

VOID

Bridging Rail - City

by

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requirements for the degree of

Master

in

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Carleton University

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A c k n o w l e d g m e n t s

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A b s t r a c t

Absence being the death of architecture simultaneously offers new opportunities. The remaining semi-abandoned rail lines situated in the core of Regina, Saskatchewan form an edge that terminates the industrial warehouse district and determines a threshold to the downtown area. The in-between is a vacant 17.5 acre lot framed by the main economic life blood of the city, the Canadian Pacific Rail. The void within the city creates a divide while providing an opportunity to intervene and reconnect the streets, the communities and the city. However, there is a peculiar beauty of the vast bareness and quietude of the remaining dust land with the main C.P.R. tracks sprawling outward to the prairie horizon. In what ways can absence manifest itself? How can one design and author absence?

The rail carries a tremendous history and was the founding element of the Queen City, yet its value is under-recognized. This thesis aims to formulate a strategy, supported by the train's infrastructure, for the creation of a *mise-en-scène* framed by the urban fabric and designed to promote civic engagement on the site. This setting-of-narrative is inspired by the experience of the train within the vast and sublime prairie landscape.



Fig. 1 *Stationed train at the rail yard*

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P R O L O G U E

There is something to be said about growing up in Saskatchewan and this never dawned on me until I moved away for University at the age of 18. This feeling is not merely romantic nostalgia, but rather a feeling of comfort, self-defining and re-assurance of one's personal identity. This feeling corresponds the motto from Terrence Heath's poem, "the only precious thing is a place to leave."¹ When asked where I live, I say where I currently live and immediately after—intuitively—state that I am from Regina, Saskatchewan. No matter what outsiders may impose on Saskatchewan, I truly believe that prairie dwellers carry a local authority and a sense of pride.

The openness of the landscape is both overwhelming and calming — a representation of the sublime, not a representation of desolation and emptiness. The sublime is a personal internalized experience. Like the artists mentioned throughout the text that express this awe-inspiring feeling from the vast prairie landscape, I felt this when I first visited the "empty" 17.5 acre lot in the middle of the City of Regina. Bordered by the city walls of industry and commercial, the land may be perceived empty only because it is hidden and has been neglected from civic engagement. Standing on this plot of land that is currently a semi-abandoned rail yard, I felt a sense of stillness with the muffled sounds of the city in the background, the ground and immense sky in the foreground with train tracks sprawling to the infinite horizon. With this stillness, however, there were subtle acts of movement and transition. I began to realize this site was far from being empty due to the active ambiance of the trains — the whistling sounds, the rhythm, and the arrival/departure of various box cars transformed the site from stagnant to transient. For me, this is an embodiment of sublime — ephemeral being the in-between state of serenity (inactive) and excitement (active). This response to the site has been a key influence towards the developing thesis. Recognizing that this rare landscape should be celebrated while adapting to the existing elements of the site. By doing so, I was inspired to use the train as a design tool to enhance visitor's experience while devising settings which reflect the observed qualities on site.

¹ Jene M. Porter, *Perspectives of Saskatchewan*, 352.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The structure of this thesis is explaining and expressing two aspects of the City of Regina — the conceptual-theoretical and the factual-historical — of the City of Regina. The historical importance of Regina is explained chronologically with the birth of the capital city, its current state, growth, development, future aspirations. As the historical-factual carries through simultaneously with the storytelling of Regina, the focus is brought to the void within the core of the city — a *mise-en-scène* and set design for the theatre of the sublime. The empty space is the semi-abandoned rail yard with the active C.P.R. main line that travels throughout the city and beyond. Standing in the middle with the downtown district on one side and the industrial warehouse district on the other, the phenomenon prairie landscape surrounds the spectator. Captivated by the boundless sky, one does not feel empty but full while realizing that the void is in fact something — the middle of nowhere is somewhere.

Throughout the text, the conceptual-theoretical and factual-historian dialect merge together to propose a re-incorporation of current civic events inspired by the current site conditions and elements. Recognizing and bringing to the surface the memories and experiences of the rail yard in regards to the train, which laid down the tracks for the Queen City — this thesis is concerned with creating a network by using the train as a tool — a kit of parts and by exploring ways to enrich the existing while gauging public activity in a modest and unobtrusive manner. This thesis concludes with three acts that may inspire other modes of activity whether informal or formal.

The aim for this proposal is not to be completely resolved but to add layers to the already layered site, framing moments that are transparent and ephemeral but forever rooted with the train tracks — creating the narrative for the theatre of the sublime.



Fig. 2 C.P.R. track laying crew, 1882



Fig. 3 *The first railway bridge across Pile of Bones Creek, 1882.*

T H E A T R E O F T H E S U B L I M E

Sublime Landscapes

Unlike the picturesque, sublime landscapes are difficult to paint or visually represent due to the vastness, disorder, obscurity, indefinable and immeasurable characteristics.² The Theatre of the Sublime is adapting to this “empty space and creating a bare stage.”³ As Peter Brooke claims that an architect is better off if he/she works like a scene designer, “moving scraps of cardboard by intuition.”⁴ The existing elements of the site are the stage set for the *mise-en-scène* that can be experienced by visitors and which enhance the sublime — a feeling of suspended disbelief. The remaining infrastructure of the train is used as a prop to choreograph scenes of civic engagement. The Theatre of Sublime alludes to Brooke’s “Rough Theatre” that deals with the authentic and raw conditions of theatre but is not necessarily in a theatre. The “Rough Theatre” experiments with spectacle outside the “legitimate places constructed for the purpose.”⁵ Brooke’s “Immediate Theory” is also a reference to the Theatre of Sublime with the theatre asserting itself in the moment, like the fleeting moments of the box car coming and going on the track.

T H E C I T Y

The Queen City and Rail: An Ambiguous Finding of Regina

Determining the location of the capital city was anything but straightforward. The C.P.R. undertook three separate surveys.⁶ In 1881, the first survey attempt was from Manitoba to Moose Jaw Creek, the second swung north and the final attempt was straightening out the track while taking over Wascana, where the creek wound about to present-day Regina.⁷ The third survey was highly influenced by Lieutenant Governor Edgar Dewdney who decided that the capital city would be landmarked on the crossing of Pile of Bones Creek, even though “the Government of Canada and the C.P.R. were responsible for choosing the site of Regina.”⁸ Oddly enough, the chosen site on the Pile of Bones Creek had little to offer to encourage urban settlement; insufficient water and poor drainage, no sheltering hills and timbers for fuel, lumber or shade.⁹ Dewdney justifies the site as being “a central position within the Provisional District of Assiniboin, and also an account of its being the natural center of a vast and rich agricultural economy.”¹⁰

² Susan Glickman, *The Picturesque & the Sublime: A Poetics of the Canadian Landscape*, 10.

³ Peter Brooke, *The Empty Space*, 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Earl Drake, *Regina, The Queen City*, 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁰ Edmund H. Dale, *Regina: Regional Isolation and Innovative Development*, 3.

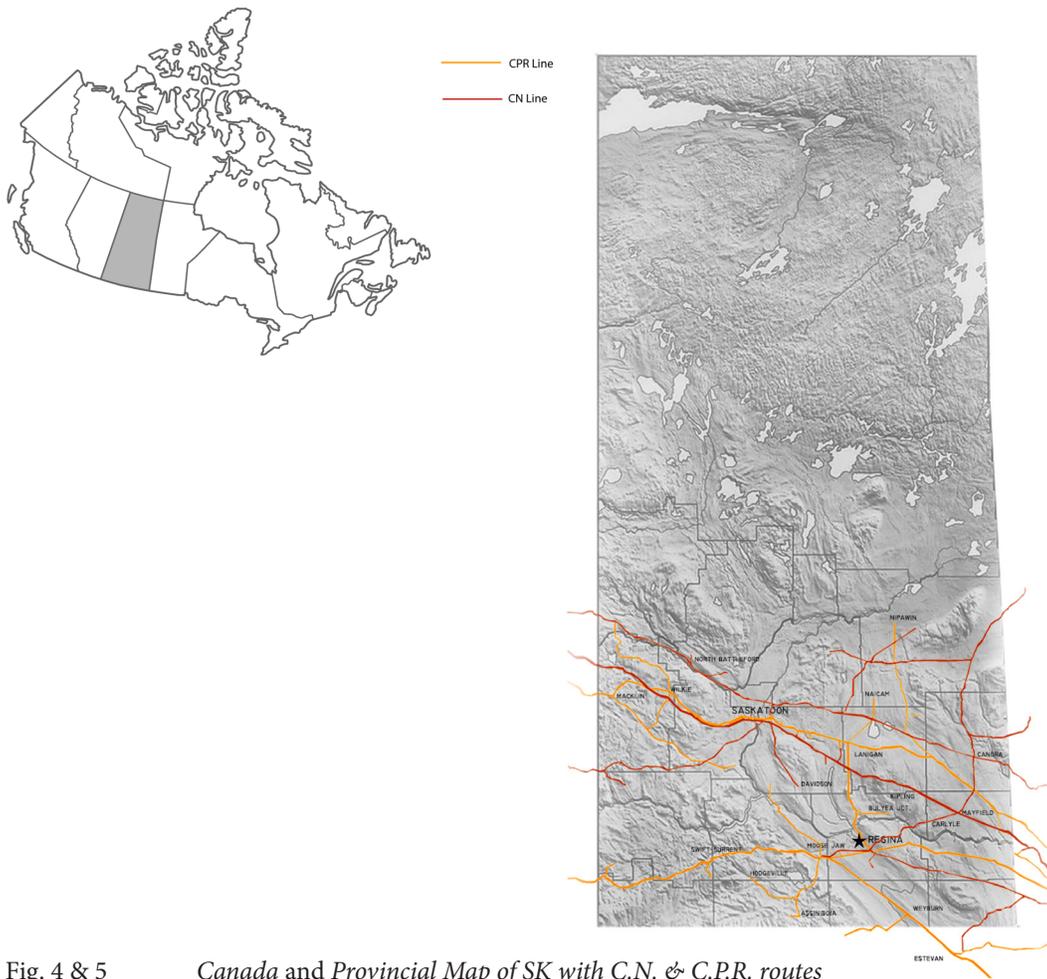


Fig. 4 & 5 Canada and Provincial Map of SK with C.N. & C.P.R. routes

The sublime is one of the formative ideas of Canadian culture.¹¹ Canada holds vast amounts of landscape that is continually being processed, read and represented. In particular, the Canadian Western prairies may be renowned for having no “national boundaries” but Kroetsch argues that the prairies have a “natural boundary” that between land and sky — the horizon.¹²

It is a shifting, illusory, unobtainable point of delineation. The horizon is ‘place and space at once, somewhere and nowhere, always present and never to be reached.’¹³

To many outsiders, this seems far-fetched and ambiguous, therefore the story must be told. The narration liberates the Canadian prairies — the city of Regina, Saskatchewan — from denying to self-affirming and destructive to self-creative.¹⁴

Many disagreed with Dewdney including the Saskatchewan Herald (Battleford) who declared:

The choice of this capital has but one thing to recommend it — it lies on the line of the railway; but that advantage is also enjoyed by hundreds of other places which have in addition both wood and water... However rich the soil may be, the lack of wood and water in the vicinity must militate against its becoming a place of very great importance. They are equally necessary to the development of a town as a railway communication.¹⁵

Dewdney and several colleagues formed two syndicates and “bought approximately twenty-eight sections of Hudson’s Bay Company lands,” adjacent to the future route of the C.P.R.¹⁶ There was credible speculation that Dewdney’s personal speculations of property interests influenced his choice on the capital.¹⁷ The property became part of Regina where the Dewdney syndicate would sell and make a “tidy fortune.”¹⁸ Dewdney proceeded to enforce urban development on the west side of the city with three major government buildings, The Territorial Government Building, The Lieutenant Governor Residence and The North West Mounted Police (NWMP) barracks.¹⁹

¹¹ Glickman, *The Picturesque & the Sublime: A Poetics of the Canadian Landscape*, 59.

¹² Rosalind Jennings, “Disappearing Doubles and Deceptive Landscapes in the Writings of Robert Kroetsch,” 25.

¹³ Robert Kroetsch, *The Lovely Treachery of Words*, 80.

¹⁴ Jennings, “Disappearing Doubles and Deceptive Landscapes in the Writings of Robert Kroetsch,” 26.

¹⁵ Edmund H. Dale, *Regina: Regional Isolation and Innovative Development*, 3.

¹⁶ Drake, *Regina, The Queen City*, 10.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ William J. Brennan, *The History of Canadian Cities: Regina, An Illustrated History*, 37.



Fig. 6 *Sight - Site Model*

Through this controversy, tension arose between the C.P.R. and Edgar Dewdney. Regina became a “splayed-out town” with two opposing forces developing urban growth in opposite directions of the city.²⁰ The C.P.R. built the train station site two miles east of the Dewdney lot (Section 26).²¹ The urban growth of Regina transpired with the placement of the station with The Customs Office, Dominion Land Office and Post Office all located near the station and “it is here that the center of the city remains to the present day.”²² Although, the opposing forces — Dewdney, to the West and the C.P.R. to the East — were planning two distinct cities within a city that had intentions of being communal. The conflict was somewhat resolved by “compromise but paid scant attention to elementary common sense in town planning.”²³

The lack of precise planning merely echoed the situation found in most other Canadian cities of the same size... the history of Regina’s planning has shown three themes: private plans have been allowed to take precedence over public interest; public planning has concentrated on regulation rather than public policy; and planners have made no attempt to define and lead in the field of public policy.²⁴

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Drake, *Regina, The Queen City*, 12.

²² Brennan, ed., Ian E. Wilson, Dorothy Hayden, Gary W. Seib, Tom White and the Saskatchewan Archives Board. *Regina Before Yesterday, A Visual History 1882 to 1945*. (Regina: The City of Regina, 1978), 3.

²³ Drake, *Regina, The Queen City*, 14.

