

THE NEGLECTED URBAN LANDSCAPE

University of Manitoba
Master of Landscape Architecture
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**Reinterpretation & Interaction
The Neglected Urban Landscape**

BY

Wai-Tung Phyllis Cheung

**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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Abstract

The neglected spaces are the spaces in between the buildings. Though they function as part of the city's infrastructure system, they are rarely included in its inventory of assets. These forgotten spaces remain as honest reflections of our urban lives, without being corrupted by popular and corporate cultures. Occupied a substantial amount of urban land, the neglected spaces represent the no-man's lands that remain emptied for most time of the day. The formation of the neglected spaces, their physical and cultural attributes and potential were examined in a series of site studies and literature reviews. This research formed the basis for art installation, which a presumably dangerous neglected space was transformed into a venue of human events and a stage that has ignited people's sensation. The installation was used as a tool to engage people to interact with the neglected realm of the city, in which they are able to see the city from a different perspective. The recognition of the existence and values of the neglected spaces could reaffirm our existence in the landscape that sustains us. The neglected spaces stand as independent critiques of urban situations, in which we will be able to obtain a better understanding of our cities. Networks formed by the neglected spaces have the potential to become sites for temporary festive events, pedestrian precincts and even permanent businesses. The introduction of alternative use to these spaces and their future design, require the collaboration from design professions, government bodies and private ownerships. As the mediator of people and their environments, landscape architects can unfold the hidden stories of the landscape like site and land artists. When functional design is infused with Art, landscape architect would to express the emotional power of the neglected landscape in a poetic fashion, that will affect human conditions positively.

Abstract

Introduction The purpose of this research is to investigate the cultural and design issues of neglected spaces in the contemporary urban landscape. These are the marginal spaces in the urban realm, resulting from a lack of coherence in urban design. In virtually every city, a similar labyrinth of alleys, driveways and empty spaces lies forgotten between and behind the beautiful buildings by which cities choose to define themselves. Indeed, these forgotten spaces also play a supportive role for the city as important as that of streets, avenues and pedestrian walkways. However, they are rarely designed to accommodate human activities, and are often excluded in the representation of the city.

Neglected spaces represent a significant percentage of a city's public space yet they remain undeveloped. Interestingly, traces of a city's past, such as industrial artifacts, old signs painted on walls and architectural elements from earlier stages of development remain intact in these spaces, a record of the evolution of our urban lives. The high walls of adjacent buildings create interesting visual perspectives. Narrow alleys and century-old passages lined with brick and hewn stone create an interesting play of light and shadow and provide rare, intimate spaces within cities. Such places, hidden from view and the noisy clamour of the streets, may offer opportunities to develop tranquil oasis-like spaces where the exotic whisper of the urban heart may be heard.

The intent of this study is to seek a better understanding of the urban landscape through interaction and intervention. Landscape is the result of a specific set of interactions between humans and environments; it shapes culture even as culture constructs landscape. As landscape represents both humans and environments, it is clear that the reciprocity between the two is essential in environmental design. This study will demonstrate the use of art to reveal the hidden relationship between humans and landscape. Using art as an eye opening tool to assist people to interact with the place and discover its unique qualities. An installation project is carried out to investigate the relationship between artist, context and people. It is also an opportunity to understand the art making process of using a simple intervention to elevate an ordinary urban experience.

This research also poses a challenge to the profession of landscape architecture. It is the role of landscape architects to provide outdoor environments that are aesthetically pleasing, ecologically sound and intellectually stimulating. However, in the last few decades, it seems that the profession has been focusing mainly on the functional and ecological aspects of design, while neglecting the emotional power of the landscape. Like land art, the medium of landscape architecture is our landscape. However, land artists in the seventies were more successful in extracting meanings and provoking thoughts about the natural landscape. Their works were a reflection of the massive environmental movement in society and they created artworks that reconnected people with nature through ecology. At the same time, we, as landscape architects fail to reflect the social and cultural condition of the city in our designs. There are only a few landscape architects like, have developed a recognizable design language concurrent with the land artists.

The significance of this research is the recognition of the importance of neglected urban spaces. The result will be that people will be encouraged to discover these spaces and to develop a deeper appreciation of the city that sustains us. A better understanding of the urban landscape may also show us that the city can nurture us and reaffirm our existence in ways normally associated only with more natural landscape. The installation project is intended to express a poetic vision in which the built environment of the urban landscape can be mediated using aesthetics and design to create a form of urban/landscape art. This challenge to the conventional understanding and accepted uses of urban space by utilizing the design disciplines and aesthetic considerations of landscape architecture to develop neglected spaces may provide an opportunity to bring both delight and people back into the neglected urban landscape.

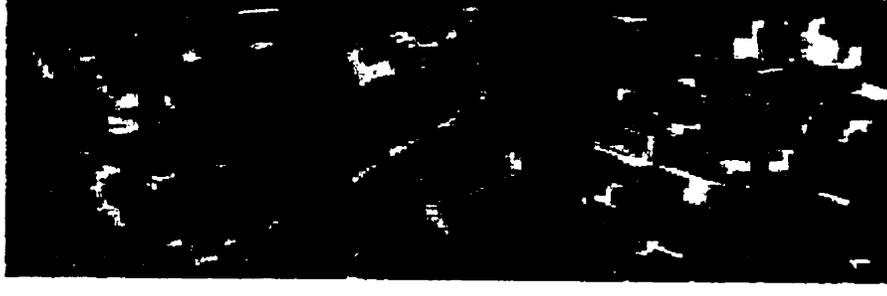
Background

Every city is made up of numerous layers of inter-dependent infrastructure. In many North American cities, buildings, streets and open spaces have most often been designed as discrete or individual elements in the urban landscape. Very few building designs address the pattern of the city. Instead a designer would often "conceive his or her buildings as virtually the only structure on earth". (Trelb, 1991 ;93) The result is a lack of coherence in urban design and a confusing and complex web of marginal spaces. The difference is that although they too accommodate cars, all manners of service vehicles and much of a city's not-so-temporary waste storage, rarely do they accommodate people. They are degraded to the back side of the city, built with no users in mind and not intended to be seen by people. They represent the urban forms which are neglected and forgotten by the city dwellers.

We are likely more comfortable with places that depict prosperity and harmony, as opposed to neglected spaces which seem latent and ambiguous. To the majority of the population, the neglected spaces illustrate the unrepresentable side of the city, and they appear to be so undesirable that most people would choose to avoid them. To the majority of the population, the neglected spaces lack cultural meaning and human purpose. Their functions are simply for temporary storage, circulation and waste disposal. As a result, these spaces remain neglected as Sola-Morales, claims that, " they are foreign to the urban system, mentally exterior in the physical interior of the city." (Sola-Morales, 1996 ;2) Nevertheless, These neglected spaces represent a significant percentage of a city's public spaces yet they remain undeveloped. When one is presented with a figure ground of the neglected spaces in any North American city, one would be surprised by the intricate connections made by these spaces. It will prompt us to question the origination of these spaces and the reason for their countless presence in the urban core. The following sections would address the above and other questions pertaining to the neglected space in the contemporary cities.

The Formation of Neglected Space

Despite their ambiguous nature, the neglected spaces have sharp edges defined by the backs of buildings. Throughout urban history, these spaces have formed endless corridors and open spaces in the urban fabric.

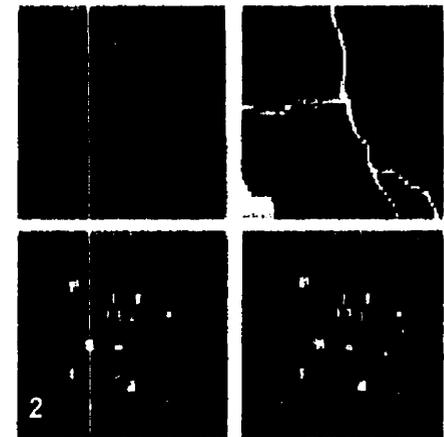


The neglected spaces formed intricate networks in Winnipeg's urban core.

The neglected spaces in the North American cities are the result of continuous urban development and are shaped to a large degree by America's ideology of land. Since Columbus first discovered the continent, America has become the experimental ground of new orders. The colossal grid was originally used as a measuring agent in the rural landscape in the early 17th century, and later was introduced as base tool for urban planning. Driven by economic factors, land slowly became a hot commodity; many developers saw the grid pattern as a standardized tool for vast land operation, which can be easily extended in all directions and manners. (Kostof, 1991) The grid system has later become the basis of many western cities' structures despite geographical differences.

The formal urban grid has generated creative constraints on urban planning and paved the way for a fragmented cityscape. Buildings in the American cities are designed with little context in mind, and instead "play their own game" within the limitations of the grid system." (Gandelsonas, 1999; 24) Kevin Lynch also speak of the American city as "great machine consisting of small, autonomous, undifferentiated parts which all have clearly differentiate functions". (Lynch, 1981) Unlike American cities, European cities are the result of a more organic urban evolution. Buildings in European cities are designed to fit into the context, as Gandelsonas called these buildings "partial and localized urban European interventions carved the existing fabric." (Gandelsonas, 1999.; 47)

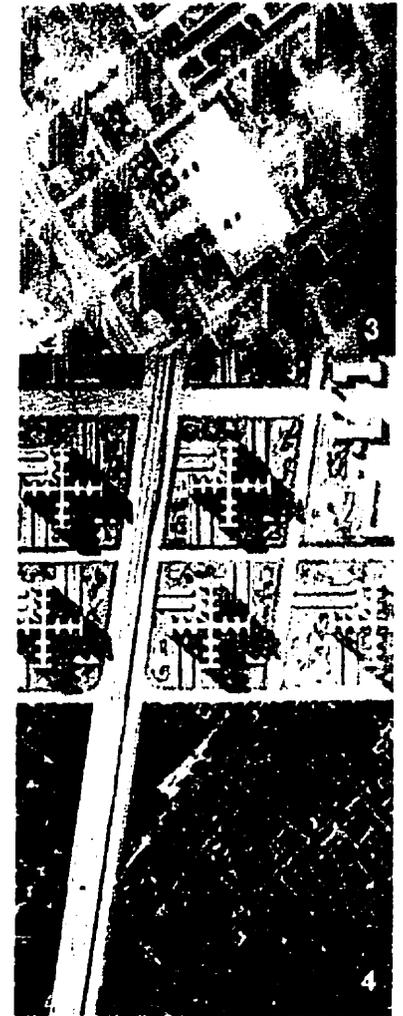
In the post World War II period, modernist designers reaffirmed the idea of America as the test site of a new order. Architects of Le Corbusier's generation despised the quotation of the past and they hoped to "erect a new awareness of time, a sense of now". (Sennet, 1991; 173) They believed the supremacy of human intervention - their insensitive imposition of super highways and skyscrapers could virtually erase history and nature. Le Corbusier's plan Voisin manifests the modernist's vision of sleek urbanism, which is about clarity, function and simplicity. His proposal of sky-high buildings, which float in a sea of trees and people walking on elevated walkways, shows no sign of street scene and neighborhoods.



Drawings by Gandelsonas illustrate three elements in North America urban design, which the grid iron plan, the scattered contemporary buildings and the alleys embeded in the cityscape.

To implement the plan Voisin would have meant wiping out and leveling the whole medieval quarter of the Marais. Le Corbusier intended to set the viewer at a far away vantage point to showcase the mechanical pattern of the proposed buildings. The most noticeable element in his Plan Voisin's drawing, are the repetition of the X-shape towers. The pattern of the X-shaped towers could be imposed on Marais or all of Paris, as it has no relation with the vernacular landscape but simply proclaim a human order on nature. Le Corbusier had rendered the drawings to highlight architectural order. All of the drawings depicted an abstract environment which seemed to be too clean and too formal to incorporate any sign of human activity. This reflected the modernist's preoccupation with two-dimensional planning rather than looking at the city in a three-dimensional sense. Seduced by the bold and high-tech utopian vision, American architects and designers were eager to break from the reliance on traditional European models and forms. (Carranza, 1999) They slowly transformed American cities into landscapes of discrete architecture, reflecting to Le Corbusier's vision of the ideal city, which consisted of 95% open space and 5% of scattered skyscrapers. (Gandelsonas, 1999) Buildings continue to be designed with no context in mind and the spaces around buildings are treated with least priority. The number of the informal undesigned spaces in between the buildings increased at the same time that the modernists began to take over the urban landscape.

Identity & Image Standing in a hostile relationship with context, the modernist designers transformed the city into a landscape of isolated architectural objects. The modernist's city is so abstract that the street system and buildings are "homogenous plastic" and "incompatible with figural space." (Gandelsonas, 1999; 28) The sanitization and neutralization of the urban landscape have undermined local character and diversity which contribute to a loss of identity. Helen Armstrong defines identity as an already existing distinct quality, a character which remains unchanged under varying aspects or conditions. (Armstrong, 1999) However cities today seem to ignore their existing identities and idolize the image of the perfect city promoted by commercial developers. Image is an ideal vision projected by the inhabitants of the city, which does not necessarily exist or reflect the local conditions. Armstrong calls it "a mental picture, idea, or concept" and "the impression a public figure strives to create for the public". (Armstrong, 1999; .287)

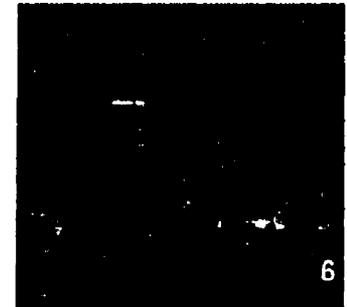


Le Corbusier's version of the ideal city, which consists of 95 % open spaces and 5% of mechanically looking skyscrapers.

Image of Contemporary Cities

In order to promote an image of prosperity, many cities choose to define themselves through flamboyant buildings. In the early part of the twentieth century, the skyscraper was the essential element of contemporary North American cityscapes. In the likeness of New York, and Chicago, many cities have presented themselves as cities of architecture. The presence of tall commercial buildings seems to reflect the economic well being of these cities. While tourists flock to buy postcards of the New York and Chicago skyline, many local people have organized architectural tours to showcase the urban landscape that they are proud of. The skyscrapers not only house offices and retail spaces, but also serve as gigantic billboards for corporations in the capitalist society.

We continually transform the city of collective spaces into a city of business icons. Urban cores have become so homogenized, that their identities are bundled up with corporate images. (Armstrong, 1999) For example, Hong Kong is associated with the Hong Kong Bank building, Chicago is with the Sears Tower, and New York with the Empire State Building. For people in the Far East, the western skyscraper is the symbol of prosperity and technological advancement. Many new Asian city centers and urban redevelopments are modeled after the western world. They aspire "to rub shoulders with the developed world and its slick urban imagery, the developing world positions itself on the receiving end of architectural concepts and construction technology that cannot be manufactured or read as part of a natural evolutionary process." (Hamdan, 1999; 29) As a result, many new city plans and urban renewal programs are implemented with western ideology without tuning for the local culture. Walking in the downtown of Kuala Lumpur, one has the same urban experience as in its western counterpart. The sky-high Twin Tower stands awkwardly among low-rise commercial buildings. Surrounded by hilly region, the twin tower has little to do with the local urban fabric nor its natural surroundings. The vernacular landscape begins to give way to a popular ideology of how a modern city should look.



The skyline of New York (top) is privatised by corporate icons. Hong Kong share the same phenomena in the construction of the city. (middle) The Pui Dong district in Shanghai follow closely to the industrialized countries which end up losing its local aura.

Creating an Identity - Urban Character

"A place is particular, a tapestry of woven contexts: enduring and ephemeral, local and global, related and unrelated, now and then, past and future. Landscape context as a fabric whose strands are narratives of landscape elements and features, both the persistent and the fleeting. Many stories have been shaped over tens of thousands of years, others over several human lifetimes, still others are just now emerging. There are deep stories, dialogues that have become interwoven, embedded, in place over time. Every place has ongoing stories, recognized, concealed, and lost. Some take longer to tell than others, some are short: some have ending, others are open, still unfolding. All that has happened in a place, all the lives lived there contribute to a sense of place; identity is defined by the common and by the rare alike. An idiosyncratic anomaly like Watts Towers in Los Angeles, a fantasy built from discarded crockery and scraps of metal, can help define identity of place." (Spim, 1998)



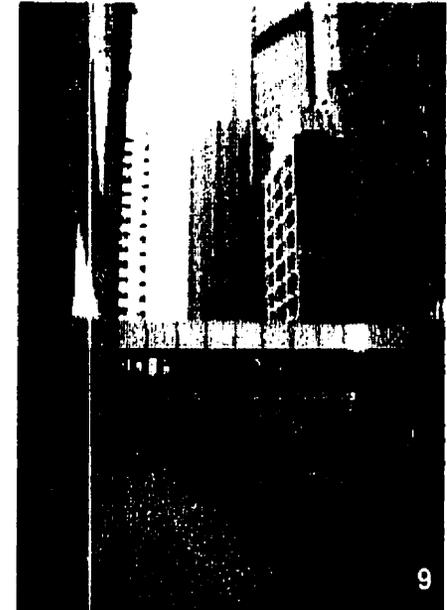
"To utopian Expressionists and Nazi purists alike, the American skyscraper was an unacceptable urban symbol. It was a monument to self-interest and the aggressive competitiveness of capitalism; its symbolism of laissez faire was therefore wholly inappropriate either for a cooperative socialist or for selfless loyalty to a monolithic state." (Kostof, 1991. P.323)

Due to the homogenization of the urban landscape and decentralization of the city, most of our downtowns have long lost their richness and diversity. Beginning in the late seventies, the growing dominance of the service industry has contributed to the decentralization of the urban cores. Offices and businesses are moved out to the suburb where land is plenty and cheap. Downtowns throughout North America, are dominated by "fields of parking, with object-buildings and/or fragments of urban fabric sitting on them". (Gandelsonas, 1991; 37) Since many businesses have moved to the shopping malls in the suburbs, the main streets in some older cities look like ghost towns at night. Scattered with abandoned buildings and vacant lots, there are only few places where people gather to shop, 'hangout', show off, cruise, and meet for movie, lunch, coffee, or a drink. The downtowns are no longer where the action is, they have been fragmented and homogenized until they function as extended suburban shopping malls. (Lippard, 1997) The character of the urban core has been weakened and blurred, as the once spirited and peopled place has fallen into a state of dullness.

