

Urban Fragment as Collective Memory

Transformation of Market Square, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

By Mehul Patel

A practicum report submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
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
of

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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P r e f a c e

The intent of this project is to analyze the current state of Market Square within Winnipeg's historic district and to offer direction for its future development. The impetus for this is two-fold: firstly, the site in its present state is incapable of responding to initiatives currently underway within the district- most notably, the construction of a new Red River Campus east of the site and renovations of the former Ashdown Building for various artists. Clearly such additions coupled with other public works scheduled for North Portage and The Forks site, Market Square has the potential to become a significant open space for the downtown. Secondly, and as importantly, the historic dimension of this site is obvious, what is not, however, is the role Market Square- as urban open space- might play in transmitting a collective memory of the place.

An underlying notion within this practicum is how the nature of urban open space in North America differs from other contexts and geographies throughout the world. Specifically, the Old World European models work within markedly different cultures and urban environments, and as such simply can not be translated to North American cities (Marcus. C, Francis C., 1998). Many have indicated this failure of a 'New World Sienna' to be indicative of a decline in public life, this is inaccurate. Public life and the need for urban open space exists in North America- albeit in a different manner; one that takes into consideration its large-scale cultural artifacts- vehicles, freeways and suburban development for instance. The central

piazza and its concentration of public life have been, for North Americans, relocated elsewhere- to the shopping mall, stadium, neighborhood park. In other words, public life has not disappeared; it has simply reconstituted into a brief lunchtime encounter or weekend shopping at an outdoor market (Marcus. C, Francis C., 1998).

P r o g r a m & S i t e S e l e c t i o n

Program Objectives

The intent of the program is to examine the functional characteristics of Old Market Square in its current state, and more importantly, to anticipate and provide a plan of future uses for the site given the changing nature of Winnipeg's downtown district. The key is to be mindful of how the site and its environs are changing- most notably the addition of the Red River Community College west of Old Market Square, the housing/commercial redevelopment of the Ashdown Warehouse and the proposed links of North Portage and the Forks Site – to transform the Exchange into a domain of technology and creativity by offering an urban landscape that reflects this condition.

Program Components

The program for the Market Square site seeks to be predictive in its approach, to anticipate future requirements and activities given the changing nature of the site and its immediate district.

i] Exhibition Space

An outdoor exhibition or gallery space is a logical ingredient given the numbers of artists working and living in such short distance to the site;

specifically, such a space would require ease of storage for works and equipment such as lighting and scaffolding and an enclosed area, or capacity for enclosure area in the event of inclement weather. In addition, this space may perform more efficiently if located within short walking distance to the Artspace complex or a security kiosk. Lastly, the area should not be in direct sunlight, and should be surfaced with a material that facilitates walking. Such a space requires close cooperation with the Artspace complex, both in terms of logistics and marketing.

ii] Outdoor Viewing Space/Concert Space

An outdoor viewing space for theatrical events and concerts requires foremost, favorable sightlines and ‘privacy’ from other events within the site; also, of importance is ease of circulation and location- one must be able to locate the space quickly and easily from a distance. Other requirements include convenient storage for lighting and an enclosed space capable of housing a control room for technical personnel. Orientation to the sun is important to consider- avoid glare for both performers and audience. A theatre/performance space may also be amphitheater-like in order to further improve sight-lines and access. The surface material for such a space must be chosen and installed in a manner that promotes safety. In addition, the space has the capacity to function year-round if enclosed as an atrium.

iii] Open Green Space

An open green space must be situated to maximize solar gain- especially if winter use is encouraged- and ease of access from any location within the site. A grade change in the form of a mound may also be useful in order to create favorable sight-lines for 'people watching' and lounging. Seating quantity and type is also critical in a successful green space- be able to simultaneously accommodate more than one user group, multiplicity. Planting and a water element also warrant attention- planting for shade and texture, and water for ambient sound.

iv] Outdoor Dining Space(s)

The site has the capacity to include outdoor spaces for dining if in private locations within short distance to a kitchen and service area. Such a site should have the capacity to be covered and be aware of sun orientation and shadow patterns, as solar access may be an important seating condition. Shelter from prevailing winds and surface material selection is also a critical component in an outdoor dining space. The space may also have a strong nighttime use. Lastly, this function may have a winter use if the solar gain is adequate. In addition, a more private dining space may be feasible towards the Leland portion of the former Union Bank site- to recall the hotel's restaurant that once was an integral part of the site.

v] Large Outdoor Venue Space

An open space within the site catering to public events, weekend markets and festivals must consider sun orientation in order for portions of the site to have direct sun, circulation clarity – be able to locate spaces within the larger space quickly and effectively and have the capacity to be segmented into smaller pieces if necessary. In addition, the site must offer seating options and proximity to other amenities- w/c, food concession areas, parking, public transit. Planting is also an important ingredient for shade and vertical texture, pattern and color. This space allows large groups to gather and move freely. It has a vital nighttime use.

vi] Outdoor Instructional and Classroom Space

This space must be located in a semi-private enclave of the larger site- located west of the proposed theatre and adjacent to outdoor gallery and exhibition spaces- with quick access to storage facilities for audio/visual and instructional equipment. This space may be a smaller component of a larger space.

vii] Outdoor Eating Spaces

This space must be located in an area that is visually identifiable and easily accessible from any location within the site. This area has portions that are in direct sun for much of the day- also desirable if winter use is a consideration- and easily connected to other spaces with

differing elements such as planting and water in order to provide a variety of eating and conversing areas.

Universal access to be provided throughout the site.

Site Selection

Market Square

The development of Winnipeg's historic exchange district has its roots in the latter part of the Nineteenth- Century by the onset of a Market Square area west of Main Street- the present day location of the Public Safety Building. The Market Square site at this time- ~1878- was largely occupied by a market building with sweeping arcades and the former City Hall (Barber, 1980). The central fire hall to the south and several blocks along Princess Street to the west also contributed to the character of the district with similar architecture and details- masonry, wood and ornamental metal. This assemblage and concentration of historic buildings can be traced to the accelerated growth of Winnipeg towards the end the 19th Century as the business climate within the city began to move away from a mostly fur trading center to one based on the movement and support of agriculture (Barber, 1980). Many of the buildings within the Market Square district date to this early expansive period- 1880-1915, taking architectural character from Chicago architects who used a similar

palette of masonry forms and arches. In all, the manner of the buildings in this region exemplifies the commercial direction of late 19th Century Winnipeg (Barber, 1980).

The Market Square site, today - bound by Main Street to the east, William Avenue and City Hall to the north, King Street to the west and Bannatyne Avenue to the south- has lost much of its building context, most notably within the stretch immediately facing Main Street. Since 1918, nine buildings have been lost due to either fire or demolition, including- the central fire station and the Leland Hotel to the north.

Many of the buildings within the Market Square district have survived; however, many are in a state of disrepair. The Market Square district is currently a mixed use zone comprising of small businesses, shops, galleries and various other cultural organizations- film, art, literary- that seem to gravitate to this area of the downtown.

The focus of this study, however, is not to document a historical narrative, but rather to illustrate how this site and its larger district- the exchange corridor- is changing; a host of urban projects have been introduced that will, as a collective, greatly alter the density and structure of this site. The newly located Red River Community College to the west and the linkage opportunities to north Portage, east of Main Street and Red River Drive, The Forks site has the potential to alter this

site and its context in a manner previously unseen- to create a locus for the downtown.

