity of tables and people. Arguably a means to create a certain level of discomfort and therefore insure turnover, the proximity of tables and people also lends a real sense of activity to these spaces. This is further enhanced by the preparation of the food, which is typically done in plain view of patrons. Rapid turnover of shoppers is also achieved through the use of uncomfortable seating, and enforced through restrictions on duration of stay. While the turnover of patrons is critical to the food court, the design of the spaces often sends conflicting messages of relaxation and contemplation. Typified by the example of Rivergate Mall, in Goodlettsville, Tennessee (figure 57), the food court often featured flowers, trees and umbrellas that, along with a flooding of natural light, make an explicit connection to the outdoors, and offer a pleasant alternative to the hustle and bustle of shopping. Many food courts reinforce this connection to the outdoors through imagery of animals, birds and fish (figure 58).

Entertainment and Leisure Amenities

Entertainment as a part of the shopping centre dates back to the first open-air centres of the 1950s. In these earliest examples, the amenities

Figure 55.

Valley View. View of court (Rathbun 1986).

Figure 56.

Stonestown Galleria. View of renovated center court (Fisher 1988, p. 97).



were clearly targeted at children, ranging from petting zoos to miniature amusement parks (Gruen 1960).

It was only during the 1980s that entertainment and leisure amenities became integral attractions, and in turn spatial components, of the shopping centre. Woodbine Centre, in Rexdale, Ontario (figure 59), typifies many of the early, modest attempts to introduce entertainment. The dominant attraction at this centre is the 'Fantasy Fair'- an enclosed space with 11 children's rides, including an antique carousel, a ferris wheel, miniature train and boat rides (Rathbun 1986, p. 183). The intention was to target younger families in surrounding, high density developments. The space itself is a compact collection of these amusement rides, considerably more dense than one would expect in places like Disneyland. With a further nod to Disneyland, the 'Fantasy Fair' is surrounded by a streetscape of small

Figure 57.

Rivergate Mall. View of food court (Rathbun 1986, p. 134).

Figure 58.

Woodlands Mall. View of food court with topiary elephant (Retail Reporting 1996, p. 76).

Figure 59.

Woodbine Centre. View of 'Fantasy Fair' (Rathbun 1990).





town, false front buildings, executed at a reduced scale.

Arguably the most famous mall in the world, West Edmonton Mall, in Edmonton, Alberta (figures 60 and 61), takes the concept of entertainment and retail to the extreme, combining the two within a dizzying context of exotic locales ranging from Europe to the Caribbean. Entertainment options, all located within the enclosed shopping centre, include an amusement park (with roller coaster), ice skating rink, miniature golf course, water park with wave pool and submarine rides.

The other notable example is Mall of America, in Bloomington, Minnesota, which features a more modest array of attractions. In addition to the typical carnival rides, this indoor amusement park, called 'Camp Snoopy', features a roller coaster and white water rafting.

Both West Edmonton Mall and Mall of America fully integrate these entertainment amenities into the morphology of the shopping centre. These amenities, like food courts, have replaced the center court as the focus of the shopping centre. In this role, the 'Ice Palace', 'Deep Sea Adventure' and 'Camp Snoopy' has become the new gathering space of the shopping centre, evidence of the trend towards the total commodification the shopping centre; even its gathering and social spaces.

ARCHITECTURE AND IMAGE

During this era of the shopping centre as pleasure dome, the dominant imagery of the ideal city gave way to the attempt to create an explicit connection to either some other place or some other time, as a means to reinvigorate the shopping experience.

Figure 60.

West Edmonton Mall. View of Ice Palace (Mertins 1989, p. 103).

Figure 61.

West Edmonton Mall. View of World Waterpark (Mertins 1989, p. 99).

The Gentrified City

As in previous eras, the city continued to provide imagery for the articulation of spaces in the shopping centre. Likewise, this imagery continued to reference the 'ideal' city, which in this period was found in the redevelopment or gentrification of older urban areas by middle and upper class interests. This gentrification often relied on historicism as a formal and aesthetic means to create and articulate space. In the shopping centre, this vision of the gentrified city would emerge in the form and order of the spaces, the use of certain architectural elements, and the continued appropriation of the arcade or market precedent.

The historical influence of the gentrified city was clearly seen in the ordering and structuring of many of the spaces of the shopping centre. In the example of Valley View (figure 55), a fountain becomes the focal point of the center court through its central placement in a raised, octagon pool, surrounded by a symmetrical pattern of benches, trees and streetlamps. The fountain also terminates an axis and sightline within the overall centre, framed by rows of streetlamps placed along the length of the mall area. The use of these formal principles at this small scale finds a connection with the Beaux-Arts traditions of the City Beautiful movement, in vogue in North America at the beginning of the 20th century. These movements have found a recent expression in the gentrified city, especially in the design of individual outdoor spaces such as streetscapes, squares and parks.

The example of Valley View also illustrates the use of historic elements in the shopping centre. Streetlamps, benches and fountains make direct reference to streets and squares of cities past. In other centres, clocks have been reintroduced into the shopping centre. Represented in an antique style and located in a prominent location, the clock recalls urban and civic spaces and buildings such as churches, city halls, banks, train stations and market buildings (Goss 1993, p. 36). Interestingly, the clock also represents a reintroduction of a sense of time into the shopping centre, begun with the reintroduction of natural light. Like in gentrified areas of cities, the architectural elements chosen for the shopping centre are often reproductions of Victorian prototypes. While in the city the ornate detailing of these elements arguably represents the infusion of wealth that accompanies gentrification, in the suburban shopping centre a similar

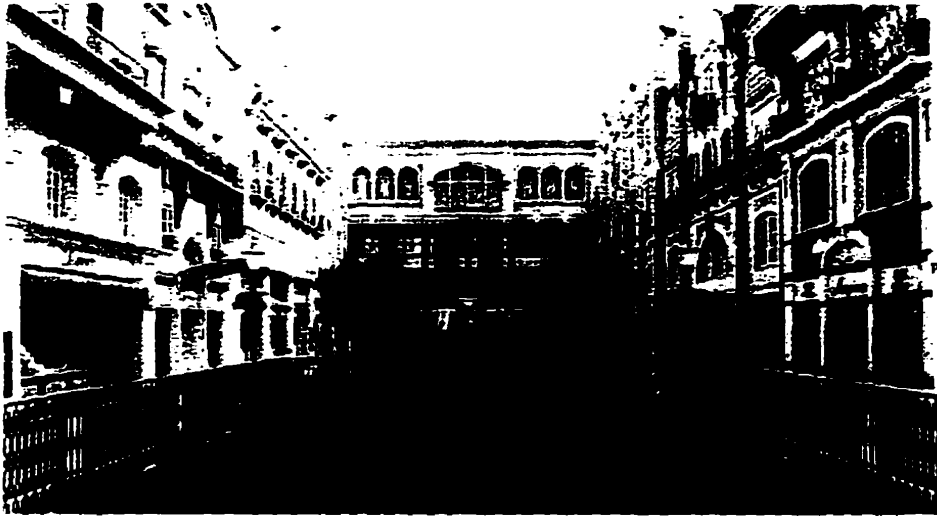
appeal is made to the sophistication and stature of shoppers. Fountains serve as an excellent example. In this period, fountains became ornate and delicate, and more importantly, focal points and objects within space. The size and opulence of the fountain typically conveyed something of the stature and success of the shopping centre. As objects in space, the fountains also became more kinetic, creating noise and movement within the shopping centre (Fisher 1988).

The carousel, an integral attraction of the new entertainment amenities such as the 'Fantasy Fair' at Woodbine Centre (figure 59), represents a similar use of historical reproduction. It was critical to the marketing of the shopping centre (and therefore emphasized in promotional material) that these carousels be restored antiques or exact replicas (Goss 1993, p. 37). The authenticity of the carousel was an integral part of the attraction for baby boomers, appealing both to the sense of nostalgia and the status associated with antiques and reproductions.

In addition to the streetscapes, squares and amusement parks of the gentrified city, the interior spaces of the market and arcade also found expression in the shopping centre of this period. Beginning in the early 1970s with projects such as White Marsh Center (figure 52), this metaphor became the dominant expression in both new and remodeled shopping centres. In remodeled centres, the creation of an arcade-like space often accompanied a massive reconstruction/expansion, along with a parallel shift towards more upscale stores and boutiques. These remodeled centres often bore little resemblance to their former selves.

Some Other Place

Although the city continued to be an important source of shopping centre imagery, the dominant images which were embraced during this period were those of far away and exotic places. This use of imagery was integral to the creation of the entertainment amenities, and was used as a means to pair popular leisure activities with popular, well known destinations to create a meaningful 'simulation'. This use of 'other place' is seen at its extreme in the landscapes of West Edmonton Mall and Mall of America.



The landscapes of West Edmonton Mall directly evoke specific places through careful associations and edited imagery. 'Fantasyland' (with its reduced scale storefronts) alludes to Disneyland, dolphin shows in the 'Deep Sea Adventure' area parallel those at SeaWorld, the 'Pebble Beach' Miniature Golf course evokes the original, and the 'World Water Park' (figure 61), in typical mall fashion, emulates a Caribbean getaway.

Of particular interest is the re-creation of historic streets within the landscapes of West Edmonton Mall. In one location, 'Europa Boulevard' emulates a European street in the manner of the Galleria in Milan (figure 62). A reduced scale streetscape houses upscale tenants selling expensive fashions and accessories.

Similarly, one of the restaurant areas at West Edmonton Mall parades as Bourbon Street, the famous New Orleans landmark. The space is kept dark, ostensibly to draw a clear connection to the popular images of this street and its famous nightlife, and in particular, its annual Mardi Gras celebrations. The darkness of the space also minimizes the compression of the space and the reduced scale of the storefronts. While 'Bourbon Street' at West Edmonton Mall captures the flavor of the original, rarely does the space attain the kind of activity and vitality of the original. The more illicit activities associated with the original have been removed, and replaced with sculptures of a drunken men and 'ladies of the night'. Ironically, the first 'Hooter's' restaurant and bar in Edmonton, featuring well endowed and scantily-clad waitresses, has opened in 'Bourbon Street.'

Figure 62.

West Edmonton Mall. View of Europa Boulevard (Davis 1991, p. 3).



Not only do the spaces of West Edmonton Mall evoke different locales, but they evoke different times. A replica of the Santa Maria (figure 63) is the centerpiece of the 'Deep Sea Adventure', and alludes to the discovery of the new world. A series of fountains recall French Renaissance gardens, and (replica) crown jewels and Ming vases represent monarchies and dynasties of past generations.

Davis (1991) correctly observes that these spaces evoked either explicitly or implicitly in West Edmonton Mall correspond to ideal vacation and tourist destinations, as shaped within mass culture through television, film and other media (Hopkins 1990, p. 11). While the editing required to adapt these places to the mall often results in oversimplification and banality, the simulation itself is often part of the attraction (Hopkins 1990, p. 13). Furthermore, in environments such as West Edmonton Mall, the individual experiences were not as important as the overall diversity of experiences and activities (Hopkins 1990 p. 10).

While West Edmonton Mall presents a more international range of ideal vacation destinations and activities, the Mall of America creates in its 'Camp Snoopy' amusement park attraction (figure 64) a distinctly American set of images. 'Camp Snoopy', the Minnesotan outpost of California's famous Knott's Berry Farm, features traditional carnival rides, a roller coaster and white water rafting. Within the heavily forested landscape of this space, a direct connection is made to the original Knott's Berry Farm and its Mediterranean landscape. The connection to California, perhaps

Figure 63.

West Edmonton Mall. View of Deep Sea Adventure (Hopkins 1990, p. 6).

Figure 64.

Mall of America. View of Camp Snoopy (Photo by the author).

the most utopian American landscape, is strengthened through the creation of townscapes of false front, 'wild west' buildings.

Interestingly, in the examples of West Edmonton Mall and Mall of America there is little connection to the respective contexts of Alberta and Minnesota. While the Edmonton Oilers often practice at West Edmonton Mall, the only direct connection to the place is through a lone sculpture—Robin Bell's *Running In*, depicting three generations of men capping an oil well—representing the history and development of the area (Davis 1991, p. 5). At Mall of America, 'Camp Snoopy' is promoted as a replica of Minnesota's northern forests (Guterson 1993, p. 55). Subtropical rather than boreal, the only connection to the 'north woods' is the white water rafting ride, which is promoted as the St. Croix River of Minnesota, and features a human-scale Paul Bunyan statue greeting those on the ride.