To understand our cities, we should search for their identities, rather than the images promoted by the local people. Identity consists of characters which are the results of the integration of human actions, social changes and the physical evolution of the city. Character is hard to create and to recreate. We can design

beautiful infrastructure but it does not necessarily mean that it will produce the intended character. Character in an urban space, like that in a novel, "develops through displacements which encounter resistance". (Sennet, 1991 ; 197) The formation of urban characters/spirit of the place requires interactions between landscape and human activities. Sometimes, where a space is designed for a specific purpose, performing other functions creates the best space ever, generating a unique sense of urban character. In the central business district in Hong Kong, there are many open air platforms which are used as skywalks, connecting all the commercial buildings. These spaces are kept clean with only a few passersby during business hours. They represent the voids in the city which contrast greatly with the highly populated streets in Hong Kong. These platforms are designed for navigation purposes in the central business districts, with only a few benches for people at lunch on exceptionally cool days. However, during weekends and public holidays, these neutral spaces are taken over by Filipino home-care workers. These once empty plazas are transformed into a urban bazaar, with people singing, dancing, picnicking, discussing their homeland politics and conducting catholic mass. A formal and restricted space with the introduction of human activities can become a lively place. With the additions of unusual elements, a space will derived with an unique character which designers could not foresee.

As the planning ideology, culture, light, material, time and climate in each city are different, the urban characters of each city should exemplify its local history and culture. For example, the cities in the North-eastern United States are very similar to the European cities, in particular the way their city blocks were defined by continuous, streets walls which recall various European lineage; jagged skylines created by skyscrapers. On the other hand, the look of younger cities is characterized by a higher percentage of scattered buildings and parking lots, due to the decentralization of the urban core. Businesses and industries are now located in many smaller cities which are scattered in a multinucleated fashion at the edges of metropolitan areas, made possible by the invention of the automobile. As every city's character is the result of its own history, so a city's character can only be 'weak' but never absent. However, the contemporary urban landscapes are so homogenized, it is difficult to distinguish each city's character.



An anti-space at the Central Business District in Hong Kong. It remain lifeless and cold during office hours. However, it will be transformed into an urban bazaar by Filipino homecare workers during weekends.

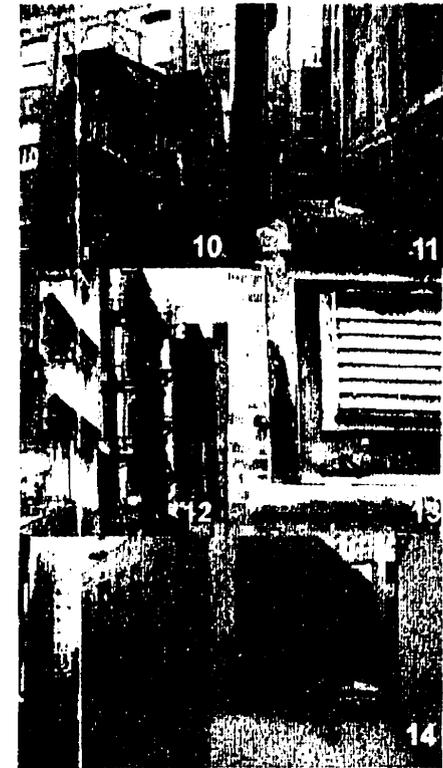
The neglected spaces reveal the evolution of our urban history as the stories of our lives are written all over on the unpainted walls. They can be called the unpretentious spaces that convey our true urban character, since they are not maintained to promote a popular image. As they are excluded from the general depiction of the city, their negative image can serve as a critique and as a possible alternative to the other formal spaces in the city. Through examining the neglected spaces in our city with that of other cities, we will be able to see how the urban landscape and its inhabitants influence each other in a recurrent way. The following section is intended to investigate the relationship between the neglected spaces with local people, time, culture, scale and movement. The primary data are photographs, travelling journals, sketches and notes recording the sound, smell, imagery and personally experiences of the places. The analyses are about three urban cores where I have been: Hong Kong, Winnipeg and Boston. Each is unique in terms of its geographical locations, diversified culture and distinct heritage. Winnipeg and Hong Kong are part of the study because of my roots in their histories and culture. Hong Kong, once a British colony is the melting pot of eastern and western cultures, which generates a vibrant and exotic urban environment. As the key factor to the evolution of the city is strictly commercial, the money-oriented mentality of the locals has heavily affected the way they see and interact with the city. On the other hand, Winnipeg is located in the Canadian prairie where the most distinct landscape element is the horizon. While development in the city has slowed down after the boom in the industrial/ warehouse period, one can still find buildings of different eras in the downtown. There are a few high-rise buildings rising from the prairie landscape while the rest of the city is very low density. As one of the oldest cities in America, Boston is famous for its rich heritage & culture. The city is divided into many unique districts each with its own spatial structure. Tight urban spaces and a confusing circulation system make the journey through downtown Boston an interesting one. The following is not a comparative study but an investigation of the qualities of neglected urban space in relation to local culture and environmental elements.

Discovering Urban Identity

The Collection of Time – Time as Urban Artifacts Ignored by the city dwellers, neglected spaces are the happy recipients of historical events. Interesting traces of a city's past, like industrial artifacts, old pipes, painted-on walls and architectural elements from an earlier time, remain intact in these spaces. Time begins to give places their own character when it services the evolution of the city, even at times of destruction. "The evidence of this process is the fragmented condition of the object, a piece of broken pipe or weathered timber, that has become part of the human world, altered and worn down like the human body." (Sennet, 1991 ; 175) In Boston, the edges of these spaces are often lined with red bricks faded by time. On the surface of the brick walls, one can find rusty stains and jade green mosses, which add to the vibrant local palette. The cobblestone paving is all smooth after years of abrasion by pedestrians and vehicles. As one enters these spaces, one might find that time seems to stop. As the walls seem to get closer to the viewer, they whisper the hidden secrets of the city.

One could determine the age of the city by looking at its neglected spaces. In places with newer development, like the downtowns of these cities, the historical evidence of the neglected spaces is less prominent. Since many North Americans are devoted to keeping everything clean, these spaces are often empty. In the city of Winnipeg, there 's a squad responsible for painting metallic gray to cover graffiti. The grounds of the neglected spaces are constantly cleaned and free of obstacles, as the city government has to ensure easy access for fire-engine and snow plows at all times. The appearance of these modern spaces is so clean that even a personal touch would look out of place. It seems that the only sign of human presence is a few pieces of garbage accidentally omitted from the trashcans.

Culture & Usage Not only does the urban landscape reflect our culture and social conditions, it is also the result of our culture – the way we live. In order to have a better understanding of our place within the city, we need to study the neglected spaces. Since they are not maintained and renovated by people, they reveal all, without hesitation and pretence. Boston is a renowned religious, educational and cultural center in the



"The city is the ultimate memorial of our struggles and glories; it is where the pride of the past is set on display" (Kostof, 1991. P.16) Time exerts its influences on cities' neglected spaces Wrought iron staircase in Winnipeg's Exchange district (fig.10) and that of New York (fig. 12, showing different level of architectural details but both ar reflectign the past glories of each city. Faded brick wall in the heart of Boston (fig. 11) and the stripped painted window in Winnipeg's Exchange both contrast greatly with the graffiti free spaces in downtown Winnipeg.

United States. Bostonians' love for fine living is shown in the details of their lives as one can find numerous bookstores, flower stands, sidewalk cafes, galleries in the neighborhoods in Boston. The residents of the Beacon Hill area in Boston are particularly good at taking care of their landscape. As one of the upscale historic neighborhoods in the city, Beacon Hill is filled with fine architecture from the nineteenth century. The spaces in between the heritage buildings look equally attractive as the front facades. The spaces in between buildings are no longer neglected as one finds personal touches all over them: leaves overhanging from the courtyard fence, a black wrought iron staircase accentuates the red brick walls, white-washed stone window sills with flower planters and flags hanging outside the windows. All of these visual elements contribute to intimate and personal spaces. The same amount of attention for details is applied to both the front and the back of the buildings. The residents in the Beacon Hill area demonstrate their love for their landscape and also their lives, as they treat all aspect of the landscape with care.

There is a saying in Hong Kong that "land is gold". The limited supply of land in Hong Kong has long driven the city's economy. People tend to make good use of every single inch of land. There are newspaper stands, eateries, barbers and shoemakers occupying the space in between buildings. Due to cheap rent and low set up cost, these spaces are filled with small businesses, owned by entrepreneurs who have limited capital. When small businesses begin to inhabit the space, they also bring life into it. The metal sheds, overhangs and store signs start to create a visual conversation within the space. To many Hong Kong people, time, like land, is also a commodity, so they would not care if they had to pass through a narrow alley as long as it is a shorter way to their destination. Day and night these spaces are filled with people who stop for their errands at the little shops.

Unlike Hong Kong people, Winnipeggers avoid the neglected spaces and regard them as urban wasteland. Very often, people associate these spaces with robberies, drug dealings and human waste. As a result, people are afraid to linger there, so it is hard to find any people in these spaces. The only neglected spaces in Winnipeg that I have seen people at night would probably be those in the bar district in the Exchange on weekend nights. On John Hirsch Avenue, which is flanked by the backs of buildings with a low degree of



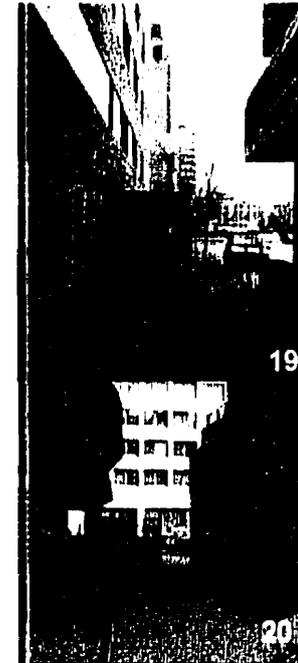
The neglected spaces in the Beacon Hill District are not neglected by its residents as they show a high level of maintenance and personal touch. (fig. 15, 16) On the other hand, in the business district in Hong Kong where land is in demand, the narrow gaps between the buildings are filled with small businesses. (fig. 17, 18)

streetscaping, one would find hotdog stands, patio parties and commercial trikes carrying the bar goers through the alleys and passageways from bar to bar. It support the notion that people would more likely go to a place where there are some forms of human activity. People would not enter these spaces since they are physically uninviting and few designers would be interested to design these spaces are at the bottom of the design priority. The American concept of unlimited supply of land is one of the contributing factors behind this phenomenon. If we have 'unlimited' land to use, why should we focus on these narrow gaps?

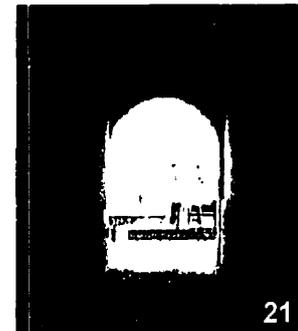
Light and Shadow Our perception of a space, its edge and its texture are functions of the way light reflects from the surface it strikes. The natural light changes drastically in the day and reveals a new dimension of the space. On the other hand, shadows in the neglected spaces create a temporary frame, controlling what we see. It frames separate from the context, focuses our attention by screening part of the site. The colors and ambience of these spaces are also transformed with the intensity of the light, throughout various times of the day. Different textures in these spaces create an interplay of light and shadow. The narrow alleys and century-old passages, lined with brick and hewn stone, bears a warm tone of beige and red; spaces in between modernist buildings, equipped with mechanical unit always look neutral and still.

In Hong Kong's central business district in Hong Kong, since the neglected spaces are very narrow and flanked by tall buildings, sunlight does not penetrate these corridors. The dust and pollutants in the air diffuse sunlight, so the spaces always appear gray and misty. Walking through these long and narrow corridors, we can hear the water dripping from the pipes, landing in puddles of silverish-gray. With moisture clinging to our skin, our consciousness is heightened in a confined place, as one would rush as to escape from the claustrophobic corridors.

In Winnipeg, where we have plenty of direct sunlight and wider neglected spaces, the colors of the walls appear to be washed out. Under the intense midday sun, the modernist buildings have disappeared into hues of beige and gray, the only way to identify them is through their logos on the top of buildings. Later in the day,



A neglected space in Winnipeg's downtown which remains emptied for the most part of the day. (fig. 19, 20)

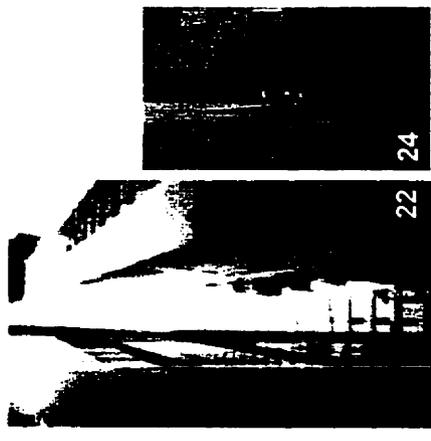


The shadow in a passageway in Winnipeg creates a temporary frame and control the way we see.. (fig. 21)

the building facades are covered with into washes of gold and yellow, the once neutral and blended landscape has become romanticized. At night, the neglected spaces are illuminated with lights from the streets and parkades. The glowing volumes of these spaces are set against the dark buildings, becoming part of a surrealist painting. To many design critics, the modernist buildings might seem to be unadorned and somewhat inhumanized, but their neutral facades serve as a perfect canvas to reflect the changes in light.

Scale When walls are arranged to form definite enclosures, the spaces are given the clarity of shape, proportion, and extent. (Moore, Mitchell, Turnbull, 1993). In the neglected spaces, the height of the enclosing walls is usually more than twice its width. These walls create dramatic, enclosed spaces, contrasting with the adjacent wide and open streets which generate an extreme sense of drama (Greenble, 1981). Some of the neglected spaces in Winnipeg are so narrow that, they contrast sharply with the rest of the vast prairie landscape. Entering from wide open streets into the narrow corridors ignites profound experiences of urban surprise. Sometimes spaces of the right scale can even become an identifying landmark (Lynch, 1960). In some extreme cases in Hong Kong, many neglected spaces in the Central Business District are so tight, that only two people (shoulder to shoulder) can pass through. The height-to-width ratio can be more than 20 to 1, creating a discomfort, which to the pedestrians, seems like walking in the bottom of a canyon. Otherwise, the neglected spaces which have a more sensible scale would provide rare, intimate solitude from the clamour of the busy streets.

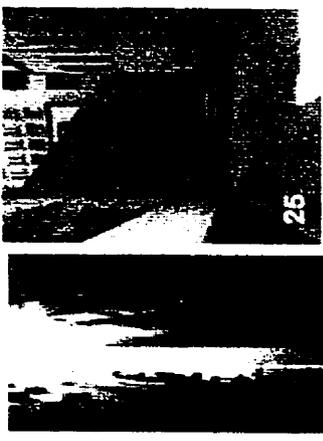
Space Animation Paths that are bounded vertically on each side create a strong perception of spatial definition and character. Enclosed by tall opaque walls, the neglected spaces offer alternative movement to the ordinary rectilinear city streets. They are corridors, pockets of space left over from building mass. Usually, there will be a series of these spaces in a couple of city blocks. When connecting all these spaces together, they would form an interesting network, which break as they intersect with the streets. In the newer part of the city, these spaces are in the form of corridors, indented with garbage dump and delivery bays. In the older part of the city, the neglected spaces take the form of crooked and narrow corridors, standing near



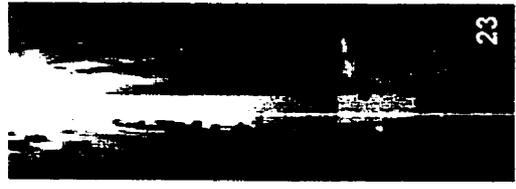
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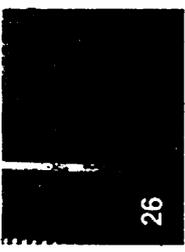
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Winnipeg has a wide range of neglected spaces, the narrower ones in the older part of downtown (fig. 24 & 25) and the wide open one at the fringe of the urban core. (fig. 26) In Hong Kong, some the neglected spaces have created claustrophobic scale. (fig. 22 & 23)

to parking lots which are converted from vacant land. Jane Jacobs talks about introducing irregularities and visual interruptions in the neutral city grid. By "incorporating sides and rears of existing buildings into their frontages, to give a mixture of age, then these new streets are seldom going to be straight for great length." (Jacobs, 1964 ; 380) As we include these additional streets to the existing street systems, it will break down the monotonous grids. Jane Jacobs believes that this would be the best way to reconstruct our urban experience with the least material destruction. (Jacobs, 1964)

In the Exchange district of Winnipeg, labyrinth-like spaces are embedded in the building masses. Every turn one makes presents a different view. Strolling along these century-old alleys and passageways is like exploring a new realm of our city. One might find endless surprises ahead as the way one moves in the neglected spaces is so different from walking on the city's street. As we are accustomed to a circulation system which was designed for efficient vehicular movement, the roads are always laid out for fast and unobstructed movement. While moving through these crooked networks, they provide us many views at every twist and turn. The tightness of these spaces reminds us of the narrow medieval streets.

Walking through the alleyways in the older part of Boston downtown is a confusing experience. The back alleys are aligned at odd angles, the entrance are usually hidden and hard to distinguish. I can still remember vividly my journey to search for a downtown subway station when Hurricane Floyd hit Boston in October 1999. Rain is pouring down heavily making it impossible to read the map and I had to trust my instinct to find my way out. My attempt to follow the Bostonians through the webs of neglected spaces to nearest refuge was an exciting experience. My ability to navigate the average grid in a planned city is ineffective in Boston, but being led by the crowds through the maze was both challenging and enjoyable. You feel an adrenaline rush in the body as you have no idea of what is ahead. The heightened sense of awaited surprise gave the journey an exoticness which cannot be found in the sleek urban environment.



The neglected spaces in Winnipeg's Exchange district formed a series of intricate and crooked network. (fig. 27)

Conclusion From the discussed case studies, we are able to see how the existing flows of a space, such as cultures, climate, social and economic factors exert their influences on the shaping of the urban landscape. One will find these un-decorated spaces represents realistic depictions of cities. It seems that an exciting city would be the one who embraces both interesting fronts and backs, with every part of the city exhibiting its glories. All places and habitats deserve the same kind of attention because the well being of one part is connected to that of the whole. It is apparent that cultural values and environmental factors have structured our everyday life and infused our lanscape with meanings. Olders cities like Boston, which have a strong cultural background, usually have more architecturally defined neglected spaces. The colors and wrought iron details reflect the city's rich heritage. On the other hand, the people of Hong Kong have economic interests are reflected well in their utilization of these hidden spaces in their city. The claustrophobic corridors describes the stressful living of Hong Kong inhabitant. In Winnipeg, the hybrid neglected spaces reflect the city' s intermittent urban development. The openness of these spaces displays a peaceful and relax atmosphere which cannot be found in other big cities.