The impetus for choosing this site is twofold: firstly, the current state of Market Square can not sufficiently accommodate the changes currently underway within the district, and secondly, the resolution of this site is poor- it does not adequately reflect its historical and urbane significance.

Site Evaluation

The nature of the site currently is rather modest in its resolution, it provides an adequate level of amenities for the user, yet the potential of the site given its historical dimension and urban context far surpasses its present condition. Moreover, the site in its present state is disjointed and piecemeal in composition.

Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian circulation within the site and its immediate context varies with the time of day and season; the site experiences heavy pedestrian volumes between 8AM-10AM and 4PM-6PM weekdays. In addition, during the summer months a significant lunchtime crowd gathers between 11AM-1PM. Outside these hours and during weekends the site has a transient flow of people to other parts of the exchange and east towards Main Street. Clearly, the flow of people and ultimately the use

of this site is greatly influenced by the season- the current state of this site is predominately one of summer use.

Vehicular Traffic

The traffic flows around the perimeter of Market Square can be significant. During peak periods-7AM-9AM and 4PM-6PM-, the vehicular traffic is heaviest along King Street and William Avenue westward from King Street. This pattern is constant regardless of season. Weekend traffic is also similar to the weekday traffic, although the volumes are not as high; Sunday, as one might assume has the lightest volume.

Planting

The current planting scheme within the site is not memorable, King Street and both edges of Letinsky Place have rows of typical Manitoba tree species- Manitoba Maple and American Elm. These trees do provide shade, visual interest and texture, however, during the summer months.

Views/Axes

It is not surprising that the views and axial condition of this site also mirrors its pedestrian traffic; namely, a strong north-south condition exists with City Hall as the north focus and the architecture and human

scale of Albert and Arthur Streets acting as strong south facing visual elements. The views within and beyond the site focus primarily at buildings, the TD Tower to the Confederation Life Building determine the manner and significance of the view/axes. Also, other 'landmark' buildings that surround the site, such as the Gault Building-Artspace complex, Maw's Garage and Kings Head Pub are also important focal points.

Topography

The topography of this site is mostly level, however, Letinsky Place acts as a drainage spine for much of the site.

Density/Scale

The scale and material of the architecture that forms the perimeter of Market Square are significant, its human scale and overall texture and pattern imbues this area with a character rarely seen elsewhere in Winnipeg.

Parking

Meter parking exists on all perimeter streets, however, like many downtown urban projects, the amount and convenience of the parking is not ideal. For the purposes of this solution, all overflow parking is to be contained off site within designated zones. There are over one-

hundred parking spaces available within a three block radius of Market Square.

Urban Open Space

Interpretation

Urban Place

The concept and notion of 'place' is a complex one, in other words, place is more than simply geography, it is more correctly the totality of concrete observable matter comprising shapes, textures, colours and materials to produce a greater environmental character or atmosphere (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). As such, a 'place' can not be reduced or described using an analytic science-based method, rather, to fully understand the importance of place within the built environment many theorists, most notably Norberg-Schulz, argue the benefit of a phenomenological approach- a 'return to things' (Norberg-Schulz, 1979).

This method, devoid of mental construction and abstraction places great emphasis on the spirit of place, or *genius loci*- the ancient Roman belief that every independent being has a guardian spirit capable of giving life to people and place; an ultimate determiner of character or essence (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). In this vein, the recognition and ultimately the respect of, and for the *genius loci* of a

place is essential for both practical and existential survivability (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). This importance of place-ness as a cultural and social barometer seems to be losing its footing; for, 'modern man' has allowed and encouraged technology and science in the belief that one can be free of place dependence.

With this in mind, however, many of the problems that plague 'modern man' stem from a somewhat dysfunctional man-place relationship. For instance, the phrase to 'dwell,' borrowing from Norberg-Schulz once again, is a marker of how well the man-place relationship has progressed within the latter part of the Twentieth-Century (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). To expand, by this theory, for man to gain a more pronounced existence-based grasp on life process there is required, firstly an understanding of orientation and identification- "man has to be able to *orient* himself; he has to know *where* he is. But he also has to *identify* himself with the environment, that is, he has to know how he is a certain place." (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). By this logic, a favorable environmental image gives the possessor an important sense of emotional security, whereas, in a poor or alienated structure, the image becomes distorted or confusing- thereby enhancing the possibility for social disruption.

The question becomes ultimately, what is the role of history and urban continuity- using a broad description- for designers and shapers of the built environment as a tool towards true place-making.

Culture and Urbanism

Historically and cross-culturally, landscape elements, urban or otherwise, have perennially managed to engender a marked emotive response; whether in the form of a private residential garden or a large civic park- landscape, perhaps to a greater degree than many buildings, manages to instill in many memory and an altogether 'place-ness'. In recent years, however, this seems to be changing, landscape architecture is desperately losing the ability to define urban place, and consequently, produce meaningful environments (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993).

The urban site, like much of fragmented city life, is becoming more and more lost within a society and cultural framework that has seemingly found other more introverted means of escape and leisure. The question, then, becomes: what is an urbane solution for the current social condition? Clearly, both today and historically, the park, in its present traditional Olmstedian form, has been the impetus, if not the guiding element, for urban renewal schemes throughout both the Old and New Worlds; in other words, irrespective of the form and altogether cultural image of 'open space', it remains an important urban artifact and plays a vital role within the conception of city (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993).

The argument for the existence of 'urban open space' seems obvious, what is not, however, is how this entity forms itself within the

greater context of a city, any city; is it an organized pattern that is evocative of an earlier tradition or expression, or is it a loosely configured and ideated space that simply forms as need arises: beach as park, square as park (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993).

The role of urban open space is changing. Customary, historical models do not seem to be altogether useful, or, in fairness, any longer should be; however, with this comes tremendous opportunity for landscape architects and urban designers to offer new, more relevant models of urban open space.

The consequences of not trying to gain a greater understanding of urban open space and its relevance for the post Twentieth-Century is severe; the new urban landscape design must in some manner perform newly established roles and responsibilities in an attempt to heal the ever-increasing rift that exists between the city and its inhabitants. This, it seems, is the challenge.

The Question of Site

Though the form and shape of most urban projects can still be recognized and distinguished, the boundaries between park, square, boulevard and recreational area are becoming increasingly blurred. The conscious and deliberate search for such hybrids as a component of the urban condition is what characterizes the post Twentieth-Century solution from its historical predecessors. This ambivalence towards the

typical urban park speaks of the need to escape urbanity on one level, while it is this very public nature that transforms the 'park' into an arena for modern life. This nineteenth-century Picturesque ideal may no longer be relevant or useful within the current technological context.

Perhaps in order to hypothesize new and innovative urban landscape design, landscape architects and urban designers need to reject and overcome Nineteenth-Century tactics of the Picturesque in order to revitalize and clarify the urban project within the fragmented framework of the post Twentieth-Century city. Urban landscape design, it seems, must be an integral ingredient, especially in North America, for an improved civic condition; hence, the challenge for landscape architects today is to reassemble the fragments of 'city' to manufacture new and relevant interpretations (Rowe, 1996).