²⁴ William A. Riddell, *Regina, from Pile O’Bones to Queen City of the Plains: An Illustrated History*. (Burlington, ON: Windsor Publications, 1981), 119.

Even though the C.P.R. was the precedent for developing what was essentially a “Pile of Bones” into a city, the city represented as a collective is not as prominent.

With isolated public buildings strung out for two and a half miles of wind-swept prairie, the little town was far from being an impressive or compact community... In the succeeding years, it would be up to the ordinary settlers to take this dubious heritage and develop it.²⁵

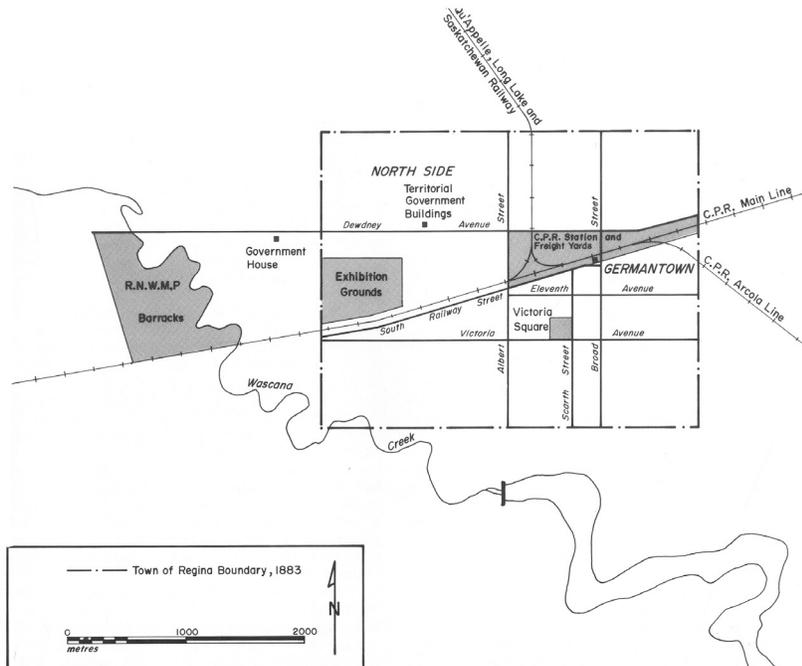


Fig. 7 Regina 1905

²⁵ Drake, *Regina, The Queen City*, 14.

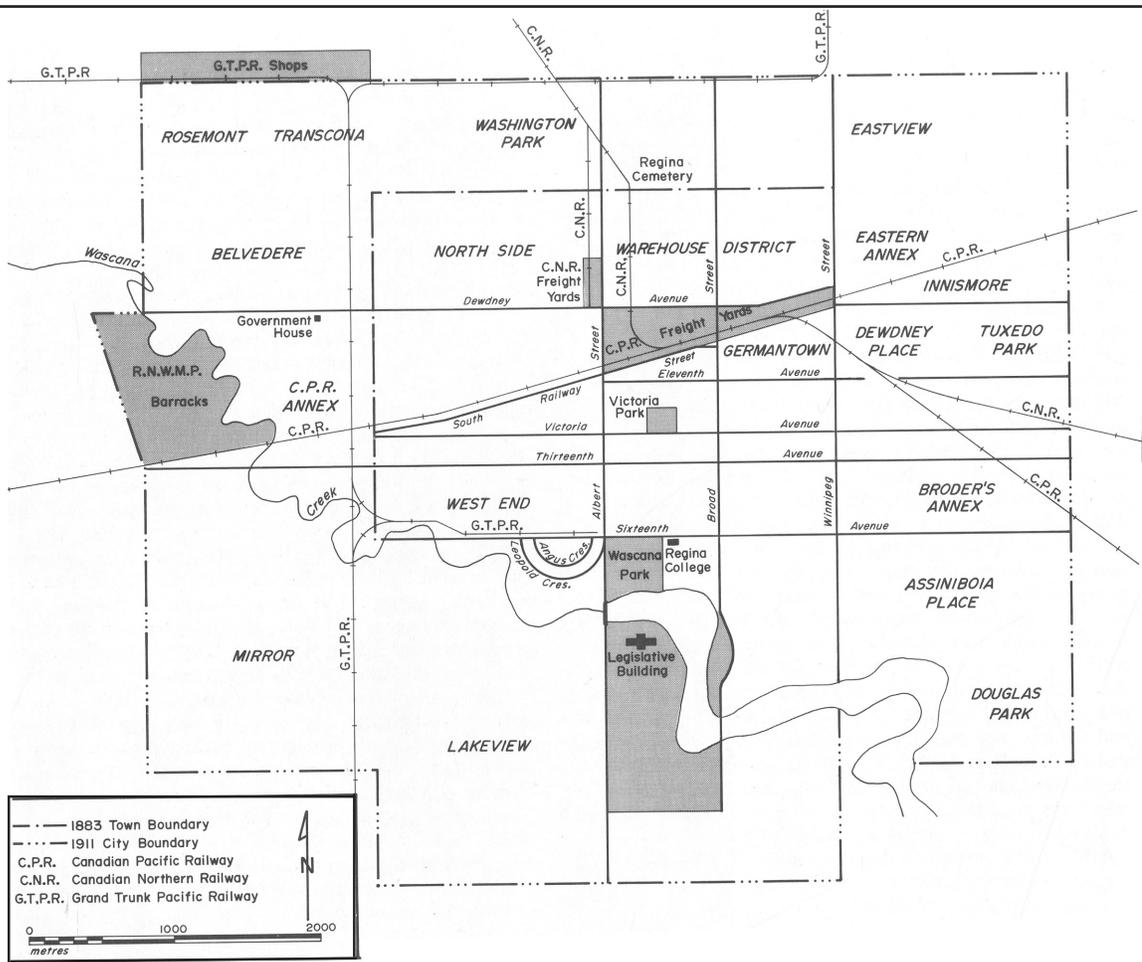


Fig. 8 Regina 1913

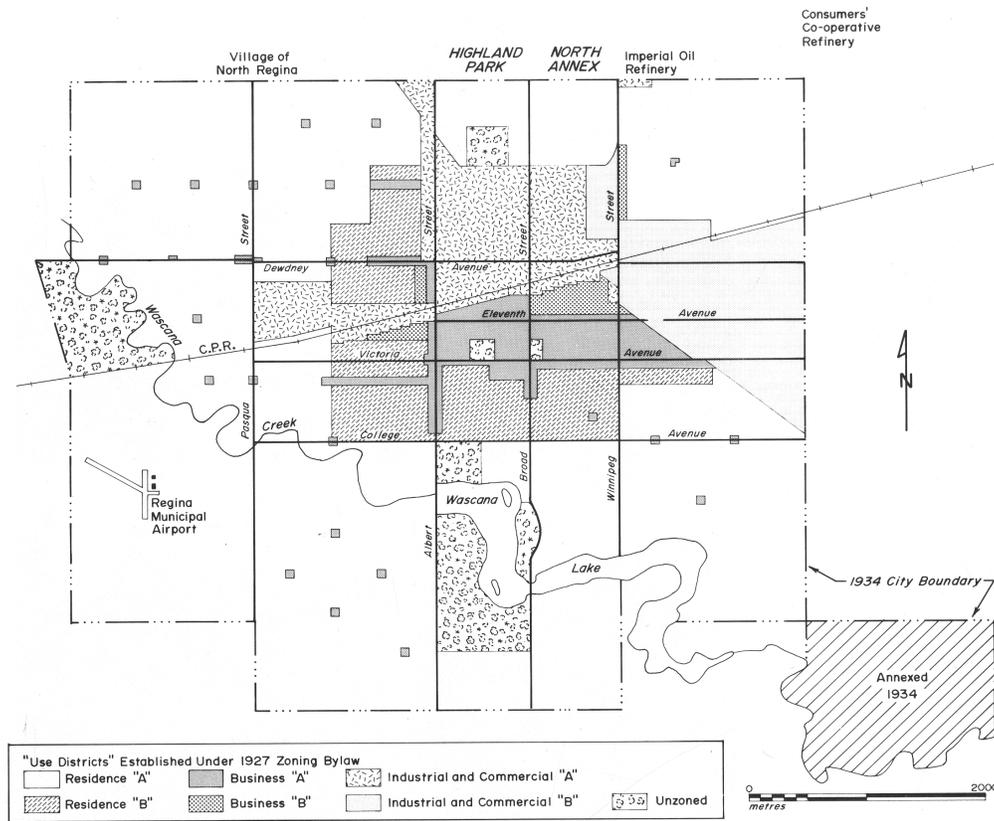


Fig. 9 Regina 1939

The Regina Monologues

The Prairies are a region of ethereal and ephemeral beauty, but also the kind of landscape that usually evokes strong feelings, either positive or negative ... It can attract and compel, but can also intimidate and repel. The detractors often speak of the Prairies as boring, flat and tedious; others, however, are attracted to the beauty of the 'austere land of violent mood'... the Prairies are both a place and a state of mind.²⁶

Wallace Stegner, a geologist who surveyed southern Saskatchewan in 1870 describes this concept powerfully in his autobiography, *Wolf Willow*:

The most desolate and forbidding regions on earth. Yet... I look for desolation and can find none. It is a long way from characterless; "overpowering" would be a better word. The drama of this landscape is in the sky, pouring with light and always moving. The earth is passive. And yet the beauty I am struck by, both as present fact and as revived memory, is a fusion: this sky would not be so spectacular without this earth to change and glow and darken under it... The very scale, the hugeness of simple forms, emphasizes stability... There was never a country that in its good moments was more beautiful. Even in drought or dust storm or blizzard it is the reverse of monotonous, once you have submitted to it with all the senses.²⁷

The Growth of Regina

After the struggling beginning years of Regina, the city grew economically and — due in large part to the railways — became one of the most dominant commercial centers in the eastern half of the North-West Territories.²⁸ By 1902, the C.P.R. had a major influence in the planning and land-use of Regina, creating an instant town by extending its prairie rail line west from Winnipeg all the way to the Rockies.²⁹ The placement of the rails initiated housing developments for workers employed where the warehouses were built. These robust industrial buildings are now seen as heritage buildings and are being reprogrammed for commercial and business uses.

²⁶ Adele Perry, Esyllt W. Jones, & Leah Morton. *Essays on Western Canada: Place and Replace*, 272.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Brennan, *The History of Canadian Cities: Regina, An Illustrated History*, 21.

²⁹ Regina's Heritage Walking Tours: Eight Self-Guided Tours of Regina's Built History. 4th ed. 2007. City of Regina.

Residents of Regina sought strength from within — revealing an “innovative spirit” — that made up for its small size, geographical isolation and monotonous terrain.³⁰ “Prairie tough” is not only a local but a valid saying that embraces the current conditions in order to “harden not weaken the fibre of prairie residents.”³¹ This prairie toughness is presented in a humble manner but should be acknowledged and expressed more within the city culture. As George Melnyk states in his critique of the book *New Moon at Batch: Reflections on the Urban Prairie*, “we must look on Saskatchewan as boasting two of the five stars in the constellation. They are, by a good distance, the two smallest, yet they go on twinkling.”³²

In the drear soil, what thought its deserts vast,
Be chill as death, and bleak the wintry blast;
It's humble poor more happiness can share,
'Mong scenes like these than in the great man's glare.³³

- Standish O'Grady, *The Emigrant*

There are few residential buildings within the warehouse district, compared to the industrial era of the early 1900's where it was an intermingled community of commercial, residential and industrial stock.

Regardless of how large the site is, many do not recognize it due to the fact that it's oddly remote and isolated. The landscape lies beyond the city walls and is rarely seen at ground level, the exception is at the site where a glimpse is possible. Many foreigners consider Regina as a pass-through city (to some people, a town) because of the Trans-Canada Highway that truncates it — “the regional isolation of Regina is marked.”³⁴ Another factor that does not help the city's isolation is the strenuous winters that often last beyond Spring.

³⁰ Dale, *Regina: Regional Isolation and Innovative Development*, v.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Samuel H. Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-Century England*, 88.

³⁴ Dale, *Regina: Regional Isolation and Innovative Development*, iv.



Fig. 10 *Prairie Fields*

In 1905, Regina was named the capital of the province and at that time it was the fastest growing province in Canada.³⁵ By 1913, twelve railway lines emerged out of the city making the city a major shipping and distribution point with an estimated 1,000 men working in the warehouses.³⁶ The decline of this tremendous economic and industry growth for Regina occurred in the Dirty Thirties (The Depression) that hit in 1929 leaving over 3,700 Reginians jobless.³⁷ Not long after, in 1939, came the struggles of World War II. The post-war years were more than ever dependent on industry to get the city in motion. There was little residential development in the downtown area and this has not changed to this day. Building activity was not seen as an agent promoting change nor creating a fresh start. “Continuity, not change” characterized the urban landscape of Regina.³⁸

³⁵ Ibid, 55.

³⁶ Dale, *Regina: Regional Isolation and Innovative Development*, v.

³⁷ Ibid, 55.

³⁸ Ibid, 119.

Growing up in Regina for 17 years, I have never encountered one person that ever owned a bus pass. From my experience, distance doesn't seem to be a factor when determining the means of transportation. There have been times when I have driven somewhere, which would easily have been a fifteen minute walk — it's a stigma. Perhaps the reason why the majority of Regina's do not walk within the small city is because it can be perceived as a ghost town. The same goes for public transportation being scarce in comparison to the street car operating during the inter-war years. If you are going to be alone anyway, might as well embrace it by commuting in your own vehicle customized to your schedule and destination. Though it is a shame that we choose to move in a way that is more harmful for the environment, more expensive and fails to maximize pleasure while at the same time maximizing harm to ourselves.³⁹ After stating the obvious, it makes perfect sense to choose to walk within the small city but people need something to motivate and initiate this choice — this movement. The free 17.5 acre lot right in the midst of the city seems to be a promising start.