One can get a glimpse of the city's true charactera from the neglected spaces in unique neighborhoods that are least influenced by corporate culture. Their unadorned surfaces tell us the stories of our urban lives - a realistic depiction of the way we live and the way we think. It reinforces the notion which culture shaped city and city shaped culture. It is very apparent relationship is critical to urban design. When people begin to explore the neglected spaces, they will begin to develop a deeper appreciation of the city that they inhabit. A better understanding of a city can reaffirm our existence in the environment. It further reinforce the notion which culture shaps city and city shaps culture. The neglected spaces act as a window into our culture. Their unadorned surfaces tell us the stories of our urban lives - a realistic depiction of the way we live and the way we think.

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Landscape and People The general conception of landscape has been slanting towards environmental issues and physical terrain. As "the words *environment* and *place*, commonly used to replace *landscape* in twentieth-century English, are inadequate substitutes, for they refer to locale or surroundings and omit people." (Spim, 1998: 17) Many traditional landscape painters/photographers have also depicted the landscape as monumental imagery. In their works, artists always set the viewpoint up in the air as to create a feeling of awe and a sense of inferiority towards nature. Human presence is constantly missing in the composition. This kind of depiction has left out an integral part of the evolution of landscape as the original meaning of landscape is about people and place:

Landscape associates people and place. Danish landskab, German landschaft, Dutch landschap, and old English landscape combine two roots. 'Land' means both a place and the people living there. Skabe and I chaffin mean 'to shape'; suffixes -skan and -schaft as in the English-'ship', also mean association, partnership...landscape connotes a sense of the purposefully shaped, the sensual and aesthetic; the embeddedness in culture. The language of landscape recovers the dynamic connection between place and those who dwell there." (Spim, 1998 : 17)

In fact, both humans and nature play major roles in the development of the landscape. Anne Whiston Spim has called our landscape – a book with multidimensional chapters, intertwined layers about how we live and where we live. (Spim, 1998) Nevertheless, our landscape has recorded countless conversations between itself and its inhabitants. Some of the dialogues are more vigorous while others are more subtle; and one must listen carefully. We, as human beings have a persistent love-hate relationship with the landscape. It can become our refuge and can destroy our livelihoods at times of natural disasters. On the other hand, it has shaped our lives as we are living in it, constantly adapting to the environment and cultures. In return, people have also shaped the landscape, as the slightest human-made disturbance to the delicate nature order can change the landscape forever.

In the Past-Connecting with Landscape Before the industrial revolution, people's livelihoods depended heavily on a constructive relationship with the landscape. People built their lives on farming, fishing, raising live stock and other industries which required a tremendous amount of attention to and respect of the landscape. It is also important for people to understand their roles and relationship with natural elements such as air, land, water and these to one another as they can put their lives at their supply of food and homes can be disturbed by a minor change in the nature. The Objway Indians are great companions to the landscape. Their respects for the environment is shown in the way they live. The wild rice field at the slacked water becomes a special place to them, as it has deep meanings in every Objway life. Their careflessness and understanding of the plants and nature, their givers of life, demonstrates their respect towards the landscape. In the contemporary society, "most livelihood no longer depends upon literacy in landscape" , but people can still "learn to read landscape, to understand those readings, and to speak new wisdom into life in city, suburb, and countryside, to cultivate the power of landscape expression as if our life depends upon it. For it does." (Spim, 1998; 26)

At Present-Disassociation with Landscape

People in the modern times often lack the sensibility and respect for the landscape. It is difficult for one to build a good relationship with the landscape, as our livelihoods no longer depend solely on nature but mostly on technology. Since we are extremely preoccupied with our own existence, we use technology to improve our lives and ignore its harmful effects on the environment. While we have stressed heavily the importance of environmental issues in school curricula, we have neglected the emotional and cultural values of the landscape. It is easier to teach about environmental issues, which can be measured with numbers, but our relationships with the landscape cannot only be taught through textbooks. It is more about first person experiences. One way to teach about human and landscape relationships is through engaging ourselves in first hand appreciation, by learning to read and understand our landscape.

Reading our Landscapes Landscape is like a symphony which “evolves continually in time, in predictable and unpredictable ways, responding to process and to human purpose, and in landscape symphonies, all dwellers are composers and players”. (Spim, 1998; 22) Reading this book of landscape will never be boring, as the characters – both human and landscape elements, change every minute. The changes in our cities are temporary and occur even quicker. In Winnipeg, the low winter sun creates a dramatic play of light on the cityscape. The best show takes place at the exchange district where the building facades are embodied with ornaments and textures. The late morning sun casts a yellow tint on the buildings; then their colors change to tones of grays and beige as the sun goes down. Eventually the city is taken over by darkness and only a strip of purplish sky is left behind. Our urban landscape is full of interesting stories waiting to be told. However, we are so consumed in our daily business that we rarely notice the wonderful scenes in our city. Discovering and giving it meaning, we receive a stronger sense of belonging and security towards the place we live in, a place with personal values. However, city dwellers would encounter some of the following problems when they read the landscape.

Difficulties in Reading the Landscape

We all experience our city in many different ways as we use it everyday, which provides a “good ground work for understanding and appreciating” the orders of the city.” (Jacobs 1961; 376) However, we often find it difficult to comprehend all the information and visual cues which we gather from our everyday experience. It is never easy to read our complicated urban landscape, as our impressions of it can be confused and chaotic, a process which Sharon Zukin defines as a visual overload. (Zukin, 1991) Apart from numerous human activities happening in the urban realm, the visual attributes of these spaces, such as store signs, street furniture, buildings and transportation, can be overwhelming. Jane Jacobs finds the city’s infinite and repetitive urban forms and human activities to be generally overwhelming and incomprehensible for the public. (Jacobs, 1961)

On the other hand, our abilities to feel and experience things have been changing since the electronic age. As we enter the new millennium, we are increasingly living in a ready-made culture and the virtual realm. Urban dwellers are likely to see the cityscape as human and technological establishment rather than the result of continual transformation under the influences of culture and nature. Most of the food, materials and information we have today are prefabricated, processed and ready for our use. Some even say that, children these days would probably think that milk is from the milk carton, rather than from a cow. Because of technological advancement, we are barely in touch with the making of things.

Our perceptions of places have also changed drastically. Many of us might find ourselves indulging the cyber world, as it is impossible "to achieve utopia in the real world where factors such as time, space, and matter are uncontrollable." (Sterling & Viemeister, 1993; 153) There are online chat rooms, where people can meet and express their ideas and emotional distress. Retail businesses have opened their own online stores for those who are too busy to go shopping in the physical mall. We no longer need to leave our house to travel as we can tour the world through a CD-ROM. The way we live has evolved to the electronic mode. Since everything seems to be readily available before our eyes and within our reach, we have to get past the old way of searching, using our instincts to feel about things, to experience the known and unknown. Michael Sorkin fears that we are probably "the last generations that will enjoy or suffer non-virtual subjectivity."(Sorkin, 1993; 234). We simply could not feel the city the way our grandparents did before. Since our lives are gradually becoming more involved with the cyberspace, our interaction with the real world is diminishing at the same time.

To Read Our Landscape There are countless stories embedded in our everyday life. We are unable to read them, as most of us lack the ability to simplify and clarify the chaotic urban scene. Designers need to invent new ways to assist people to discover the stories in the landscape, as returning to the old way of experiencing things would be inadequate in the current shift of culture. We are in the information age in which technology is "formlessness", which departs from the

"You operate so many things in your environment that even when designers make some things more 'convenient' for you, it's not worth it if they demand so much of your time. You can get to the point where you can't figure out how to boil water. And if you sit before your computer so fascinated by the intimacy of somebody's program that you're living on Twinkies and take-out Szechuan, well, over a period of decades, that's going to put in the grave" - Bruce Sterling

modernist's notion of 'form follows function.'" (Tendance, 1984) As it is difficult to prescribe technology in physical forms or symbolism, designers in these days are facing a new challenge of working on the presentation of the 'un-presentable'. Developing a better understanding of our landscape requires an "adventurous mind, the urge to search, and to fully utilize our ability, " to see, smell, taste, hear, and feel landscape as a symphony of complex harmonies." (Spirm, 1998; 3)

Sometimes, it requires a fresh eye to understand a place, to read details which the local people cannot see. A foreigner would be able to detect special qualities of the landscape and restore them to those who have created them. (Lippard, 1997) However, a stranger to a place might be able to capture the unique everyday life details in a space without knowing the reason why they exist and how they are formed. Anne Whiston Spirn claims that, "reading landscape deeply requires local knowledge. On foreign ground, one needs an interpreter." (Spirm, 1998; 3) Most of us are not trained to read our landscape in a critical way, we need the objective eyes of a foreigner and local knowledge to read the landscape effectively. One would require a tool to unfold the stories within the landscape, which enables us to step back, to think differently, to have the quest for details and being sensitive to the cues in the landscape.

Art has been used as a means to express our values and experiences in the landscape since the beginning of human race. Artists have tried to engage the viewer to experience the landscape, which has emotional values for them. However, static painting and sculptures seem to be incapable of depicting the dynamic, yet complicated contemporary city life. Movements such as Dada, Surrealism, and the Situationist have exalted the ephemeral beauty of the city's atmosphere. They promoted a revolution of everyday life through cultural experimentation of our urban lives and have used art as a medium to reconnect us to our landscape by assisting people to reveal the buried meanings in the landscape. (Holevoet, 1992) They have chosen to represent the complicated cityscape through a variety of forms: everyday objects, photographs, maps, videos, charts and combinations of these forms. Art about the urban landscape demands a more active response from the viewer than the traditional art school and the museum environment.

Art as an Eye Opening Tool-Place Art

Art can strengthen people's bond with the landscape, by discovering and reintroducing, meaning and delight in the environment. Jane Jacobs believes that through the fusion of art and our lives, we are able to illuminate and clarify the meaning of life and thus, to understand the meanings and orders in the city. As art begins to take place in the landscape, it will start to create a space with meanings and intentions. We could call these projects which reveal new depth of the landscape – place art.

Place art should be intellectually challenging and also raise our consciousness about land, history and culture of the place. It should make the connection between landscape and inhabitants visible, and place art should reveal the meaning of the place, rather than placing another meaningless objects in their lives. It is important to add a social dimension, by engaging the spectator to become part of the space. Like two-dimensional art, place art also frames the part of the view, but in collaboration with the place itself. Being responsive to the constant changes in different onlookers and the place itself, place art makes its departure from traditional paintings and photography (Lippard, 1998).

The artistic approaches to natural and urban environments are very different but they are both complicated and unpredictable in nature. The structure of an urban system might not be as intricate as that of the ecosystem, but as it involves human factors, culture and socio-economic issues and creates millions of open-ended possibilities. Most of the time, ephemeral projects represent the transience of the city better than permanent ones. In certain situations, permanent works better suit memorial and sentimental purposes. Nevertheless, permanent works lack the flexibility and alertness to social and cultural changes. Lippard believes the virtue of ephemeral works is that both sites and places change. (Lippard, 1998) Place art raise people's awareness about the transformation in our landscape, having the flexibility to change when the place evolves and being to reflect the reason for the change.

In fact, there are many types of temporary place art. Some artists might choose to create larger scale artworks like some of Christo's wrapping projects in which scale and distance are two of the key factors. Usually these works need longer preparation periods, as projects of this scale require intensive governmental and public interventions in the design process. The size of these projects has attracted a lot of attention and initiated endless controversies. However, public focus is always on the budget and the aesthetic value of the projects rather than artist's intentions and the meanings of the projects. Projects of great scale do make strong statements but do not necessarily best represent the existing landscape. We have to be careful not to let a place diminish and become merely a backdrop. Instead of working on a preconceived idea, we should let the place speak for itself. (Lippard, 1998)

Other artists choose to interpret the landscape in more subtle ways. They choose to create projects of smaller scale, which in the environment can easily be seen, touched, smelled and heard. Anne Whiston Spirn considered projects which are close to human scale as at "the heart of human experience, the scale of human companionship, conversation, touch..." (Spirn, 1998; 172). A project within the onlooker's reach is likely to be more successful in igniting human senses. This kind of projects does not have to depend on other instruments, such as telescopes or aerial photographs to experience it. Rather than an alienating object intruding the city, it will affect people's lives when they interact with the place through art, for people can touch the place and experience it on a more intimate level. It will generate a more personal impression for those who have experienced it. Artists also have greater control of smaller projects. They allow more room for creativity and freedom of expression and "the smaller the scale, the greater the role of direct shaping through working drawings and on-site adjustment." (Spirn, 1998; 202) This kind of Place art would be most effective with those who interact with the site in their daily life, instead of those who are casual lookers and passersby. The local people who are already part of the place will be able to perceive the space from a new perspective. (Harald, 1993)

Landscape Interpretation & Interaction

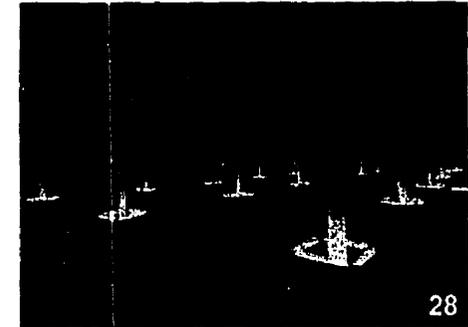
The following selection of projects explores new ways of representing and understanding the urban landscape. By imposing meaning on a space or deriving meaning from it, one can turn it into a memorable place. A small intervention with the site is adequate to turn an ordinary space into a stage that arouses human sensations and changes our perception of the space. Seduced by the enhanced environmental cues, the spectator of the space will become an actor and participate through active mental and physical intervention. Through their personal experience, they will arrive at their own interpretation of the place. As these projects are ephemeral in nature, the sources are recruited from photographs and documentation of the projects. Artists' intentions are crucial to the projects, but their abilities to highlight urban details is the determining factor in the success of the works.

1. Black/ Light/ White/ Garden, Rome - Heather Carson

Heather Carson's project black/light/white/garden (fig.28) at the American Academy has transformed a humble orchard into a garden of evening delights. During her stay at the Academy, she noticed that the trunks of fruit trees in the back corner of the Bass Garden, were painted white with lime to repel insects. She surrounded the bases of the forgotten trees - 18 apple, plum, and apricot trees with "light wells" made up of blue fluorescent tubes, giving life to an ordinary agricultural detail. The mystical blue light has caught the attention of a fellow resident at the academy with delight,

"The lights, as most of the beautiful things in life, are absolutely simple. Squares of neon blue surrounded the periphery of more than a dozen fruit trees. The rows, when lit, had the symmetrical fascination of a Balanchine ballet...Heather Carson's lights gave the garden both classical order and esprit." (Wasserstein, 1999; 32)

As a theatrical lighting designer, Carson has created a night garden almost like a painting with the square peripheries echoing to the walls of an ancient city. The most important issue is that Carson was able to transform the garden into the ultimate stage set, to encourage people's imagination. Wasserstein's vision of the garden calls for, "the stars below await the romance of lovers and the serenity of sleep." (Wasserstein, 1999; 32)



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2. Sandwich Board, Ottawa – Eduardo Aquino

In Ottawa, it is a usual practice to advertise by putting a sandwich board at the front of businesses. One would bump into at least one sandwich board while strolling through the streets. Eduardo Aquino, put a mirror on the two faces of the sandwich board (fig. 29). Instead of carrying a promotional message, the mirror then reflects the local scenery, people who walk by and street trees. When the mirror captures a piece of the blue of the sky, it brings the pedestrians closer to the sky. It now promotes the local, by framing the local situations with four edges. It acts like a traditional landscape painting, reflecting the landscape and drawing awareness to our surroundings by using a frame in a more flexible way.



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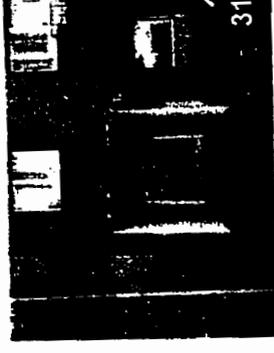
Eduardo Aquino

3. White Tunnel, Lodz - Karin Sander

Karin Sander's passageway projects (fig. 30 & 31) are examples of sensitive site interventions. In an international artists symposium in Lodz, Poland, Karin selected two passageways upon which she worked according to her own interpretation of the site. She restored the walls of the passageways and painted them white. "Both spaces then became so brilliant that they seemed to have been taken out of their gray and depressed surroundings altogether like two entirely separate bodies of light." With the simple use of light and white paint as material, she was able to bring out light and effulgence itself. In this case, Karin has based her knowledge and alertness of the situation of the site and "only by small details – changed it from an undetermined, vague one to one, which is defined." (Stockebrand, 1993) This minimal intervention was able to open up new and surprising perspectives concerning not the only usual conception of a place but also the back of the place.



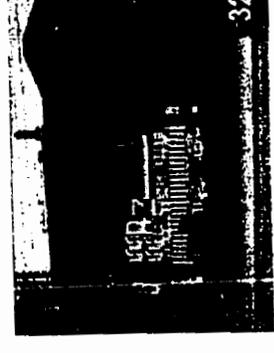
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4. Affichage Sauvage, Toronto- Daniel Buren

Buren's Affichage Sauvage (fig. 32) was first realized in Paris, December 1967 and subsequently in more than two hundred places. He used vertical striped sheets of paper, alternating white and colored, which are collaged on external surfaces: walls, fences, windows, boards. The picture chosen here was one of the installations in Toronto in February 1989. The strips were collaged onto the exterior of an abandoned



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building, which was already covered with posters. Unlike the art works protected in museums, this piece was meant to disappear over time. As the gradual effacement is uncontrollable, the time frame of the work was unpredictable with each respective project. (Buren, 1990) Buren brought attention to the abandoned wall by introducing a rectilinear order to the chaotic poster wall. The beauty of this piece was that through time, the paper strips were going to disappear as people keep piling poster on poster, which highlighted the process of erasing and which in turn became part of the urban history.

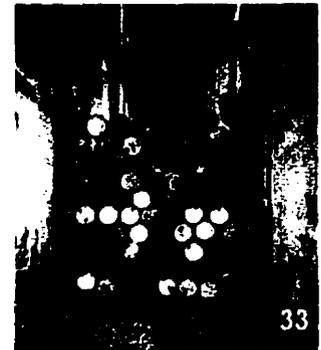
5. **Wall of Oil Barrels** Rue Visconti, Paris. Christo

Christo stacked up 160 oil barrel on the Rue Visconti, which was a one-way street connecting the Rue Bonaparte and the Rue de Seine in the historic university district (fig. 34). The wall completely blocked off the traffic and communication between the two streets. It was Christo's intent that the "iron wall", could be used as a barricade during a period of public work in the streets, or can be used to transform the street into a dead end. (Alloway, 1969) This project is quite different from the others in this study, as the artist specified a function with the installation, in addition to the spatial intent.