To Challenge the Status Quo

The Olmstedian park is a Nineteenth-Century invention created to allow the 'new' city dweller the means of escape where intolerable living and urban conditions existed. Irrespective the Romantic parks, such as Hyde Park, Buttes Chamont, Vondelpark, and, of course Central Park are undeniably linked in some manner to the cities they inhabit. Many cities no longer exhibit borders or edges defining distinct spaces and districts. The inhabit of the city is free to explore an endless array of possibilities. Those urban spaces that once were

referred to as simply 'park' are known to urbanites today to also include other, perhaps less defined places: mall, beach, square, steps, et cetera.

To quote Adriaan Gueze, "this is a story about a changing ideology, sometimes we need to change ideology (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993). Gueze's statement is essentially based or theorized by the following two suppositions: firstly, that creating and forming green space has become a stereotype, and secondly, the miraculous park of the Eighteenth-Century, a necessity in the nineteenth-century has become an anomaly in the current urban landscape (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993).

Green space, by this argument has become habit forming, a self-motivating thematic and psychological cliché. In response to this, Gueze makes the astonishing claim that open green space *per se*, in its current form and context, has become irrelevant- no longer useful as an urban device. By this logic, the park of the twentieth-century is now incapable of duplicating or attaining the Picturesque beauty, in both form and thought. Secondly, Gueze recognizes that there exists within the modern city new revolutionary orders and opportunities, a new urban public that are psychologically and economically unique; 'city nomads' that live in an urban context that is profoundly different, both culturally and architecturally, than at any other point in history (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993).

Modern man no longer travels only to Italy for cultural validation, a new world order with technology at the apex has established freedom to the nth degree; the urban landscape design, in its present condition, no longer serves as a means of escape. It is important in Gueze's interpretation to recognize that a contemporary city manages to identify and create a new escapist methodology to ultimately and inevitably dispel Eighteenth-Century interpretations of urban open space (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993). This may lead to a novel definition and role for landscape architecture, allowing spaces for activities other than what the designer intended.

For Adriaan Geuze, there can be no resolving of 'urban open space' in the historical sense; nature and beauty seem less valid to a society and culture that challenges the relationship of city and green space. The Twenty-First Century urban landscape design, in this vein, should provide more than a mere backdrop for leisure; it must be a place for experimentation, a laboratory for urban landscape design.

Posing a similar theoretical position, Andrew Arriola, working within Cerda's Barcelona designs urban spaces from previously abandoned and leftover sites; stating that the current urban condition of overcrowding and high density has left the 'city' with conflicting constraints and opportunities. As a result of this crisis within the modern city, the urban Picturesque park faces issues which traditional models are incapable of processing yet alone (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993).

The urban landscape design, for Arriola, is, and becomes an architectonic open space, it approaches and models itself in the manner of built form: urban landscape design as building (Knuijt, M., et, al, 1993).

Many critics, such as Bernard Huet and Colin Rowe insist that the dilemma of 'park' is essentially a *city* problem; that much of the lack of understanding and an inevitable misguided solution base stems from a failure to respect and acknowledge urban process, its structure and continuity. In other words the designer "must forget ego in the way you forget nice design. You have to be eclectic, you have to understand history, you have to understand collective memory. You have to understand the never designed projects that made the city...(Knuijt, M. et al 1993."

To give relevance and meaning to any urban space, there needs to be within the public and administrative realm, a clear comprehension that the city and its elements are not static; that urban open space of relevance, both culturally and thematically, must in some manner remain incremental, part of a greater whole (Rowe, 1996). Others argue that such an approach can only work to some execution within those countries and cities that occupy an 'urban culture;' namely, Old World European nations such as Italy, Spain, France and Germany.

The response to such a position is that despite an altogether elaborate and extensive historical record each place exhibits a cultural

parameter and perceptible '*genius loci*'. For instance, the North American prairie has within a rich historical and cultural tradition that has been for the most part ignored as a generator of urban direction; clearly, New World cities occupy a different urban stature than Rome, however, an urban place-ness, it seems, is readily available if the intent to identify it remains (Rowe, 1996). Much of the problem for this lack of appreciation rests on the purely North American phenomenon that local traditions and urban cultures are either unavailable or of little or no relevance. This attitude must change if urban landscap design is to maintain any level of importance amidst a climate of intense social and cultural transformation.

D e s i g n P r o c e s s

Design Criteria

The purpose of design criteria is to identify and describe the factors that play a critical role in a design, and to document the decision making process. It aims to formulate a series of objectives for the design- a guide- based on research of other urban landscape spaces and a careful examination of the site and its physical and cultural context.

i] A successful urban place must be responsive to the user by virtue of its program.

ii] The notion of urban continuity is critical, the design in all its parts ought to reflect a historical narrative, a collective memory. The ‘collective memory’ of a place and its inhabitants can be extracted from its context to give the solution a sense of authenticity and relevance.

iii] Clarity of concept and attention to detail allows the usefulness and intent of the design to surface freely.

iv] The design should be subtle and eclectic.

v] Fragments, literal and figurative, create opportunities to knit past, present and future- a means of expressing the cumulative, binding nature of a civilization.

Fulfilling the Program

The program and its components represent a most critical component of the design phase. The intent of the program is to fully identify the functional characteristics-pro and con- of Old Market Square in its current state, and more importantly, to anticipate future uses for the site given the changing nature of Winnipeg's downtown district. The key, then, is to be mindful of how the site and its environs are changing- most notably the addition of the Red River Community College west of Old Market Square, the former Ashdown retail building as possible residential development and home to the Contemporary Dance Group- and, in turn, reacting and proposing an urbane landscape that reflects this condition.

Ultimately, the test, it seems, is how well the program is married to the thematic dimension of Market Square's historical presence- do the functional parameters of designing an urban space work in concert with the notion of 'collective memory' and urban fragment?

This aspect of the process has caused the most difficulty, to accurately understand the workings of a complex physical and cultural

site has been both arduous and time consuming; however, the program is in many respects the most vital ingredient of the entire proposal.

Clearly, one can argue the 'potential' and value of this site in a purely intuitive manner, yet its present condition functions adequately, for the moment, and is used by the public in a range of activities. The challenge, then, has been to envision beyond its current state, to be predictive, without becoming overly wishful.

Inspiration

The intent of the design has been to give lasting presence to this site by evoking historical 'drama', to be mindful of change over time, both intentional and accidental in order to gently nudge the user into forming a lasting impression of the site and its characteristics.

Obviously it very difficult to impart a designer's thematic response onto a third party, however, if the design is relevant and in this case cognizant of a 'collective memory' the user is able to bring his/her own experiences and memories into the mix in order to make the place meaningful. The notion of 'meaning' is the one most used in describing a place that for some unknown reason conjures a response in the user; to further, it also the distinguishing factor that elevates 'built work' to architecture. In this instance, for Market Square, the devise is memory, memory of not only its literal and metaphysical physical parameters,

but also, and perhaps more importantly, the recollection of the social and cultural significance of this site and extended context.

The notion of memory within urban contexts is complex, the residue of history in the form of fragments seems to awaken an elusive quality which modern urban planning can not duplicate; furthermore such sites such as Market Square offer the public a glimpse into forgotten memories that are dormant or erased- allowing the user to substitute invented traditions and imaginary narrations (Boyer, 1996). The significance of an 'urban fragment' may also be derivative of modern life, fast paced consumer driven cultures- found globally, in any 'city' - may force the collective mind to search for its historical dimension. Unfortunately modern urban planning has purposely sought to destroy the form/figure relationship, to erase historical reference and memory in its vision of discipline and purity of form (Boyer, 1996).