The many lots that were vacant were turned into low density residential subdivisions and suburban shopping centres by developers — this would be repeated on other vacant lots.⁴⁰ This suburban growth increased and was widespread.⁴¹ Concurrently, the use of the automobile — while encouraging the development of large retail shopping centres — left Regina's downtown culture stagnant.⁴²

This dispersed sprawl of repeated blocks eliminated human and community movement in the core. The last street car retired in 1950 when electric trolley buses took over followed by diesel buses in 1966. As of now, nothing can compete with the private use automobile in Regina.

³⁹ Charles Montgomery, *Happy City*, 184.

⁴⁰ Brennan, *The History of Canadian Cities: Regina, An Illustrated History*, 167.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, 178-79

⁴² *Ibid*.

The streetcar had a huge impact on the growth of commercial and residential activity away from the downtown core while remaining within the city limits. The street car encouraged expansion with clusters of neighbourhood shops and activity appearing along the streetcar lines west of Thirteenth Avenue and east of Victoria Avenue.⁴³ More importantly, the city folk enjoyed the ride because it was a public activity. Children would spend days riding the streetcar as part of a playful activity.⁴⁴

⁴³ Ibid, 126.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Fig. 11 *Inaugural run of the Regina Municipal Railway down 11th Avenue, July 28th, 1911. To mark the occasion no fares were charged, and some children rode the streetcars all day.*



John Newlove's "Ride off Any Horizon" describes prairie imagery:

Piles of buffalo bones, boys swimming in a narrow river, fields yellow with wheat and mustard, the frames of 'lost houses' abandoned in the Depression, the ghosts of the 1885 rebellion — until, exhausted, he runs of memories and images and is forced to face 'the concrete horizon, definite, / tall against the mountains, / stopping vision visibly.' And then there is more to say.⁴⁵

The wind is preaching again.
Failed crops! It cries. No rain.
The dust wags a stern finger
across the fields. Let this be a lesson:
organize
conserve
buy insurance.
Move to Toronto.⁴⁶

- David Waltner-Toews, "Saskatoon Revisited"

Fig. 12 *Post-war Regina: Stanley Park, 1920.*



⁴⁵ Jene M. Porter, ed. *Perspectives of Saskatchewan*, 364.

⁴⁶ David Waltner-Toews, *The Impossible Uprooting*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1995), 117.

There is an impression of departure in these selected poems. Waltner-Toews' poem presents an anxiety about departure.⁴⁷ Departing Saskatchewan has been ongoing since the Depression, resulting in the loss of economy, industry and people. However, through the struggle in which those who have left the province have nevertheless taken with them "a belief in the importance of community, a moral and intellectual seriousness, a skepticism about unrestrained capitalism and a keen awareness of the common good."⁴⁸

Fig. 13 *Post-war Regina: South Railway Street with the Railway Station, 1920.*



⁴⁷ Porter, *Perspectives of Saskatchewan*, 362.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

In regards to citizens departing the province, Regina in particular, one can argue that the prairie city is in fact a void; not necessarily vacant of economy and industry but rather of culture and identity. Yet the void is precious with its landscape — flat earth and big sky. What lies in between these elements creates a dramatic, emotional and spiritual landscape, “one that inescapably affects the consciousness of its inhabitants.”⁴⁹ Is there an architectural response that mediates with the prairie landscape to encourage citizens of Regina to be present participants instead of departing bystanders? Or how can the departing leave traces of their past experiences within the land?

Some of the Canadian Pacific Rail lines were removed to control traffic flow in 1961. The removal of these lines permitted the widening of Arcola Avenue to provide better access to new subdivisions in the south-east.⁵⁰ The Grand Trunk Pacific line that was built in 1910, which opened up the prairie landscape was replaced by the Lewvan Drive Highway.⁵¹ Traffic congestion and control is an important asset to consider with urban planning, but the implementation of large-scale motorways need not neglect the human scale and walk-ability of a city. Regina is a splayed out city... [everything seems spread out and too far for the size of the city]⁵² Regina has the largest network of roads...⁵³ but lacks a network binding community. What used to be a collective and commuting hub is now vacant with freight trains that transport and connect everything but people within the city.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 361.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 181.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Porter, ed. *Perspectives of Saskatchewan*. (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2009), xii-xiii.

⁵³ Brennan, *The History of Canadian Cities: Regina, An Illustrated History*, 37.

Many who grew up in Saskatchewan have left to pursue their ambitions. Yet, for most there is a lingering nostalgia power and a recollection of identity and belonging that pays tribute to the landscape itself.

We were driving on what might be considered the bleakest stretch of road, on the bleakest time of year. When I got out, crystals formed all over the inside of the windshield. There were the prairies, the stretch of the wind, the movement of the clouds, the skies, all lilac-y and yellow. The windbreak was burgundy the snow was pink with the sun going down. It was such a rush of colour. To be so cold it could kill you in fifteen minutes, and yet to look so warm. I felt like a salmon smelling its native stream.⁵⁴

- Joni Mitchell, "40 Below 0" oil painting

⁵⁴ Brooke, James. "For Joni Mitchell, Artist Singing Was Not Enough," New York Times. 22 August 2000.



Fig. 14 *Joni Mitchell*
"40 Below 0"
oil painting on canvas

The Set of The Sublime

Walking through this vast void of 17.5 acres gives one an eery yet divine sensation while hearing the sounds of trains with the muffled sounds of the city in the background. The thesis site is a remnant of the prairie landscape of bareness yet fullness framed by the sky and ground with the train tracks reaching to the distant horizon.

Within this residual space, one recognizes human activity and abandoned traces along the current chain-link fence that borders the site while advertising the City of Regina's "Rail Yard Relocation Project." There is evidence of various past activities — trash, the nuts and bolts of industrial railway objects, an abandoned shopping cart and other strange encounters. These found items present prospective active spaces and brings awareness to the materiality of things and places. Such artifacts and surfaces encourage the hand to run over them to explore their consistency; these objects may be "touched, thrown, picked up, stroked, pulled apart, kicked, drummed upon, squeezed or jumped on."⁵⁵ The materiality and placement of the objects inspire conceptual and imaginal ideas — a setting for future events.

The Industrial Warehouse Districts of Regina

With the overcrowded freight yards, the C.P.R., C.N. and G.T.P. agreed to lay spur tracks to connect the trains to warehouses and services within the warehouse district.⁵⁶ Eventually the area further north-east of the CP Rail yard became more and more industrialized. This area is known as Ross Industrial Park, where the majority of the CP and CN trains are currently stationed for servicing. This area also connects to other rail lines. The industrial warehouse district is characterized by manufacturers, warehouses and wholesalers which contribute to a high coefficient of specialization for agricultural establishments.⁵⁷ The industrial district is close to the Trans-Canada highway, whereas recreation and amusement establishments are non-existent by this main highway. It is no wonder that Regina is seen as a pass-through town to most visitors.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Karen A. Franck And Quentin Stevens, ed. *Loose Space, Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life*, 242.

⁵⁶ Brennan, *The History of Canadian Cities: Regina, An Illustrated History*, 57.

⁵⁷ Dale, 77

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, iv.

So they analyzed the sounds made by clarinets, flutes, violins, and found that each note contained a remarkably high proportion of plain noise: actual scraping, or the mixture of heavy breathing with wind on wood: from a purist point of view this was just dirt but the composers soon found themselves compelled to make synthetic dirt — to 'humanize' their compositions. Architects remain blind to this principle — and era after era the most vital theatrical experiences occur outside the legitimate places constructed for the purpose.

- Peter Brooke, "Rough Theatre," 79



Fig. 15 *Sight-Site Model*



Fig. 16 *Aerial view of Ross Industrial Park*



Fig. 17 - 9

Sight Documentation

The warehouse district is characterized for wood products manufacturing, printing and paper industries and food processing plants.⁵⁹ There are a large number of retail outlets that have converged within the district over the years yet the coefficient retail trade is lower than the central business district (downtown).⁶⁰ The majority of the warehouse district is known economically for wholesale trade. Nonetheless, Dewdney Street, the adjacent street north from the rail yard marks the commencement of a developing hybrid. The popularity of Regina's warehouse district has promoted heritage conservation and adaptive-reuse of existing buildings. The warehouses on the Dewdney strip have been re-used for commercial, business and residential developments while respecting their historic and architectural surroundings.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Ibid, 75.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Regina's Heritage Walking Tours: Eight Self-Guided Tours of Regina's Built History. 4th ed. 2007. City of Regina.

Fig. 20 Workers laying down tracks in the Warehouse District

Fig. 21 (bottom) "Discover the District" billboard currently seen on Dewdney Street

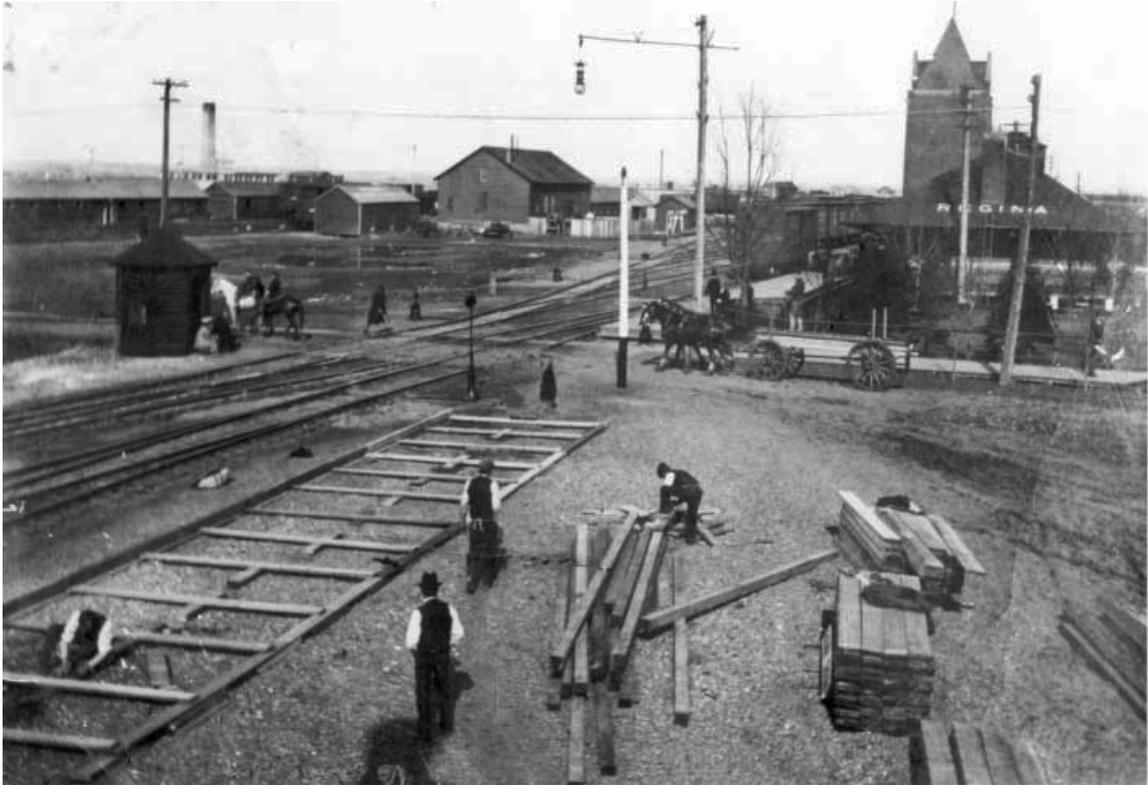


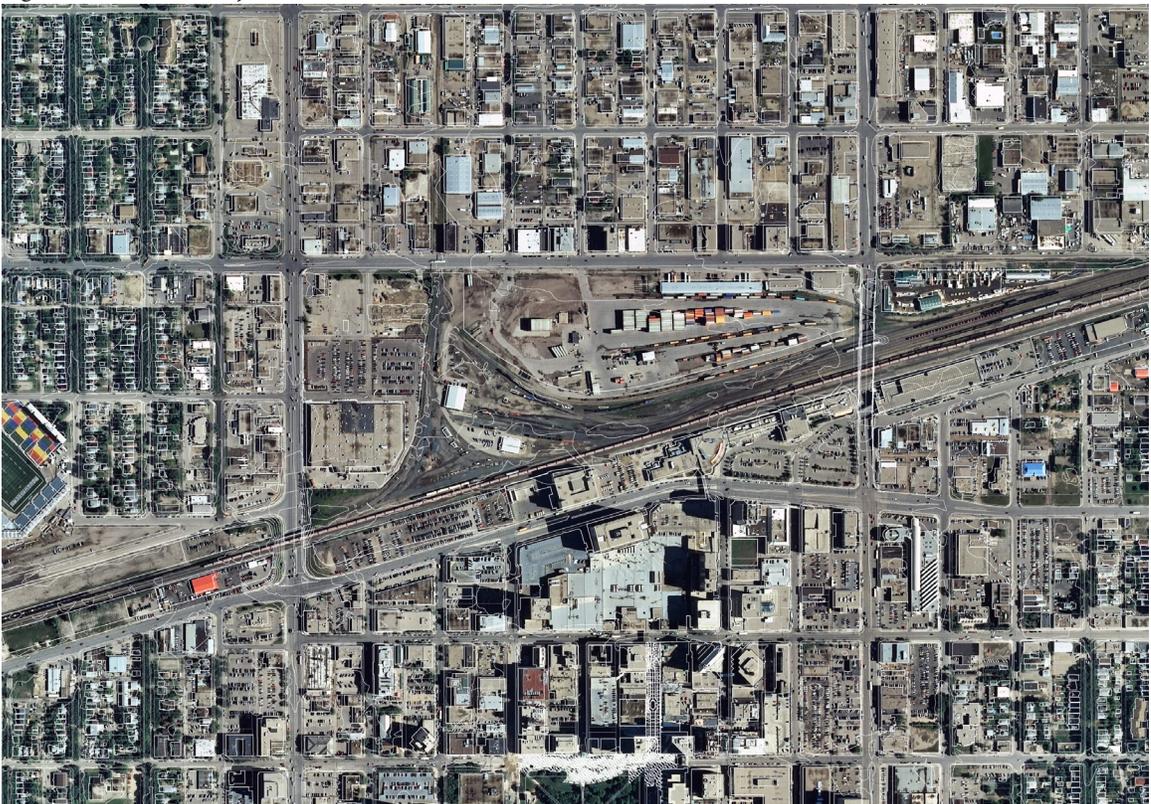
Fig. 22 *The spur tracks laid out on Dewdney Street in the Industrial Warehouse District.*