In this project, Christo used only oil barrels, a rather ordinary object, in the installation, and he intended to re-contextualize this known object in an unusual setting. Through a simple installation, people's usual routes to places were disturbed; a traffic artery was blocked. We rarely think about such a narrow street as an integral part of the circulation system. However, this simple installation turned a humble urban situation around. The oil barrel wall brought such disorder that "make us belatedly aware of the fact that there once was something we had grown accustomed to using." (Welzer, 1993)

6. **Passaggio**, Porto - Tadashi Kawamata

Tadashi Kawamata's Passaggio (fig. 35) used space as an intrinsic part of the project. He saw cities and urban spaces, with their constant construction and deconstruction, as metaphors of life and death. In this case, he used a temporary elevated walkway, to change people's perception about the narrow street



systems in Porto, Italy. Kawamata was impressed by the complexity of Porto's old city center, particularly the narrow street systems. He decided to construct a set of scaffolding for the pedestrian to walk through their city and to see it from a different perspective. It offered the locals a new view of places they have neglected, and helped them to enjoy the drama of the natural light and weathered walls. (Cerver, 1995) The locals became more self-conscious as they were elevated from their usual circulation system and their sense were heightened. As the pedestrians took their first step onto the scaffolding, every move they made and every squeaking noise became part of the installation.

In the Future-Reading our Urban Landscape

The previous projects show that people can be linked more closely to urban landscapes through simple and subtle site interventions. The essences of these works are the simplicity and thoughtfulness. The project's ability to interact with both context and people is crucial, as it can help the locals to rediscover and reinterpret the hidden qualities of their own place. As designers, we can infuse the following elements from the previous projects into our design:

- **Provoke thinking**

Projects should be designed for a boarder scope of viewers, and should be more general and open-ended in nature. Place art is the combination of different art forms to seduce our senses. Instead of using text or other literal cues, place art would enhance certain environmental cues to direct the movements of our eyes, to ignite our sense of smell or to help us listen to the landscape. When people start to pay more attention to these cues, they would notice another side of the place which they have never seen before. After that they would begin to look at familiar places differently. Some might say that place art should be subtle rather than direct. It should consist of clues rather than object, to awake our senses to the landscape unconsciously. Locals will derive more fun from the project when they view the piece with an unconditioned mind to discover and to capture the identity of a place.

- **Aesthetically pleasing and inviting**

The purpose of place art is to reintroduce the place to the locals from another perspective. Only when the project is visually inviting, will the locals be delighted to join the discovering process. It is about a temporary transformation of the place rather than a permanent restructuring of the place. People should be left with memory rather than a piece that will grow out of date and fall behind, in the process of urban evolution.

- **Minimal disturbance to the site**

For place art, the installation phase should be confined to small scale. Major intervention with the site would arouse the locals prior to the installation. This kind of arousal would raise unnecessary expectation and steal the attention from the place. Moreover, a project that needs excessive maneuvering would cause drastic changes to the place rather than fitting with it.

- **The use of simple material**

Material selection is crucial to the success of the project as it carries meanings and poses limits of the place. When we choose material that is inappropriate, it will affect the outcome and lead to unintended irony and failure. (Sporn, 1998) The ideology behind place art is to transform an ordinary urban detail into a substantial one. Therefore, the material selection should also reflect the same principle. Place art is about revealing the stories within the context, so we need to use materials that mean something to the locals or foreign enough to play contrast to the context. The selected material should be simple and familiar enough, so it would not steal the attention from the place itself nor to confuse or repel the viewers.

Through simple site interventions, city dwellers would be encouraged to participate in a discovery of their urban landscapes. They would begin to notice or even appreciate everyday life details which they are not aware of before. Once people are attracted to the place through the project, they have a better chance of unfolding the deeper meanings in the landscape. Meaning is often "layered, complex and unfamiliar enough to hold people's attention" but once people's attentions are caught, it will "make them wonder, and

to offer ever deeper experience to those who hang in there." (Lippard, 1997 ; 286) Therefore, we would have a better understanding of our landscape that nurtures us and reaffirms our existence, and an awareness of our place within the landscape.

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Neglected Spaces Neglected spaces are part of the city's infrastructure. They accommodate cars, service vehicles and the city's temporary storage of waste. However, people often neglect these spaces and exclude them from the typical perception of cities. Neglected spaces are highly function-oriented, therefore they are rarely designed to be seen by people and their aesthetic values is not the primary consideration. Nevertheless, neglected spaces provide us with an honest depiction of the city; they are not decorated to represent corporate images. The traces of time and the wear and tear in these spaces contribute to a humanistic quality, which is rare in the homogenized city. Similar to the lost spaces defined by Trancik, the neglected spaces are also abandoned by the public. However, they are different from the lost spaces as they make positive contributions to the city and in many cases, form hidden and intricate networks connected to other infrastructure systems in the city.

The Neglected Network in Winnipeg Exchange District

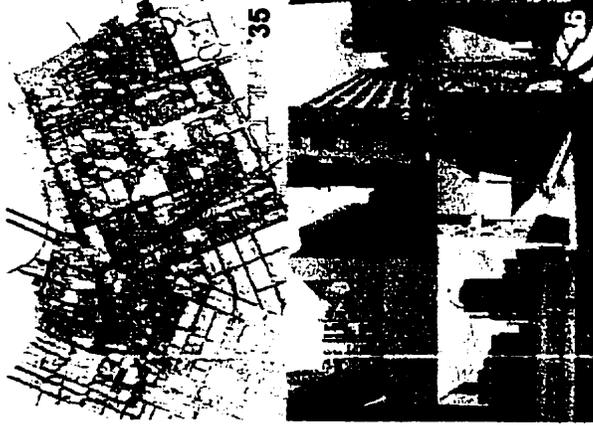
When we look at neglected spaces in Winnipeg, they may seem lifeless and cold when compared with those of older cities or other vibrant urban centers. Nevertheless, Winnipeg has a wide variety of neglected spaces due to its incoherent urban development. The downtown landscape has been evolving at different paces throughout the city's history. From the economic boom in the late 1880s, the depression in the 1930s and 1950s, to the steady growth in the late twentieth century, Winnipeg downtown has experienced periods of rapid expansion and slow growth. Winnipeg, which was once the headquarters of the western grain trade at the end of nineteenth century, has gradually lost its national prominence compared to other western cities such as Calgary and Edmonton. The city inconsistent development stages have failed to create a unified urban landscape, thus Winnipeg's identity seems ambiguous when compare to other Canadian cities. To many urban designers, Winnipeg needs to strive for a stronger and more distinctive identity to attract new capital in order to revitalize the area. (Walker, 1979)

In fact the diversified architectural styles created by incoherent urban development has defined the true beauty of our city. The discontinuity of building styles has created a hybrid and interesting urban landscape.

In downtown alone, one can find buildings from the last century and those of the 1990s. Despite the fact that they stand in the same urban realm, each of them possesses its own character. The neglected spaces formed by these buildings would be interesting to be viewed alone, while being complexly rich when viewed as series. It is because Winnipeg has been growing in a slow but steady fashion, there was no need to wipe out the old downtown for the accommodation of new corporate buildings and they provided an opportunity to preserve the past of the city. These spaces tell the stories of our urban history in a random fashion, as there was no unified urban planning in the earlier years (fig. 35 & 36). Neglected spaces not only serve perfectly well as a backdrop for the experience of viewing, but also as a window into our urban history. It would be an interesting way to see the city through a walking tour, starting from the oldest part of the urban development and gradually walking to the newest one. The assortment of neglected spaces are often group in different zones with regard to various developmental stages of the cityscape.

Among the neglected spaces in Winnipeg, those located in the south of Portage Avenue display the pure form that Modernist designers worshipped. This area is characterized by vast parking lots and scattered office towers, which were built after the 1960s. The neglected spaces in this area are spacious, clean and well maintained for services vehicles. Bounded by the emptied backs of the buildings, these spaces stand as like urban voids, depleted of any human presence. However, they are generally wider and allow more sunlight than the other neglected spaces. The clean sharp edges have created a series of neutral and well-defined modern spaces which remain emptied after office hours.

Further down the residential area south of Broadway consists of low-rise and medium high-rise apartment blocks. Many of these 1960s buildings are designed in box shape with few architectural details. The short pathways between the buildings are joined by the back lanes to form a series of circulation systems which are used by the residents on a day-to-day basis. Despite their plain appearance, these spaces are highly utilized by cars, service vehicles and local residents. The majority of buildings south of Broadway are built after 1950s and exemplify modern urban living which emphasizes functionality, efficiency, simplicity and the reliance on vehicles. The sense of time is less prominent in the neglected spaces of this area as they are maintained and the slightest personal touch is cleaned and covered.

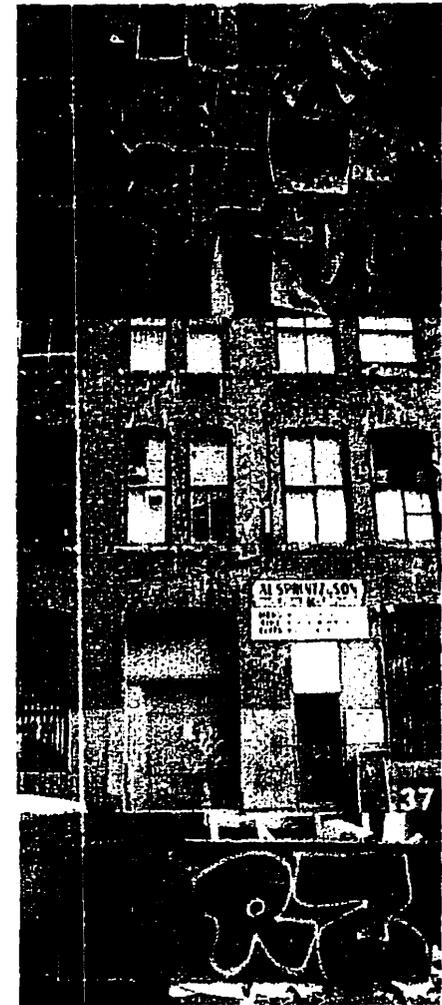


A wide variety of neglected spaces in the heart of Winnipeg's downtown.

The back alleys adjacent to the area along Portage Avenue are the busiest ones in downtown. The concentration of retail businesses and the high traffic flow of this area add to the heavy wear and tear in these corridors. Unlike other neglected spaces in downtown, these alleys are some of the few examples which shows a fair degree maintenance. They are maintained by the Downtown BIZ for they are seen and used by the public all the time. Human intentions are written all over the walls as graffiti in these spaces are quickly covered with metallic paint and Take Pride Winnipeg has been painting murals on the backs of the buildings. Despite their proximity to each other, these corridors differ greatly from the neglected spaces one block south of Portage Avenue.

The street pattern in the Exchange District are influenced by historical river lot farming, fur trade routes and railway line, it consists of linear streets and curved streets intersecting at an odd angle. (Artibise, 1975) Therefore, the backs of the building mass have formed a series of crooked alleyways. These neglected networks in the Exchange District are the most interesting of Winnipeg urban core. They are the remnants of the golden days of the industrial/warehouse era between 1878 and 1913. As the heartland of agricultural trade, banking business and wholesale industry, the Exchange District consists of buildings in rich color palettes and embraced with spectacular architectural details. The rental value of this area is general lower than those in downtown. So the owners of the buildings in the Exchange district has little intention to maintain and retrofit their property. With the current decline in investment incentive, many buildings are torn down and the lots are vacant. New investment to the area has been "kept to a minimum as rental profit in this area is low." (City of Winnipeg, 1974; 14)

The neglected networks of the Exchange District are formed by corridors (back alleys and passageways) and empty spaces (parking lots converted from vacant lots and delivery bays). They create an alternative movement system to the usual linear circulation system in North America cities. The most fascinating elements in these networks are the crooked corridors (alleys) following the course of river and the bend of Main Street. These laneways used to serve the warehouse industries and railway line for loading and transportation of goods. Currently, these corridors are less busy than they used to in the old days but they still



The interesting borders condition in Exchange District's neglected spaces

perform a similar function. Movement in these spaces offers a sense of surprise for the drivers and pedestrians as there are no direct views in these corridors. The high walls framing these spaces have created a sense of enclosure, focusing the viewers towards the end the connectors. In addition, their height to width ratios allow a generous amount of sunlight to penetrate into the neglected corridors, making the walk through these spaces are pleasant one.

The neglected networks in the Exchange District are all unique as individuals while interesting as seen as a group. The rich color palette and intricate architectural details are still prominent on the building facades, and the same level of detail and complexity of textures are carried onto the backs of the buildings in an informal way. We can find a treasure of old posters and signs, brick work, wrought iron staircases and elevated delivery doors (for cart and train) at the rear side of the buildings. The faded paint, rusty metal sheds, crumbling brick walls and weathered timber give us a sense of how these spaces might have looked in the high time of the area. However, Winnipeggers rarely have the chance to appreciate these wonderful spaces as they are always characterized as unsafe places the hot beds of drug use and robbery.

Analysis & Commentary The net works formed by the neglected spaces in the Exchange district, can be categorized into two different types in terms of their usages, spatial structures, locations and cultural values. Those located at the fringe of the Exchange District are dormant and latent in nature, showing few signs of human activity. Those which are close to the heart of the district are more lively and spatially more interesting. Three major spines are identified within the area: King Street, Albert Street and Rorie Street, where we can find a concentration of neglected spaces and a fair degree of human activities. The neglected spaces close to these spines could benefit from their adjacency from the human zones. These networks are initially identified through the examination of aerial photographs and axonometric plans. When viewed from above, we can easily notice many interesting spatial patterns embedded in the Exchange district's building mass. Personal observations and land-use plans were later used to verify each pattern's potential to become a people place.



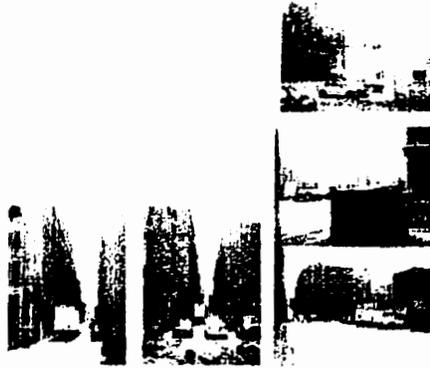
The neglected networks in the Exchange District

These patterns are further analyzed in terms of their existing flows including their physical attributes (spatial structure, color palette, light and shadow, edge condition) and cultural values (atmosphere, history and usage). These qualities of the site were recorded by site sketches, personal notes and photographs. The following vignettes had captured the essences of these hidden networks, in which we could glance into the past glories of the district and also the its present well being. These analysis assisted us to define the relationship between the front and the back of the buildings, the people who use these spaces. The increasing knowledge of these spaces could help us to understand our city from a more realistic angle and to discover of the surrealistic beauty of the city.

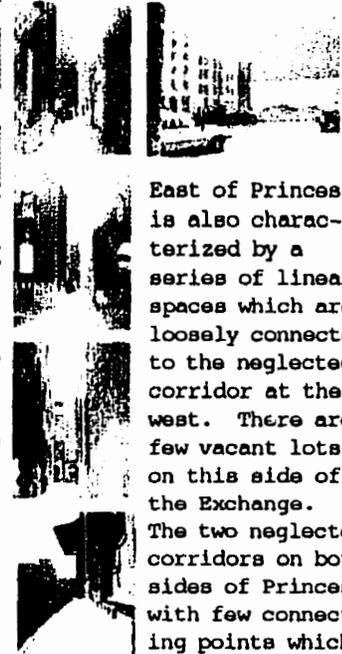
Along Princess Street The alleys and parking lots at the west side of Princess Street formed two series of neglected corridors. They are located at the backs of abandoned factories and warehouse buildings, which were once the homes of light industries (such as garment, printing and cigar manufacturing). They are located at the periphery of the central business district where there is a concentration of wholesale and retail companies. (Artibise, 1975) At present, this neighborhood continue to deteriorate due to low investment incentive and the decline of industries. These alleys are still used for loading and unloading for the remaining businesses, the rest of the buildings in the area are left vacant and boarded up. This area is located at the fringe of the Exchange District where the land value used to be lower. As a result, the building masses are less compacted and the alleys are wider than those at the east. Few pedestrians use these corridors as there is only a small number of businesses remain in this area. There are very few users in these spaces outside of business hours. Industrial waste and parked cars are scattered in these spaces giving the passerby an impression of an urban wasteland. These corridors remained quiet and still with the exception of a few men working on deliveries occasionally. Time seems to be the only interesting element in this network, which the color on the loading doors and companies signs speak of the function of these spaces in their golden days. The backs of the buildings are left inarticulate as these spaces are function-oriented which, the rest of the building walls are left in neutral shades of gray.



Aerial photograph of neglected spaces along Princess Street, Winnipeg.



The buildings on the west of Princess were built around the same period and the building fabric appears to be more uniform. The spaces between these buildings follow the city grid, forming a series of linear spaces which allows efficient and unobstructed movement.

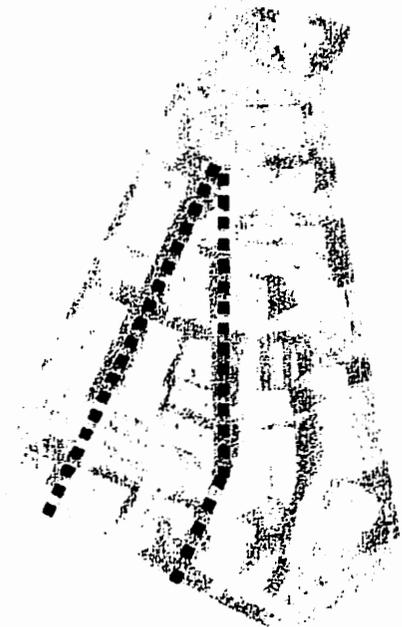


East of Princess is also characterized by a series of linear spaces which are loosely connected to the neglected corridor at the west. There are few vacant lots on this side of the Exchange. The two neglected corridors on both sides of Princess with few connecting points which form a less intricate network.

40

King & Albert At the heart of the Exchange district, there is an extensive neglected network adjacent to King and Albert Street, which consists of passageways, crooked alleys and a large number of parking lots. Unlike the neglected corridors along Princess Street, the spaces of this network are closely knit with the retail business, galleries, night clubs, eateries and hotels in the neighborhood, which supply a constant flow of users during the week. These spaces also have the potential to catch the festive event spill off from Old market Square. On weekdays, they are used heavily for parking and deliveries; with the addition of art crowds and bar goers during weekends, these spaces become lively.