A Sense of Place

In spite of the prevalence of imagery of 'other place', many shopping centres during this period did attempt to create a connection to their specific contexts. Like in previous examples, explicit and popular imagery would be appropriated to draw this connection. Villa Linda Mall, in Santa Fe, New Mexico (figure 65), creates this sense of place through materials such as timbers and colored tiles, earth-tone finishes, indigenous weavings and terra cotta pots. Most importantly, and unlike previous examples, Villa Linda Mall introduces more explicit architectural styles and open space types into the interior shopping centre. Surrounded by mall areas executed as colonnades, the center court rather successfully emulates an open-air courtyard, through the use of trees and the abundance of natural light.

This period also saw the use of environmental graphics as a means to make a reference to the specific locale. In The Town Center at Boca Raton, Florida, this connection to place was achieved through the motif of the palm tree, repeated as an architectural and graphic element (Fisher 1988). In other shopping centres, a more ironic sense of place has been created by using imagery of buildings and landscapes that once stood on the site of the centre or in the immediate vicinity. These images adorn banners that hang throughout the shopping centre (Rathbun 1990).



Typically, these graphic elements and images (and the places and histories they represent) became synonymous with the image of the shopping centre, and used in marketing and promotional literature, advertisements and shopping bags.

The Lure of Nostalgia

During this period, imagery would also emerge in the shopping centre that tapped into the postmodern desire for nostalgia. Reflecting the rise of the family and traditional values typical of an earlier, simpler time (Ellin 1996), this nostalgic imagery was targeted at baby boomers, to evoke fond memories of childhood and family (Goss 1993).

At Woodbine Centre (figure 60) the small town streetscape evokes 'Main Street U.S.A.' at Disneyland, along with all of its meanings and intentions. The streetscape clearly makes reference to the past, and the security, simplicity and normalcy of small town life. The reduced size of the storefronts, like Disneyland, correspond to a child's sense of scale, and for adults create a toy-like charm (Kunstler 1993, p. 220). At Woodbine Centre, the reduced scale streetscape finds a convenient compliment in the tropical fig trees.

Figure 65.

Villa Linda Mall. View of center court (Rathbun 1986, p. 67).



The carousel, an important ride at Woodbine Centre and other shopping centres, became a dominant symbol of this nostalgic manipulation. While on one hand the carousel had value as an antique or a reproduction, on the other hand it simply represented the lost innocence of youth and old-fashioned fun (Goss 1993, p. 37). As mentioned previously, the carousel (and its authenticity) became a dominant element of the marketing of the centre. At more than one shopping centre, entire court spaces would be themed around the carousel (figure 66).

Local history is remembered at Penn Square Mall, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where the metaphor of the Victorian arcade attempts to recall a turn of the century amusement park that once existed adjacent to the site (Rathbun 1986, p. 174). A similar connection, nostalgic and arguably superficial, is drawn through the name given to the food court: 'Picnic Square'. The evocation of this outdoor, family experience may help to naturalize and legitimize the shopping experience, but does nothing to counteract the hustle and bustle of the indoor food court.

This era of the pleasure dome represents the first major rethinking of the accepted retail formulas of the shopping centre, in response to larger contextual shifts threatening its economic viability. The reconfiguration of the center court and the addition of food courts, theatres and entertainment amenities was a means to attract shoppers back to the shopping centre.

Figure 66.

Myrtle Square Mall. View of Carousel Court. This food court is created in the image of the carnival; the strip of shops and food vendors visible at left evoke a midway (Rathbun 1986, p. 83).

More than ever before, the architecture and imagery of the shopping centre was critical to this attraction. Complex simulations of other places and other times, especially childhood, catered directly to needs and desires of shoppers, providing 'escape' from the pressures of postmodern life. In spite of their impressive economic success, even during the recession of the early 1990s, the construction of new 'mega-malls' would be halted by a continued economic downturn. The shopping centre would once again reinvent itself, focusing more on its community connections. In time, however, entertainment and leisure amenities would be reintroduced into the shopping centre, in its future incarnation known as the urban entertainment centre.

Chapter 7

CONTEMPORARY CENTRES

This current period of development, beginning in the mid- to late-1980's, is characterized by a vast divergence from existing shopping centre models. On one hand, the success of themed environments such as West Edmonton Mall and Mall of America led to the development of what would become known as the urban entertainment centre. On the other hand, increased competition forced traditional centres to restructure and tailor themselves towards a greater community orientation.

The dominant spatial trend shared by these two diverging lines of evolution is the return to, and increased emphasis on, open space and landscape. The return to open space was seen as a means to reinvigorate existing and tired malls, and to respond to a quickly emerging paradigm for suburban development, known as New Urbanism.

CONCEPT

Like previous models, the conception of the contemporary shopping centre was a careful reflection and adaptation of the times. While the shopping centre would continue to evolve along with social and economic changes, the biggest impact was an initiative by architects and planners, known as New Urbanism. This movement, paralleling the social movement of new traditionalism (Ellin 1996), has swept across North America. These movements advocate the creation of dense, mixed used communities, often modeled on the traditional American town, and fostering a renewed sense of community and civic life.

A number of sociocultural trends and shifts in society have emerged as important factors in the current evolution of the shopping centre. Generally, the population is getting older, more women have entered the workforce, and the demands of the family have meant that people have less and less leisure time (Langdon 1994).

The rise of 'family values' is another trend representative of the larger postmodern embrace of the new traditionalist movement. This movement stresses a return to traditional values and ethics, the importance of the family and the embrace of a simpler lifestyle (Ellin 1996). A similar lifestyle shift is the embrace of city life. This interest has manifested itself in the emergence of the coffee house, the sidewalk cafe, the bookshop and the market, all in suburbia. Other relevant societal shifts include a heightened awareness of environmental and ecological concerns, paralleling an interest in sustainability, and increased accessibility to information, in the form of the World Wide Web.

Changes in the economy, excessive competition from existing malls and other forms of retail have favored redevelopment over new development. A general economic slowdown in the late 1980's coupled with recession in the 1990's would leave consumers with less disposable income, and reveal the weaknesses of the shopping mall industry (Wickens 1992). Bankruptcies, store closures, mergers, overbuilding and competition from other retail have all led to the rethinking of existing centres, their tenant 'mix,' and their atmosphere (Green 1991, p. 16-17, Goldberger 1992, p. 20, Lassar 1995, p. 14). Competition from other forms of retail has been significant. In addition to traditional catalogue shopping, the big box, power center and factory outlet have appealed to the value driven consumer, whereas home television shopping, as well as shopping via the World Wide Web offer the appeal of convenience.

Perhaps the greatest factor in the reconception of the contemporary shopping mall has been the recognition of its impacts on the environment and ecology of the region. This realization has found a timely parallel with the gradual rise of the New Urbanism movement, which among other things attempts to ameliorate this reality and offer a new vision for suburban development. By this time, the environmental and ecological impacts of the 'accidental city' of strip malls, roadside franchises and regional shopping malls was clearly understood, the problem articulated by designers and planners (Calthorpe 1983, Barnett 1982). The patterns of land use, supported by established retail formulas, necessitated excessive and unnecessary amounts of parking, wasting valuable lands. This sprawling landscape supported further automobile use, and discouraged the implementation of public transportation. Finally, the pollution of runoff

due to the vast areas of impervious parking would wreak havoc on the ecological functioning of the region.

As a paradigm for new suburban development, the New Urbanism espouses compact developments which encourage walking and integrate living, shopping and working. The movement embraces the traditional American town, and its form and structure, as the inspiration for this new development. New Urbanism often borrows from this traditional town its architectural imagery, in order to satisfy the postmodern need for both nostalgia and a sense of community (Ellin 1996).

While the principles of New Urbanism have in the past found use mainly in residential developments, the principles have been applied to the design of commercial landscapes. The street is one of the dominant elements of New Urbanism, connecting “individuals to civic ideals and public responsibilities (Langdon 1994, p. 123);” it is the street that finds expression in many of the current projects surveyed.

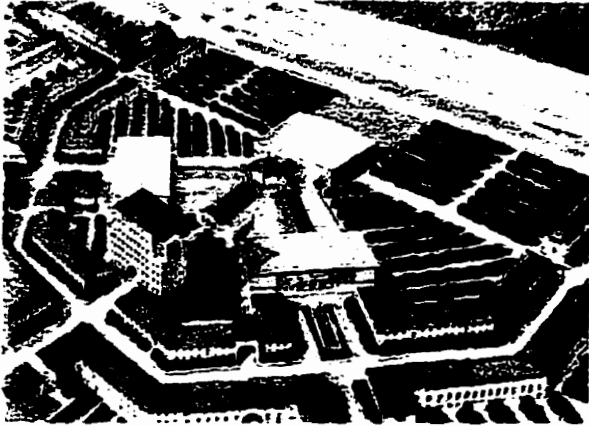
DIVERGING TYPES

As a result of the increasing complexities and changes in this current period of development, a number of different concepts of the shopping mall have emerged.

Existing Malls

During this period, existing shopping centres have often become targets for revitalization. This redevelopment has ranged from simple aesthetic upgrades to the addition of new functions. These new functions may include the more typical, including food courts, movie theatres, as well as the less expected. Economic necessities have forced many malls to accept non-traditional tenants, ranging from post offices to schools to art galleries.

In terms of open space, the redevelopment of existing shopping centres has focused some attention on the exterior environment; however, this attention has generally been limited to the creation of open spaces at entrance areas.



The Town Centre

Another conception of the contemporary shopping mall is that of town centre. This particular concept has emerged as a result of economic and social concerns articulated by the New Urbanists. In its ultimate state, the shopping centre formally becomes the heart of the suburban community of which it is part. The creation of the town centre entails the integration of the shopping centre through networks of streets and open spaces (figure 67) and the addition of enough different kinds of uses to create a synergy typical of a Main Street (Thomas 1994, p. 24). In the hands of the New Urbanists, the conception of the shopping centre as a town centre entails the adoption of historical imagery, architecture and open space precedents. In rare cases, previous commercial types such as the shopping village can provide appropriate precedent for new development (figure 68). An integral component of this town centre concept is the experience of city life. This is already being evidenced in the rise of the coffee house, sidewalk cafe, bookstore and market in suburban shopping centres.

Figure 67.

Avalon Park, Florida. Aerial view of proposed town center incorporating a regional mail (Krieger 1991, p. 93).

Figure 68.

Mashpee Commons. View of proposed shopping court (Katz 1994, p. 71).

The Urban Entertainment Centre

An alternative vision of the shopping centre, and one evolving naturally out of precedents such as West Edmonton Mall and Mall of America, is that of the urban entertainment center (although ironically these centers are rarely located in urban areas). These centers have emerged in response to



the decrease in leisure time and the increase in demand for entertainment, made possible by technological advances such as virtual reality.

In the urban entertainment center, retail begins to be subsumed by entertainment and leisure amenities such as cinemas, IMAX theatres, restaurants, nightclubs, arcades. Open space is a critical component of the urban entertainment centre, contributing to the particular image or concept of the centre (figure 68). Instead of the 'hard' technology of rides and other attractions at early precedents, such as West Edmonton Mall, the urban entertainment centre uses 'soft' electronic and virtual reality technology. At the urban entertainment centre, one can ski downhill without ever going outside.

Figure 69.

Irvine Entertainment Center.
Aerial view (Mays 1996, p. 98).

Figure 70.

The Citadel, View of interior
court (Freeway Landmark
1988, p. 65).

(Sub)urban Revitalization

An interesting yet uncommon direction of shopping centre development is that which might be called '(sub)urban revitalization'. This trend is characterized by the conversion of derelict lands and buildings, often industrial, into shopping realms. The Citadel, in City of Commerce, California (figure 70), illustrates the conversion of a former tire factory into a factory outlet mall. In redevelopment projects such as this the potential exists to maintain and reinterpret the previous industrial nature of the site, to create a meaningful connection to place.