Fig. 23 *Rail yard, 1947*



Fig. 24 *Rail yard, 2012*



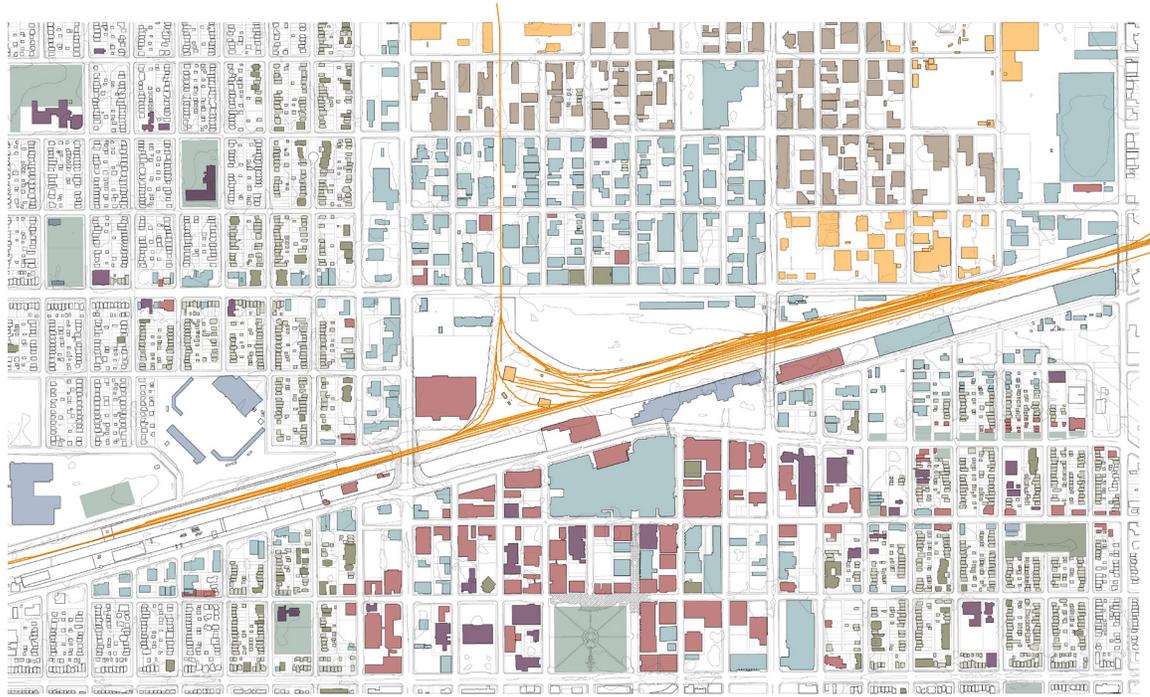


Fig. 25

City of Regina Building Program

- SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING
- MULTI-UNIT HOUSING
- ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
- INSTITUTIONAL
- OFFICE/BUSINESS
- PARK
- INDUSTRIAL
- COMMERCIAL/RETAIL
- INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL

The Miniature - Narrative in Space

The miniature box exercise focuses on framing the journey of a young girl, Jeliza Rose in the film *Tideland*. Jeliza Rose comes across an abandoned and overturned bus adjacent to rail way tracks. Fireflies illuminate the ruin, transforming the bleak area into a spectacle. Through this monotonous landscape and Jeliza Rose's imagination, she discovers explorations and observations that may have been unrecognized and unnoticed at first. Jeliza Rose is recognizing and embracing the habitation of the absence and the decay of broken windows from the overturned school bus. She is bringing life and activity within the abandoned land and infrastructure; allowing her imagination to consume the sounds and the visuals that surround her. This illustrates the incredible imagination and influence humans possess regarding the context of the land; they initiate the program of spaces. People make the spaces expressive and embrace spontaneity that allows transformation or a different perspective of what once was looked at as nothing, void. As Jane Jacobs states, "a store is also a storekeeper."⁶²

The Rail Relocation and Revitalization Project 1946 -present

As personal vehicles took over public transportation, there were more complaints about the current railway's location. Most of the complaints were justified by the rail traffic slowing down vehicular traffic. A concept for Regina's railway relocation was presented to the Canadian Transport Commission (CTC) in 1970.⁶³ Phase I consisted of the relocation of the CN yard and the main lines as well as the CP Lanigan main line.⁶⁴ The second step would be the relocation of the downtown CP yard and the main line—the economic life-blood of the city.⁶⁵ In order to develop the 114 acres of vacant land, the City of Regina held an international competition to prompt future design strategies for the CP Rail Yard in downtown Regina.⁶⁶ With more than 350 inquiries submitted, Michael Duplay, architect and Claire Duplay, planner and economist, were chosen for their design strategy.⁶⁷

⁶² Sonia Hirt and Diane Zahm, ed. *The Urban Wisdom of Jane Jacobs*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 4.

⁶³ "Relocating Railways Longterm Project." *The Leader-Post*. B12. June 24, 1985.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ "Once in a Lifetime Opportunity." *The Leader-Post*. 12. May 18th, 1976.

⁶⁷ "Who would Develop Vacated Railway Property?" *Local History*. May 22, 1977.



Fig. 26 *Set design based on the movie, Tideland*



Fig. 27 *movie scene from Tideland*



Fig. 28 movie scene from Tideland

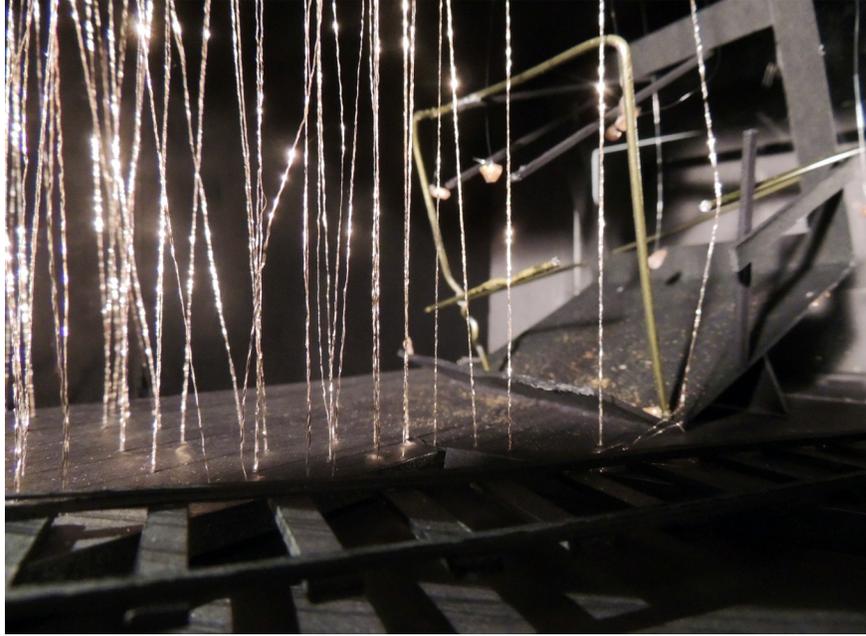


Fig. 29 *Set design based on the movie, Tideland*



Fig. 30 *Set design based on the movie, Tideland*

Delgado commemorates Jacobs' life of the sidewalk as a dance:

Dance is that class of artistic creation most grounded in taking maximum advantage of the expressive possibilities of the body, deploying its energy at a given time and space, a time and space that might seem to have already been there prior to human action, but that in reality emanate from it...The time-energy-body of the dancer expresses all of its possibilities through everyday activity in urban settings in which words become accustomed to being worth relatively little in relations between partial or total strangers and in which all seems to depend on superficial eloquence, not in the trivial sense, but rather in terms of acts that take place on the surface, that function through slippages, that avoid or extract the maximum utility from the contours of the land, that seek out and create grooves and folds, that conceal any regularities on the skin of the social body.⁶⁸

The Parisian designers described the program as “socio-cultural facilities while bridging the gap in urban continuity” by proposing “a green festivities mall and a tree shaded main square surrounded by memories of Regina”⁶⁹ While the design was well intended — incorporating a pedestrian environment — the funding of the project was unaffordable.⁷⁰ Currently, the P3A team, a local architecture firm, are partnering with Urban Strategies Inc., WSP Group and Urbanics Consultants Ltd. to configure a master plan for the 17.5 acre site that is adjacent to the C.P.R. main line with storage and spur lines that arc the boundaries of the site.⁷¹ Working with the City of Regina, RRI (Regina Revitalization Initiative), they have entered Phase 4 of the Secondary and Concept Plan in Fall 2016. This consists of selecting a preferred concept, preparing draft plans, technical strategies and preparing final plans.⁷² Achieving a general public consensus through open houses is an improvement to communal urban planning compared to the Edgar Dewdney and the C.P.R. rivalry. Thus far, the conceptual design considers general/public institutions, mixed used residential and commercial buildings, and active ground floors, an open pedestrian bridge, a civic square and dispersed green spaces.⁷³ ... While this thesis takes into consideration the city master plan, it condenses the plan by exploring ways of building with the absence, not against it. Working with the sublime, acknowledging existing observations — evidence of quiet activeness that need to be brought to the forefront. Within the scope of the project, this thesis seeks ways to encourage rapid, though influential, community engagement through the agency of everyday activities.

⁶⁸ Sonia Hirt and Diane Zahm, ed., *The Urban Wisdom of Jane Jacobs*, 30.

⁶⁹ “Which plan do you prefer? Plan A, Plan B, Plan C, Plan D or Plan E?” *The Leader-Post*. 10. May 18th, 1976.

⁷⁰ Ed Owen. “Paris Firm’s Plan Picked for Downtown Rail Yards.” *The Leader-Post*. June 2, 1976.

⁷¹ RRI, Regina Revitalization Initiative. <http://www.reginarevitalization.ca>

⁷² “Public Open House #2: Exploring Concepts.” Monday, May 16, 2016. RRI, Regina Revitalization Initiative. <http://www.reginarevitalization.ca>

⁷³ Ibid.



Fig. 31- 2 *Aerial views of active rail yard and inactive rail yard*

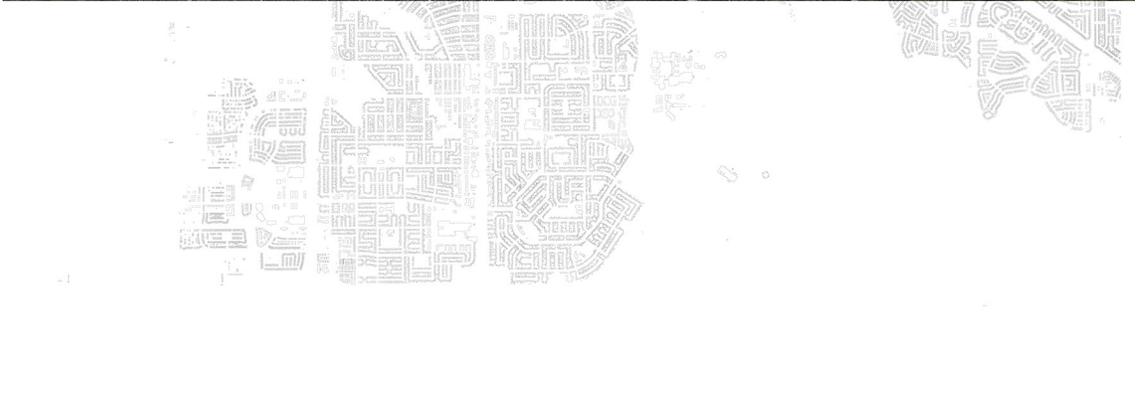


Fig. 34 Map of Regina & photo-collages

Taking advantage of the ordinary and seeking the great potential to add a layer of appreciation is replicated by a local Saskatoon bicyclist, Robert Judge. He is a participant in his city that is freezing for half of the year. Judge decided to go car-free in his city where he would rely on his bicycle as his only means of transportation. With the help of extreme thermal clothing, studded tires, a utility tub that was attached to a bike trailer in order to haul his groceries and other things, Judge was set to go.⁷⁴

Biking in winter is kind of like walking on hot coals: people say you can't do it. They say it's impossible! But then you just go and do it... First you feel the cold in your mouth and nose. It's twenty-five below and the wind is blowing. Your eyes fill up with tears for the first few blocks, but then they clear up, and you just keep going.⁷⁵

- Robert Judge

Hearing this at first seems bizarre and one may even question the sanity of this man. However, Judge explains his biking experience along the Saskatoon River as a story that may shift initial judgments. Judge would pick up his three-year-old son from day care and put him on the backseat of his bike.⁷⁶

The snow would muffle the noise of the city. Dusk would paint the sky in colours so exquisite that Judge could not begin to find names for them. The snow would reflect those hues. It would glow like the sky, and Judge would breathe in the cold air and hear his son breathing behind him, and he would feel as though together they had become part of winter itself.⁷⁷

It is highly unlikely that Regina residents will turn to cycling during the arctic-like winters, but the monologues presented facilitate the importance of traveling as a pedestrian — walking. Walking opens up spaces to something possibly different. The pedestrian defines and shapes the city; people are the subject of the city by recognizing the importance of these “signifying practices [walking] as practices that invent spaces.”⁷⁸ Walking and being able to experience the tactility of stories and experiences accumulated in a place is comparable to the joyful and silent character of the child wandering from one place to the other. “Physical moving about has the itinerant function of yesterday's or today's superstitions.”⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Montgomery, *Happy City*. (Anchor Canada, 2013), 177.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 178

⁷⁸ Michel Certeau, “Walking in the City,” *The Practices of Everyday Life*, 107.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 106.