This neglected network has one of the most fascinating spatial structures, which is both irregular and diverse. As King Street and Albert Streets converge at Old Market Square, they have created a series of odd shaped building lots with crooked alleys. The scales of these spaces also vary due to the irregularity of the building masses. The journey through these spaces reveal dramatic transitions from bright light to dark shade and from vast open spaces to narrow one. The movement in this network differs from the linear circulation pattern in the west of the Exchange. This neglected network embodies a maze-like quality. There are many twists and turns which make navigation through these corridors an interesting one and full of surprises. Moreover, the color palette of these spaces are more vibrant with signs of former businesses and architectural details are still visible. These human touches have enhanced the visual quality by adding human interest into these spaces. One would feel safer in this area as there are more signs of human presence. The noise from Main Street is filtered through the building mass also adding a humanistic quality to these spaces.



41

Numerous neglected spaces are tied to King and Albert Street in the Exchange District in Winnipeg.

There are two short and narrow corridors connecting Albert, Arthur and King that are rich in colors and occupied by parked cars most of the time.



The neglected spaces west of Albert form one of the most spatially interesting networks in the Exchange District. The narrow corridors lead to wide open parking lots; brightly lit alleys are connected to dark passage ways. The visual excitement from these spaces can be compared with experience of walking through a medieval town.

The hidden entrance to the Port-a-Park site at the corner of Main and McDermot provides a sense of mystery as people's views are obstructed and one wonders what is lying ahead.



The vast open parking lots in this area can be used as outdoor concert spaces and the blank walls of adjacent buildings can be used to project images.

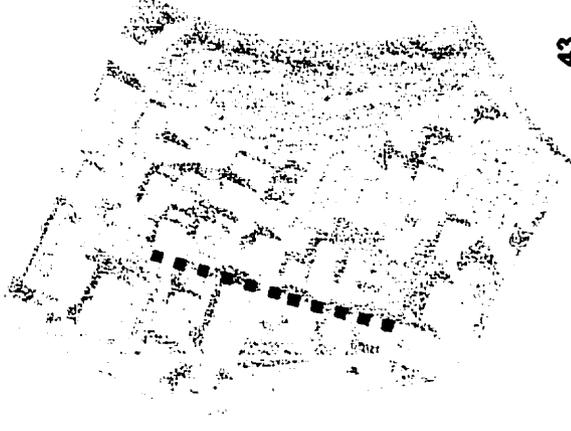
The alleys leading from Albert to Main are wide enough to become an internal street. If the backs of the buildings are treated with care, these spaces can become the sites for new business.



Along Rorie

The area between Main and Rorie was once the home of banks, financial institutions and grain industry buildings in the hey day of the Exchange District. Once occupied by the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, the Great West Life building, the Winnipeg Stock Exchange, the Royal Bank and the Bank of Toronto, these buildings are now occupied by government agencies, offices and small businesses, which continue to supply a constant flow of people and cars to the area. The parking lots converted from vacant lots are always filled with the cars owned by office workers in daytime on weekdays. Rorie street also serves as a spine, connecting the entertainment hotspots and recreation areas in the district such as night clubs, theatres, concert halls, the baseball stadium and parks, which are used heavily by the people during weekends.

Similar to the neglected networks along King Street and Albert Street, those connected to Rorie street are also characterized by heavy flows of people and cars, diversified spatial structure and corridors full of twists and turns. In the same area, there are buildings ranging from the 1800s warehouses to modern day architecture. The articulation of each building's surface and treatment of the back are different according to its age. This contribute to a visually diverse edge condition. In the older part of this area, passageways and interior driveways which used to handle the loading of dry goods have become dormant following the decline of the warehouse business. However, they still are interesting spaces as dark vessels within the network. In the modern sector (between McDermot and Lombard), the alleys are kept clean and often occupied by parked cars. Office people move through these spaces during coffee breaks and lunch hours.



43

Aerial photograph of the area along Rorie Street.

The west of John Hirsh Way is irregular in spatial structure. There are few businesses located in this end and it remains quiet for most part of the day. The space becomes lively again when the shows begin and end at the nearby concert halls and theatres.

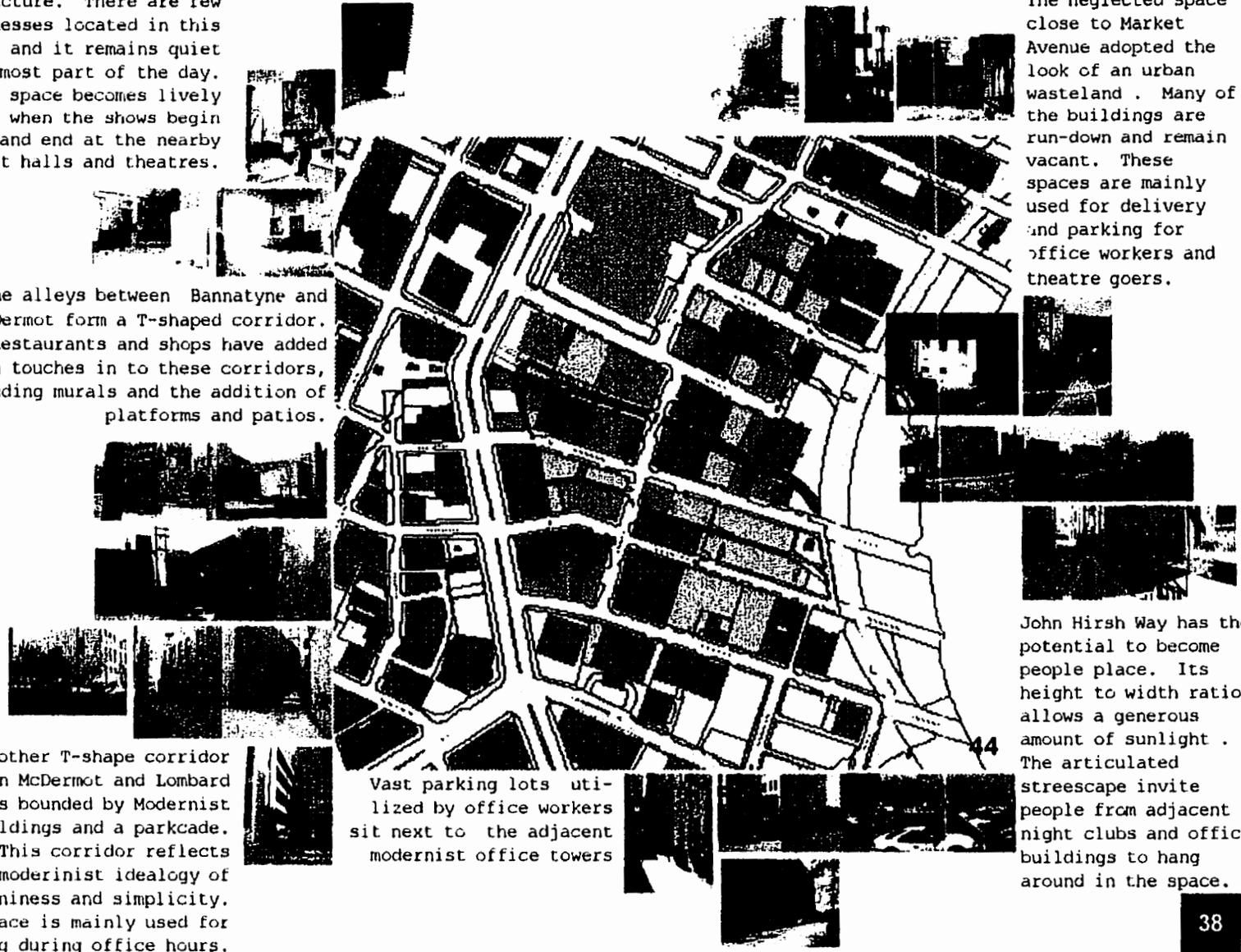
The alleys between Bannatyne and McDermot form a T-shaped corridor. Restaurants and shops have added human touches in to these corridors, including murals and the addition of platforms and patios.

Another T-shape corridor between McDermot and Lombard is bounded by Modernist buildings and a parkade. This corridor reflects modernist ideology of cleanliness and simplicity. This space is mainly used for parking during office hours.

Vast parking lots utilized by office workers sit next to the adjacent modernist office towers

The neglected space close to Market Avenue adopted the look of an urban wasteland. Many of the buildings are run-down and remain vacant. These spaces are mainly used for delivery and parking for office workers and theatre goers.

John Hirsh Way has the potential to become people place. Its height to width ratio allows a generous amount of sunlight. The articulated streetscape invite people from adjacent night clubs and office buildings to hang around in the space.



Potential The neglected networks of the Exchange District introduce a rare spatial irregularity into the urban fabric, as opposed to the linear street system. Their unique spatial structure can form a new kind of urban aesthetic in the setting of the homogenous cityscape. These networks seem to lack a clearly defined function, and the spaces are used for parking and delivery bays and temporary storage of waste. Their ambiguous nature suggests the opportunity for them to become multipurpose spaces.

These neglected networks are only used for few hours during the day and remain empty the rest of the time. They seem to be underutilized, considering the high percentage of urban land which they occupy. The clean edges and well-defined enclosure of these spaces suggest the attributes of comfortable human gathering spaces. Interesting artifacts of the past add meaning to the utilitarian nature of the spaces. The neglected spaces in the Exchange District are generally wider than those in other cities. In some cases, they could be viable streets in Asia. The spaces are enclosed without being claustrophobic; they are wide without being vast. This neglected and hidden realm of our urban landscape has the potential to be used in a more effective and spirited way. Some of the backlanes are wide enough to be converted into an enjoyable pedestrian precinct for temporary events and new businesses. With the installation of a simple skylight over the lane, narrower spaces will become permanent business space, readily available for new business which can be served from the buildings on either side.

Vision Efforts have been made to transform small parts of the neglected network into more pleasant spaces. However, many of the attempts are merely cosmetic treatment or simply physical transformations with little consideration to incorporate human activities. To transform a preconceived dangerous space into a visually welcoming place not only calls for spatial transformation but the inclusion of human factors in the design process. Walt Disney once made the following comment on the eve of Disneyland's opening, "don't forget, the biggest attraction isn't here yet ... You fill this place with people, and you'll really have a show." (Spirn, 1998; 146) People have the power to animate a space. The addition of human activities can breathe new life to the neglected realm of the city.

The Exchange District is one of the liveliest areas in downtown with an assortment of theatres, galleries, the concert hall, eateries, bars, and coffee shops. Located next to all these cultural institutions and businesses, the neglected networks not only can serve as infrastructure but also become a part of the District's vibrant culture. These spaces have the potential to become multipurpose spaces outside of business hours. As an attempt to arouse public awareness to the existence and values of the neglected spaces in the urban core, we need to capture their essence and translate it into a language which the public can understand.

These spaces can serve as a stage set to ignite human sensation and open people's mind to a new set of urban experiences. Through the introduction of unusual elements and human activities, people would be attracted to these spaces out of curiosity. Imagine all these spaces and corridors creating a fluid network which flows through the building mass. Their unique quality is highlighted through simple site interventions, such as the addition of lighting and sound. People could stroll through these spaces in the way they prefer exploring a new found interest in the Exchange District. At night, the networks could become one illuminated volume. Night clubs and cafes could extend their business to the neglected spaces where people can dance, chat, and meet. Commercial rickshaws could carry people through the web of spaces to experience a surrealistic territory of the city.

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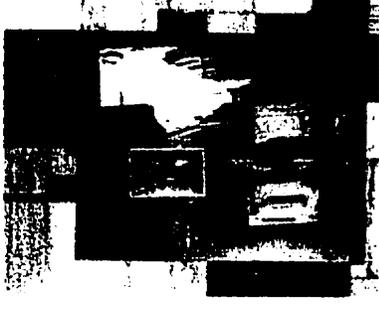
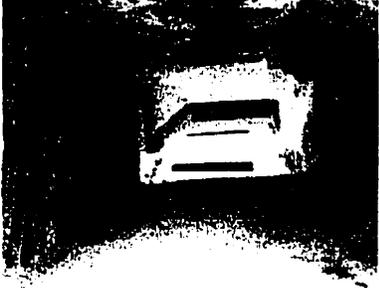
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T h e T u n n e l

The Tunnel was a temporary art installation in a neglected space set within the Exchange district of Winnipeg. Its goal was to raise public awareness to the existence and value of these spaces. The Tunnel also acted as a stage set to ignite human sensations and to create a new sets of urban experiences.



Introduction

This project started out as a personal quest for art making and my love for the neglected landscape. I have always been fascinated with the photographic quality of alleys and the spaces between buildings. This fascination led me to begin to try to understand the spatial definition and the humanistic quality of these neglected spaces. As a Hong Kong native, I have always felt comfortable with the tight enclosures in the urban realm. They are the most honest depiction of the neighborhood condition. It is most apparent in the case of Hong Kong, as cleanliness and formality of these spaces gradually decreases with the property value. Outside the central business district, where the government exerts less control, people freely manipulate these spaces for their own use. As a foreigner in Winnipeg, I have found comfort in these narrow narrow spaces which have given me a sense of security in the vast prairie landscape.



Photos taken during previous travels initiated the idea of humanizing neglected spaces to tell stories of their history. By examining different cultures, we can see how the most unadorned public space can become alive and embraced with human intentions. The neglected spaces in these pictures have resurfaced from the hidden urban landscape and are being recognized as part of people's lives.

Site Search A site inventory of neglected spaces along the spines defined in chapter three was conducted to define an overview of these spaces. The results were used as a measuring tool for each site to distinguish its individual character. Photo essays were used to render an subjective description and to record issues such as spatial definition, color palette and physical boundaries. Sketches were used to extract the emotional /humanistic values of the sites. A digital video recorder was used to record sounds and movement within these spaces. In the video, traffic noises gradually decreased when walking toward the center of the neglected spaces, which become a solitude from the usual urban clamor.

This project ended up as an interaction between a neglected space, the people and myself. Being the facilitator of this interaction, I act as a bridge between the two. The installation became an eye opening tool, introducing these hidden gems in the urban landscape to the people.

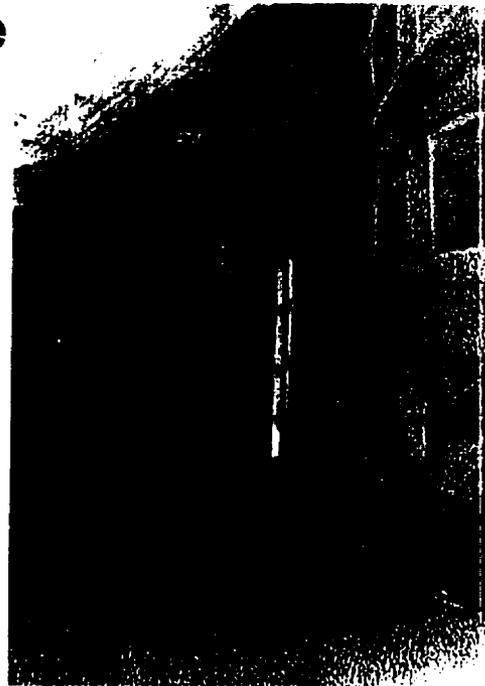
As a foreigner, I was able to interpret these humble spaces as unique spaces. As mentioned in chapter three, a foreigner has an acute sense to the environmental cues of a space but lacks the knowledge to understand them. One of the goal is to pick up these interesting elements in the neglected spaces, to understand their nature and reintroduce to the Winnipeggers.





Potential Site McDermot Alley1

The alleys within the building block between McDermot and Lombard offer the most interesting views and circulation pattern. In the form of a crooked t-shape, this neglected space offers a series of interesting views. It is heavily used by cars and motorcycles during daytime and serves as a favorite passage for commercial trikes carrying bar goers during weekend evening. It transforms into a surrealistic glowing volume created by yellow light from spilled from the adjacent parkade.



The McDermot site has a very interesting boundary condition with a semi-enclosed edges on the north side, exposing part of the site to an adjacent parking lot. Pedestrians and drivers can experience an interesting play of light and shadow as the intensity of light varies with the openings of the Northern edge. The alley ends at a T-shaped junction which provides a strong anchor point in the journey. The southern edge of this space is embraced with human artifacts, where the backs of the buildings are painted in vivid colors and indented with murals. One of the restaurants has put out a patio facing the alley, showing a friendly gesture towards this neglected space. It is one of the very few neglected spaces in the city of Winnipeg which shows signs of positive human intentions. Its unique edge condition has prompted many interesting design options.

Potential Site McDermot Alley2



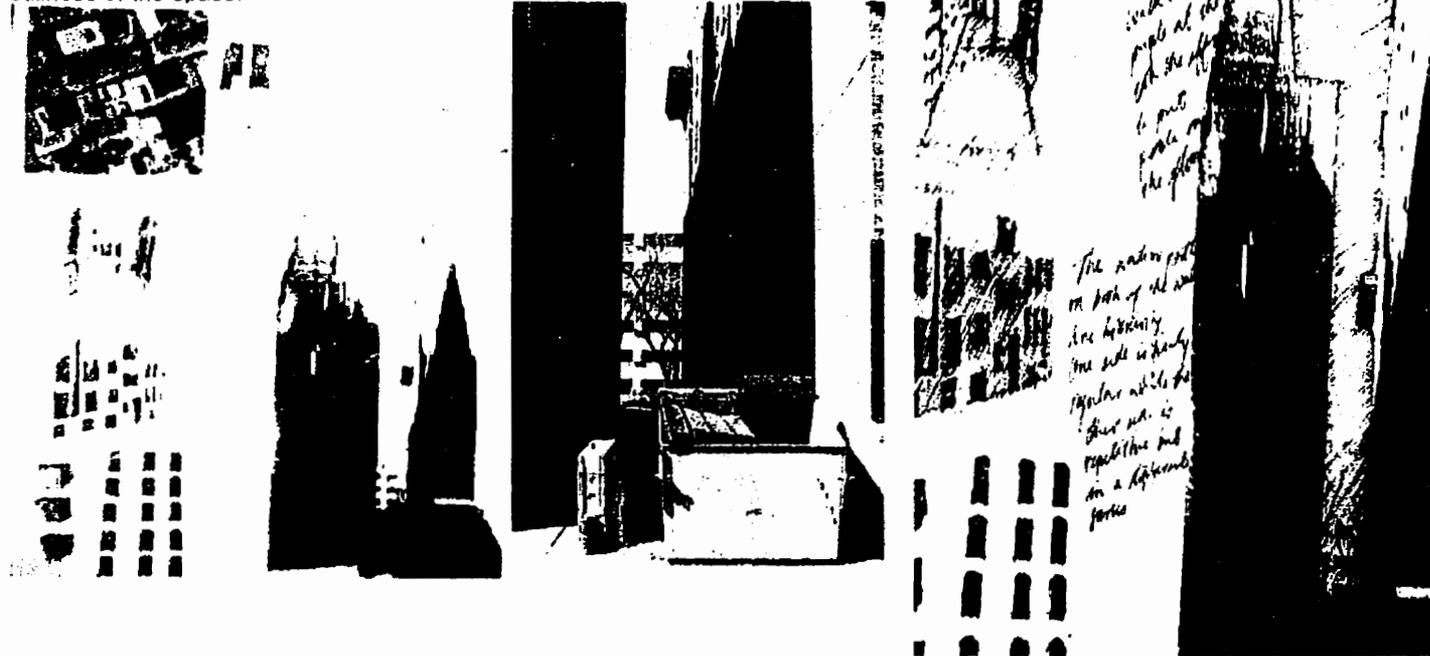
*Foot of highway park
create a transition zone
between the alley and the street*

*and
the
steps
two*



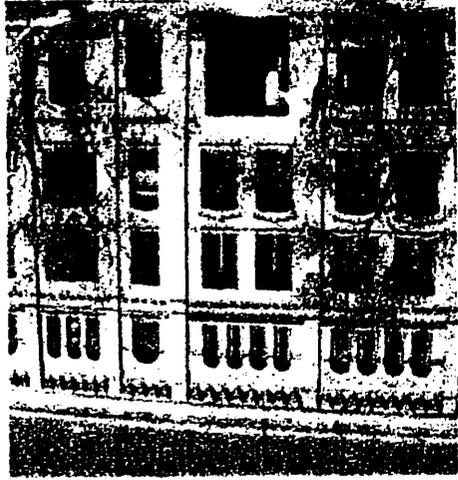
Potential Site Boardway Alley

The east Broadway site is a tight space between a commercial building and an apartment building opposite the Revenue Canada building on Broadway. It serves as a loading area for a catering company and garbage collection for neighboring buildings. The local residents also use it as a short cut to Broadway where a concrete path is laid, and flanked by gravel at both sides. The asymmetrical window patterns on both buildings break down the stillness of the space.