SPACES

An integral component of the emerging vision of the contemporary shopping centre is the return of outdoor space. In this contemporary period considerable experimentation and innovation has resulted in a plethora of open space examples, ranging from the streetscape to the plaza to the courtyard. The concern for the quality of environments within the commercial landscape has even extended to the parking lot.

While the contemporary shopping centre would see significant changes in its exterior environment, few changes would be seen in interior spaces. While spaces such as center courts and malls might become more elaborate the general decor would become more restrained and less gaudy (Green 1991, p. 17). New finishes and graphics would keep older-style centers 'fresh', and at the same time, develop some kind of theme, important to the image and attraction of the shopping centre (Thomas, in Fennell 1995, p. 31).

Streetscapes

One of the fundamental elements of urban design, the street, is being reintroduced to the contemporary shopping centre. In its new context, however, the street and streetscape is evolving from a simple functional conduit into a landscape of amenity, activity and commerce.

In existing shopping centres, transforming blank walls and parking lots into streetscapes is part of the larger attempt to increase pedestrian activity in the vicinity. Rather than a series of windows or display cases, the new streetscape fosters meaningful and diverse urban activity. The prospect of the streetscape defies several of the accepted 'rules' of malls, notably the concentration of shopping activity in the central, enclosed mall. Likewise, developers are hesitant to accept this new approach (Lassar 1995, p. 17).

Community-based centers and power center/big box retail developments have implemented the streetscape to their economic advantage. In the example of Piazza Carmel, in Carmel, California (figures 71 and 72), a streetscape is 'pasted' onto a blank wall of a supermarket. The result is a considerably more pleasant (and comfortably scaled) space. An outdoor



food court area is an element within this streetscape that, along with a dominant piece of sculpture, provides an amenity and attraction for shoppers and nearby residents. The more local example of Oliver Square, in Edmonton, Alberta (figure 73), features a similar facade that, along with an outdoor sidewalk cafe, masks a multi-tenant power center.

These streetscapes tend to operate on a number of levels. Beyond the simply functional, these streetscapes can offer amenities to shoppers, the possibility of social interaction, and as well, the opportunity for commerce. As landscaped spaces, complete with benches, these new streetscapes create not only pleasantly scaled spaces, but in master planned communities, communicate something about the tastes and expectations of the adjacent residents. As postmodern spaces, these streetscapes combine socializing and consumption in the form of the sidewalk cafe, the coffeehouse, and also the farmer's market. The space begins to evoke more urban realms, and the space becomes part of an overall experience that is ultimately consumed by shoppers.

Forecourts, Plazas, Commons

Another dominant trend in the creation of open spaces in the contemporary shopping centre is the introduction and transformation of existing open space types, including the forecourt, plaza and common. Like

Figure 71.

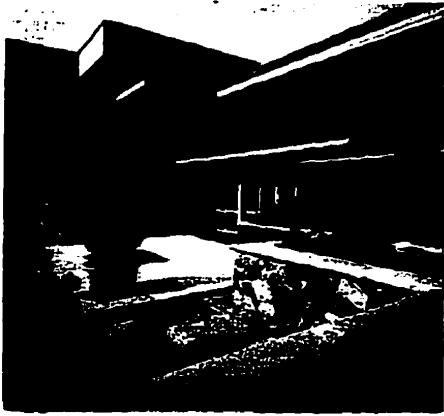
Piazza Carmel. View of plaza (Sutro 1992, p. 59).

Figure 72.

Piazza Carmel. View of streetscape (Sutro 1992, p. 59).

Figure 73.

Oliver Square. View of streetscape (Photo by the author).



the streetscape, these spaces mediate the building/ parking lot boundary. However, unlike the streetscape, these open spaces are considerably more concentrated, providing more economic potentials for developers while being easily integrated into existing shopping centres. Therefore, more examples exist, and they reveal a great diversity of function.

These outdoor spaces grew out of very simple attempts to enlarge and improve the entrance areas of shopping centres (figure 74). In some cases these spaces offer new retail opportunities, i.e. sidewalk cafes, and other times they provide relief from the bustle of the shopping centre.

The creation of new open space can combine the extension of mall space and function with new amenities to create significant spaces for a variety of activities. At the Crossroads of San Antonio, in San Antonio, Texas (figure 75), an older mall was upgraded and a large outdoor plaza added. This space functions as both forecourt, gathering area, informal seating area and outdoor cafe. The sizable water feature creates an impressive amenity, and along with soft landscaping and terracing, provides an appropriate mitigation of the parking/ building interface. It is intended that this space is intended to at some later date become the focus of mixed-use infill.

The local example of Polo Park Shopping Centre, in Winnipeg (figure 76), creates an open space similar to that of The Crossroads, which although more modest, illustrates the potential to better connect to the surrounding suburban context. The outdoor plaza of Polo Park not only creates a pleasant open space amenity, but represents a key component in the formal structure of the site plan, which continues the axis of the internal mall through both a transit mall and a pedestrian connection to the major east-west artery.

Figure 74.

Bridgewater Commons. View of entrance (Rathbun 1986, p. 21).

Figure 75.

Crossroads of San Antonio (Fisher 1988, p. 97).



A more substantial integration of these new open spaces into the life and fabric of the suburb can be seen in the proposal for Kentlands, a residential development in Gaithersburg, Maryland (figure 77). In this plan by Andres Duany & Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, a traditional village green is incorporated as a mitigating device between the more regional and the local commercial orientations of the mall. In this permutation, the green can accommodate a wide variety of activities. However, it is ostensible that the inclusion of the green also has considerable symbolic function, a means to help foster a sense of community and tradition important to the New Traditionalists.

The formal potential of the new entrance forecourt/open space can be taken to the extreme, as in the example of Northpark Center (figure 78). This forecourt creates a passive rather than active space, providing an alternative to the bustle of the mall, rather than a further extension of it. The other function of this forecourt appears to be symbolic, communicating clear expectations of the lavish atmosphere that awaits shoppers inside.

Figure 76.

Polo Park. View of entrance and transit mall (Photo by the author).

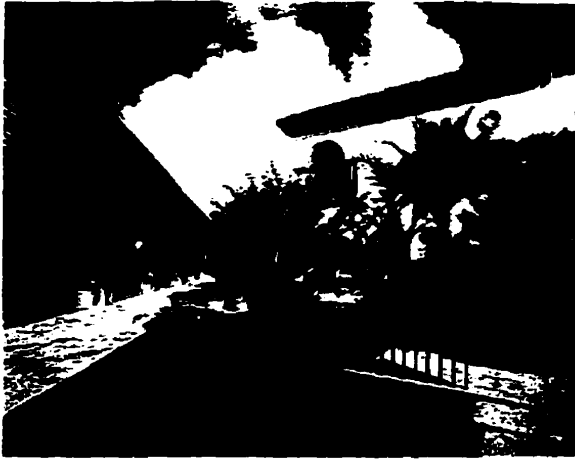
Figure 77.

Kentlands. View of square. Regional shopping centre visible at center (Krieger 1991, p. 34).

Figure 78.

Northpark. View of entrance (Rathbun 1990).





Courtyards

Another, though less common form of open space emerging in the contemporary shopping centre is the courtyard. Because of their architectural character, courtyards offer the potential to break up existing building mass and insert open space *into* the existing shopping centre. The revitalization of Fashion Island, in Newport Beach, California (figure 79), provides new courtyards in addition to paseos and arcades (Pearson 1990). The courtyards in this example create considerable amenity to shoppers, through the use of landscaping and water features. In addition, internalized courtyards such as in this example afford developers the ability to maximize pedestrian traffic while controlling the use of the space.

As an innovative solution to the loss of an department store anchor, at Inner Circle, in Stanford, California (figure 80), this empty space was converted into a series of smaller stores surrounding a pleasant, intimately scaled outdoor courtyard (Fisher 1988). In this example, like Fashion Island, the courtyard is conceived in a Mediterranean style. Given the location of both of these projects in California, the reliance on this open space type and architectural imagery creates an appropriate sense of place, as well as an engaging, high quality pedestrian environment.

Figure 79.

Fashion Island. View of courtyard (Pearson 1990, p. 98).

Figure 80.

Inner Circle. View of courtyard (Fisher 1988, p. 99).

Pedestrian Connections

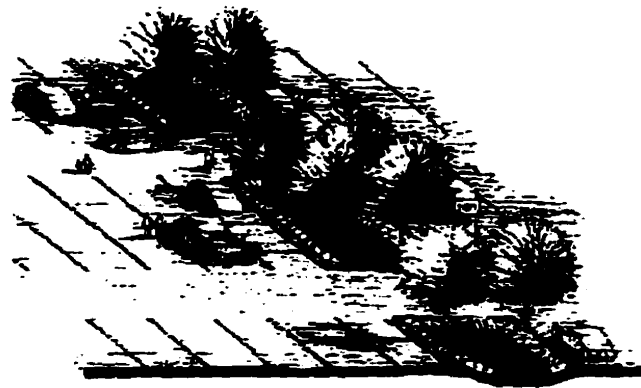
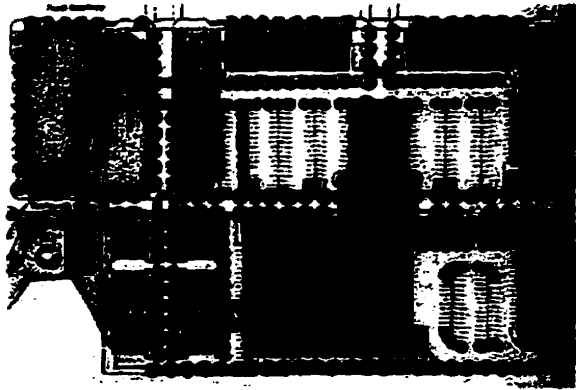
In contemporary shopping centre development, pedestrian connections are seen as a means to create a stronger link to adjacent communities, while at the same time providing alternatives to automobile use. In the example of Piazza Carmel (figures 71 and 72), these connections draw people through the parking lot to the streetscape and outdoor food court. At Polo Park (figure 76), this pedestrian connection begins to evolve into a space on its own as it integrates with the transit mall. The example of Polo Park also illustrates that these pedestrian spaces need not be simply functional—this particular pedestrian connection assumes the ‘gentrified streetscape’ of the interior mall, expressed through the use of trees and decorative streetlamps.

The Potential of the Parking Lot

In a number of recent projects both built and unbuilt, there is seen a recognition of the various potentials of the parking lot. Looking beyond while accommodating its functional purpose, planners and designers are recognizing the potential of the parking lot to host temporary gatherings, as well as the need for the parking lot to address and mitigate its adverse impacts on environmental and ecological systems.

In a proposal for the Boulder Town Center in Colorado (figure 81), Peter Calthorpe inverts the typical pattern of building surrounded by parking. Instead of a featureless, scaleless landscape, the parking lot assumes a sense of scale and enclosure, and in turn a certain urban quality. The importance of the parking lot as a space is reinforced by the formal treatment of a pedestrian axis across the lot, articulated with trees and unique paving. Perhaps most importantly, the space itself is envisioned for community use, i.e. a farmer’s market, during non-peak times of use.

Shopping centre owners are now beginning to address the impacts of their developments on environmental and ecological systems. In a recent expansion of Westfarms Mall, in Farmington, Connecticut, areas designated as overflow parking areas (in use during peak times and holiday seasons) were designed as grass areas, rather than the typical asphalt surface



(Thompson 1996 , p. 60). A recent study for a prototype store for Wal-Mart included proposals to reduce the impacts of stormwater runoff and pollution within the parking lot. The proposal by Bill Wenk (figure 82) featured a pattern of vegetated swales throughout the parking lot to capture, purify stormwater runoff from the site while providing the potential to irrigate landscape improvements (Roberts 1994, p. 59).

Figure 81.

Boulder Town Center. Site plan (Landecker 1996, p. 76).

Figure 82.

Proposal for Wal-Mart (Roberts 1994, p. 59).

ARCHITECTURE AND IMAGE

In spite of the variety of open spaces emerging in this period of contemporary shopping centre development, for the most part these new spaces would be executed in what are by now recurring themes- open spaces would echo the current vision of the ideal city, evoke other places or create a specific connection to the place. The freedom from the constraints of interior space and the corresponding shift to outdoor space offered the potential to sample from a wider range of precedents, and to create more 'authentic' representations of spaces and places, such as streets and plazas, exterior by their very nature. In addition to these familiar themes, this current era of development also sees the rise of more personal, artistic approach to the design of these open spaces.