The childhood experience that determines spatial practices later develops its effects, proliferates, floods private and public spaces, undoes their readable surfaces and creates within the planned city a “metaphorical” or mobile city, like the one of Wassily Kandinsky dreamed of: ‘a great city built according to all the rules of architecture and then suddenly shaken by a force that defies all calculation.’⁸⁰

The reference to Kandinsky within the context of the thesis refers to the curious wanderer of a place. Having the open-mind of a child — fascinated by the most mundane everyday objects that are in fact archives of social engagement — is an example of an active participant with space. These observations can only be experienced by being actively situated on a site, not passively from a distance. Human bodies were born physically, mentally and spiritually to move — not to be transported. Although, the rail yard commemorates machines of transportation, the remaining 17.5 acres that is asphalt-free could be dedicated solely for pedestrians. This thesis project explores ways to design a hybrid between the train and pedestrians that compliment one another. Creating a balance between the two fundamental parts of the theatre of the sublime — the prop (the train) and actor/actresses (the visitors).



Fig. 35 *Winter Prairie Hues*

⁸⁰ Ibid, 110.

The Prop: The Train filling - emptying - rediscovery

"The prairie landscape is a landscape of extreme dimensions — a great simplicity and it calls for extreme yet simple, forms."⁸¹

- Frank Lloyd Wright

Can the urban centres that had a direct relationship to the railroads and the grain elevators become distributing junction points for human activity as they were for supplies such as lumber, coal, general merchandise and agricultural implements?⁸² It seems more common for prairie people to engage with the environment in terms of recreation and aesthetics rather than economics, especially within the core of the city.⁸³

The railway stations serve as thresholds to the city; "a dramatic rite of passage."⁸⁴ Mass amounts of people engaged in "unrelated activities find themselves gathered together within the space according to the rhythms of trains."⁸⁵ There are ample opportunities for new experiences and stimulating activities for those inhabiting this in-between and mediating space of transportation and place.

Railway stations are characteristic places for dense and varied as well as anonymous and fleeting encounters, in other words, for the type of interactions which were to mark the atmosphere of life in big cities, described by Benjamin as overwhelming with excitement.⁸⁶

- Jurgen Habermas

⁸¹ Perry, Jones & Morton. *Essays on Western Canada: Place and Replace*.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Franck and Stevens, *Loose Space, Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life*, 78.

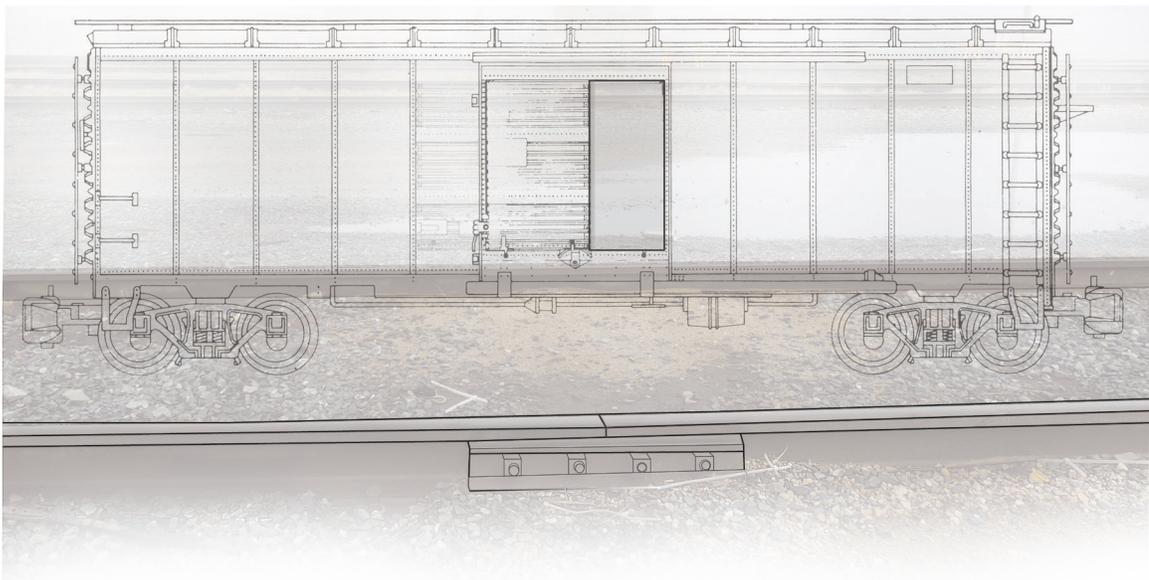
⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

The railway tracks embedded in the landscape remain rooted while the trains are constantly in flux — arriving and departing. “Rhythms. Rhythms. They reveal and they hide.”⁸⁷ Observation and meditation follow the line of the tracks that spread throughout the site rejoining the past to the present to the possible — this moving spectacle is happening in front of the observer, “simultaneously centre and periphery.”⁸⁸ These rhythms cannot be grasped with a camera in the same way as attentive eyes, ears, a head, a memory and heart experience these moments — a dialectical materialism.*

* *dialectical materialism* ; According to Henri Lefebvre, dialectical materialism is an open-ended movement bringing together the conflictual and contradictory while linking theory and practice. “The intention is not to deny one or other term nor to transcend them, but to reveal the continual movement between [opposites such as] homogeneous and fragmented, ephemeral and durable.”⁸⁹

Fig. 36 *Train Facade*



⁸⁸ Ibid, 36-7.

⁸⁹ Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, 9-10.

How can one transcribe architecturally the ephemeral, as well the connective quality of the train towards the city?

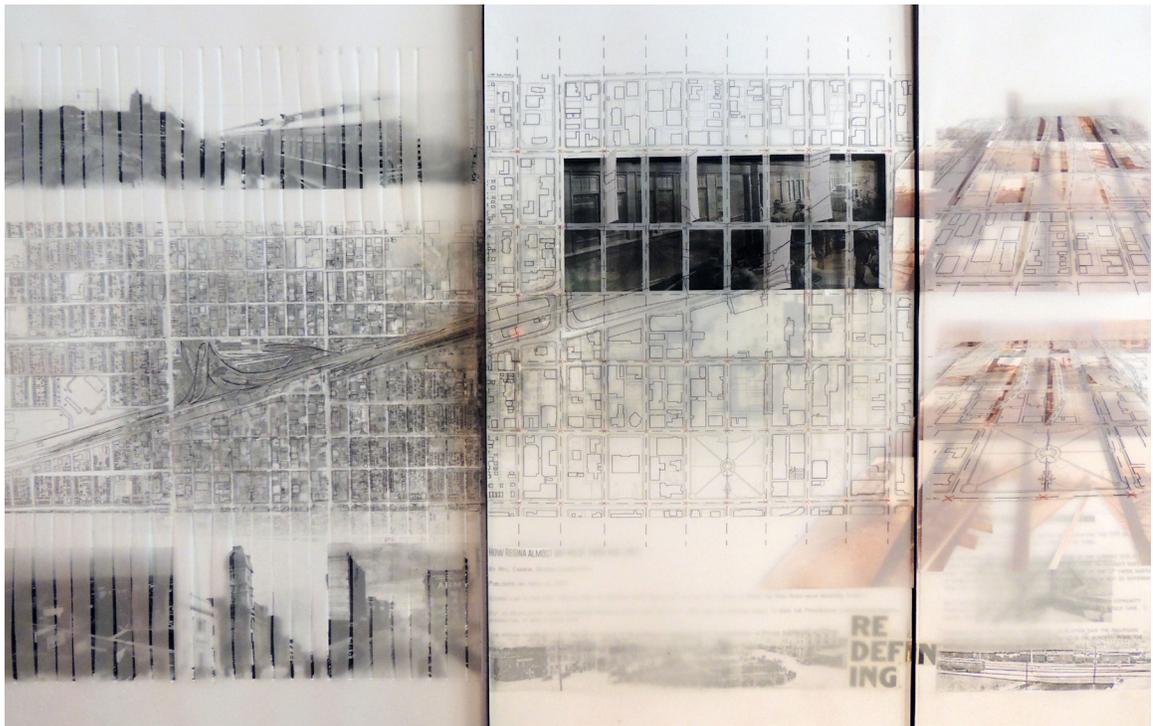


Fig. 37- 8 *Triptych*

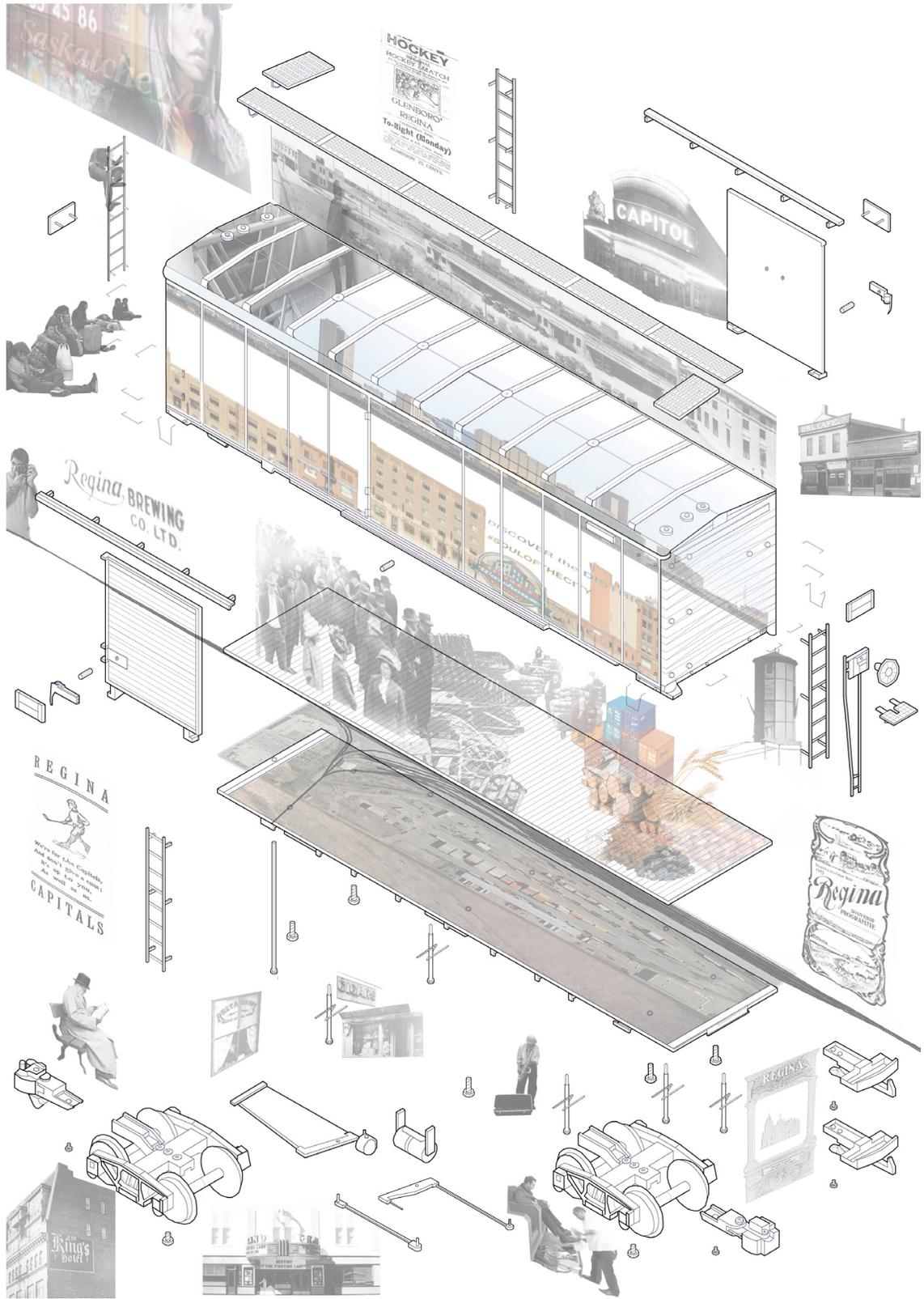


Fig. 41 Layered Axonometric of Train & Events

T H E S T R A T E G Y

This thesis and project seek to define a spatial framework that can accommodate different forms of appropriation and emerging uses within the shifting seasons of the landscape. Some of these infrastructures cannot be foreseen and should not be defined from the very beginning of the project, rather the program or plot unfolds throughout; similar to the journey of the train.⁹⁰ By contrast, the rootedness of the railway station, being an arrival to the metropolis, reflects permanency but the experience is transient. The grounded structure in the landscape, the spur tracks, is timeless and survives all seasons but the ephemeral kit of parts, the box car, extending from this structure is dispersed along the lot framing moments of action and movement.