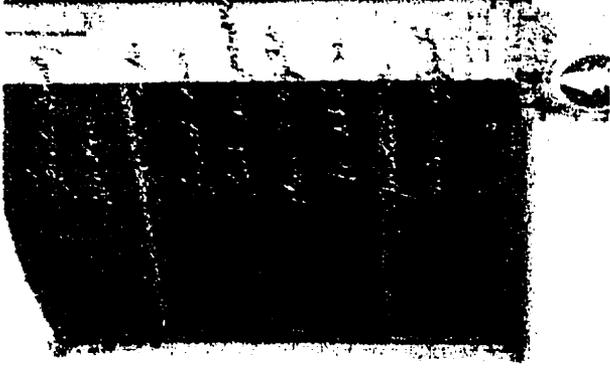
Final Site

Among all potential sites, the Bannatyne site was closest to my workplace. Every time I walked by the driveway, I always wondered how people parked in this narrow space, and how they determined the sequence of parking. The utilization of the passages and internal driveways as parking was quite an unusual practice in the Exchange District.

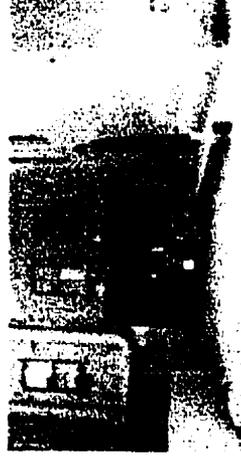


Site Analysis

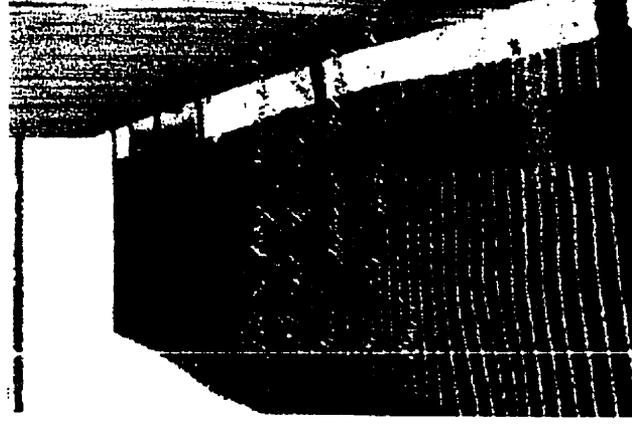
It was a designer's responsibility to expose interesting site features to the office people and passerby. Photographs were used to capture the transient beauty of the space. By framing parts of the site in the photographs, details were isolated from the complex setting. These photographs prompted the way I felt about the site, as I sorted them as images at first glance and began to make connections to the rest of the site. The interesting existing flows identified from the site analysis were used as the backbone of the final installation.



The arch is a recurrent theme both inside and outside of the driveway. The windows on the building facades and the doors of the delivery docks take form in the same shape.



The driveway walls and other structures on the site formed interesting shadows.



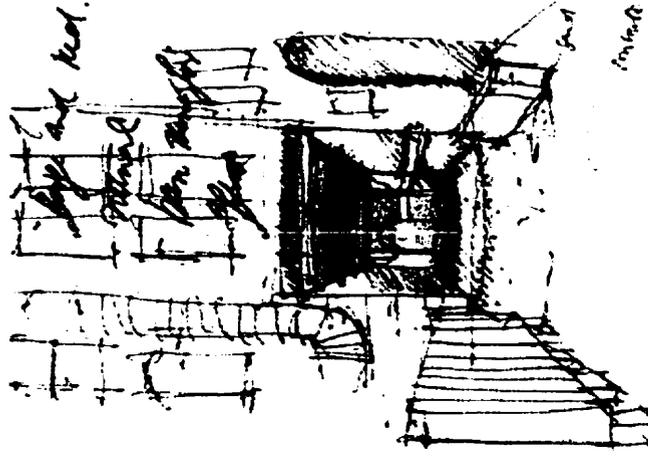
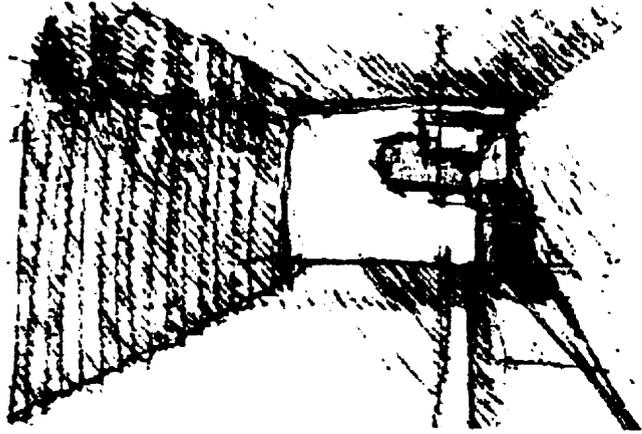
Existing Flows People and Cars

This space is well used at certain times of the week. The primary users of the site are the office people during day-time on weekdays and the bar goers during weekend nights. The north side of the driveway is used by office people as a lunch area and smokers would hide inside the driveway for a cigarette at coffee breaks. Weekends were usually quieter times until nine o' clock at night when the driveway acts as a connector for different bars in the district. People rarely used the space for parking at night, other than a few pizza delivery men who would use it for temporary parking.

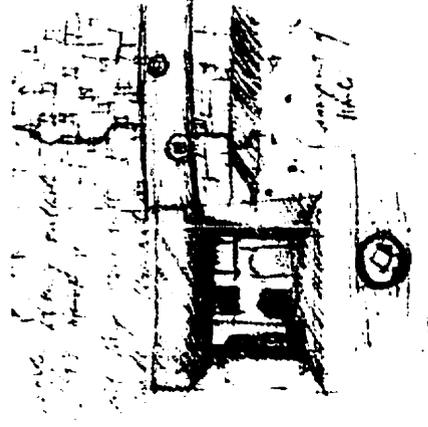


Wind is a prominent factor which contributes to the appearance of the space. The prevailing wind creates trails of leaves on the ground. In the springtime, flower petals are tossed by turbulent wind currents outside of the driveway. While the wind is roaring outside, the interior of the driveway remains still and contrast with the unsettling scene.

Existing Flows Wind and Time

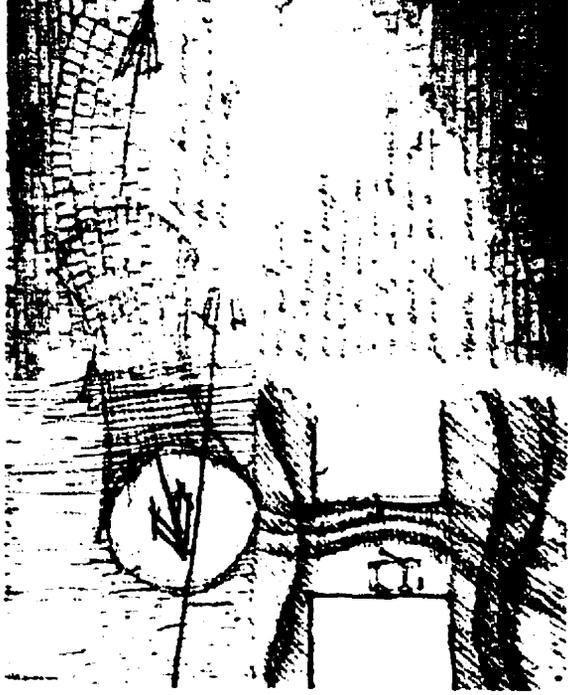


Different flows in the landscape have left their marks on the surface of the space. Very often, we are not aware of these signs in our environment. One of the most important elements in the space is the artifacts of time: rusty nails, weathered timber and crumbling brick walls speak of the history of the site. The combination of these elements has established a unique mix of textures and colors.



Existing Flows Vision and Movement

The Driveway is a space of movement and a passage of natural forces and time. It can also be seen as a stage catalyzing the interaction between the flows. As the walls funnel towards south, it further exaggerates the perspective effect of the space, enhancing the illusion of a tunnel.



During the initial meeting with the building owner, he has indicated the possibility of renting the driveway for commercial use added a practical dimension to the project. The owner had suggested the possibility of blocking off one of its ends for commercial use. However, the openings of the driveway were the most interesting elements in the site, and I felt obligated to retain the views at both ends. As the driveway was originally used for thoroughfare and delivery zone, so it is important to preserve its nature as a space of movement in the final design. The issue of adoption of an existing space and reusing it prompt the question of the potential for a more permanent option in the future.

Among all themes, the perspective vision created by the funneling walls was the most interesting one. In order to accentuate this visual effect and spatial continuity of the driveway, repetitive elements were positioned in the space to lead the eyes along. The repeated elements could consist of light, paint strips, fabric or plastic screens. Plastic screens and lights were chosen as the materials. The position of the screens were determined to allow maximum number of parking spaces and also to serve as partitions to highlight certain architectural elements in the tunnel. So the drivers who were used to park their cars in the space were also include in the design of the installation.

C o n c e p t As the site was transformed, our eyes were directed by the shadow and funneling walls to move through the space. The screens created a visual sequence that prolonged the viewing time span and made the viewers wonder what was waiting ahead. Our vision was led to the view at the vanishing point, which was accentuated by the framing effect the shadow. By then this tunnel like space had ceased to be what was viewed. Nevertheless, it became an integral part of the viewing process. The viewer would be able to interact with the site. Moreover, in doing so, would have the opportunity to transform an ordinary urban experience into a sensational journey.

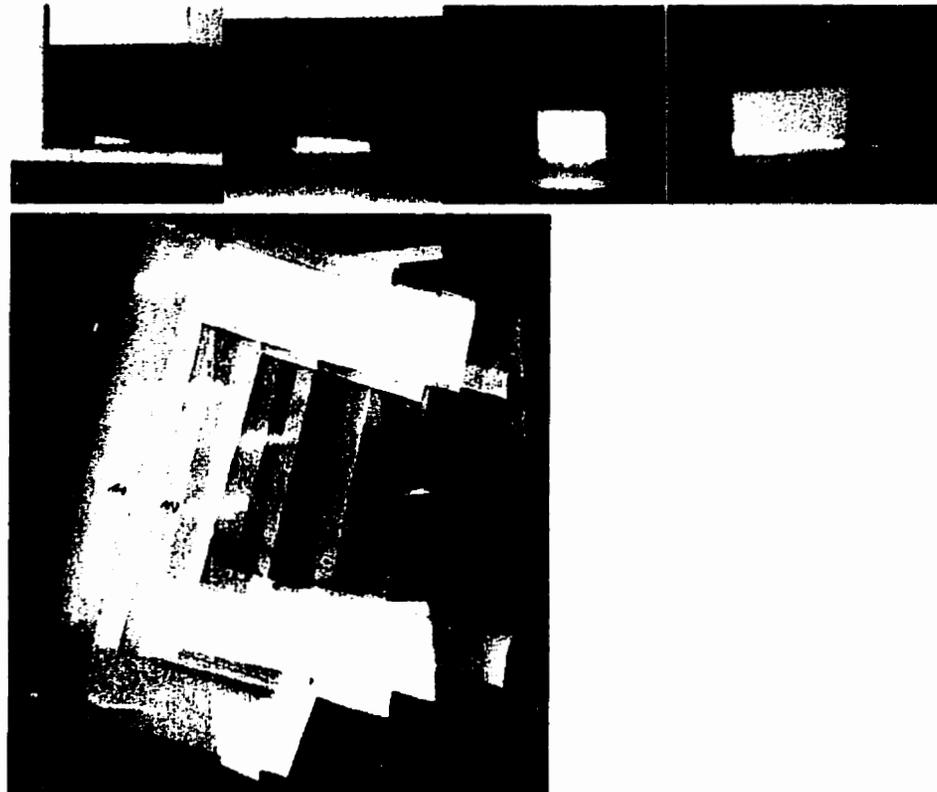


The shape of the screen was the resonance of the square arch at both ends of the tunnel. The design of the screens was modified to have openings which allowed for air to pass through. Different techniques of hole cutting and slanting were explored in terms of aesthetics and movement in the wind. The pattern of the openings largely dictated the choice of materials.



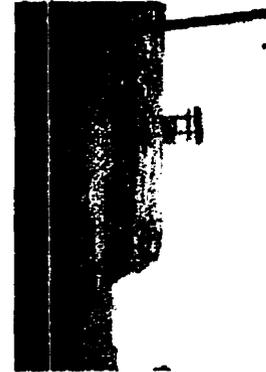
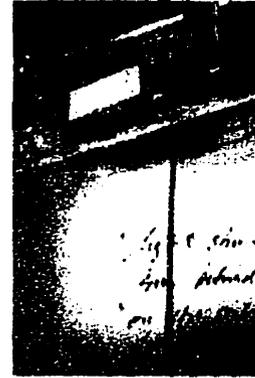
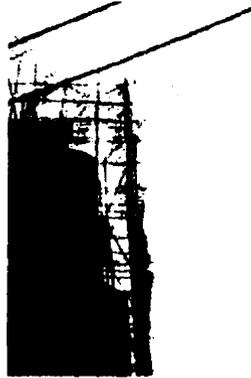
A mockup model was built to experiment with the effects of solids and translucent curtains in the tunnel. It was also used for determining the position of screens and the effects of light on the space itself. It provide a rough dimension for the screens which would be altered at the final installation.

Design - Model

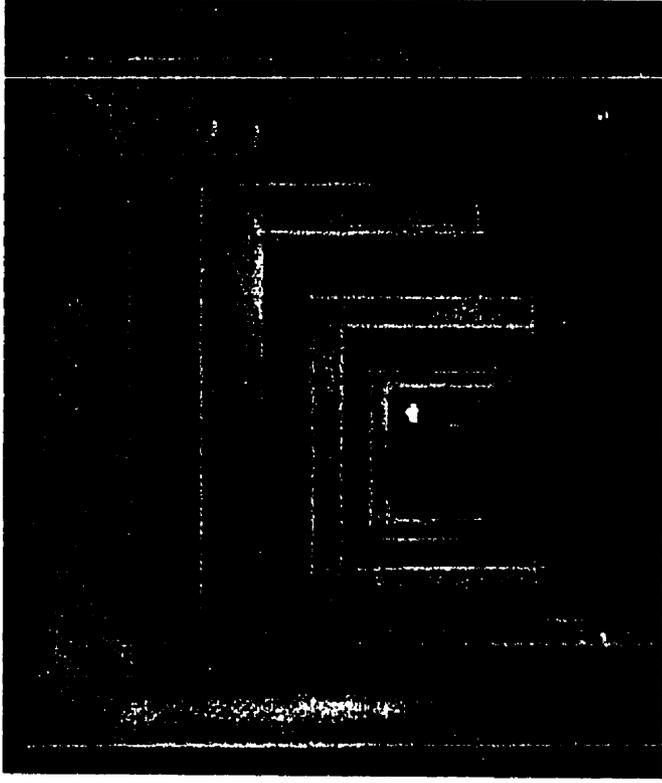


Design - Materials

Material was crucial to the installation. Different materials were considered for use, including transparent colored plastic found in Hong Kong construction site. In the end, white local construction tarp was used to reflect the idea of elevating the meaning of a humble material. It was also chosen for its neutrality which would change as it interacted with different forces, such as wind, sunlight and colored lights. Because tarps are designed for construction use, it was a cheap material for experimentation with different cutting methods and the arrangement of wind openings, and the arrangement of wind openings, and sturdy enough to withstand strong wind.

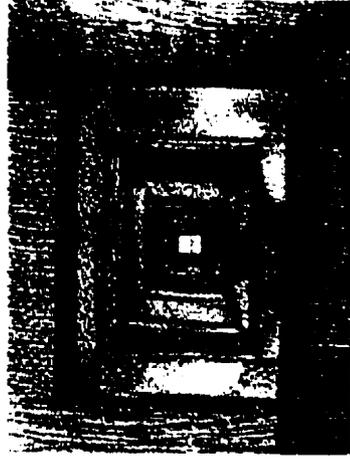


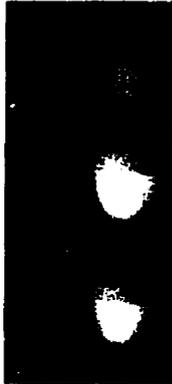
Translucent tarp was used to form a series of screens. As the viewer passed through each layer of the physical/visual sequence a connection was made to the time necessary for becoming aware of the site. The configuration of translucent screens created a light and air sensation.