Collage City

As in previous eras, the contemporary city continues to be the dominant source of imagery for the shopping centre. While the contemporary city



often adopts a historical stance, the dominant mode of this expression is collage. Whether historical, industrial or exotic, this period of urban architecture relies on 'facadism', loosely defined as the reliance on 2-dimensional facades, and their subsequent collage to create a sense of history and vitality (Choay, in Ellin 1996, p. 143).

In their re-creation of urban streets and squares, many shopping centres have adopted the architectural styles now typical of urban marketplaces. In drawings for the redevelopment of Square One Shopping Centre, in Mississauga, Ontario (figure 83), the streetscape closely resembles that of the urban marketplace, utilizing a collage of different facades interspersed with vaulted gathering spaces executed in an industrial aesthetic. In this and other examples, the visual complexity of the project lends a sense of activity, diversity and dynamism to the space, and implies an additive, urban history rather than an instantaneous, speculative development.

The collage of urban fragments known as facadism finds a literal- and extreme- expression in 'hyperreal' environments such as City Walk, at Universal Studios, California (figure 84). Defined as a heightened and idealized simulation of an original reality to a point at which the two dissolve (Thayer 1994), hyperreality is evidenced at City Walk in the 3-dimensional collage of buildings, neon signs and other urban elements, carefully orchestrated and deliberately juxtaposed to create a sense of energy and vitality. This vitality is simply visual; the everyday, mundane and illicit activities of true city life have been excluded from this carefully controlled, private space.

Figure 83.

Square One Redevelopment.
Conceptual drawing (Dennis,
1990, p. 31).

Figure 84.

City Walk. Nighttime view
(Shillingburg 1994, p. 87).



Historicism

Historical building and open space types also account for a considerable proportion of shopping centre imagery. Typically quoting buildings and open spaces of cities and small towns, historical imagery is critical to much of the new urbanist development, attempting to foster a sense of community for its inhabitants. This is seen in the plan for the Kentlands (figure 77), in which a traditional village green is utilized as a mitigative measure between the regional mall and the local community. As previously suggested, this space appears to carry significant symbolic weight, although one may only speculate on the range of meanings. While the green is ostensibly intended to foster a sense of community, it might also unintentionally represent the material values of this community, or on the other hand, the attempt to counteract this culture of consumption.

In a less ambiguous example, building types and imagery of the small town is used in the redevelopment of Mashpee Commons, in Mashpee, Massachusetts (figure 85). Stores and services, with offices and apartments above, line a network of streets laid out over what was previously a regional strip centre.

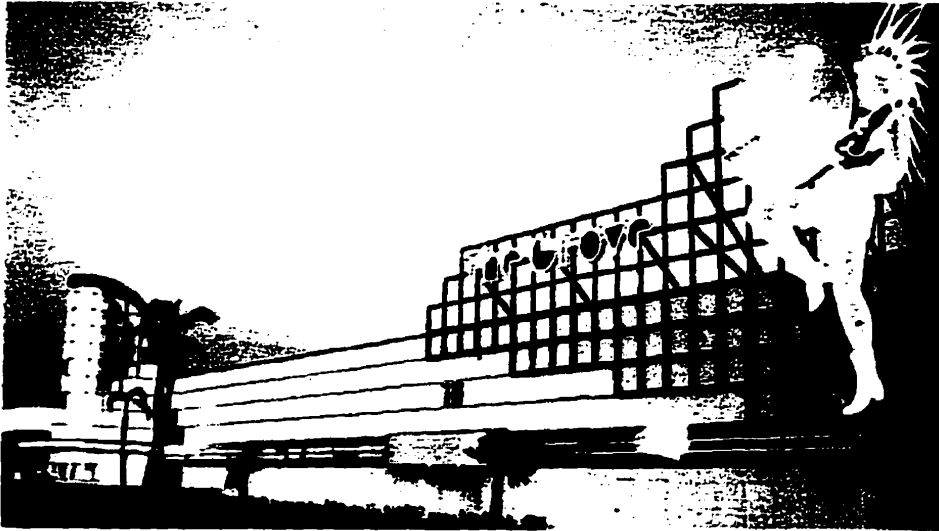
Other building types of civic importance offer the potential to create a sense of history in new commercial and residential developments. In the example of Sully Station Shopping Center, in Centreville, Virginia (figure 86), the principal grocery store anchor is created in the image of a train station (Rathbun 1990, p. 58). The use of this reference creates a connection to the railway suburbs of a previous era, the train station representing both the heart and the 'front door' of this suburban community. The creation of

Figure 85.

Mashpee Commons. View of street (Rathbun 1990, p. 27).

Figure 86.

Sully Station. View of grocery store (Rathbun 1990, p. 60).



this artificial history unintentionally mimics initiatives elsewhere, in which derelict and abandoned station buildings are being preserved and adapted to new uses.

The Marketplace at the Grove, in San Diego, California (figure 87), provides an example of the use of more recent, and arguably more appropriate imagery for the shopping centre- that of earlier shopping centre precedents. In this example, the designers utilized streamline deco imagery popular in the 1930's to compliment a rejuvenated piece of neon art from the original centre (Rathbun 1990, p. 193). The completed centre captures a piece of shopping centre history, and draws a connection to the popular culture and history of its suburban context.

Two examples of shopping centres in rural Alberta provide an interesting comparison in the use of both historic and regional imagery in an attempt to create a connection to place. A recently built strip centre in Bragg Creek, Alberta (figure 88), recalls local history through the use of a 'false front' building typology common to this region. The development departs from the typical use of western imagery in theme parks, and creates a 'townscape' of exceptionally high architectural detailing and resolution. Featuring upscale boutiques and a coffee house, this centre has housing on upper floors, as well as balconies for public use.

The false front buildings are further connected to their Foothills context through a landscape treatment of indigenous plant material creating a buffer between the parking area and the storefront/ wooden sidewalk.

Figure 87.

Marketplace at the Grove.
View of facade. Rehabilitated
neon sign visible at right
(Rathbun 1990, p. 194).



Furthermore, the unpaved parking lot not only creates less of an impact, but also completes the allusion to a previous time.

The Village at Pigeon Lake, south of Edmonton, attempts to create a similar sense of place through historic imagery, although in this instance the imagery is considerably more generic. The village centre consists of two blocks of commercial development straddling parking and a small landscaped area. One block, a grocery store, recalls the form of the original general store, which once stood in the area. The other block (figure 89), is executed in a complex aggregation of facades and rooflines which masks a simple rectangular footprint. This more rural example of facadism evokes, perhaps unintentionally, currently popular folk art, featuring 2 dimensional, flat representations of rolling, bucolic landscapes. The connection to this 'folk art', ironically now mass produced and for sale in this very strip centre, is strengthened through the landscape of this central area. In a compressed and foreshortened manner, hillocks and creek beds are squeezed into this tiny space (cleared from forest), and planted with randomly located trees. Interestingly, the bucolic expression of this village centre is representative of the dominant landscaping style of cottages that surround this centre, and by extension, reflect the lack of appreciation for the native landscape prevalent in this area.

A Sense of Place

A trend continuing during this contemporary era was the use of imagery to create a sense of place in commercial developments. Like in previous examples, this connection would be created primarily through the use of

Figure 88.

Strip Centre, Bragg Creek.
View (Photo by the author).

Figure 89.

The Village at Pigeon Lake.
View of store block. Central landscaped 'square' visible at left (Photo by the author).



building types and architectural styles typical, but not necessarily indigenous, to the particular area.

At Terra Vista Village, in Rancho Cucamonga, California (figure 90), Spanish colonial architecture was chosen for this centre of a new residential development. Of interest in this example is the particular use of the colonnade- ostensibly to create a comfortable, shaded environment for shoppers, but also, to mitigate the building/parking interface. To this end, a substantial buffer area has been introduced, executed in hard surfaces with shade trees and low walls, offering the potential for seating.

Irvine Entertainment Center (figure 69) stretches the connection to place by inserting into the semi-arid landscape of southern California images of desert regions of North Africa. The architecture and urban pattern of this development is intended to evoke images of a Bedouin city and marketplace (Mays 1996). The extensive use of trees creates an image of an oasis, which in the context of suburbia might be both appropriate and ironic. In this example, like most urban entertainment centres, the theme is critical to the image of the centre, and therefore finds expression within the project at several different levels. Fountains in the shape of frogs offer an explicit and whimsical compliment to this imagery, while in much more subtle and implicit fashion, patterns of paving stones evoke the shifting sands and dunes of the desert.

Figure 90.

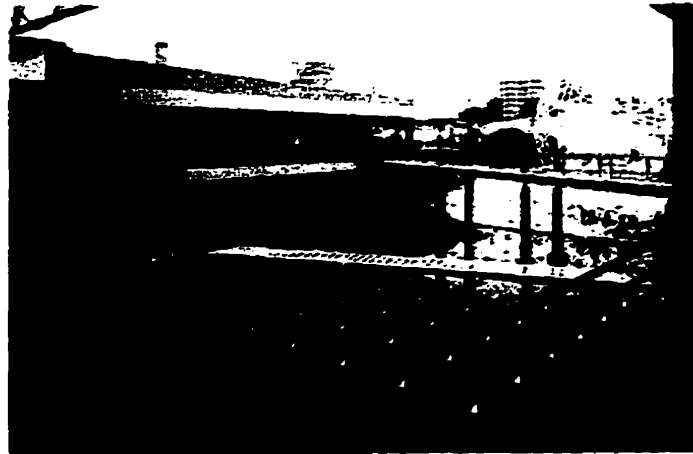
Terra Vista Village. View of colonnade and streetscape (Rathbun 1990, p. 183).

The Artistic

One of the more interesting developments in the articulation of the spaces of the shopping centre is the embrace of a more personal and artistic approach to design. Two examples by landscape architect Martha Schwartz illustrate this aesthetic approach, which still offers the designer the potential to embed into the spaces various meanings and intentions.

The Citadel (figure 70) combines a sense of place and time with this more personal, artistic approach. The sawtooth shapes of the rooflines and the use of industrial structures recalls the original function of the site as a tire factory. A stylized oil derrick recalls similar industrial activity in the area. Furthermore, the unique Assyrian detailing of this original building, which was retained in this redevelopment, finds expression throughout the development (Freeway Landmark 1991). Paired with this architectural expression is the creation of public spaces by Martha Schwartz. Of particular note is the 'Grand Allee', marking the transition from the parking lot into the centre (figure 91). The grid of palm trees is paired with a checker pattern of ground textures, lending a minimalist quality to the space. The only other element within this lean palette is the use of concrete 'tires' to protect the trees from cars, making a further connection to the site and its history. Also of note is the way in which this space functions- designed for both cars and people, the patterns of palms clearly delineate where each belongs, ensuring a smooth integration.

The Rio Retail Center (figure 92), also by Schwartz, represents an equally personal approach to the design of commercial space. In this example, rather than imagery connecting the development to the site, imagery is chosen which makes reference to shopping and our larger consumer culture. Combining a typically minimal palette with an interest in seriality and pattern, a grid of frogs is laid over the site, focused on a large space frame covered with vines. The juxtaposition of other synthetic elements complimented by the use of bright colors gives the space a certain surreal quality, paying homage to and subtly questioning our consumer culture. Interestingly, these two examples of open spaces, completed by an internationally well known designer, suggest a future direction of the



shopping centre, in which these 'signature' spaces, like the artwork and sculpture of the 1950s and 60s, become indicators of the stature of the centre.

This period of contemporary development represents the second major reconception of the shopping centre. More fundamental than the drive to include entertainment in the 1980s, the current shopping centre evolved in a number of directions and assumed a number of forms. These various incarnations shared in common a reintroduction of outdoor gathering space, either as a means to foster a stronger connection to adjacent communities or simply to expand retail opportunities. Interestingly, outdoor spaces in the 1990s are considerably more grandiose and elaborate than open spaces in the first open-air malls of the 1950s. Likewise, in this current period the concern for the quality of the exterior environment results in a broader range of new spaces, and the consideration of some, like the parking lot, like never before.