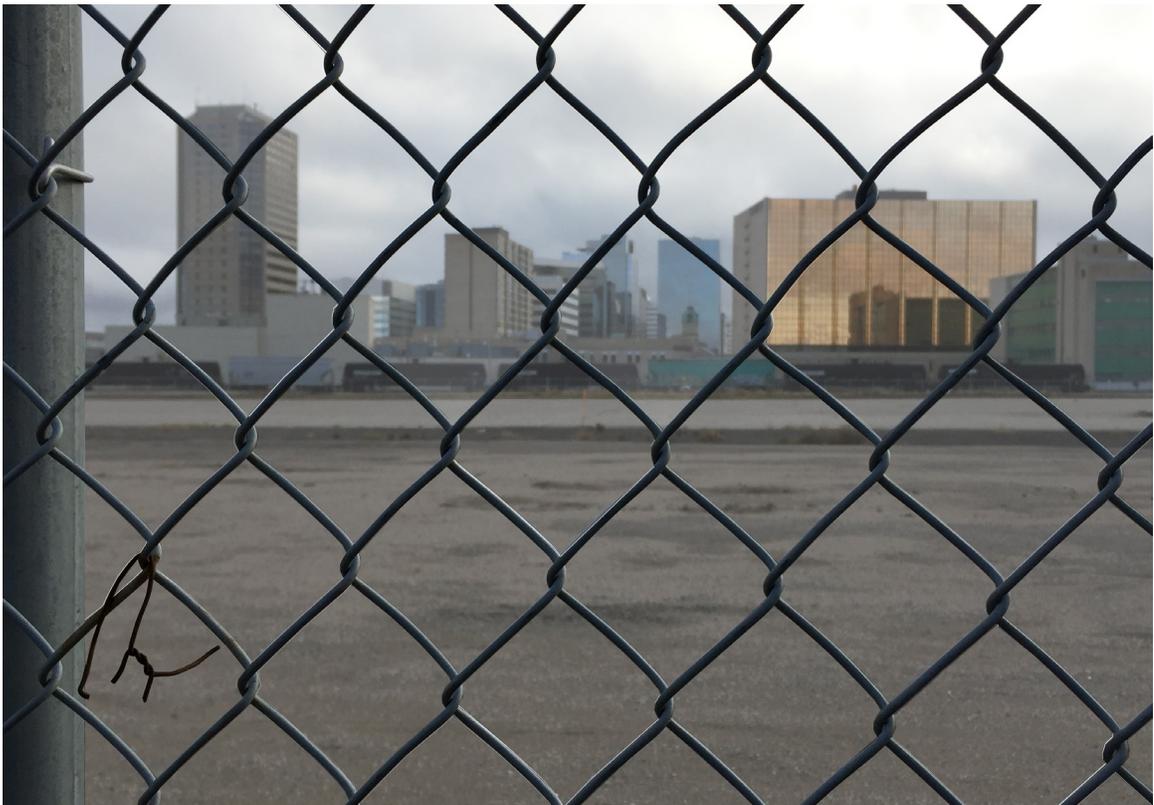


Fig. 42 *Void*

⁹⁰ Franck and Stevens, *Loose Space, Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life*, 286.



Fig. 43 *Sublime*

Currently, the C.P.R. only carries freight throughout the city, a revival of a passenger train is encouraged. With the many train passengers, an emerging network would evolve with various paths and junctions. These various pathways (traced by characters such as the planner, the commuter, the wanderer and others) would influence the site's choreography and design strategy. The crossing of numerous passengers could initiate increasingly permanent structures in contrast to temporary structures of frequent crossings. One will experience the spectacle of arriving in the Queen City and become engaged in civic event and celebrations set within the clear and vast prairie landscape — an invitation to experience the sublime, a feeling of suspended disbelief. These temporary structures serve performance functions and support public tributes to the city.



Fig. 44 Character Studies



collect; scavenge, used, second-hand

collect; buy, new, first-hand

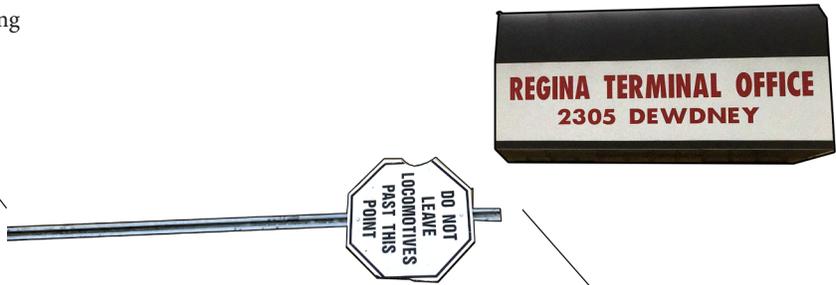


found object: shopping cart

Fig. 45 *Existing Explorations*



inform; cautionary, rules, warning



found objects: signage

inform; exhibit, orient, welcoming

Fig. 46 Existing Explorations 2.0

The Sublime – Suspended Disbelief

The sublime being an internalized experienced, “producing an overwhelming sense of awe or other high emotion through being vast or ground.”⁹¹

The Sublime is a critical component and is the most expressive of western values and aesthetics. The site offers the potential for a reconfiguration with respect to the narrative of place and our place within it; a reflection on the relationship of figure and ground. At first glance the 17.5 acre lot may appear bleak but while being captivated by this stretched horizontal flatland, one discovers a “discourse of layers and contradictions that refuses to skim the surface of [the site], but instead burrows into it.”⁹² There is a build-up of experiences, explorations and events that are layered within the dust. Many visitors of the prairies claim there is a lot to not see: no trees, no mountains, no people. “Being prairie means not seeing, willfully.”⁹³ Think of how much energy this “not-seeing” takes, imagine what could be if that energy were redirected.⁹⁴

Alison Calder’s discusses the prairie scene represented in an “uncommon sense” through art that shifts the perspective of viewers that are looking at the same old scene but with new eyes.⁹⁵ Uncommon sense has this double clarity that can be seen in art and design by interacting and “burrowing” into the space with layers and contradictions that refuse to skim the surface.⁹⁶

Uncommon sense shows us difficulty, opacity, the limits of our understanding. In doing so, it releases us from the obligation of not-seeing, allowing the possibility of an openness that counters belligerence and defensiveness. The golden field is the tip of an iceberg⁹⁷

⁹¹ Rem Koolhaas, “The Future of the Way We Live, Love and Work,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zv9CEO7pApg>

⁹² Steven Matijcio, ed. *Scratching the Surface: The Post-Prairie Landscape*, 15.

⁹³ *Ibid*, 14.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, 14.

⁹⁵ Matijcio, ed. *Scratching the Surface: The Post-Prairie Landscape*, 15.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*.

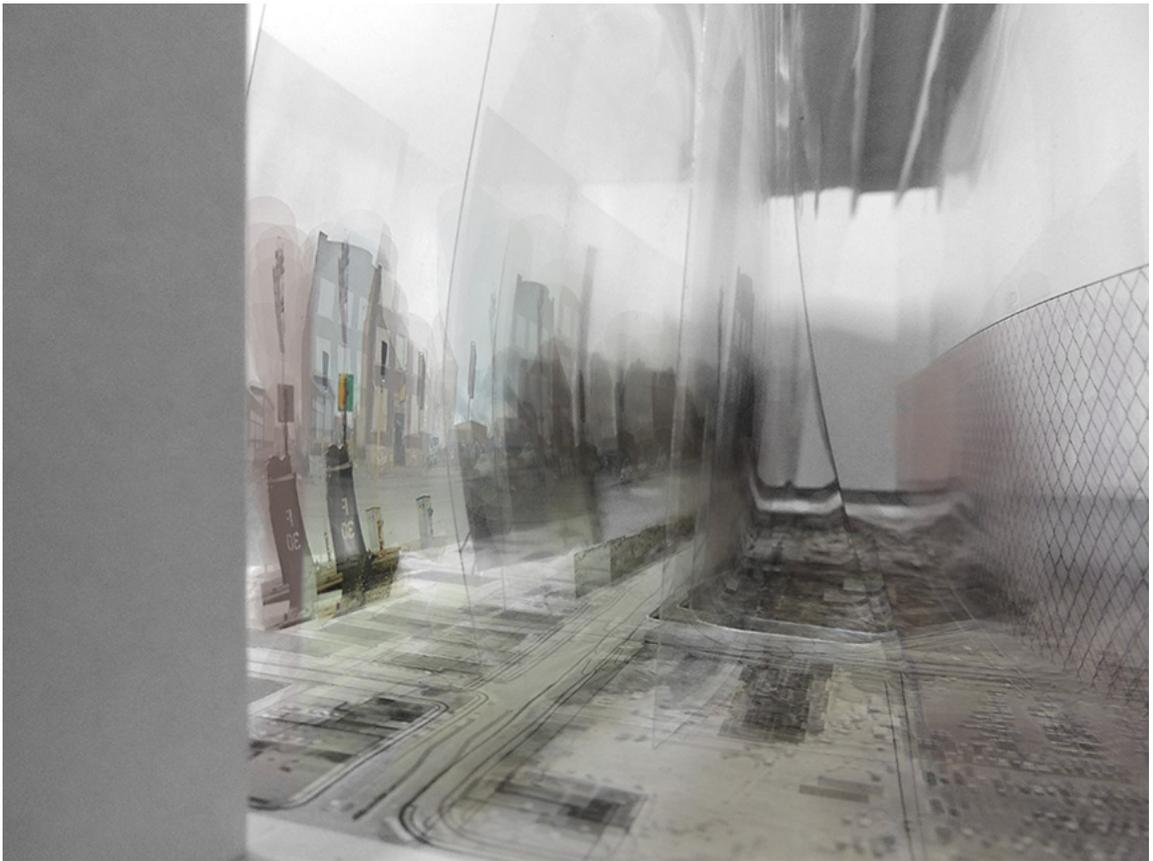


Fig. 47 *Sight - Site : Dewdney Street*



Fig. 48-9

Sight - Site : Dewdney Street



Fig. 50 *Sight - Site : C.P.R. Tracks & Hub*



Fig. 51 *Sight - Site : C.P.R. Tracks & Hub*



Fig. 52 *Sight - Site : C.P.R. Tracks & Hub*

Gordon Matta-Clark's definition of the sublime is applicable to the sublime being an internalized experience, "a question of the mind's struggle to grasp the suppressible — a question of presentation, and hence, representation... quite formless and devoid of figure."

The stillness and soothing hiss of the trains within the setting of the site stimulate an "absent landscape — a evocation that provokes a tendency to stop and listen."⁹⁸ Tim Edensor describes this as a "sensual immanence" one receives while traveling through a ruin, which parallels the experience visiting the abandoned rail yard.⁹⁹ The foggy atmosphere, the textures of all tactility from smooth to abrasive, and the contrast of faded colour in the background with pops of colour in the foreground creates visual landscape that is a balanced contrast. Making the step from the sidewalk to the dirt leads visitors to enter a terrain that will stimulate the senses to become immersed in reverie. The large plot of land offers freedom from the consistent flow of city time. The void does not represent emptiness, it "makes room for a void" by opening up and allowing a transformative power of freedom and play within a system of defined places.¹⁰⁰

Ruins act as "exemplary sites" to address the question and concerns that arise from how urban space is produced and reproduced.¹⁰¹ The opening of the site from the modular city and structured grid offers interaction, performance and play from the lives of regulation and routine.

[The rail yard] opens up possibilities for regulated human bodies to escape their shackles in expressive pursuits and sensual experience, foreground alternative aesthetics about where and how things should be situated, and transgress boundaries between inside and outside, and between human and non-human spaces.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Tim Edensor, *Industrial Ruins*, 91.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 15.

¹⁰⁰ de Certeau, "Walking in the City," *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 106.

¹⁰¹ Edensor, *Industrial Ruins*, 17.

¹⁰² Ibid, 18.



Fig. 53 *Sight - Site : Downtown Skyline & Rail yard*



Fig. 54 *Sight - Site : Downtown Skyline & Rail yard*

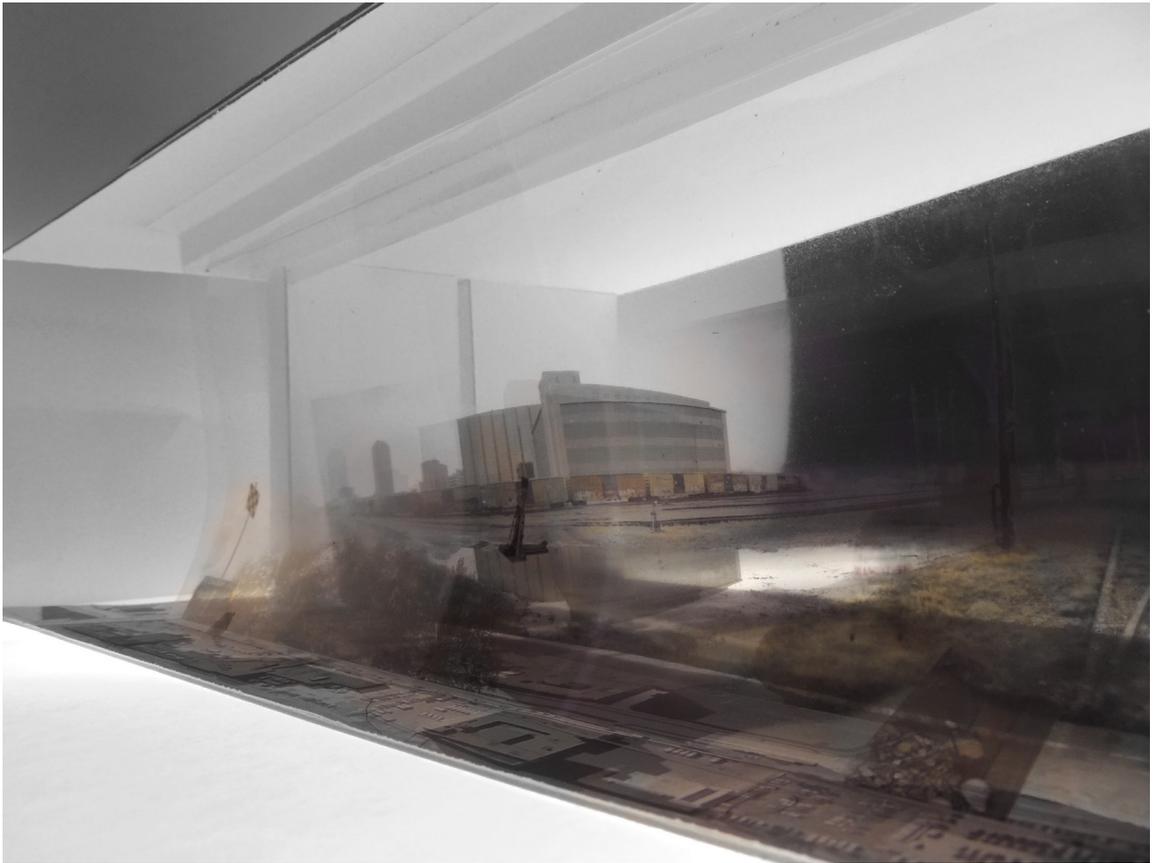


Fig. 55 *Sight - Site : Downtown Skyline & Rail yard*

Existing Explorations

Ephemeral and untraceable, one of the traces of human activity on site is the layer of graffiti seen on the box cars. Graffiti and trains have an intuitive relationship, whether intended or not. As Cyrus Smith, who photographs freight train graffiti, states the trains are a “massive industrial postcards sent by inner city graffiti writers, traveling from countryside to city scape.”¹⁰³ Responding to the sublime environment while engaging in a primitive social language of the city; “a breath of discontent; urban life clearing it’s throat.”¹⁰⁴ Transporting freight and urban goods out of the city, “the graffiti literally screams across the prairies, as if flying out of a world so insane it wakes up everything in sight.”¹⁰⁵ Ripping across the plains and “slicing this notion of serenity as a symbol connecting the landscape to the city, bleeding metropolitan life into it.”¹⁰⁶