Design - Lighting

Lighting played a key role in the installation. It was used as a tool to simulate the vibrant local night scene. The play of different color lights would create different moods, as colors could be adjusted to the nature of events. The tunnel looked hollow during daytime and could be transformed into a glowing volume by adding light. The signified the resurfacing of neglected space in the urban landscape by adding positive meaning to the ambiguous nature of the neglected spaces.

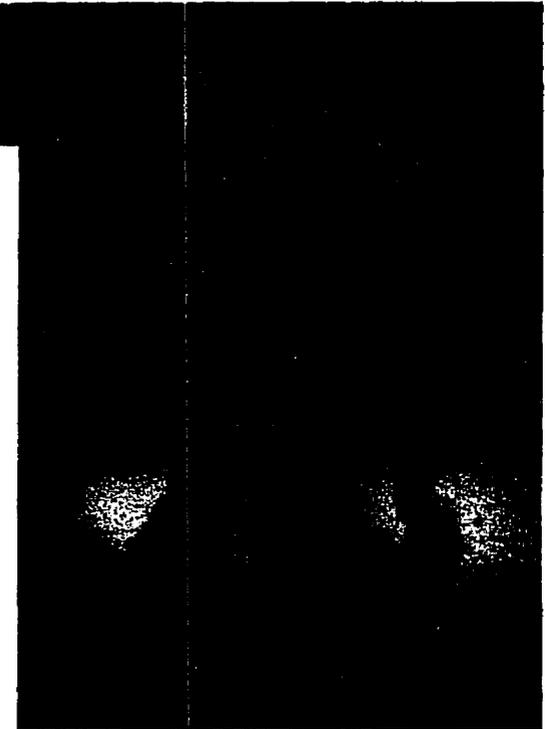




Design - Lighting

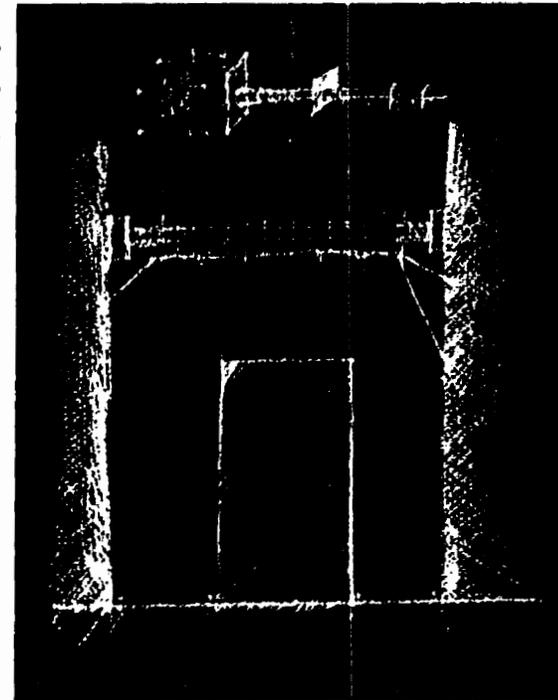
Lights and different color gels were brought to the site for experimenting with color combination and to determine the location of the lights. Shining the lights at the edge where the ceiling and the wall met, exaggerated the arch effect created by the screens. To encourage interaction with the site, we got volunteer to perform different acts in front of the lights as to test out the relationship between body movements and light.

Small stage lights were used to illuminate the screens at night, offering a dramatic contrast to the subtle palette of natural light and shadow during the day.





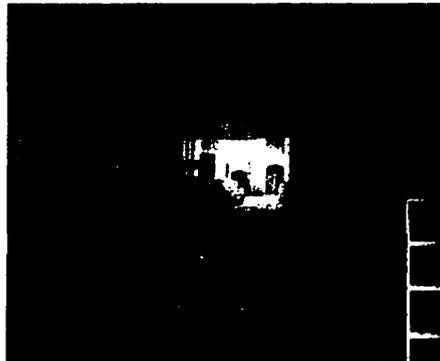
Design - Structures One of the biggest challenges was to design the structure of the installation. As the site was located in a heritage building, one of the design concerns was to prevent any damage to the site. Taking the idea of the compression bar for a shower curtain, compression bars were designed and fabricated at various lengths to be installed at different intervals at the site.



Prior to the installation date, a series of mockups and tests were carried out at weekday nights and weekend mornings as to avoid to be seen by the people who were familiar with the space. It helped to prevent raising any unnecessary expectations during the installation period.

Design - Mockup

As the site was located in a nineteenth century building, the dimension on the original plan is no longer accurate. So the on-site mockups were carried out to verify the dimensions. A compression bar was also installed to test its strength. The dimension of the openings were determined on site to allow for vehicular movement. During the process of the mock up, wind seemed to be the most powerful flow in the space as the screen was constantly being blown from its place. I have learn more about the site through these mockups which also helped to shaped the final installation.

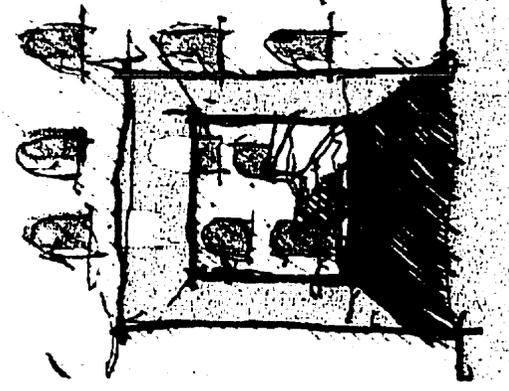
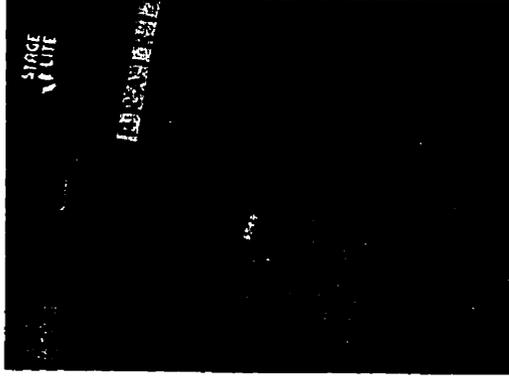


I was constantly in the dilemma of making the project being known to others or keeping its subtlety and let the participants to experience the space themselves. On a personal level, I would love more people to experience the space which includes sending out press releases and hanging posters in the Exchange. However, this would create a situation which the participants would come with a preconditioned mind. This dilemma had become one of the determining factor of the installation approach.

During the preparation of the installation, I have came across many people from different professions and learned to communicate my ideas to people in the language they understand. The preparation process is also part of the installation. Like public art, people were educated about the subject matter through the art making process. Especially to those who had worked closely with the installation had developed a new perception about the neglected spaces.

Design - Communication

The tunnel has interacted with the public on different levels, including the building owners and maintenance personnel for site issues; office people and bar owners in the neighborhood; police for security measures and permission; the Exchange BIZ, City of Winnipeg and building management for possible funding; news media and newspaper for exposure. In order to promote an interest in the neighborhood, the project had been promoted as a dance event in the community newspaper and adjacent business. The project was intended to introduce an unusual function to this neglected space, as to experiment with its transformability with site changes.



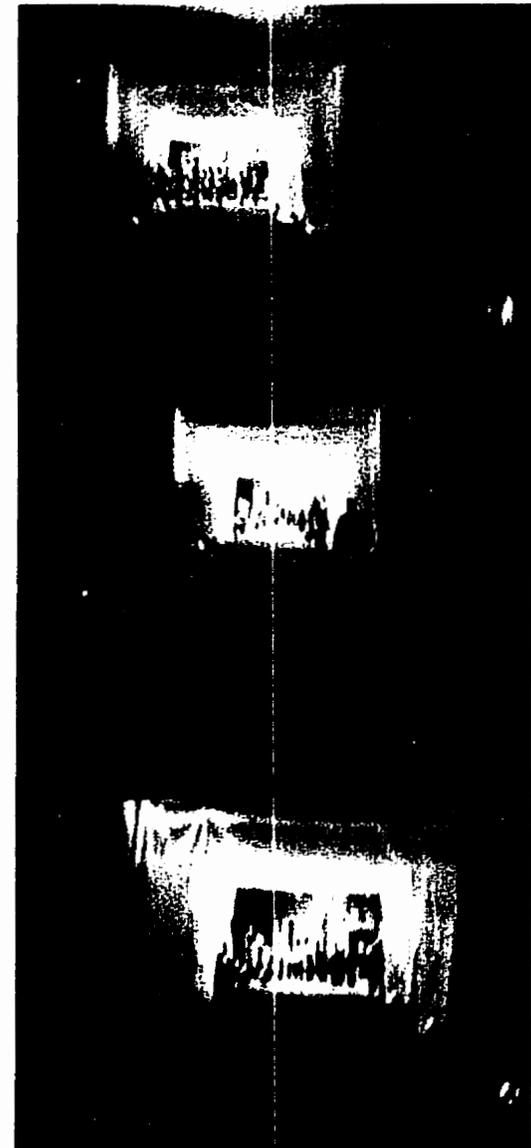
Due to the experimental nature of the piece, the duration of the installation was from August 27th to 29th. The installation began at 6:00 am on August 27th and was dismantled by 9:00pm on August 29th. The anticipated audience during the day were those who work in the neighborhood. At night, the Tunnel was experienced by people moving between the theatres, nightclubs, bars and nearby parking lots.

The Tunnel as a performance Space During the 3 days and 2 nights when the installation took place, the nature of the Tunnel had transformed from an urban eye sore into a stage of performances. It had evolved, ranging from human events to the play of winds and lights. The installation has performed spontaneously with the addition of new flows, such as human activities, wind, lighting and others. The nature of the opening night was also a celebration of the local night scene and the space. The first night was an attempt to incorporate human quality into the space. There were volunteers to initiate conversation and to conduct surveys with the onlookers, and people were invited to dance in the tunnel. The second night was more latent in nature, with no invitation and no instructions for the onlookers. People were free to experience the space and the volunteers would only explain the nature of the project when interest was shown.

The participants' responses were highly positive and differed greatly according to people's relationships with the space. For those who worked in the area and were familiar with the project had showed greatest amount of interest and had made a lot of constructive suggestion for the future use of the space. They were also more imaginative and more able to interpret to site from a new perspective. However, for those who were merely passerbys, they were scared to ask questions about the installation. It seemed to be uncool to ask and to wonder what was going on. As many of us were buried under the same routine everyday and reluctant to try out new things.



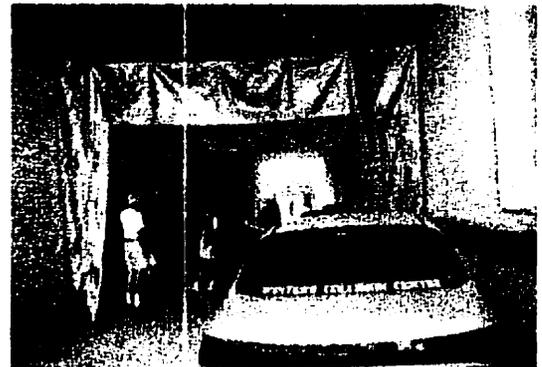
The Tunnel as Music When infused with dance music, the Tunnel transformed into a dance party. Many people were attracted by the lights and music and came check out the installation. When popular dance tunes were played, people could relate to the space in many different ways. The rhythm of the music and colors represent the MTV culture, which a lot of the young people could identify with. Some thought that a TV crew was shooting a music video in the Tunnel. A man cycled by and told us that people in the Exchange used to have rave parties in the abandoned buildings. He thought that the Tunnel was a way to remember his golden days. It was amazing how a little gesture could bring up memories.



To the people who use and pass by this passageway everyday, the Tunnel was interruption to their daily lives. They became more aware of the existence of the space. In the morning, cars started to fill the space after eight o' clock. The drivers were more conscious of the space as they had to park carefully between the screens. The office workers were attracted by the installation and began to ask questions about it. Their concerns reflected their close relationship with the site, which was part of their daily life. Once they had seen what the site was capable of becoming, they were concerned about the future of the site and possible improvement. A woman who worked in one of the office on 141 Bannatyne brought down a painting of her own to exhibit side by side with the installation. Her co-worker had brought coffee and donuts for the artists and the volunteer.

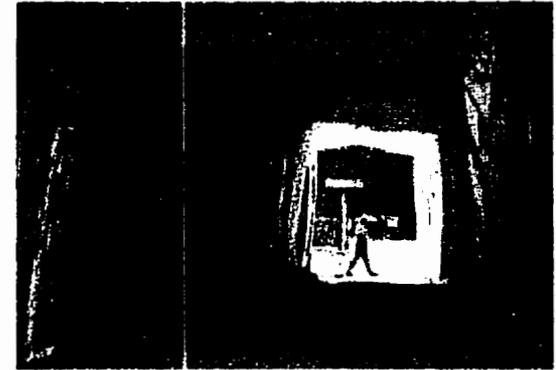
The Tunnel as an Interruption of Daily Events

It was interesting to see how people interacted with the installation. Many incidents were unexpected. For example, a volunteer from the Exchange BIZ took an architectural tour inside the Tunnel and explained the nature of project. The focus of the tour was usually about the history of the local buildings, but the installation had engaged the volunteer and given additional meaning to the local story. She has made a comment which the installation fit right into the exchange BIZ's direction of adapting existing structures and new use.



The Tunnel as an Event

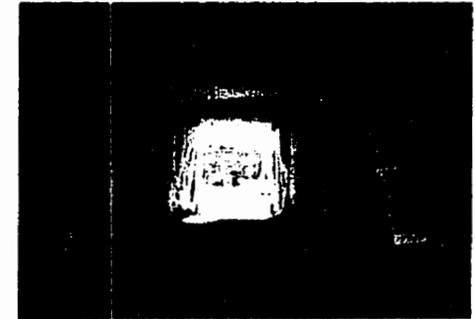
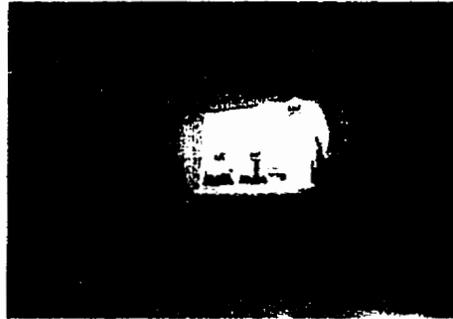
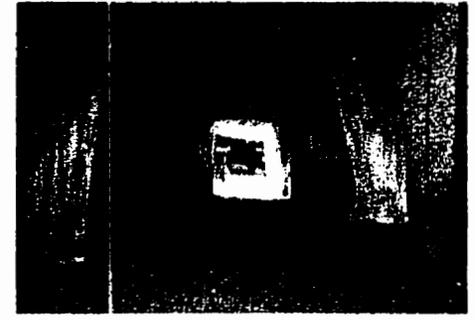
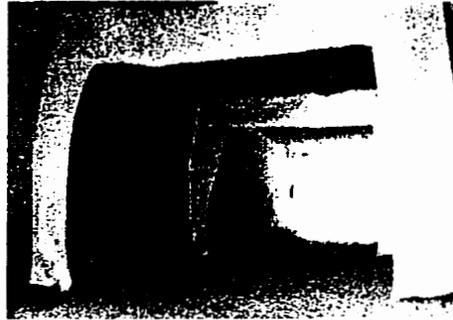
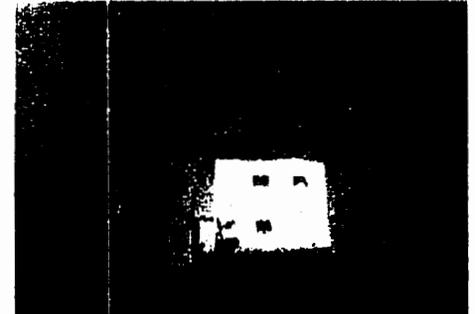
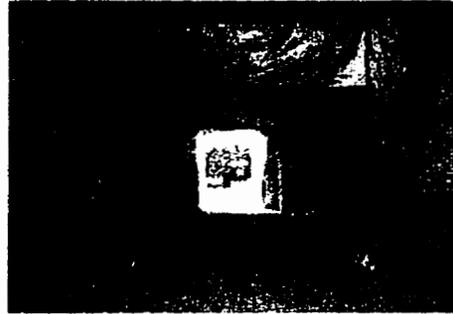
When people were present in the Tunnel, the space became lively. It changed the nature of the Tunnel from a latent space to one with human purpose. The composition and ambience of the space also transformed from an urban void into a spirited space as human presence breathed life into the space. The way the participants positioned themselves in the space. The way the participants positioned themselves in space and move their bodies in the space provide indication of possible opportunities.



When there was no human presence in the space, wind would take over the show. As the wind blew, the screens would move in sequence, revealing the intensity and the rhythm of the air flow and animating the space. The screens also gave a musical performance as they were carried by the wind and the weights at their bottom end would clink against the ground. Once again, with the interaction of flows, the space became alive.

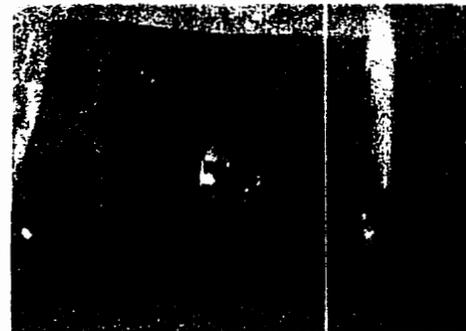
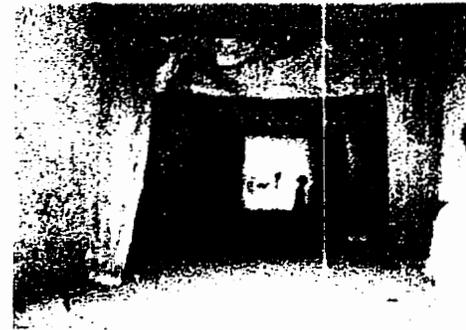
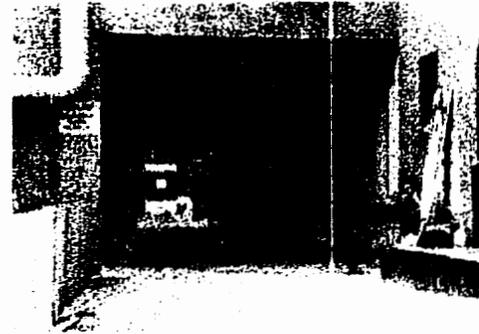
The Tunnel as Nature

The translucent screens acted as temporary frames and highlights different views in the Tunnel. These frames were also constantly changing with the flows in the space. When sunlight was diffused by the screens, it transformed the tarp into a glowing edge, subtly framing the end views. Inside the Tunnel, four of the screens framed the interior delivery doors. As wind blew across the space, the frames were morphed into an organic shape, dancing in the rhythm of the wind.