While the addition of any outdoor spaces within the shopping centre should be seen as an improvement over previous models, there is a lack of analysis of the successes and failures of these new spaces. Certainly, these spaces reflect the lessons learned in previous eras with interior malls and courts, and provide seating opportunities, plantings, fountains and other amenities deemed necessary to create sociable places (Whyte 1988). However, the spaces are conceived as extensions of interior malls and courts, so not only do they have an implicit retail function, but the activity corresponds to the hours of shopping centre operation, and the fact remains that they are still private spaces, subject to control by shopping centre management. These concerns should be particularly important to shopping

Figure 91.

The Citadel. View of 'Grand Allee' (Freeway Landmark 1991, p. 66).

Figure 92.

Rio Retail Center. View of court (Boles 1988, p. 64)

centres, that as a result of downsizing and restructuring, are positioning themselves as community centres.

The shift towards a community focus, is becoming a dominant trend in shopping centre development and redevelopment. Interestingly, this drive by developers has found an interesting if odd bedfellow in municipal governments, who have identified the shopping centre as a meaningful locus of suburban redevelopment. In this fusion of commerce and community one finds the roots of the future shopping centre.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION: A REAL FUTURE

As a means of conclusion, the final chapter of this study explores the future form of the shopping centre, along with the corresponding developments in landscape and open space. This future exploration is predicated on the belief that the shopping centre will continue to be a locus of contemporary life, evidenced by its continued growth and assimilation of other realms- first downtowns, then airports, cruiseships and now cyberspace.

Speculations on the future shopping centre are grounded in the careful consideration of its past evolution and the identification of trends that have emerged and shaped its changing concept during this period. Firstly, the history of the shopping centre reveals a number of trends that have found consistent expression, such as the emulation of an 'ideal' city and the re-creation of exotic and far away realms. While the persistence of these trends may represent needs and desires deeply engrained in society and arguably beyond the scope of this study, these trends will undoubtedly continue to shape future centres. Secondly, this history reveals the flexibility of the shopping centre to appropriate and adapt technologies, concepts and fashions from larger artistic and architectural contexts, such as modernism and postmodernism. Exploring future trends in these parallel areas provides a likely source of future shopping centre architecture and imagery. Finally, and most importantly, the shopping centre has consistently proven its responsiveness to changes in economic, technological and social contexts, and especially in the example of current shopping centre development, its ability to assimilate these shifting values and reinvent itself. This reality not only demands the speculation of these shifting values, but also provides the impetus to identify the unfulfilled potentials of the shopping centre and address its many criticisms and shortcomings. The most obvious focus of this particular exploration is the shopping centre's failure to become a meaningful civic and community space.

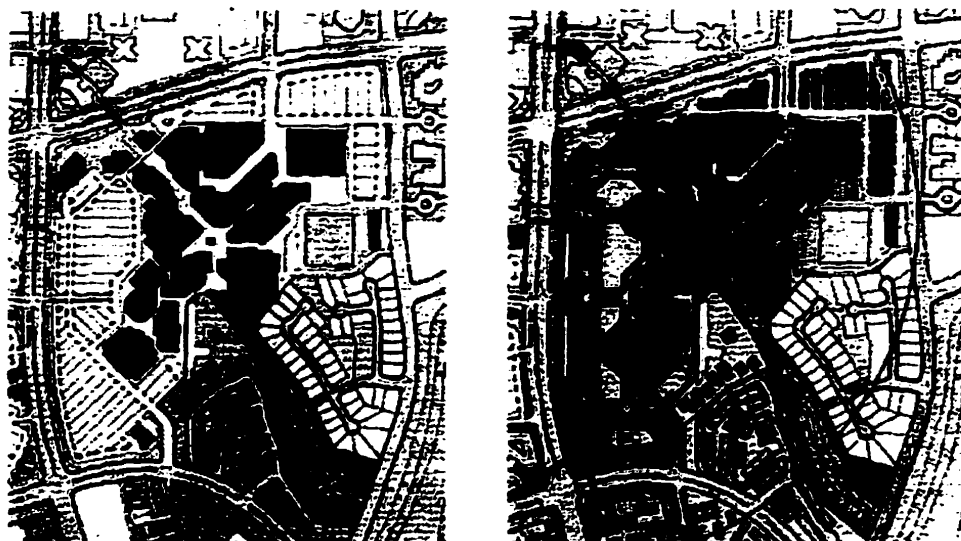
Like previous examples, the future shopping centre demands a concept or vision to direct its development. To illustrate this new vision, examples in this final chapter will draw from precedents in architecture, urban design and landscape architecture, and in addition, original sketches will be included to illustrate the ideas within the more specific context of the shopping centre. The ideas, examples and sketches, although speculative, implicitly summarize and evaluate the past history of the shopping centre, but more importantly, provide direction for future study and exploration.

A NEW VISION

Like in previous eras of development, the vision of the future shopping will reflect the transformation of current experiments in shopping centre design, and more importantly, changes within the larger social, economic and technological contexts. At the same time, articulating this new vision provides the opportunity to address many of the weaknesses in past and current shopping centres.

Of the myriad of current retail variants, the model of the town centre provides the most compelling vision upon which to construct the future shopping centre. While the future shopping centre will exhibit characteristics of all the different types (including the urban entertainment center and revitalization projects such as The Citadel), the town centre model not only offers considerable potential for developers, but its relevance to current municipal planning schemes ensures its lasting impact on the suburb and its future planning. Achieved through infill and a reconsideration of parking requirements, the dense pattern of buildings and spaces connected by a street network provides developers a means to increase and diversify their investments in existing shopping centres (Dennis 1990).

More importantly, the process of infill associated with the creation of a town centre offers an innovative solution to the land use and infrastructure issues facing many municipalities. The challenges facing these municipalities range from the rising costs of infrastructure and other public facilities, the lack of adequate, affordable housing, increased automobile use and pollution (Urban Development Institute 1993). The shopping centre and its immediate context provides an excellent locus of redevelopment



because of its present underutilization and lack of density and diversity (Calthorpe 1993). Through redevelopment, the shopping centre becomes not only a place for living and working, but for residents of adjacent communities, a centre of life which did not previously exist.

An example of this type of redevelopment is seen in the proposal for University Town Center, in San Diego, California (figure 93). In this project by Peter Calthorpe the parking lot of an existing shopping centre is infilled with new buildings and new uses. This new density and diversity of use is intended to support rapid transit use, reducing the need for parking areas. A new network of streets and open spaces is placed over the site, extending the existing mall and court spaces of the shopping centre while creating new public areas.

Unquestionably, the shopping centre will continue to be a dominant component of this redeveloped landscape. Therefore, the future shopping centre will still be responsive to demographic and economic trends, which can be reasonably predicted. People will have less time to devote to leisure activities- including shopping- as a result of family responsibilities (Hollinshead 1996, p. 17), as well as increased workloads as a result of downsizing and self employment. Population growth in North America is slowing (Hollinshead 1996, p. 17), and of this population seniors (Lutz 1996) and teenagers (Schwartz 1996) will emerge as dominant groups. North America will become increasingly diverse ethnically; by 2050 almost

Figure 93.

University Town Center. Site plans showing existing mall and proposed redevelopment (Calthorpe 1993, p. 132)

half of the population of the United States will be Hispanic or African American (Morganthau 1997).

The continued development of retail will be supported by continued economic prosperity. The economies of North America will continue to grow (Bostian 1990), as new markets open up in eastern Europe and developing countries elsewhere. Significant segments of the economy will be related to information-based and environmental technologies (Bostian 1990). The internet and World Wide Web will be integral to the new economy, and will also foster a new 'virtual commerce', in which shoppers can browse virtual shopping malls, or utilize the vast resources of this technology to inform purchasing decisions (McGrath 1997). Clearly, this will have an impact on the economic viability of the shopping centre. Other important technological developments in the future involve transportation. High speed rail and maglev trains, which are propelled by electromagnetic fields, provide new opportunities to service the suburban hinterland (Hollinshead 1996, p.17)

The greatest influence on the future shopping centre will be people's shifting lifestyles and values. Entertainment, added to the shopping centre in the 1980's, will extend into all spheres of future life. Diversions will range from themed environments in restaurants, discos and hotels to virtual, interactive games to simulated activities, i.e. indoor skydiving (Adler 1997). However, a movement is afoot which is searching for alternatives to both the hyperreality of postmodern life and the loss of community (Spayde 1997). Searching for alternatives to a lifestyle broadly defined by nostalgia, simulation, the compression of space and time (Harvey 1989), a retreat from collective life, a shift to the political right and the importance of the individual and family (Ellin 1996), there is evidence of a growing interest in a lifestyle which embraces the values of community, environmental and ecological sustainability, and authentic experiences (Spayde 1997) such as community celebrations, arts and culture (Borgmann 1992). Perhaps ironically, the internet and the World Wide Web will provide a venue for a community interests to find expression through a 'microdemocracy' (Fineman 1997). Ultimately, these values will lead to a more self-reliant society which embraces and protects other cultures, places importance on spirituality and holism, and values quality of life over material affluence (Marien, in Christensen 1986, p. 130).

Like before, the shopping centre will attempt to commodify many of these lifestyle and value shifts. With regards to entertainment, this has not only begun but has become an integral part of the shopping centre concept. The interest in the environment and sustainability has found expression in shops like the Nature Store (Price 1995) and those which specialize in trading and recycling products (locally seen in 'Sports Traders' and 'Toy Traders'). The reaction to the hyperreality of current life is just now finding expression in the rise of 'authentic' products, services and experiences within the marketplace (Spayde 1997). Ironically, these 'authentic' products do nothing to alter the patterns of consumption within our material culture.

To embrace the kinds of lifestyles espoused by Marien (in Christensen, 1986) Borgmann (1992) and Spayde (1997), more fundamental changes will be required of the shopping centre, and its physical manifestation. To become a true center of suburban life, the shopping centre must build upon existing trends, such as the inclusion of daycares, museums and satellite university campuses, while embracing new uses, such as libraries, government and social services and employment opportunities. Of course, entertainment and leisure amenities will continue to be integral components of the future shopping centre. Most importantly, however, the shopping centre must introduce housing into its mix of functions, either as an integral component of the existing building (Wagner 1995), or as new structures (Emodi 1989).

The shopping centre must become a hub of regional transportation. Mass transit, such as maglev trains, will link the shopping centre with downtown areas as well as other centres in the greater region. This initiative will reduce automobile use, and encourage pedestrian activity, which in turn supports open space initiatives.

Most importantly, venues must be provided in the future shopping centre to embrace a meaningful public life, allowing a sense of community to emerge. Outdoor spaces, free of the internalization and control of the shopping centre, offer the potential not only for amenity, but also meaning and function. In addition to places of relaxation and leisure, new open spaces can represent the community's values, its diverse cultural history, and its concern for the environment. More importantly, these spaces serve

as necessary venues for communal and civic celebrations, cultural events, and political functions, all integral to more meaningful suburban life.

A NEW (SUB)URBAN TYPE

The new vision of the shopping centre as a focus of suburban life will demand innovations in its design and planning, leading to a new building, landscape and (sub)urban design typology. New forms and patterns must emerge to accommodate the densification and diversification of the shopping centre landscape. At the same time, this experimentation provides architects and planners the opportunity to break away from the standardized forms of the shopping centre, i.e. the dumbbell plan, and its many manipulative spatial devices. While not a central concern of this study, the search for morphologies is not only interesting but necessary to frame further discussions of individual spaces and their articulation.

The ongoing tendency of the shopping centre to reflect design and planning strategies of the day suggests that the future shopping centre may likewise borrow from future developments in architecture and urban design. The roots of these future developments are seen in contemporary examples. Many of the current plans for shopping centre redevelopment, such as at University Town Center (figure 93), suggest an infill of new uses based on an extension of existing patterns of the shopping centre coupled with more tradition patterns of the city. In these examples of a postmodern urbanism, designs utilize formal devices such as the grid and principles such as symmetry, axis and hierarchy reminiscent of the City Beautiful movement.