The graffiti depicted on the freight boxes were notable yet naturally in context with the adjoining decay and corrosion on site. The large void is adaptable; creating an environment with elements added without consent, which is what makes it so intriguing. “Graffiti is a direct social engagement, with no strings attached... [while] the contemporary city has no idea what to do with the expressive leak gushing forth from the industrialized illusion of order.”¹⁰⁷

Using waste as an artistic means creates an “alternative economy and encourage observers to questions processes of (de)valuation and exclusion.”¹⁰⁸ All material is provisional, which makes spaces in a constant state of becoming. The play of textures, forms, and aesthetics of rubbish can transform abandoned industrial landscapes into landscapes of display and spectacle. The rail yard is comparable to the term, “Junkspace” that Rem Koolhaas uses:

Junkspace does not pretend to create perfection, only interest. It turns the existing — anything compromised — to its advantage, a new picturesque, even a new Gothic, generated by collisions between immutable objects and inchoate architectural energies, hybrids of forgetting and remembering. Its geometries are unimaginable, only double. A new vegetal is corralled for its thematic efficiency.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ Matijcio, ed. *Scratching the Surface: The Post-Prairie Landscape*, 49.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 50-2.

¹⁰⁸ A. Assman. “Beyond the Archive,” 72.

¹⁰⁹ Rem Koolhaas, “Junkspace,” 149.



Fig. 56 - 7

Site Relics



Fig. 58 - 9

Site Relics

Precedent

Jean Klimack from Brandon, Manitoba.

"Purposeful Purposelessness"

She diverts capitalist-inspired models of task (and time) management into meditative drifts where ends are continually obscured. She creates objects that are perpetually in progress, living as documents of their making rather than discrete conclusions with set destinations.¹¹⁰

Klimack's process applies to this thesis research and proposal for temporary architecture and urban design proposed. Drosscapes* require urban design strategies that are adaptable to change but aren't too open-ended in which will result a surrender to power-hungry economic developers.¹¹¹ Infrastructure design "prepares the ground for future building and creates the conditions for future events."¹¹² Stan Allen describes this approach as "material practice:"

that is concerned with performance: energy inputs and outputs, the calibration of force and resistance. Material practices deploy an open catalog of techniques without preconceived formal ends, [while working] through necessarily mediated procedures— operations of drawing and projection for example — that leave their trace on the work.¹¹³

* *drosscape* ; implies that dross, or waste, is scaped, or re-surfaced, and reprogrammed by human intentions. The suggestive etymology of the word includes shared origins with the words waste and vast, two terms frequently used to describe the contemporary nature of horizontal urbanization, as well connections to the words *vanity*, *vain*, *vanish*, and *vacant*, all of which relate to waste through the form of empty gestures.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 120-1.

¹¹¹ Alan Berger, *Drosscape: Wasting Land in Urban America*, 239.

¹¹² Stan Allen, *Points + Lines: Diagrams and Projects for the City*, 54.

¹¹³ Ibid, 53.

¹¹⁴ Berger, *Drosscape: Wasting Land in Urban America*, 236.



in the sinuous space where rules and coincidence cross paths ...



Fig. 60 - 3

Jean Klimack, Forest Series

P R E L I M I N A R Y A C T S

The process is the act itself — an experimental utopia. Using the landscape as a medium and model for process — responding to temporal change, transformation, adaptation and succession.¹¹⁵ Being attentive, sensitive and curious with the materiality and performance of the site and conditions, one becomes inspired to activate the space and produce urban effects to engage the community without the predictable and traditional mechanisms of space making. The void becomes the setting for actions staged by humanity while being observed by the surrounding cityscape — the audience. The fenestration of the buildings in the background are apertures to the community events and interactions that are taken place within the foreground of the city — theatre of the sublime.

The window offer views that are more than spectacles; mentally prolonged spaces. Familiarity preserves it; it disappears and is reborn, with the everydayness of both the inside and outside world. Opacity and horizons, obstacles and perspectives implicate one another because they complicate one another, imbricate one another to the point of allowing the Unknown, the giant city, to be glimpsed or guessed at. With its diverse spaces affected by diverse times: rhythms.¹¹⁶

The majority of the remaining rail lines are spur tracks, which is the only anchor of the act—marking its importance and existence. The spur track that circulates the vast stage would be the active line that initiates the play of civic events such as a drive-in theatre, venues for music festivals such as the Regina Folk Festival and a pop-up marketplace for the Regina Farmer's Market. Returning to the notion of the box car being a kit of parts, this notion is carried through for the unfolding of the series of events. The train is the main prop, in which a set of props branch out from to choreograph the spectacle. The permanence and re-purposing of the existing tracks generates the design proposal to be technically and resolved yet open with respect to the subtlety of the prairie landscape.

¹¹⁵ Charles Waldheim, *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, 039.

¹¹⁶ Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*. 33.

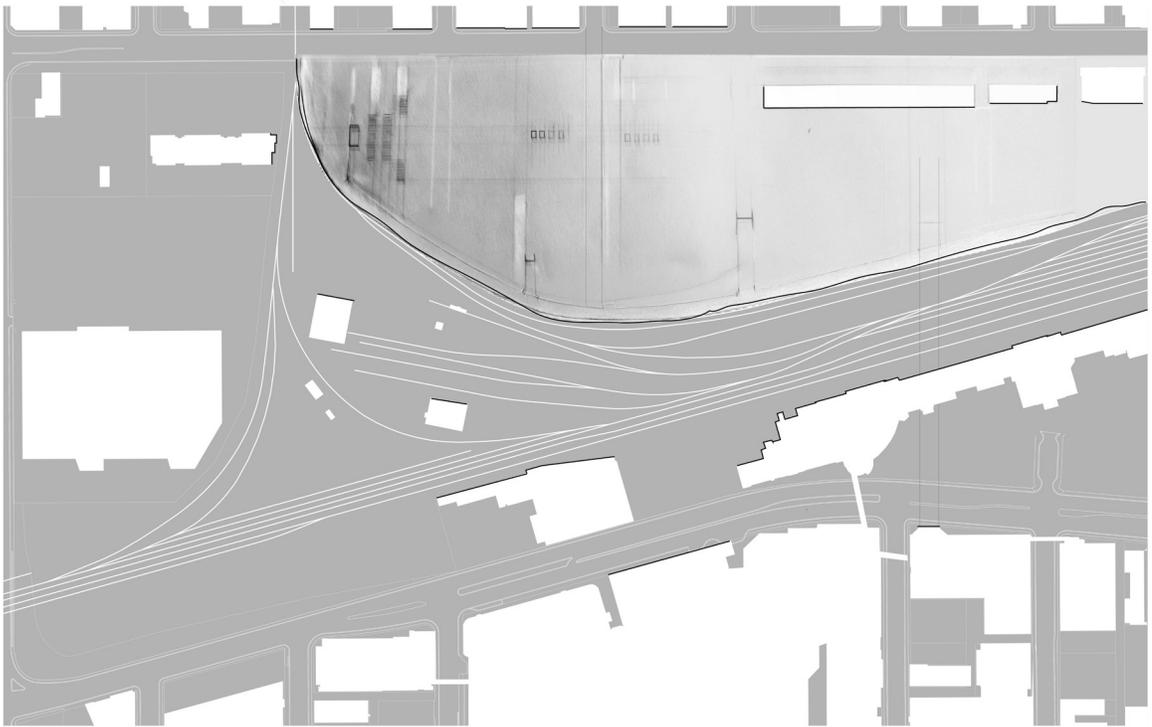
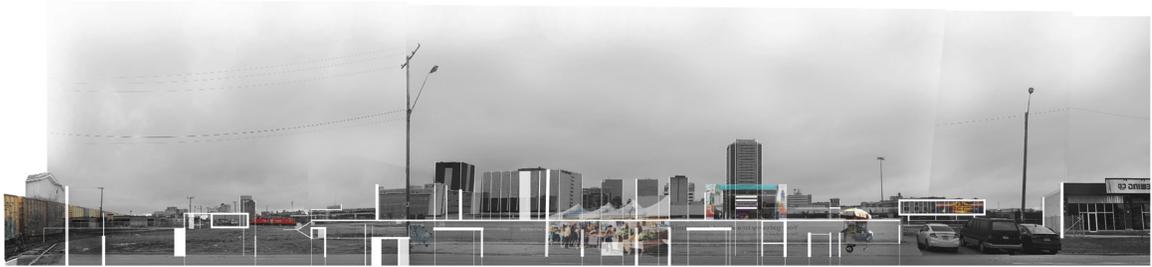


Fig. 64 *Extraction - Addition Plan & Section Sketch*



Fig. 65 - 7

1:50 Mise-en-scène (process photographs)

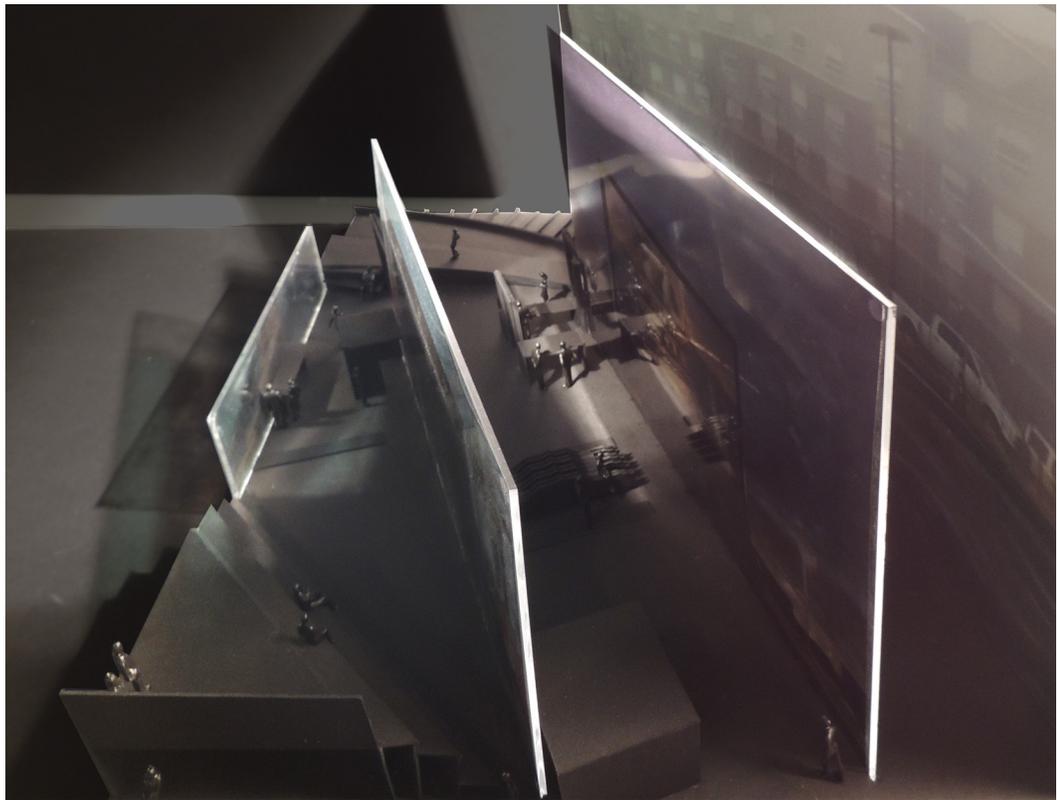
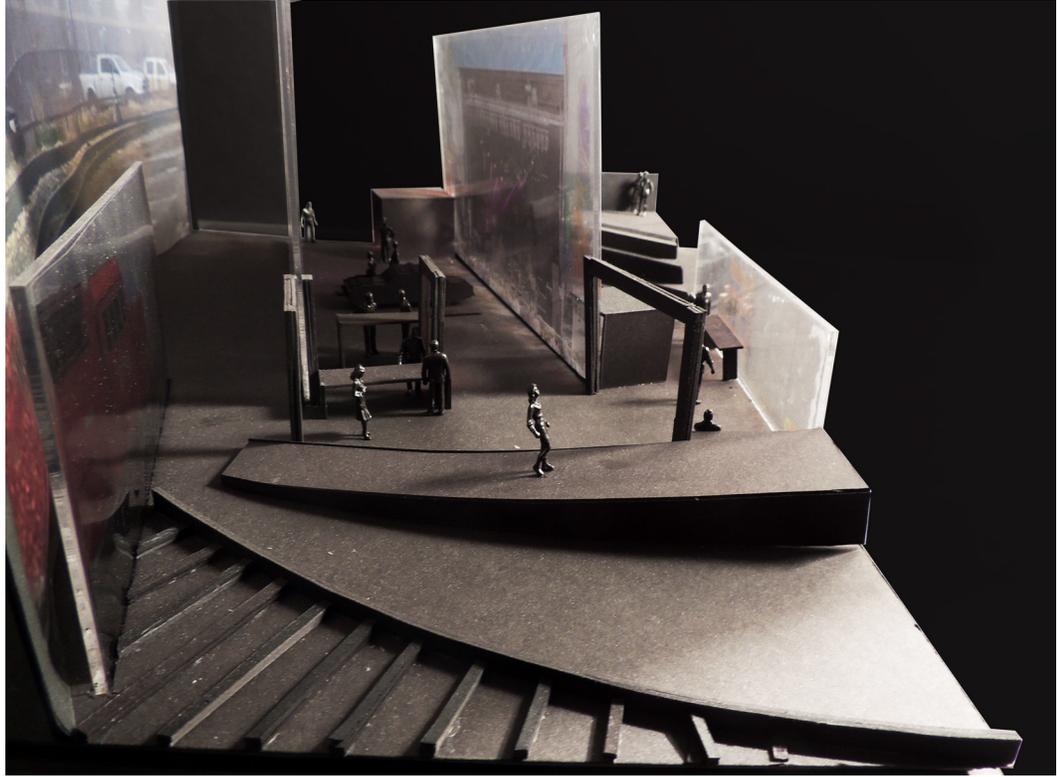