In this instance, Market Square, the notion of collective memory is one of social inclusion, - as professed by Halbwachs- that collective memory is at its core a social phenomena, rooted in shared experiences. According to Halbwachs, an urban artifact is lost due to its lack of adequate stimuli, the result of vague fragmented impressions. In this sense, memories are brought to light through the recollection of places once visited, by situating an idea or pattern into an appropriate group context- a social construct- "a man who remembers alone what others

do not remember resembles somebody who sees what others do not see. It is as if he suffers from hallucinations (Boyer, 1996).”

The problem, however, from such memory explorations within urban environments is inevitably: to what end? A memory crisis often occurs if a population wishes to break itself from its traditions; similarly, an equally great crisis develops due to this rejection of precedent in the form of, as Boyer states, “the collection of historical tokens”. What should the balance be, of past to present, how does one attend to the forces of tradition and history without placing undue pressure on other systems? Boyer is correct, it seems, in stating “...we are compelled to create new memory walks through the city, new maps that help us resist and subvert the all- too- programmed and enveloping messages of our consumer culture (Boyer, 1996).”

For this study, the crux of the answer rests on the premise that memory is a shared *social* activity, and as such, a specific place and time is worthy to recollect as built environment if it is communal-relevant to many.

Collective memory is also central to the work of Aldo Rossi- the architectural event is the unfolding of a story that has at its core primary forms such as the triangle, pyramid, cone and cube that moves the participant to become the focus of a collective memory. Stairs and courtyards, windows, barrel vaults, fisherman’s houses, lighthouses and silos appear throughout Rossi’s work, becoming objects that translate

personal and collective myth. In this sense, Rossi blends the real and the imaginary in an enigmatic way, to juxtapose discordant thoughts and objects in a manner that enables the viewer to experience a collision of illogical sensations (Boyer, 1996). Through the frozen images of the city, the viewer is taught how to read the city not as a fixed object, but one that oscillates between the repetition of past forms and process of continual change (Boyer, 1996).

Rossi is dissatisfied with the present state of the world and aims to peer into history in order to find an “otherness not yet completely erased”, to save the past by turning it inside out and rescue the present by shielding it from boredom and alienation.

The value of history seen as collective memory, as the relationship of the collective to the place, is that it helps us grasp the significance of the urban structure, its individuality, and its architecture which is the form of this individuality. This individuality ultimately is connected to an original artifact- in the sense of Cattaneo's principle: it is an event and a form. Thus the union between the past and the future

*exists in the very idea of the city that it
flows through in the same way that
memory flows through the life of a
person; and always, in order to be
realized, this idea must not only shape
but be shaped by reality* (Rossi, 1982).

Memory has the capacity to link an individual to his family and shared experiences, to other customs and traditions, religion and of course places. For the purposes of this study and the design of the Market Square site, memory is a shared, common experience- not individualistic. In this vein, memory is based on 'lived experiences', forcing the individual to gain perspective, once again, in a group setting (Boyer, 1996).

Case Studies

Plaza Mayor, Salamanca, Spain- Emilio Ambasz

The proposed Plaza Mayor is an urban project that grows physically and literally from the stones of the city. It is an urban project that uses historical footprint as a means to explain more fully the cultural and social significance of this site.

Salamanca, located on the Iberian peninsula is one of the oldest cities in Europe, having been conquered and destroyed by the Celts,

Moors and Romans since 300 BC. It is within this context that architect Emilio Ambasz proposes the re-design for Plaza Mayor- the commercial and cultural focal for the city. The configuration of the site is square and open, in contrast to its dense and irregular urban context of streets and buildings. Masking much of the perimeter of the plaza is a four-sided Baroque building designed by Churriguera. The columns of its main level arcade separate commercial and private activities from the plaza proper. The plaza before the Ambasz design was a flat and uncomfortable site ill-suited for gathering as urban open space. The program for the site asks for a sheltered tree lined space sensitive to the rich historical content of Salamanca and this region of Spain.

The design asks for a series of concentric squares that step down into the plaza onto a circular patterned metal grating that lights a dance hall directly below; the plaza's former ground level is simulated by the addition of planting- the tops of the trees acting as a metaphorical ground plane. As one descends into the square, the trunks of the trees begin to appear. The column-like planting scheme and canopy mirrors the arcaded loggia beneath neighboring facades.

Union Station, Kansas City, Missouri- Emilio Ambasz

The proposal for Union Station aims to preserve a building with historical significance by incorporating it into the urban and cultural community of Kansas City. The essential feature of this project is the

green belt that weaves through parts of the downtown to culminate at the station's public entry; to in essence, serve as frontpiece for the building, reconnecting it to the urban landscape.

This theme continues into the building in the form of gardens and wintergardens that serve as reception areas for cultural events throughout the year.

The 'Grand Hall', at one time the waiting area for the station is converted into a botanical garden illuminated by large south facing windows.

The success of this project rests in its use of history and program in a unique manner, to be mindful of how the building and its former function can be selectively recalled as an urban renewal strategy. Also, of note is how the architect incorporates motion and movement as instruments in the design, taking cues it seems from the building's former life as a station for train travel.

Franklin Square, Philadelphia, PA- Robert Venturi

The Ben Franklin house in Philadelphia is a project that uses memory and the notion of historical remains- both literal and figurative- as conceptual generator within a greater set of functional and programmatic requirements. Essentially, the footprint of the Franklin House [located within a larger site that serves as an interpretive center for Franklin's life and work] is re-constructed as a

stainless steel short structure to provide a ghost of its former life. The concept and execution of the project is simple, clear to understand and effective- it aims to bring to life the home of an important historical figure. The constructed frame brings into focus not only the architecture, but other associated memories and historical events.

The Franklin House reconstruction is a simple and competent design that uses historical fragments- in a somewhat literal manner as parcel within a larger urban square- to evoke the greater historical lesson; one that transcends the architecture to include the social and cultural significance of Ben Franklin's life.

Synthesis

***Sacro Bosco* - Decomposition of a Cultural Artifact**

The garden by Vincino Orsini (1513-1584) at Bomarzo, Italy, begun in 1552, is the subject of great speculation and curiosity from both the academic community and the casual observer; its colossal monsters rising from a dark wood in a marshy valley have stimulated both folklore and surrealist interpretations (Darnall, Weil 1984). The mystery of this site can be fully attributed to its creator's persona- Orsini incorporates a program that only a select few- well-versed in Italian literature and thought would comprehend (Darnall, Weil 1984).

The Orsini garden at Bomarzo is arranged into five separate programmatic regions; firstly, the original entry for the site included a

bridge crossing a stream leading downwards to a path and lower garden- an area characterized by large scale sculptural figures (Pegasus Fountain, Turtle carrying Fame, a Nymphaeum and the famed Love Theatre or Belvedere). The level area across the Love Theatre contain other objects and statues, including the Hell Mouth- the outward symbol of the entire garden. The Hippodrome, probably with parterres in Orsini's time is situated directly above the meadow, while the most elevated portion of the garden houses another meadow area and the Temple- approximately twenty meters above the Theatre. The most southern region of the site Orsini placed a large open-mouthed mask topped by a globe and the Orsini crest. Both the Hippodrome (and its geometric garden) and the Theatre are sited in such a manner that during the afternoon and evening hours the two spaces are in complete shade; similarly, from the steps of the Temple one captures a dramatic view of the Orsini castle.