Experiments in sustainable and ecologically-sensitive design may also find expression in the future shopping centre. In these examples of design, the orientation of buildings and open space is a response to environmental factors such as climate and solar orientation, the necessity of compact development and larger patterns of energy flows (Calthorpe and Van der Ryn 1986, Van der Ryn and Cowan 1996). An integral component of this potential vision is the creation of spaces for the purposes of food production, as well as the mitigation of averse ecological impacts. An excellent example is seen in the proposal for Rockies Sun Belt Village by Peter Calthorpe, in Golden, Colorado (figure 94). In this example a shopping centre-like form houses all of the essential functions of the community, and

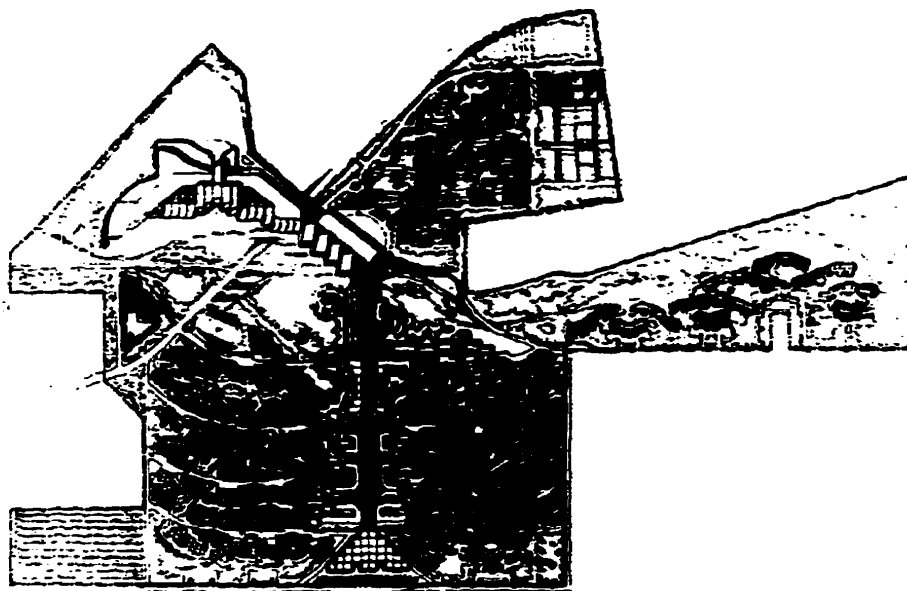


Figure 94.

Proposed Rockies Sun Belt Village. Site plan. The community centre forms a spine visible at center, running towards the top left. From this spine emanate fingers of pedestrian green space, and rows of houses oriented towards southern solar exposure (Calthorpe and Van der Ryn 1986, p. 87).

from this centre emanates fingers of pedestrian space which structure housing, oriented for optimal solar gain (Calthorpe and Van der Ryn 1986).

A compelling direction for the future shopping centre is seen in current directions in architecture and urban design which challenge the rationality and regularity of modern architecture and its accommodation of function. This concept is best articulated as the 'event city' by architect and urbanist Bernard Tschumi. The concept of the event city is characterized by "...promiscuous collisions of programs and spaces, in which the terms intermingle, combine and implicate one another in the production of a new architectural reality (Tschumi 1994, p. 13)."

One of the best applications of this challenging of programmatic relationships is seen in the competition entry for Parc La Villette, in Paris, by Rem Koolhaas and the Office of Metropolitan Architecture (figure 95). The submission proposed a vast diversity of buildings and landscapes arranged in narrow bands, that, when bisected by circulation paths, would maximize the interaction and 'permeability' of each function (Koolhaas 1991).

The juxtaposition of seemingly uncomplimentary programmes and functions, both indoor and outdoor, can create in the future shopping centre a diversity and energy clearly absent in current developments, as well as the



means to integrate new kinds of outdoor spaces as compliments of indoor function.

NEW SPACES

The evolution of the shopping centre into a fully functioning center of suburban life has definite impacts on the creation of new spaces. Whereas in the past the spaces of the shopping mall were for the direct and indirect consumption of goods, spaces in the new shopping mall can and must fulfill the full range of human needs, individually and collectively, as parts of a new civic landscape. This leads to the creation of genuine and meaningful spaces, free of the spatial manipulation leading to the condition of 'mall-aise' described by Kowinski (1985). Instead, the spaces of the future shopping centre must engage the user rather than dull the senses, be adaptable, flexible and inclusive rather than exclusive.

Functionally, the new spaces respond to the shifts in program as the shopping centre evolves into more of a functioning city. Existing trends will continue, such as the use of the parking lot as a site for markets and gatherings. Other spaces will emerge that fulfill the potential only suggested in current developments, such as the role of wetlands and other mechanisms of ecological mitigation. New spaces will be added to the

Figure 95.

Competition entry for Parc La Villette. Detail of model. In this view the 'bands' along with their disparate programmes are visible (Lucan 1991, p. 90).

shopping centre which reflect the reaction against hyperreality and the embrace of the real. Clearly, the most important spaces of the future shopping centre will be truly public, civic spaces, to be used for a variety of functions.

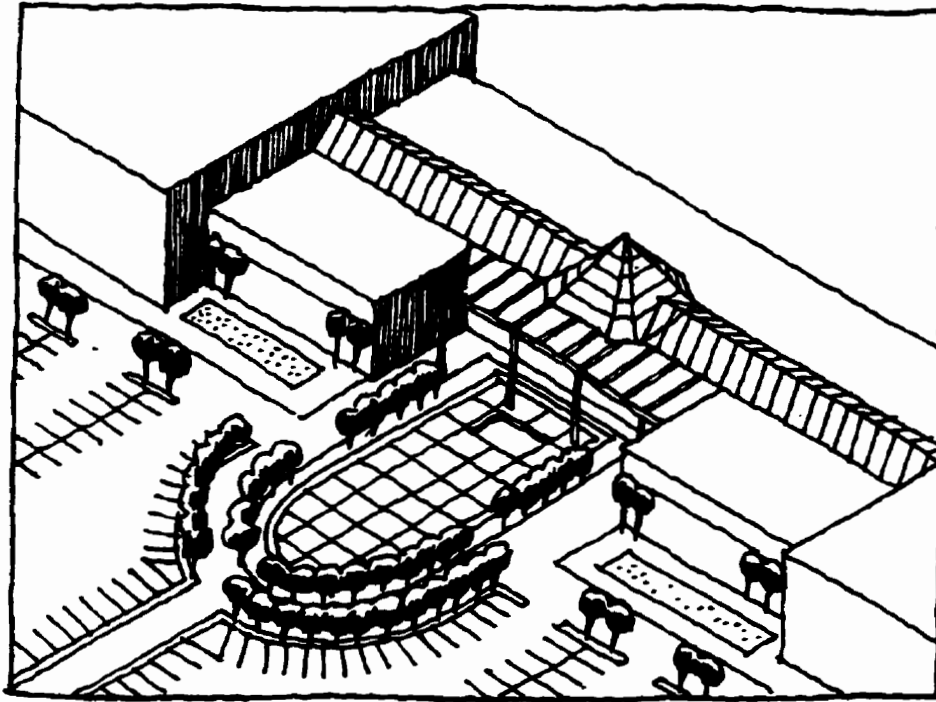
Civic Space

In many ways, the creation of meaningful civic space in the shopping centre is representative of a much larger issue of creating urban space, and is therefore somewhat beyond the scope of this study. However, there are very definite issues which the transformation of the shopping centre can address.

Civic space provides a meeting place for all residents of a neighborhood or city, in which a diversity of functions can occur, ranging from the commercial to the cultural to the ceremonial. In the future shopping centre, civic space replaces the center court, and fulfills its original potential as gathering space. In this new exterior space, the full variety of public life must be accommodated- especially those activities based on interaction. This can range from the return of the farmer's market, to the rise of communal celebrations (Borgmann 1992). Clearly, these public gatherings must be free of the merchandising and promotion of the shopping centre, as in the past.

An important cultural component in the creation of civic space is the embrace of art and sculpture. This represents a necessary reaction to hyperreality, and an embrace of those things that engage the mind and body and center peoples' lives (Borgmann 1992, p. 119). Unlike its first use in the shopping malls of the 1950s, public art must be free of censorship, those pieces with controversial subject matter as appropriate as any other. Public art, whether it takes the form of mural, sculpture, installation or environmental art, becomes a source of community pride, and can draw attention to its location through its embrace of specific issues, or references to landscape.

This didactic potential of art and sculpture can extend to and embrace other causes which might attract community support, such as the environment. Recycling and community composting centres may therefore become important compliments to civic space.



An important consideration in the creation of civic spaces is the presence of the state and its integration with the everyday public life of the community. Peter Rowe refers to this concept as 'civic realism', and describes its emergence in spaces where the spheres of the state and the civil society equally coexist and reinforce each other's roles and expectations (Rowe 1997). An example is seen in the recent redevelopment of Square One Shopping Centre, in Mississauga, Ontario, and the parallel construction of a new City Hall and public square (Delaney 1994).

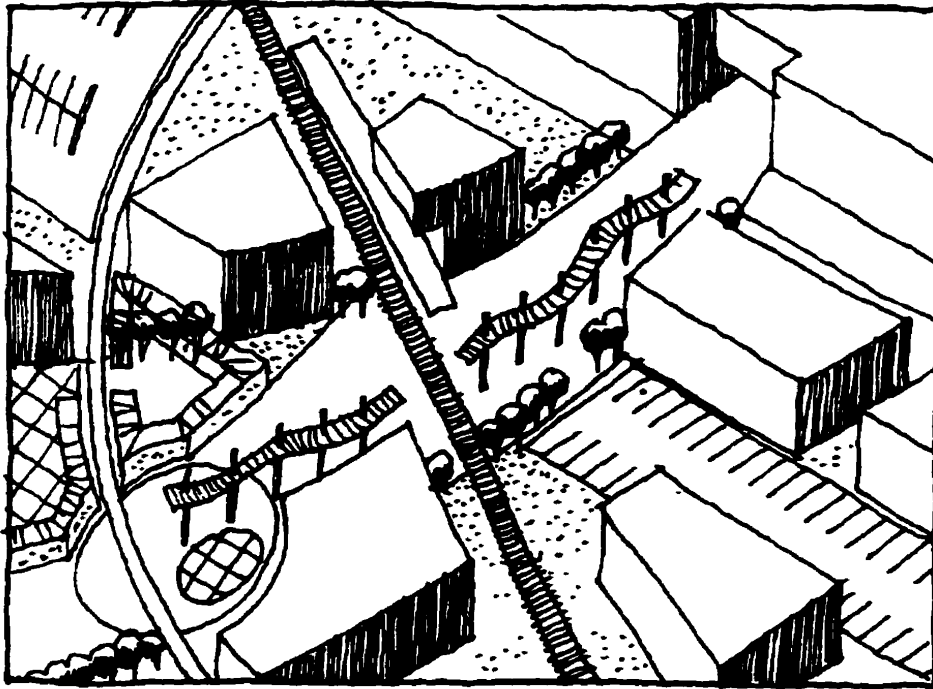
Civic spaces can be used as a means to mitigate the existing separation of inside and outside, private and public, which characterizes the shopping centre (figure 96). Richard Sennett (1994) advocates this blurring of boundaries as a means to creating engaging space, the user forced to interpret the spatial and symbolic cues. In this particular use, the space also represents the meshing of the existing shopping centre with the new pattern of infill, and its resulting matrix of open spaces.

Connective Space

In the future shopping centre, the new fabric of built form and landscape will be structured by a matrix of open space. This 'connective space' (figure

Figure 96.