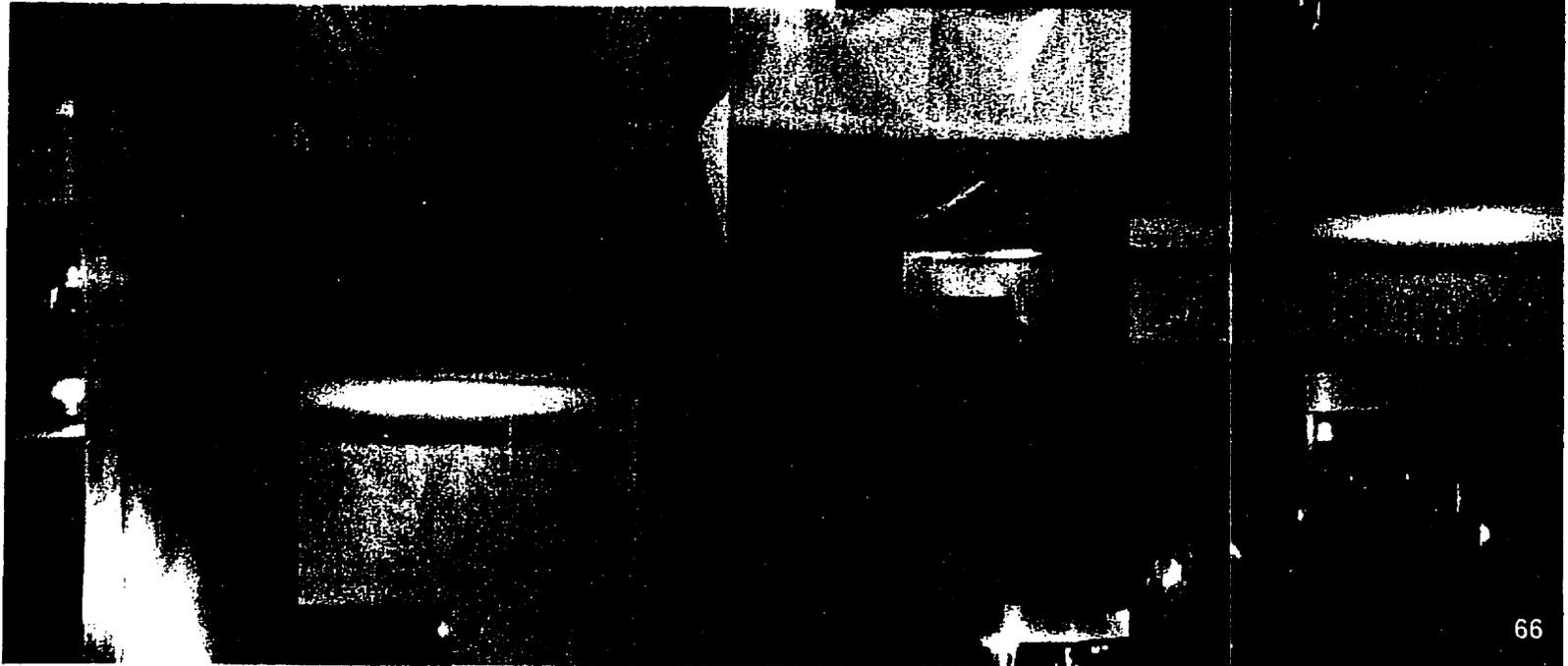
The Tunnel as Nature

The screens blended into the wall as the sun started to sink. The space had become darker and the contrast between colors was low. The screens looked as if they were the extension of the pale brick walls. The subtle play of light had brought the end view closer and the Tunnel then looked like an enclosed box.



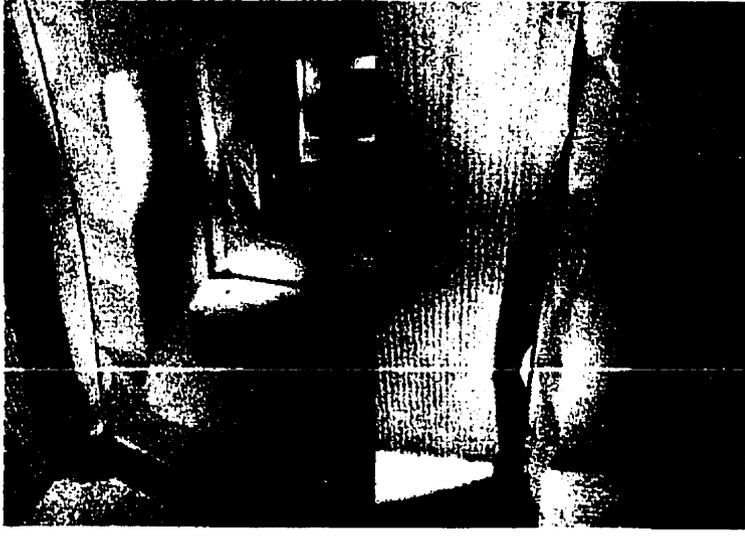
At night, a progression of color gels was used to emphasize the depth of the space. The colors had also stimulated participants' imagination. Some thought the space was warmed up and one woman commented that, " the pink had brought out the innocence of the space." The use of a red color scheme had warmed up the space as many had felt that the space was safer than before. The colors also gave the space a golden red tint which was divided into smaller rooms by screens. The walls and the screens became one, they formed interesting details. As captured by the camera, these details have become an abstractionist's painting.

The Tunnel as light



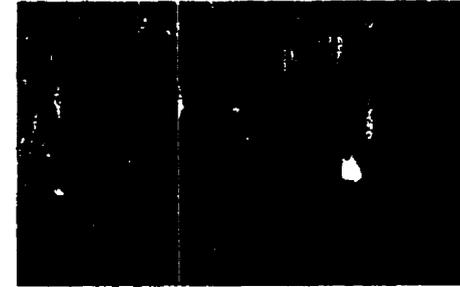
The Tunnel as Imagination

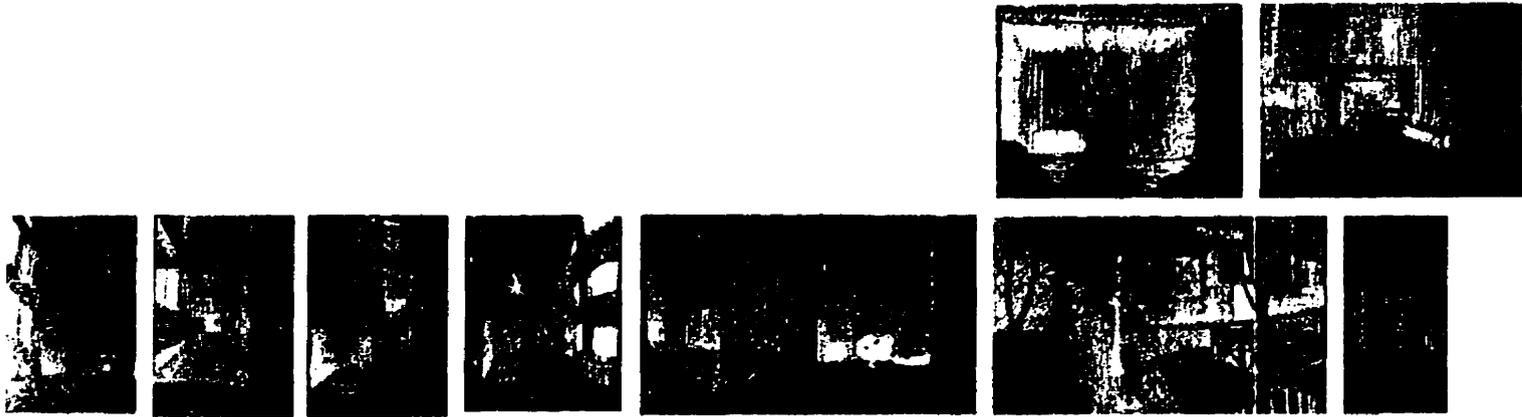
Illuminated by white lights, the tunnel didn't lose its ability to provoke imagination. It was then transformed into a more calming space. One onlooker claimed, the screens look like white sails in still water." There were other people who compared the space to a carwash and an oriental living room. We could see more of the backbone of the installation as the color faded and the space became neutral and free for interpretation.



The Tunnel, which was once intended to be the end product of six months of preparation, has now become the basis for a new project. In the art-making process, I have truly realized the necessity of a long preparation period, in order to be able to read the site well. Throughout the whole process, I discovered new qualities of the site everyday. I continually revise the design to adjust for new qualities which continually surface from the space.

Conclusion During the installation, the driveway at 141 Bannatyne Ave. has given numerous performances which had the potential to become multipurpose space. The space has already possessed the basic qualities of a gathering space as it is at a comfortable human scale which also provides a fair degree of enclosure. The installation has shown that human intentions are added to a neglected space, people will feel more comfortable in it. With the simple installation of screens at appropriate places the Tunnel could be rented out as spaces for parties, festive events and art performances. Lighting could be adjusted to fit the purpose of different events. As the screen at the openings are made of translucent material, it could retain the views at both ends while providing a sense of enclosure for the users. The screens could be rolled up during different events. The opening of the screen would be altered closer to human scale. In winter time, the Tunnel could be used as a waiting space for the bar goers during weekends, where they would be serve hot drinks and be able to relax in a cozy setting. The screens would be changed with ones that are slashed in the middle. In this case, these screens would be hung close to each other, providing an air tight space to keep people warm and dry inside the Tunnel.





Conclusion The tunnel can be extended to the neglected spaces in the adjacent blocks to create a new circulation network. It would then become part of a larger installation which could have a greater impact in the neighborhood. People could casually stroll through these spaces or their walks could become an organized event which instructional maps would be given out for pre-choreographed movement in this web of neglected spaces. When all the neglected spaces are lit up at night, they would become one illuminated entity. In summer time this could become as a temporary festive event. Bars would be encouraged to move their business outside to their patios where people and music would spill out onto these spaces. Commercial rickshaws could carry people to pass through the web of neglected spaces, to experience a new found surrealistic territory in the city. As a result, the Exchange district would be more lively and vibrant.

The consequence of many people living in crowded urban environments, is the loss of a "sense of self". The forgotten spaces of the city might be thought of metaphorically, as the "lost urban self". If we interpret a city only from its public facade, we are simply surrounding ourselves with illusions (Jakle & Wilson, 1992). Neglected urban spaces stand as a realistic reflection of a city's identity, a kind of alter ego. The search for, and consideration of, the "urban self" may add to the understanding of stresses, both good and bad, that are the result of the complex and multi-layered urban ecosystem in which we live. If we can learn to value the humble spaces of the city that are currently overlooked, and find ways to re-integrate them into the contemporary urban fabric, we may generate opportunities for individuals to find the kind of spiritual sustenance usually found in traditional gardens and parks. There is no question that a deeper appreciation of the city/self, can lead to a reaffirmation of our existence, in the urban landscape that sustains us.

Forgotten by the public, neglected spaces are often stereotyped as the dangerous sectors of the city. Even during the day, there is little reason to enter such spaces other than to dispose of waste or to park. At night, when the heartbeat of the city slows and changes, neglected spaces become a kind of no-man's land.

Unlike the lost spaces defined by Trancik (1986), such spaces function as the backbone of our infrastructure systems. Although they accommodate some of a city's basic utilities and even function as important conduits for transportation, they are not included in the city's inventory of assets. If we continue to ignore these spaces, they could further the decay of our cities. This situation can be turned around by bringing new and meaningful life back to these intimate urban spaces. Only the continued and regular presence of people can make them safe again. Life begets life and planned, even, choreographed events, temporarily change the nature of this neglected realm bringing excitement, vitality and meaning to the ailing urban self.

Introducing human events does not necessarily mean retrofitting neglected spaces with precise functions or popular images. Indeed, this could greatly undermine their spatial integrity as well as their important informal nature. The reintroduction of neglected spaces to the public is not about drastic alteration, with the goal of

bringing them into the mainstream culture. It is essential to preserve the role these spaces to provide critiques of the urban environment. At the same time, interventions can bring a degree of recognition from the public. The adaptation and reuse of these spaces offers a rare opportunity to reconstruct our urban experiences.

A Learning The tunnel was a temporary installation intended to engage the public in a part of the landscape with which they are unfamiliar. The introduction of unusual elements into this site attracted immediate interest. This newly-found interest ignited a series of responses and generated spontaneous delight. Through the use of the Tunnel, participants were seduced into pondering questions about the installation and the space in a kind of intellectual/aesthetic exercise. The ephemeral nature of the installation implied the notion of evolution. Its short duration compared to “normal civic or corporate work” may also have made it less intimidating and in this way avoided unintended negativity about increased city spending or urban aesthetic issues.

Office workers and residents in the area were most interested in the project. They raised interesting questions about the space and interpreted the installation in creative ways. However, this project had its greatest impact on those who knew the area well. For those who were unfamiliar with the area, such as bar and theater goers, a larger scale project might be needed to capture their attention. The unfamiliar may need extra guidance and more substantial cues to read the temporarily altered landscape and understand its implications. In order to create a greater impact on the neighborhood, developing projects in series of spaces could be effective in this way. Individual projects could remain smaller in scale while being connected both geographically and in duration of time needed to explore them to form a lasting impression for visitors to the area.

A Vision The Tunnel is has become the begining of an extensive installation in Winnipeg's Exchange District. A series of events could be staged to move people through the network of neglected spaces over a period of hours or even weeks. Each installation would appear and disappear, leaving images of 'what has been' superimposed on the memory of 'what was'. Like an urban wave, this series of events would create a rhythm of movement for the participants. It is human nature to follow the clues given by the environment to navigate from one place to the next. Although, it is impossible to dictate how the participants should think about these forgotten, neglected spaces, the interventions could promote a lasting impression, and an awareness of this hidden realm of the landscape.

The Collaboration of Design Professions, Government and Private Ownership One of the roles of landscape architects is to mediate the relationship between buildings and landscape. However, the design and development of neglected spaces is not a simple task that can be changed by new paving patterns or the addition of trees. The future design of the spaces between the buildings requires collaborative forces of the design professions, government bodies and landowners. Neglected spaces are often the by-product of architectural or urban design, in which the emphases are normally on the buildings, while ignoring their relationship with the surroundings. However, the neglected spaces between the buildings are very much a part of the built environment, and should not be dismissed as urban voids. Like buildings, the neglected spaces possess performance qualities. It is important to have urban designers, architects and landscape architects collaborate in the design of a unified city. The spaces between the buildings should be designed with the same level of detail as the front facades. The development and design of neglected spaces should exemplify their characteristics, such as the interesting plays of shadow and light, the element of time, and their ability to reflect social conditions. To work with these

spaces, designers need to depart from conventional practice which usually deals with works of a more permanent and formal nature. The approach to the design of interventions in neglected spaces should focus on the hidden aspects of the site and its performance with existing and new flows.

Although neglected spaces are in the public realm, they are in the hands of private owners and businesses, who are usually not interested in improving them. Private owners have less incentive to utilize these marginal spaces and generally concentrate resources on maintaining the front facades of the buildings. In many cases, undeveloped spaces are given over to parking lots as an interim use prior to development. In the case of the Tunnel, the site was owned by an architect whose design background enabled him to understand the purpose of the project. As a result, he granted full support of the project, both in terms of funding and the freedom to design. In other situations problems and conflicts could arise when working with owners who have little or no urban design knowledge.

The sanitization of the North American landscape has restricted freedom in design experimentation with urban cores. The underlying principle of urban planning in many North American cities is to clear the ground, sanitize, and "promote human welfare through segregation of land uses into discrete zones and the substitution of high-rise towers for ground-level density." (Trancik, 1986) Modern urban planning has neglected the diversity and complexity of dynamic urban cores. The current zoning policies are too rigid to accommodate multiple land use. The spaces in between the buildings, which are frequently regarded as leftover spaces, are generally allocated the role of temporary storage of wastes and receptacles for mechanical units. While to infuse neglected spaces with multiple uses within present zoning and codes is not an easy task, we should not continue to neglect their presence, as they possess great potential to become exciting and vibrant areas of the city. (Wrampier, 1992)

A Mission Contemporary art seems to be fighting for the preservation of neglected spaces in the interior of the city. "Filmmakers, artists and photographers seek refuge in the urban margins of the city when the city offers them an abusive identity, a crushing homogeneity, a freedom under control." (Sola-Morales, 1996) Instead of merely preserving glimpses of the hidden urban scene, landscape architects have the ability to construct these scenes as a continuum. By manipulating the flows of neglected spaces, landscape architects orchestrate the spaces and prompt endless possibilities. The experience with a given place varies in accordance with different stages of the users' lives and the place itself. (Hawkin, 1997) As designers, we tend to orchestrate how people feel and act in a space. However, unintentional uses and the addition of unusual elements can create exceptional character for a space.

The Tunnel was a site specific design that departs from conventional landscape architectural practice. The three day and two night installation has become the testing ground for ideas, methods, and future projects. Being able to experiment with unconventional methods in the design process seems to be a luxury within the budget and time constraints of everyday practice. Experimentation can help us to notice details that we have missed in a typical site analysis. In the Tunnel, wind had never been seen as an important flow, for it is hard to visualize the presence of wind except for the trails of fallen leaves on the ground. On the first day of the installation it became apparent that wind would be one of the strongest forces on the site. It began to animate the space by blowing the screens in sequence, causing them to dance in the wind. The weights at the bottom of the screens created rhythmic sounds when they clinked against the ground. This helped the visitors to notice the impact of wind and to realize its presence on the site. The site experimentation attempted to allow the space to speak for itself and to let the design follow, rather than the design emerging solely through the designer's assumptions. This approach with the Tunnel project points the way for future projects to discover hidden qualities of the site that could be used to influence human conditions in a positive way.

Art has been the backbone of this project. It is considered to be a tool or perhaps a kinetic element to affect a temporary landscape transformation. The results and learning from the installation has further reinforced the notion that art in landscape architecture is more than simply placing objects in an empty space. Like artists, landscape architects can also extract meanings and reflect the process of urban landscape with a simple site intervention. This process can illuminate the special qualities of the site to the people without design background who lack a critical eye to read the landscape. In this case, an ordinary detail of the space is elevated with meaning to initiate thinking.

The mission of landscape architects, is to strengthen the bond between people and their landscape, not only through functional designs but also through poetic vision. Landscape architects can take on the role of a storyteller, to unfold the deeper meaning buried in the landscape. To fuse art and design will bring delight back to the urban cores. Revealing the site to people and engaging them to become part of the space, will not only create a sound design but one that can change the way we live and infuse our lives with meaning and delight.

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