More pronounced than the congenial gardens that surrounds Rome proper- belonging to a similar clientele of wealthy noblemen- Bomarzo is characterized by a path- the walk of surprises. As compared to other gardens such as Villa d'Este at Tivoli with its series of ascending axes and terrace spaces, Bomarzo is an enclosed private garden that is purposely hidden from view, a *giardino segreto* (Miller, 1982). Situated on a hill and isolated from the villa complex, the garden opens itself to the visitor amidst trees, hedges, sculptures and a natural

spring that follows a climbing serpentine path similar to Farnese at Caprarola. A sequence of terraces, recesses, stairs and fountains present themselves to the viewer by design and in progression- one element forms the foil for the next- a succession of shaded paths and open space, expectation and surprise (Miller, 1982).

At Bomarzo the classic pleasure garden is transformed into an interlocking maze of gloomy and bizarre forms, of Arcadia interrupted (Miller, 1982). The mysterious path and enclosed pastoral context become one in the same- Elusian fields to sculptural monstrosities and sensory bewilderment (Miller, 1982).

Confusion and obscurity is a central theme for Orsini- the unceasing appeal toward wonder and fright in the eye of the viewer (Miller, 1982); however, it is incorrect to characterize this garden as simply an irregular solution. Orsini does not comprehend the world as a labyrinth the mythic creatures and objects- vases, walls, benches- that comprise the garden are carefully inscribed (of which many are no longer legible) to reveal to the learned viewer a primer for deciphering the puzzle (Darnall, Weil 1984). The wonder of this garden leads to understanding- the descent into darkness is revealed ultimately as the path towards knowledge. (Darnall, Weil 1984).

To the viewer, this garden is a rite of passage, from which chaos comes order- the wilderness and strange mythic objects and creatures reveal themselves as something greater, tranquil. Unfortunately, the

means to fully understand Orsini's inscriptions and subsequently the method and intent is lost, however, through extrapolation one can summarize that 16th Century Italian chivalry and cultural mores have greatly influence the designer. In this sense, the *Sacro Bosco* is a paradigm of the Italian Renaissance garden as defined by Battisti- an intellectual construct that encompasses all literary and visual disciplines.

Of particular interest to scholars and historians is the significance of the inscribed surfaces found throughout the site; specifically, the tone and character of the verse allows a rare glimpse into the thought and intent of Orsini. The importance of the Italian and Latin inscriptions can not be lost, inferences to the works of Dante, Petrarch and Ludvico Aristo are many and in instances overtly so. Dante and Petrarch are central to the structure of Renaissance art and literature, for example, at Bomarzo, Orsini mirrors the Divine Comedy- Dante's descent into hell and search for Paradise

The 16th Century, in terms of Italian literary and artistic reference is fully available, and as such, one can begin to interpret the garden and ultimately Orsini's intent through its allusions to ancient Rome. The uniqueness perhaps rests on the fact that Orsini's sources differ from other gardens of the time, and region, and also, more importantly, he chose to unify the garden by creating a specific mythology in concert with a satirical commentary on the ostentatious

nature of other gardens within Italy commissioned by wealthy cardinals and princes (Darnall, Weil 1984).

The Renaissance in Italy often observed links between morality and alchemy, all manner of natural philosophy and magic seemed useful for intellectuals of the time to further understand and control personal destiny; in this sense, heaven and earth had a controlled, set character, whilst man had the capacity to communicate with the ordered rational world- heaven, or the chaotic disturbed world-hell. This dichotomy of values is clearly evident; as stated earlier, in the writings of Dante and Petrarch- works that take instruction from the Neo-Platonic structure that underscores Renaissance philosophy. For instance, in the *Divine Comedy* Dante and the guides move through an ordered concentric universe in search of meaning and Divine Love within a landscape that varies and morphs according to the author's soul. In order to understand Paradise he must firstly delve himself into the depths of Hell; not by coincidence, Orsini's garden is motivated by the same premise- one must be willing to encounter a constantly changing and frightening landscape in order to ultimately ascend towards an architecture of optimism.

The *Sacro Bosco* reflects its designer, philosophical and evocative of 16th Century artistic and cultural practice while at the same time it introduces the viewer to humorous and entertaining objects and sculptural artifacts; the garden is a psychological experiment, it evokes

literary references in order to express how the author of the garden may participate with worldly pleasures and ultimately attain Divine Love. The *Sacro Bosco* or sacred wood/grove is more than simply a garden of relaxation and contemplation; it is for its designer a place where 16th Century ideals and cultural mores present themselves as landscape artifact.

For the purposes of this study, it is this fact that is most germane, simply stated, the garden is a decomposition of 16th Century thought and culture: a microcosm of Renaissance life and art. This decomposition is evident physically through inspection of the layout and related architecture, however, similarly, and perhaps more importantly, it is a glimpse into the historical, artistic and literary constructs of the period- a mnemonic device. In this vein, the Bomarzo site is a memory landscape, it brings to light a narrative from the distant past in a unique manner, to quote Benjamin “...storytelling always contained some useful advice or conventional moral from the past; it conveyed experiences within the shared communal life of its listeners.” This is precisely what Bomarzo offers, it evokes the participant to remember the path towards heightened morality and self awareness- that an ostentatious lifestyle is in contradiction to such an edict. The monstrous forms and strange visions are simply the means by which the viewer is made aware of, and recalls his ‘personal responsibilities.’

It does not seem by coincidence that Benjamin makes the claim that often “ objects placed in unique contexts and configurations became a form of shock experience used to reawaken memory.”

Benjamin, of course was writing some 300 years after Bomarzo, yet, the similarities are uncanny, both Orsini and Benjamin are advocating memory and storytelling as integral design devices.

D e s i g n P r o p o s a l

The Design

The design of Old Market square recalls a critical period of Winnipeg's history, an era of increased economic activity due to agriculture and the commerce of agriculture; it is intended to incorporate memory of the time when Winnipeg grew from a small settlement to become an economic and urban presence on the Canadian landscape. Before 1915, Winnipeg's survival and growth was mostly the result of fur trading, however, with the advent of new technologies in farming an influx of capital and optimism spurred a building boom at this time. The design aims to reference this period and its importance in order to evoke the greater story. In other words, the memory of this era- its cultural, economic and historical relevance is evident in the design. This is, then, a memory landscape.

The means of conveying this history is through recalling the physical and cultural footprints of this site. Old Market Square, the focal point for much of the increased economic activity during the building boom at the start of the Twentieth Century has lost nine buildings due to fire or demolition since 1918. Using this data the design uses building placement and loss as the means to evoke a mnemonic narrative, one which offers a glimpse into the cultural, social and economic forces that shaped Winnipeg.

Like Sacro Bosco at Bomarzo- a memory landscape that refers to 16th Century Italian literature and culture- the design of Old Market Square places objects in the form of planting and architectural pieces or remnants to recall a different time- to as Walter Benjamin states in *The City of Collective Memory* “ place objects in unique contexts and configurations to reawaken memory.” The set of artifacts are metaphorical, by design, thereby providing for contemporary programmatic needs and historic meaning by means of expression through landscape art.

The design of Market Square evokes the memory of the site in essentially two ways, firstly, by locating the footprint of buildings and streets no longer present and secondly to refer to its function. For example, at the Leland Hotel site, the perimeter of the building is a continuous paved surface that outlines the physical location of the building, while at the Bijou Theatre site rows of grasses are planted to recall rows of theatre seating. This procedure continues throughout the site keeping in mind the program and its requirements.