Civic space in the future shopping centre. A space for public gathering, cultural and communal celebrations is inserted into the existing shopping centre. Extending the spaces and form of the shopping centre, the space takes on a formal quality appropriate for its civic function (sketch by the author)

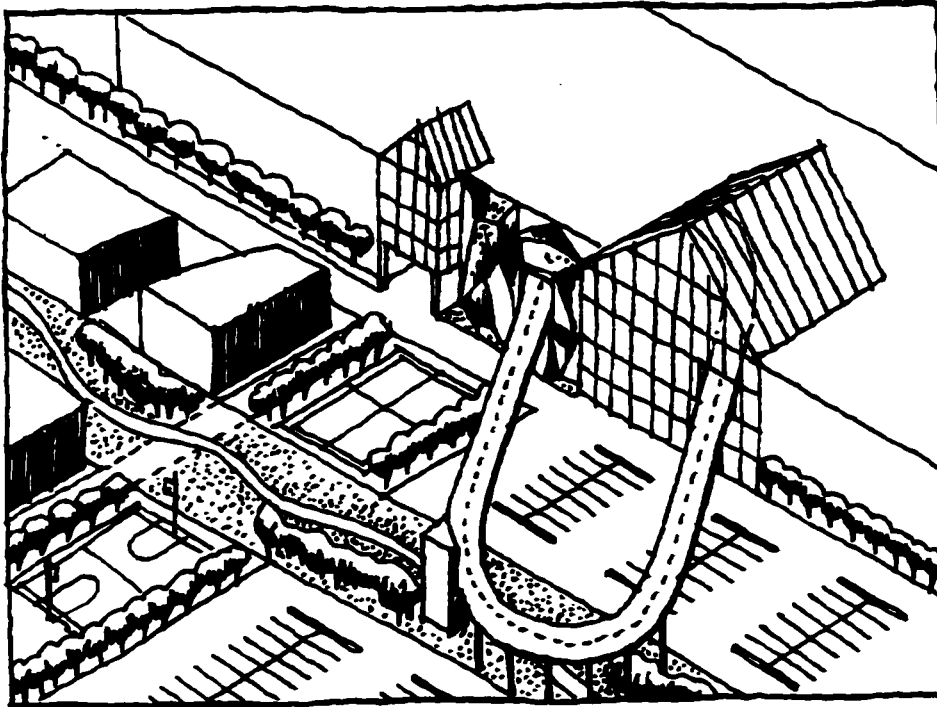


97), represents the evolution and merging of the mall spaces and pedestrian connections of contemporary shopping centres. Therefore, these connective spaces are both indoor and outdoor. By their connective nature, this matrix of space has an inherent function of circulation and movement. The connective spaces can therefore be intended for pedestrian use, or as interchanges of transportation systems. As remnants of mall spaces, these connective spaces can offer the potential for retail opportunities, or can interact with other uses and landscapes, creating the kind of 'urban events' envisioned by Bernard Tschumi and Rem Koolhaas.

This spatial matrix must inevitably interact with the surroundings of the shopping centre, which now range from residential at best to highway and utility corridor at worst. The need to create spaces at these boundaries is recognized by Richard Sennett (1994), who likens these interstitial spaces to an ecotone, the areas where ecological habitats overlap and the greatest exchange of energy occurs. The specific nature of these new spaces will result from the circumstances of the site and location.

Figure 97.

Connective space in the future shopping centre. Extending mall areas out into the landscape, this connective space structures the infill of buildings, connects to parking and green space, while becoming a space in its own right (sketch by the author).



Recreational and Athletic Space

Some of the most interesting landscapes of the future shopping centre will be those of a recreational and athletic nature. Adding outdoor spaces for individual and group activities reflects the continued emphasis on health and wellness in society, the logical outgrowth the integration of fitness centres into shopping centres, and the need to provide alternatives to 'virtual sports' now an important attraction of urban entertainment centres.

As a compliment to indoor uses such as gymnasiums and racquet courts, outdoor tennis courts and running circuits can be added, to name a few (figure 98). Athletic fields can be located in overflow, grassed parking areas. 'Short course golf' can provide an appealing alternative to 'virtual golf'. At the same time, popular (and presently internalized) activities such as rock climbing can be reintroduced outdoors and, along with extreme sports (skateboarding and freestyle cycling), become points of activity and spectacle within this new shopping center landscape.

Figure 98.

Recreational and athletic space in the future shopping centre. A running track extends into and over the parking lot from an indoor fitness centre. A linear strip between parking bays houses outdoor fields and courts. The focal point of this area is an outdoor climbing wall (sketch by the author).

Contemplative Space

Clearly necessary spaces in the future will be those that reintroduce diversion, contemplation and rejuvenation into the environment of the shopping centre. Fully realizing the potential of the first center courts in shopping centres, sculpture and botanical gardens offer amenity to shoppers, but more importantly, become places of civic importance and public pride. At the same time, more meditative spaces (interpreted in the past as a Japanese garden) respond to a deeper personal and societal need to maintain and renew emotional and spiritual wellness in light of the pressures of postmodern life.

Integrating Ecological Function

Future shopping centres, like other commercial and corporate citizens of the suburban landscape, will be required by municipal and regional governments to minimize and mitigate the adverse effects of their developments on environmental and ecological systems. Interestingly, the continued interest and concern for the environment (and recently being commodified in the mall), presents the opportunity to create an amenity of this situation.

Stormwater mitigation in the form of vegetated swales and permeable parking lots are easily absorbed into the landscape of the shopping centre (figure 99). More intensive methods of mitigation, such as constructed wetlands, are more difficult to include, but offer interpretive and recreational amenities, especially when planned in conjunction with education and child care facilities.

The Potential of Community Gardens

The possibility also exists to create community gardens and orchards within the future landscape of the shopping mall. Hough (1995) identifies the potential of flat-topped buildings to house not only gardens, but greenhouses that utilize waste heat from buildings underneath. For residents of higher density housing, these rooftop gardens (figure 100) will

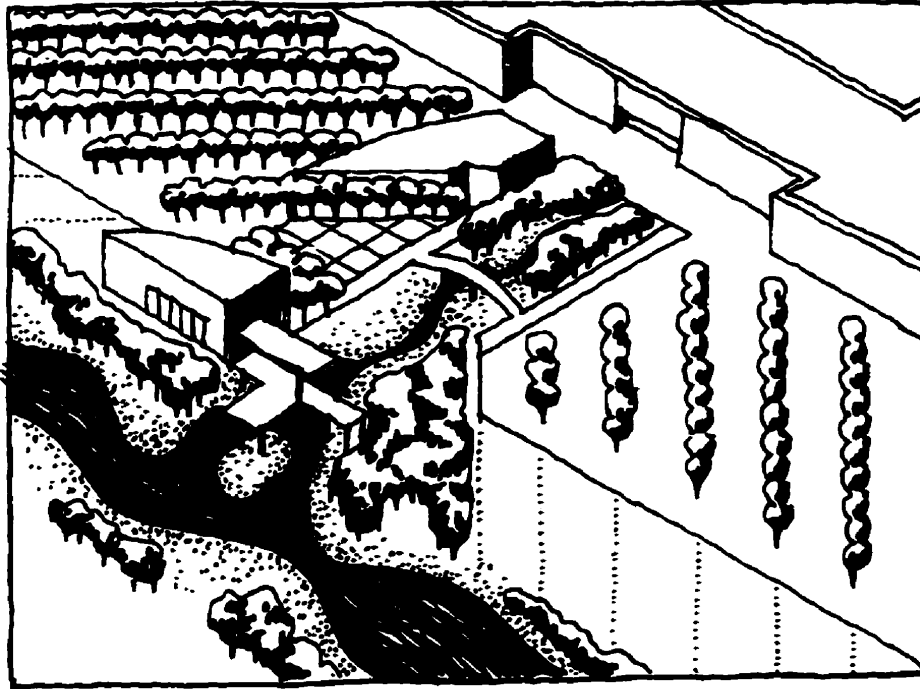


Figure 99.

Ecological function integrated into the future shopping centre. Stormwater is collected in parking lots, and enters a constructed wetland for purification. An early childhood education centre visible at left structures its educational programming around this amenity. Overflow parking areas visible at bottom are grass rather than paved with asphalt (sketch by the author).

serve as an important amenity while building community pride. Gardens as part of larger sustainable landscapes also offer an interpretive potential, making natural systems visible. More importantly, community gardens and

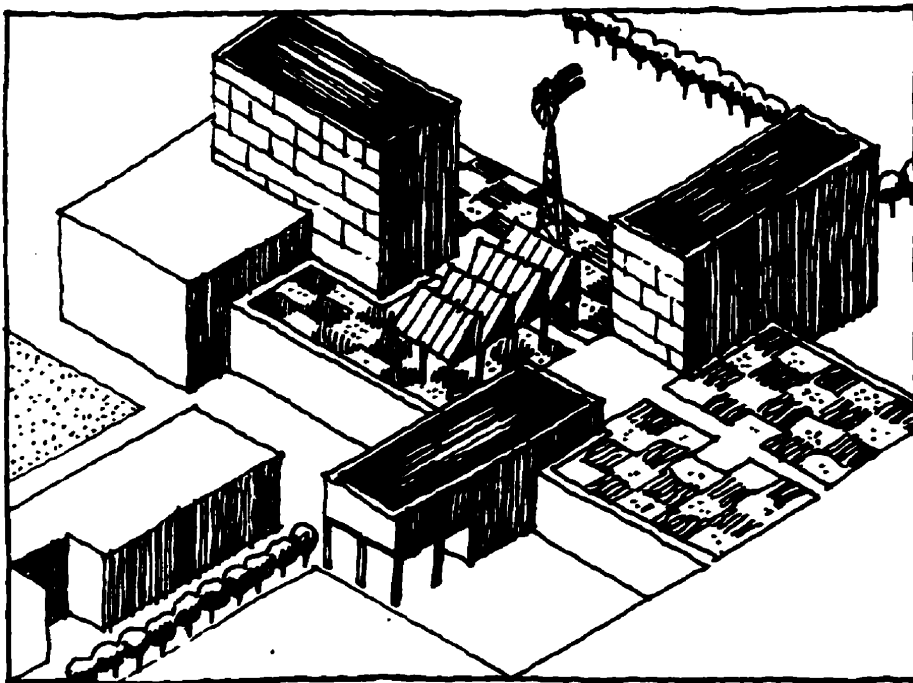
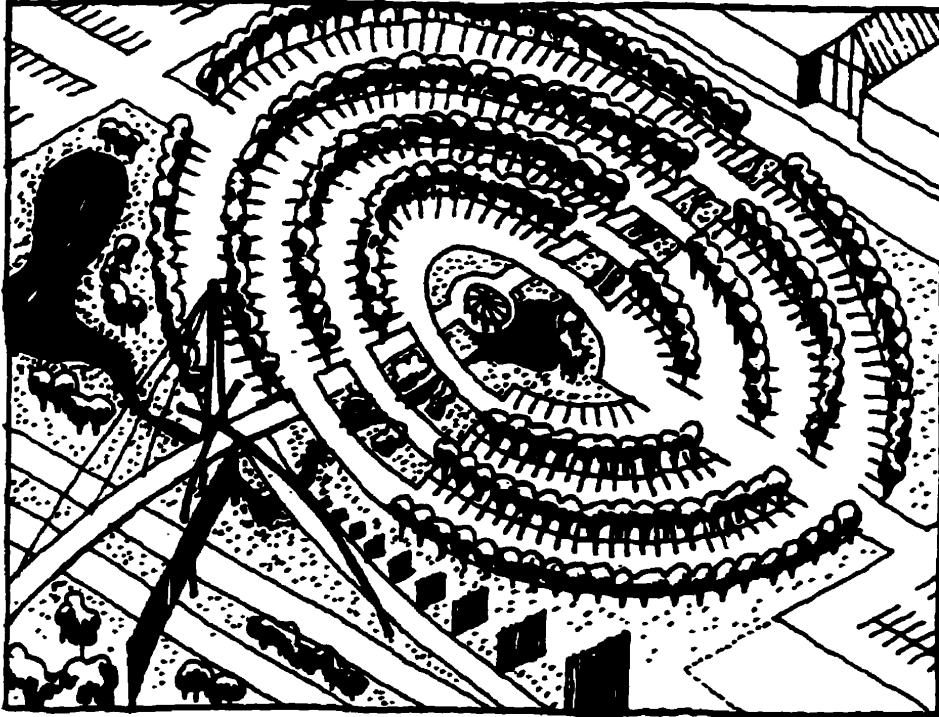


Figure 100.

Community rooftop gardens in the future shopping centre. Rooftop gardens provide food production for those residents living in high density gardens. Solar and wind power provide energy to run necessary equipment. In addition to community gardens, these rooftop spaces can also serve as outdoor amenities for these residents (sketch by the author).



element in transforming the shopping centre into more of a self-sustaining entity.

The Automotive Landscape

While the parking lot has been previously identified as a space for temporary community functions such as farmer's markets and carnivals, it is in desperate need of redesign, to become a more humane and engaging space, while being true to its functional and commercial nature (figure 101).