Fig. 68 - 9

1:50 Mise-en-scène

The Drive - In

If small towns in Saskatchewan such as Wolsley and apparently soon to be Lumsden are able to provide a successful Drive-In cinema then surely the capital city can afford to give it a try, considering there is not a centrally-located movie theatre within the city. Matching the nostalgia and romance of the passenger train with the sublime landscape, the drive-in naturally belongs. Since the site is situated backstage from the downtown district — as of right now — it is fairly quiet and as mentioned, inactive. The event of the drive-in would not only temporarily activate the void, the cultural energy would ripple outward to the downtown district and revamp the industrial warehouse district. Mixing the hybrid of transportation industry with the pedestrian opens a collective activity for the citizens and visitors of Regina.



Fig. 70 1:50 Mise-en-scène

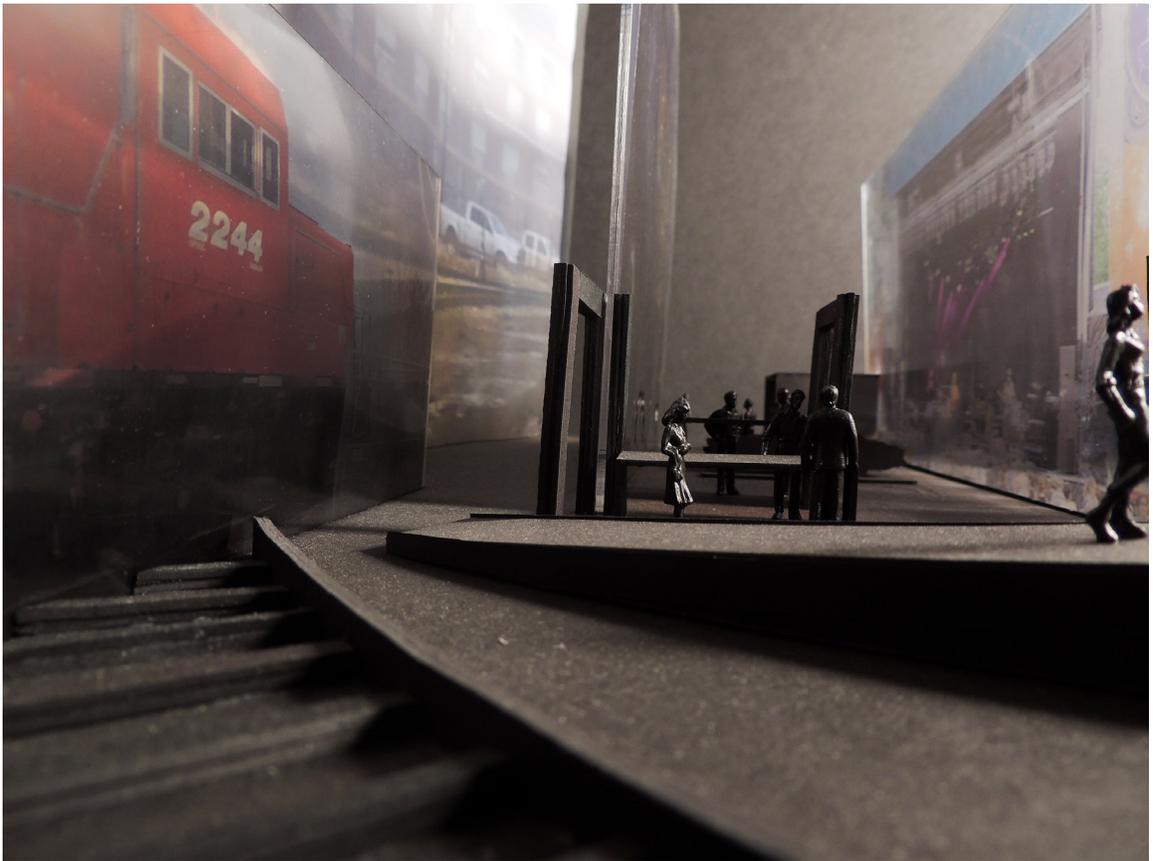


Fig. 71 - 2

1:50 Mise-en-scène

T h e F e s t i v a l

The Regina Folk Festival is a non-profit organization that holds events throughout the year but the most popular being the music festival in August at Victoria Park, which is directly south of the rail yard. The summer festival has been expanding each year accumulating more musicians, listeners, and dancers. Rather than an urban sprawl, why not propose an event sprawl of social engagement — expanding the downtown culture toward the rail yard. Continuing the festival throughout the city, there could be an event on stage with the Regina skyline viewing from above. The stored box cars that are situated in-between the skyline and stage could act as stage sets or concession stands to welcome the entertainment. The site may seem stagnant but it can be very flexible and adaptable for placement, movement and rotation of portable infrastructures. The composition of the site allows for changing scenarios to occur depending on conditions such as weather, views, and the maintenance and activity of the C.P.R.

T h e M a r k e t

Many venues align along the seemingly narrow City Square Plaza which is part of Victoria Park, where the Folk Festival is held. The Farmer's Market takes place very Wednesday during the lunch hour and Saturdays where many locals linger tasting and buying market goods. During the summer season, the market becomes very busy and at times can feel congested with the linear pathway. The Regina Farmer's market is a great event that has grown significantly by introducing night markets, "Market Under The Stars" with live music, liquor tasting and other miscellaneous activities including yoga and salsa dancing. All of this happens on a concrete pavement covering 75,347 square feet (1.73 acres). Imagine the possibilities for this event with 17.5 acres of land.

This thesis project is not proposing to replace the Regina Folk Festival and Farmer's Market from their existing locations at Victoria Park, rather the proposal is offering an opportunity to evolve from these successful acts of public engagement.

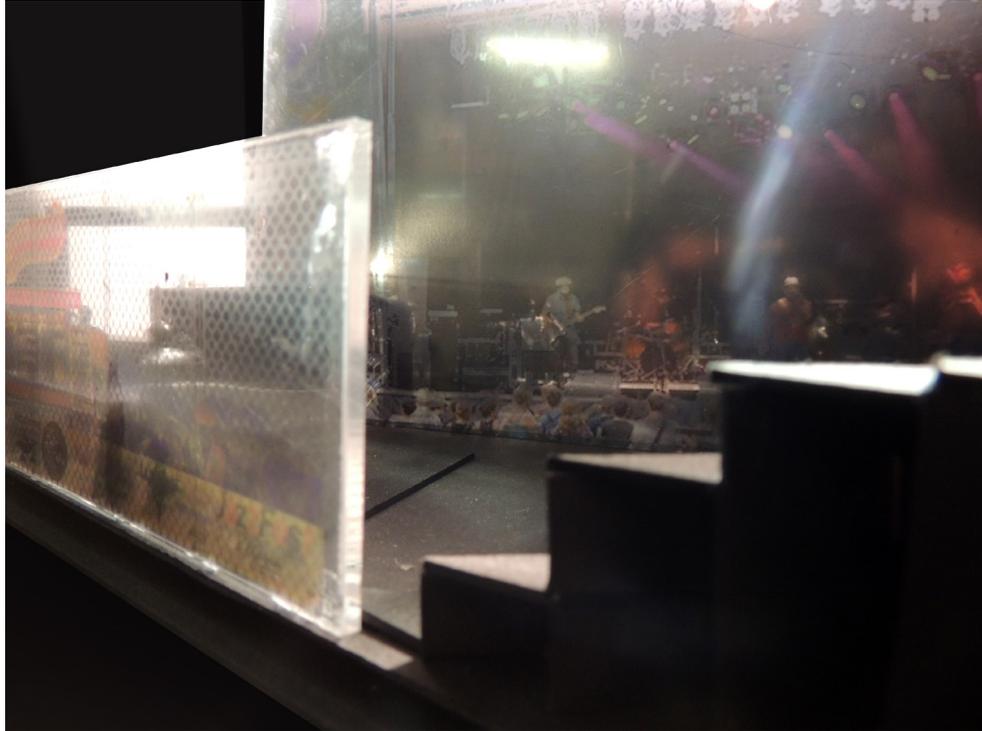


Fig. 73 - 4

1:50 Mise-en-scène



Fig. 75

1:50 Mise-en-scène

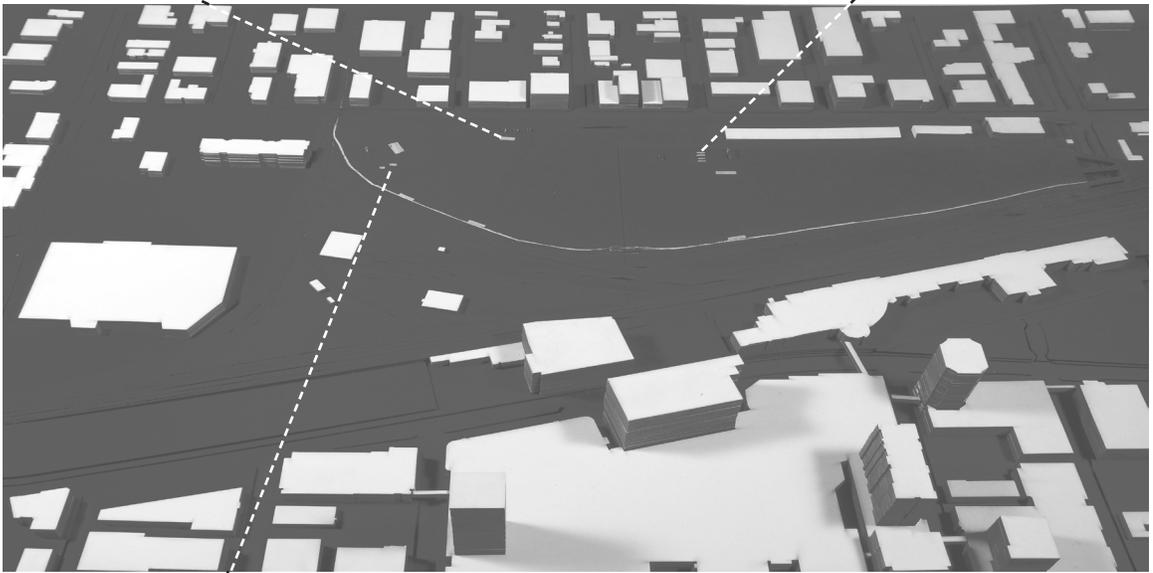


Fig. 78 Site model - void & mass



Fig. 76-7, & 79 Mise-en-scène vignettes

C L O S I N G S C E N E

This thesis is an exploration of possibilities based upon the story, experience, and imagery of the rail yard. The concept is adaptable to this touchingly and seemingly abandoned landscape. Beyond the surface, the lot holds many experiences, stories, opinions that were expressed factually and conceptually. The proposal is subjected to critique due to the fact that it refers to an actual concern within the city — a “feedback mechanism.”¹¹⁷ Taking advantage of the existing program of the site — the remains of a rail yard — the box car is essentially the facade of the thesis project. The opening of the box car is the commencement of the theatre of the sublime. Pieces of infrastructure begin to assemble to frame the existing while introducing another layer of spectacle and engagement. A passage unfolds from an opening to a frame to a view. People begin to filter through the site, manifesting the absence of the site — observing, lingering, and engaging with one another and/or the event of the cinema, concert, market and other activities that may occur intuitively that will lead to other future events. The train is the main prop for the theatre of the sublime by representing moments of ephemeral and blurred vision — exceeding the conventions and limitations with the aspiration to endeavour the unimaginable.¹¹⁸

E P I L O G U E

Throughout the double-narrative from the historical-factual and the conceptual-theoretical, this thesis is more concerned with the process of discovering and exploring the site of the semi-abandoned rail yard. The design is incomplete; “a design that has clarity without rigidity; one that could be called ‘open’ as against ‘shut.’¹¹⁹ As Peter Brooke states from his “Immediate Theatre” that the director and the set designer believe that the completion of the design can never be an end in itself.¹²⁰ Responding to my initial site visit where for me, I experienced the sublime — an internal feeling of disbelief that I am situated in a still yet transient and unfixed environment. This thesis is an intuitive response to that internal feeling of sublime I experienced — capturing the existing artifacts scattered throughout the site while adapting design strategies as being in motion, action and in relation to what the visitor brings to a scene as it unfolds — the stage as a moving picture, not neglecting the “emptiness” of the site.

¹¹⁷ Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, 15.

¹¹⁸ Glickman, *The Picturesque & the Sublime: A Poetics of the Canadian Landscape*, 42.

¹¹⁹ Brooke, *The Empty Space*, 124.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

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