The following is a breakdown of the design based on specific memory references from North to South:

A] Leland Hotel

The memory of this landmark hotel- a significant meeting place for politicians, business people and bureaucrats in the last two decades of the 20th Century- on the north east corner of the site is recalled by a large paved surface of granite that outlines the building footprint. In addition, the fire that destroyed the hotel is represented by the random placing of basalt boulders of varying size within this area. To further, the intense black color of the basalt recalls the ferocity of the fire and the charred, burned remains of the building following the fire. The boulders also have discretely placed jets that mist water, like smoldering remains. This area, immediately west of the former Union Bank building and across from City Hall is an informal food court and lunchtime space and as the Leland restaurant did in times past, has the capacity to become a performance space for dance groups, the ballet or symphony.

B] Bijou Theatre

The Bijou theatre, accessible from both the square and Main Street was an instrument of attachment- linking Manitoba to the news of Canada and the world.

The design for this area is separated according to the footprint of related historic row buildings. The theatre portion is inhabited by a series of typical Manitoba cereal grass plantings- barley, wheat planted in rows typical of movie theatre seating. The smaller space to the east, the theatre entrance, is represented by seating- a place of pause for discussion- that follows the theatre lobby outline and a grid of concrete columns that exaggerates its spatial structure. The columns- sculptural light fixtures- are constructed of cast concrete. They are decayed vertical objects within the site and sculptural in intent.

A row of columnar Swedish Poplar defines the southern boundary of the theater. The former Bijou theatre foyer is scheduled to serve primarily as an outdoor dining space with the Union Bank acting as a kitchens, service, preparatory area and place of conversation.

C] Jail site

Winnipeg's first jail was in the basement of a dry goods merchant and, hence, has an importance as the symbolic expression of law and order in an urban setting. The design embodies a series of water jets- with form to express prison bars- that shoot up from the pavement at intervals. The site acts as an interpretive garden, children's play area and casual seating space that aims to give a glimpse into the history of the site.

D] Union Bank Building

The Union Bank building is indicative of Winnipeg's changing economic climate during the turn of the century- moving away from fur trading and frontier homesteads to one of agriculture and the commerce of agriculture. The site immediately south of the Union Bank building, formerly a commercial row building is identified by the placing of decayed limestone walls, one running east-west and another north-south that mirrors the building's foundation. A row of planting to the north marks the northern edge of the building. This area is closely linked to the Bijou site, and, therefore, becomes

perimeter dining spaces and informal gallery and street performance areas.

E] Central Fire Station

The Central Fire Station, located at the south-west corner of the site was the most dominant feature of the Market Square site during the turn of the century; it is part of an infrastructure of services in order to more fully meet the needs of a growing population.

With this in mind, the memory of the fire station site to the south west corner is identified by a bosque of trees that follows the footprint of the building. The bosque, given its dense overhead canopy has the capacity to become a more private space for a range of activities- casual seating area for individuals or groups, a performance space for theatre and music, a meeting space for artists and the creative community within in the area, a classroom or instructional space for the Red River Community College. The former location of a hose tower is recalled as a clock tower to become an urban landmark for the site and surrounding district.

F] Weigh Scale

The weigh scale, located north of the fire station site was at the turn of the century a place for vehicles to stop, today the space is recalled in a similar manner- as a hard surfaced area depressed below grade level as a space for people to sit and 'people watch.'

G] Commercial Blocks

While the entire Market Square site is expected to host a variety of activities, the commercial block of buildings immediately north of the former Ashdown complex is recalled as an outdoor theatre and performance space that has both an indoor and outdoor component. Such an amenity will allow theatre, dance and music, and a range of other groups a formal space for performing year round. The shape of the theatre is semi-circular and backing Main Street- to minimize traffic noise- with a series of paving and topiary plantings as extensions of the curve moving west in a serpentine pattern. The topiary and seating is also an expression of music and dance wafting through and into the other parts of the open space. The paving and plantings allow this performance area to continue throughout the site, giving

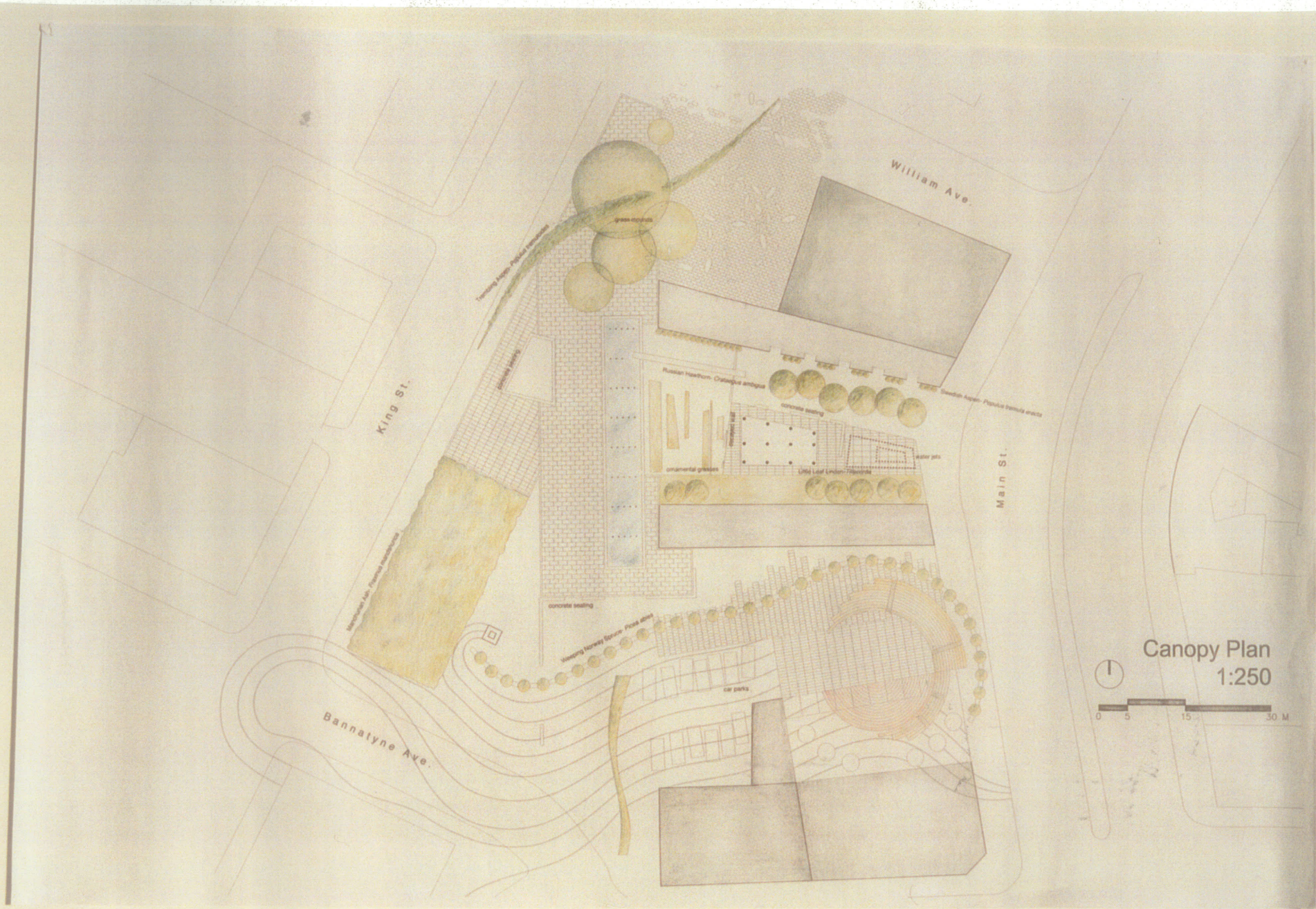
a sense of continuity to the entire site. In addition, this area extends from the open space into the ground level of the restored Ashdown retail warehouse.