In the future shopping centre landscape, parking areas must be structured with trees, vegetation and other elements to not only provide a more pleasant scale, but to provide protection from sun and wind. Interesting potentials exist to restructure the parking lot in such a way to celebrate the sense of motion and arrival, by car or mass transit. Vegetation patterns, landforms and architectural elements can be structured and transformed to correspond to acceleration and deceleration. At the same time, elements such as billboards can be sensitively introduced into the parking lot. While they have an unabashedly commercial intent, commercial elements can be

Figure 101.

The automotive landscape in the future shopping centre. Spirally shaped parking celebrates the sense of arrival while tunnelling shoppers into a central spine of connective space. This connective space extends to a pedestrian bridge that extends over the adjacent highway. The architecture of this bridge becomes part of the image of the shopping centre, and carries advertising (sketch by the author).

used to lend order and pattern to a parking lot, and create a sense of scale and enclosure. These commercial elements can also evolve from the standard billboard to become pieces of environmental art, that offer the potential for more successful advertising, as well as becoming oddly appropriate focal points in this new landscape.

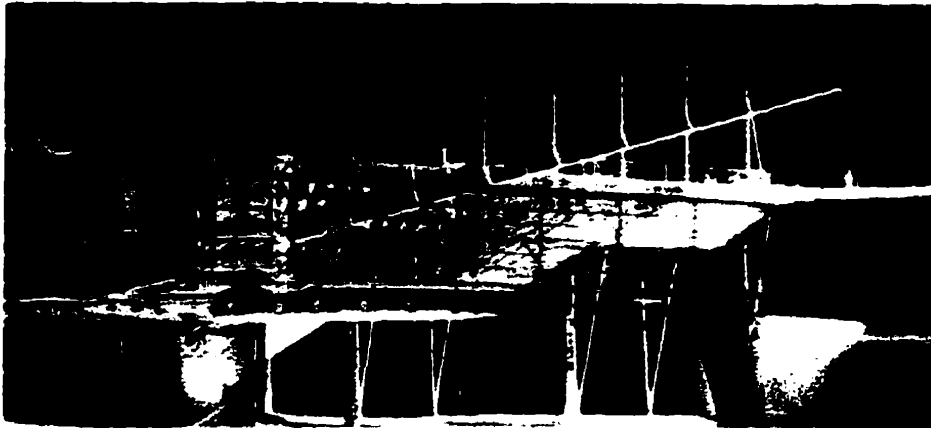
ARCHITECTURE AND IMAGE

The future transformation of the shopping centre offers the potential to introduce a new vocabulary of architecture and imagery. The evolution of the shopping centre to a fully functioning center of suburban life has definite implications on the specific use of architecture and imagery, especially in the creation of civic space. References to the city have been a consistent trend in the development of the shopping centre and its spaces. Arguably, this represents a deep rooted desire for urban experiences, and therefore will continue to be of relevance. Other sets of images, like those representing far away places and those communicating status exclusiveness have little or no relevance in the future shopping centre landscape.

Future Cities

Like in the past, the future shopping centre is likely to borrow imagery from the city. One only has to look as far as the avant-garde architecture and urbanism of today to see what direction the shopping centre can take. A survey of contemporary work reveals many architects' intention to fully embrace the city, and reveal and celebrate the complexity and contradiction in our urban lives (Jencks 1990 p 270). Clearly, this approach marks a discrete break from the development of postmodern urbanism, often resorting to nostalgic and hyperreal images of past cities.

One particular vision of the future city is evidenced in a recent proposal by architect and urbanist Bernard Tschumi. Pont-villes, an urban design strategy for the city of Lausanne, in Switzerland (figure 102), concentrates circulation in freestanding bridges and ramps which chaotically intersect and mesh throughout the valley site. The 'urban event' created by the juxtaposition of the different bridges and public and commercial functions is clearly articulated in the architecture. The forms communicate the sense of



movement, and the juxtaposition of function, i.e. the urban event, is communicated through the cacaphony of elements which freely intersect and mesh with open space.

A similar embodiment of the diversity and dissonance of contemporary city life is seen in the work of American architect Frank Gehry. In projects such as the Edgemar Farms Conversion, in Los Angeles, California (figure 103), Gehry creates a metaphor for the complexity of the city, based upon the juxtaposition of fragments of commercial and industrial imagery of Los Angeles. The specific response to Los Angeles in Gehry's work, however, often results in a style referred to as 'defensible' architecture (Ellin 1996, p. 72). The danger in the loose appropriation of this architect's work into the shopping centre is in the creation of forms and images that communicate fear and potentially preclude meaningful community space.

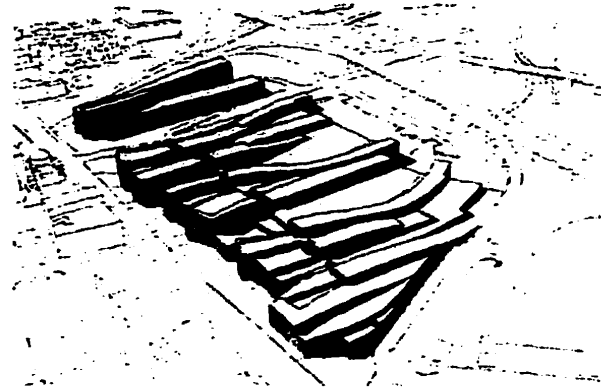
A more generic but no less timely expression of our current societal and technological condition is seen in the Columbus Convention Center, in Columbus, Ohio, by Peter Eisenman (figure 104). As a convention centre, this building recognizes its role as a meeting point defined by information and transportation; the architectural form therefore evokes strong associations to both a bundling of high speed fibre optic cable and freeways and highway interchanges.

Ecology, Art and the Creation of Place

A critical condition of creating meaningful space in the future shopping centre landscape is the embrace of a sense of place. This concept has been in

Figure 102.

Ponts-Villes proposal. View of model (Tschumi 1994, p. 65).



evidence throughout the development of the shopping centre, but awaits experiments in locales devoid of explicit architectural imagery, i.e. the southwestern United States.

On one hand, the creation of wetland and similar habitats for stormwater mitigation offer a means to draw an explicit connection to the natural habitat of a place. Similarly, much of the current focus in landscape architecture towards the use of native species and creation of habitats, as integral and artistic components of design, offers a means to introduce narrative into the evocation of place.

Environmental art continues to offer a meaningful way to create a meaningful connection to place. One might find examples in contemporary landscape architecture, and in particular, the work of Michael Van Valkenburg. His installation at Harvard University, Massachusetts (figure 105), creates a pattern of metal scrim walls, that when frozen over with ice, capture and make obvious the varying qualities of light over the course of the day and the season, raising an awareness of both natural process and the peculiarities of place. Interestingly, artworks such as Van Valkenburg's are ideally suited to the future shopping centre, satisfying the desire for experience and interaction not available with more static artworks.

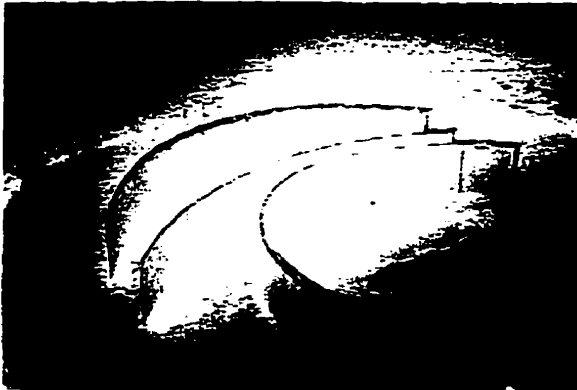
The cultural landscape of place can also be interpreted in the future shopping mall, and in the most unlikely of ways. At Solana, an office development in Texas (figure 106), Peter Walker and Ricardo Leggoretta applied the metaphor of the Spanish hacienda to parking lots, open spaces and arrival areas (Jewell 1990). Tying the project to the specific place, the hacienda metaphor appropriately communicates to and engages the highway landscape, creates more pleasant and human scaled spaces, and

Figure 103.

Edgemar Farms conversion.
View (Jencks 1990, p. 270).

Figure 104.

Columbus Convention Center.
Aerial view (Jencks 1990, p. 235).



by virtue of its regular, geometric nature, organizes parking areas with minimal disruption.

A Potential For 'Other Place'?

Ironically, 'other place' does have a meaningful role in the design and articulation of spaces within the future shopping centre landscape. Instead of the current fascination with space-time compression, or the use of the food court to offer- or sell- 'ethnic diversity' to shoppers, an opportunity exists to use 'other place' to address and embrace the increasingly diverse populations of suburbia.

The opportunity of 'other place' arises through the replication of the garden and landscape traditions of the ethnically diverse populations now inhabiting suburbia. More appropriate than a food court, fitting exotic gardens to the climatic realities of North America grounds them in this place and can serve as a powerful poetic of the successes and failures of cultural assimilation. In addition to this didactic and symbolic role, these gardens may satisfy some of the contemplative environments of the new shopping centre, but more importantly, provide a venue for the collaborative design and planning of the landscape by members of that particular group.

ACCOMPLISHING CHANGE

The vision of the shopping centre is changing rapidly, even today. It is difficult to even define the term 'mall' now, as the retail formula of the

Figure 105.

Raddcliffe Ice Walls. View (Van Valkenburg 1994, p. 52).

Figure 106.

Solana. View of court (Jewell 1990, p. 53).

typical shopping centre is now found in airports, on cruiseships, and in the virtual environment of the internet. In the future, it may be likely that the shopping mall as we know it may no longer exist. However, the degree in which it is embedded not only in our economics, but our popular culture, ensures it will continue to be an important element, in some form, of the suburban landscape.

Certainly, the shopping mall has demonstrated its ability to change; this has been seen in the extreme sense in the recent examples of centers being completely demolished and rebuilt. As a meaningful part of the future (sub)urban fabric, such a fate might not come of the future shopping centre, as it attains the kind of importance afforded historic and civic buildings in the towns and cities of our time.

More importantly, the shopping centre must change. The growing number of municipalities which have initiated the process to see the shopping centre become densified and diversified provides evidence of this. Such a process of suburban infill is certainly not limited to shopping malls; in fact, it is being applied to industrial and office parks as well.

The fundamental step in this process for municipalities, towns and cities is to change their vision of land use planning and zoning. No less important, and likely more difficult to achieve, is the reformulation of land use requirements, the drafting of development plans, and finally, the rethinking of the development process. Municipalities have realized that they must become partners with private interests, rather than simply regulators (Urban Land Institute 1993). To this end, many municipalities have been forced to create and adopt innovative zoning policies, such as Comprehensive Development (CD) zoning by the City of Burnaby, British Columbia. CD zoning represents a site-specific approach to developing and accepting projects, in which the municipality and the developer work in partnership (Ito 1997).

The role of the designer in the process of creating the future shopping centre is critical. Like pioneers such as Victor Gruen and John Graham, designers have an obligation to help shape the vision for the shopping centre and the larger suburban landscape. Arguably, this role should not be the exclusive domain of designers- public participation is integral to assuring community support and a sense of ownership of these new suburban civic and community spaces. Shaping this future vision involves sampling

from other realms of design and planning, which has only been touched upon in this study. If the shopping centre has historically drawn a connection to the suburban residential landscape, for example, then what might the future residential landscape look like? Or the future city? Designers must also take the lead of people like New Urbanist Peter Calthorpe, who does not simply challenges the perceived 'rules' of suburban and commercial land use, but importantly, proposes alternatives. Calthorpe and others evaluate the built examples of such work, and most importantly, articulate the findings in a way to be accessible not only to other designers, but those in the development industry and government, as well as the general public.

In the infancy of the shopping centre, its development was eagerly watched and evaluated by the Urban Land Institute, a development industry thinktank which published many brochures on topics ranging from industrial parks to shopping centres. The enthusiasm and zeal of this organization, recognizing the economic opportunities of this new building and commercial type, must have been a tremendous factor in the rapid growth, standardization and export of the shopping centre. Recognizing the opportunity and necessity to reconceive the shopping centre, in order to finally realize the civic and community potentials only hinted at by Victor Gruen, architects and planners of the future must have similar zeal.

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