H] Albert Street Fragment

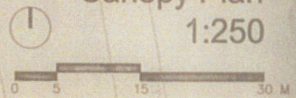
Albert Street- which at the turn of the century ran continuously from Bannatyne Avenue north toward William Avenue- is important since it is indicative of the changing urban landscape of Winnipeg due to increased levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. This specific notion is recalled primarily by a large pool of water and ornamental fountains that run north to south, parallel to Main Street. The intent of the water element is to recall the memory of Albert Street using a material other than paving in order to separate public from semi-private spaces within the site. To further, the bottom of the pool is surfaced with granite blocks. The pool serves as an oasis, an integral focus, especially during the summer months, from the hard surface material that exists throughout much of the site. Albert Street is also recalled by the historic outer Market Square site, now a transformed outdoor meeting space that caters to large

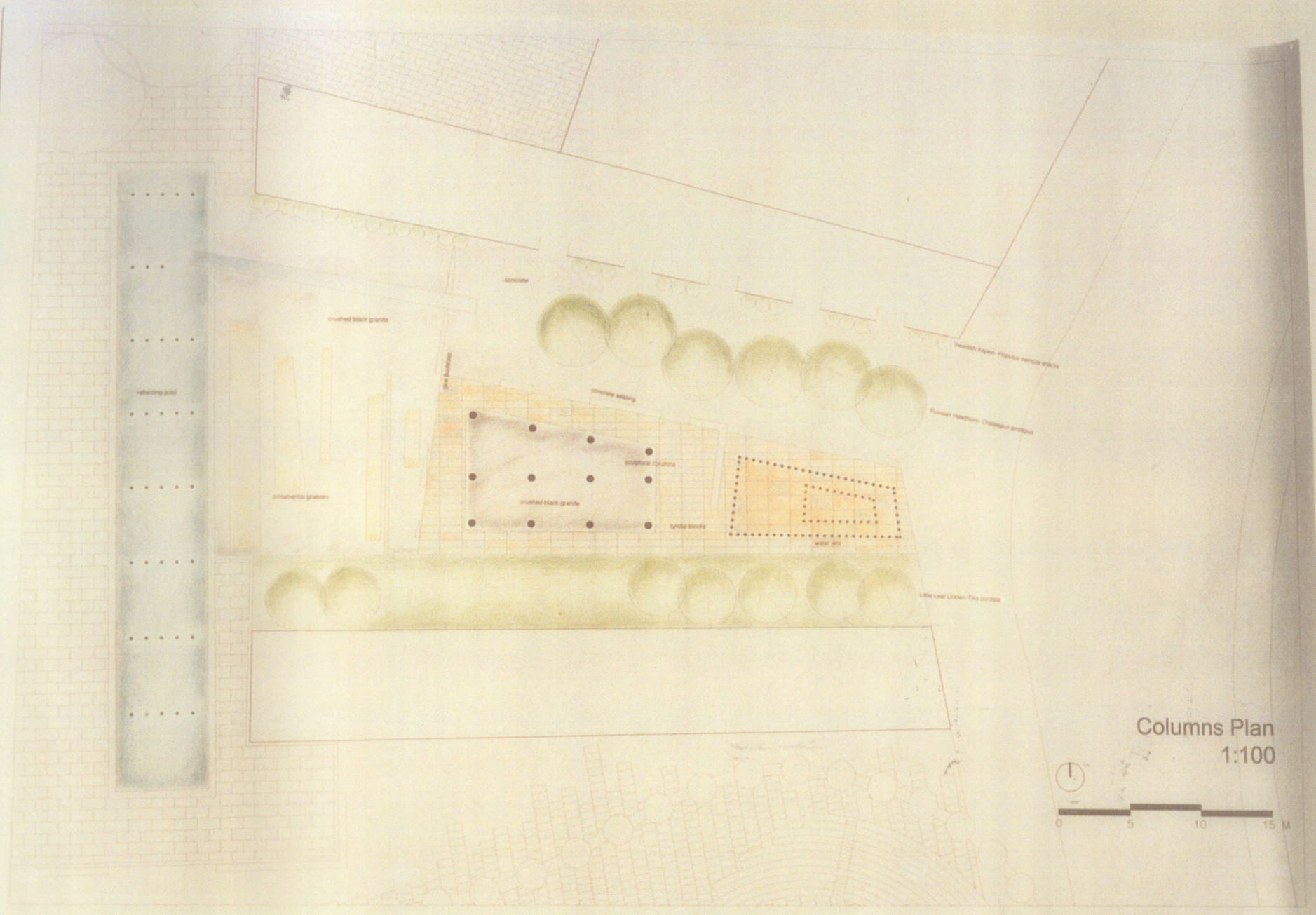
groups of people for public events, political speeches
and festivals during the summer months.

The assertion of Sacro Bosco at Bomarzo as precedent for the
Market Square re-design may at first glance seem improbable,
however, as indicated, both offer a similar historical position: that
collective memory and the re-living of portions of that memory leads to
a greater awareness of historical continuity and its relevance socially
and culturally.



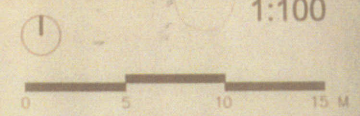
Canopy Plan
1:250

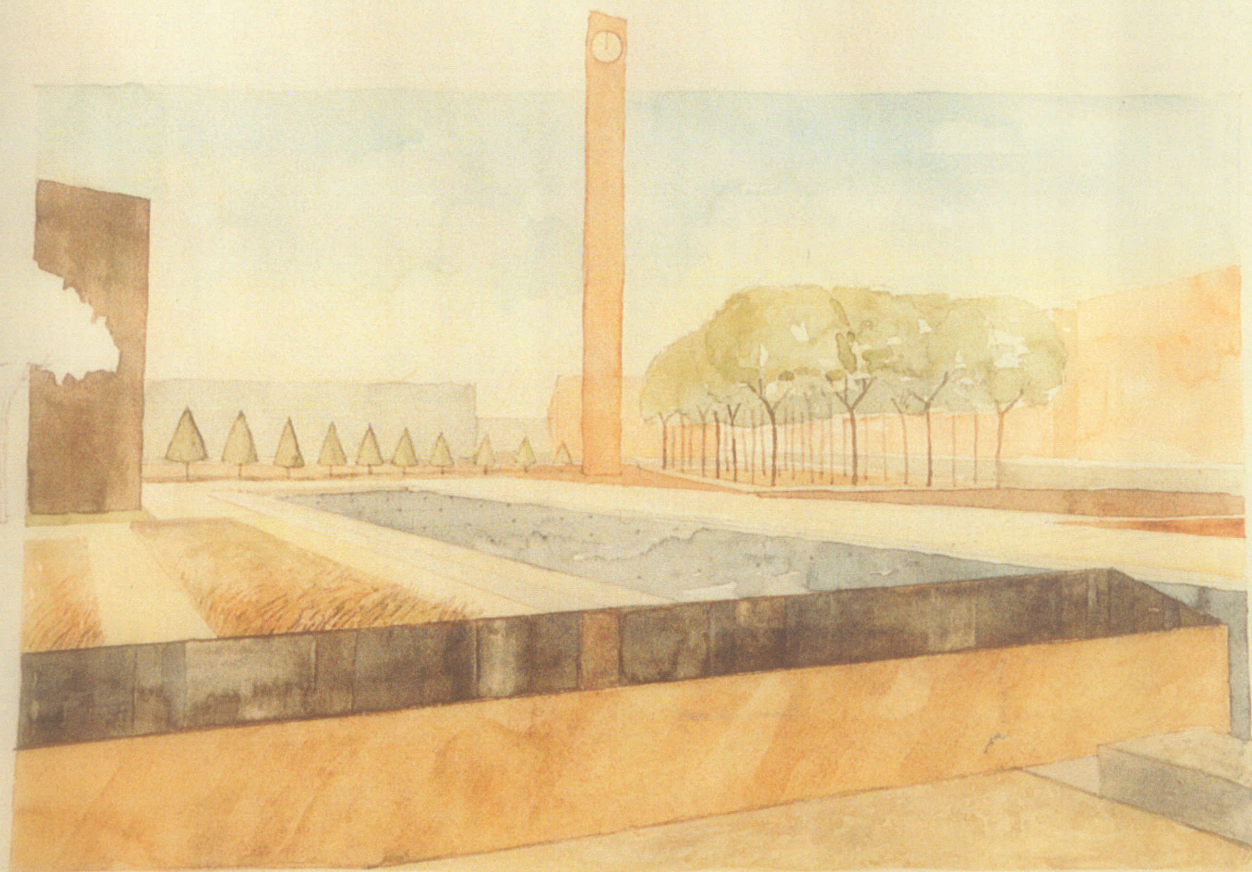




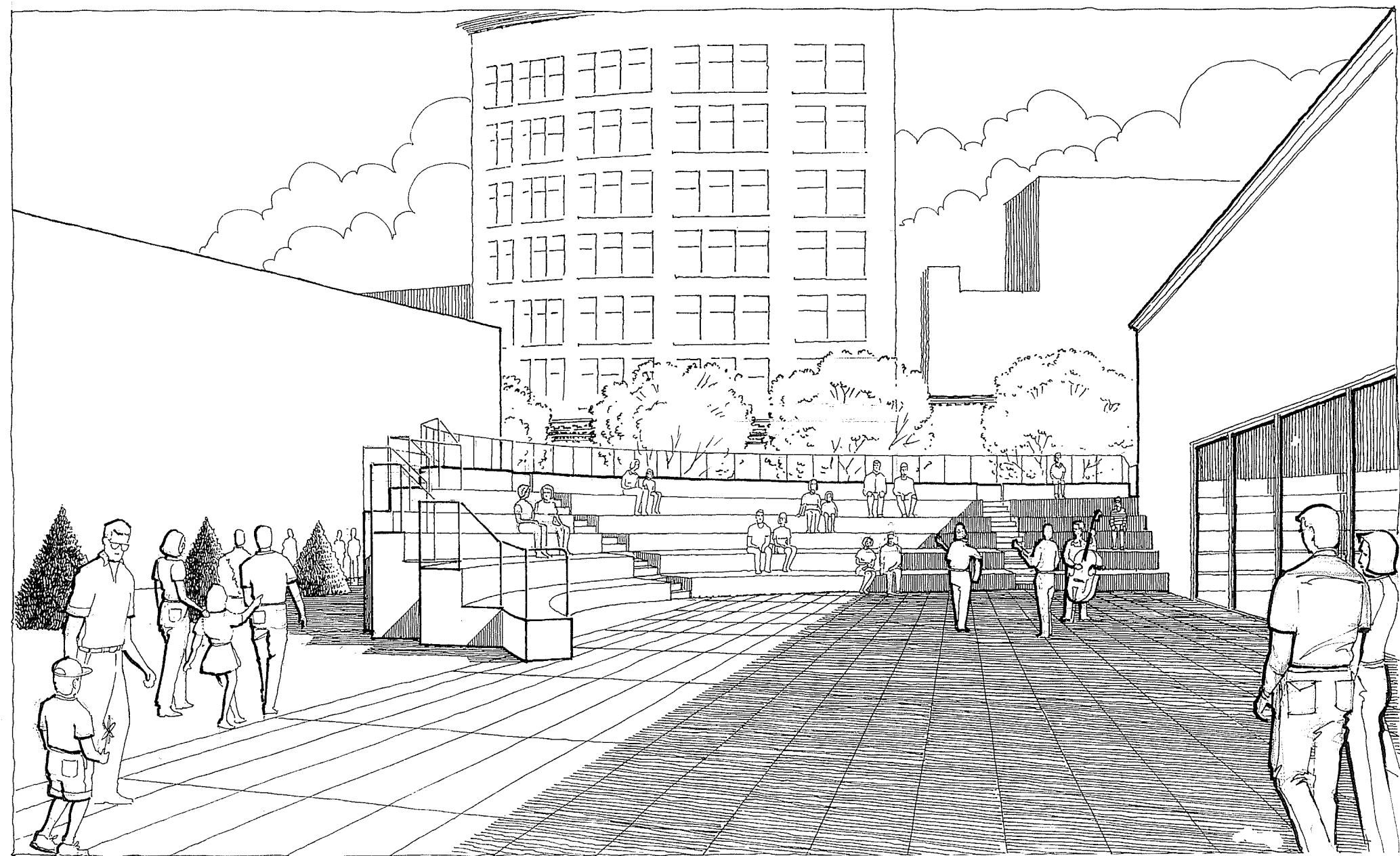


Theatre Plan
1:100









E p i l o g u e

The challenge of this practicum has been to fulfill the programmatic requirements of a changing urban space, to anticipate future needs based on the building and development patterns currently underway within the district. This task has proven to be difficult- coupled with a strong historical and urban context- pre-conceptions and strict intuitive reactions to this information has at times delayed the development and progression of the design. Clearly, the understanding of how the site is changing has been central for design progression. In retrospect, the challenges of the program stem from the fact that the Market Square site has the potential to become a memorable urban space given its location and urban-cultural context- that this responsibility has the capacity to magnify errors and lapse in judgement.

With the program in place, the next critical step was to synthesize the historical layers of the site and determine why and how collective memory can influence the design. One can quickly understand the historical dimension of this district, its architecture exudes a quality and place-ness rarely found elsewhere. This in itself is obviously not enough to justify a new approach for the site; however, with closer inspection one can appreciate how the current state of the site does not firstly, reflect this historic importance, and secondly, its

present state is incapable of accommodating the changes presently underfoot within the district – namely, the new Red River Community College west of the site, the redevelopment of the former Ashdown retail building and proposed initiatives linking north Portage and the Forks site.

With this in mind, the central theme of collective memory and recall begins to take shape, the design makes reference to historical data such as building footprint and use to demonstrate how this district was central to the building boom experienced at the turn of the century due to an increasingly agrarian economy. It is this fact that propels the intent and rationale for the design.

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