At Intervals

Envisaging the Social Incubator

By

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Preface

The following thesis is presented to the reader in a specified way, broken into two Acts.

Act I, will present the fictional section of the thesis at the forefront of the document in order to immerse the reader in a work inspired from the themes and discussions that follow shortly after.

In Act II, a dialogue with authorial sources of ideas about the street and its modern conditions within North American cities will be presented. Raising the issues and bringing the writing, analysis and poetics into discussion.

The reader will enter the fiction.

The reader will enter the dialogue with the sources.

The discussion and older philosophy will aid in drawing out the poetics.

00 – Abstract

00 – Narrative Structure

Two fictional cities coexist, a city of movement and transportation in favor of streets and egress, the other of the social, in exclusion of the street and in favor of the environment as social incubator.

Within the city of movement resides our first character, Mr. Thoroughfare; resident, traveler and advocate of the city of movement and transportation. He assumes the role of the Observant from his home, participating passively through observation and analysis.

Within the social city resides our second character, Mr. Gregarious; citizen, entrepreneur and civil servant of the social city. Within his home context he assumes the role of the Sociable, participating actively through dialogue and exchange.

Each character in their travels, reaches a small town along the periphery of the two major cities and through the autonomy of daily life, they come into passing. They meet each other, exchange formalities and spark up a conversation, this ultimately leads to a discussion of their respective cities; sharing their stories and lived experiences.

These stories embody the vital characteristics of their respective and foreign cities, these depictions become easier to share when it is noted that within each of their possession lay a deck of cards. These cards represent a physical indicator of the themes, elements and contexts in which the core values, imagery and ideology of their stories can be contained and easily expressed.

Each character holds a deck of thirty cards, they choose to combine them together to form a solidified deck of sixty cards which is then played out in a game of their creation. The goal of this game is to combine these varied aspects and attributes, either positive or negative, to play out new potential cities. These are cities that have never been experienced or conceived by the two characters, which become real fictions through the cards. The cards are played out and the narrative is told, the discretion of fate and the player of the game intertwine to form these resulting cities through the cards.

The game is played in multitude, much time passing between the two characters as story after story is told through the conception of new cities, two of which will be retold within these pages.

The following section introduces the Thoroughfare Deck and the Gregarious Deck in succession with brief descriptions of their card types and card effects. To give a full understanding of the framework in which these characters operate, the rules of the game played between the two will be described before the two city narratives are introduced.

Act I

A Fictional Tale of an Evolving North American City:
A Game of Tarots.

01.1 - Tarot Card Index

01.1 – City of Movement Deck

Type: Element

Resident, traveler and advocate of the city of transportation and movement, Mr. Thoroughfare. Within his home context he assumes the role of the Observer, participating passively through observation and analysis.

Type: Theme

Physical and Psychological impacts on the social patterns and habits of individuals within their respected neighbourhoods.

These afflictions are brought upon by the street and the varying densities of traffic it houses.

Type: Theme

The interruption of city blocks that occurs on the ground plane, brought upon by the street; the severing of continuity.

Type: Theme

The disconnection of ones familiarity within their residing neighbourhoods and the inhabitants.

Type: Theme

A reformation of the city grid occurs.

Type: Theme

*The city as sentient organism; a reaction or counter measure
ensues.*

Type: Theme

A severance of the grid from the remaining city structure.

Type: Theme

*The infrastructure which defines the resulting city fabric
and its orientation.*

Type: Theme

The Street emphasizes the gap between the built environments.

Type: Theme

The invisible area of influence, an aura of repulsion.

Type: Theme

The associated facets of the street stain the streetscapes of the city and the architecture within it.

Type: Context

In favor of transportation and egress.

Type: Context

Hulking masses of metallic force, stuck in gridlock in a never ending conveyor belt of progression to and fro. The narrow pathways on either side cower until the brief moment of repose brought upon by the slightest transition of colour.

Type: Context

*The curb becomes the stable of metallic horsepower, they
barricade the perimeter of the conveyor belt of progression.*

Type: Context

A moment of respite, as the city rages above.

Type: Context

A moment of solitude as the city rages below.

Type: Context

Isolated monolithic structures of sculpted stone and intricate articulation.

Type: Context

*Open stretches of land, paved with the intention that no man
travel these lands on foot.*

Type: Context

*The central point of the community, highest point of the city,
only accessible via transport.*

Type: Context

Disconnected from the remainder of the city; house the greatest amount of social interaction and safety.

Type: Context

The most commonplace experience of social interaction and exchange.

Type: Element

The city continues to grow organically.

Type: Element

An interlude or pause between two entities occurs.

Type: Element

The city grid accommodates transportation, distance between city blocks increases.

Type: Element

The primary elements contributing to the production of communal identity become distanced.

Type: Element

*The city section is approached in favor of efficiency; rational
and calculated.*

Type: Element

*The built environment contains the potential for identity;
remains frozen in its crystal state.*

Type: Element

The built environment remains static in its character.

Type: Element

Social interaction and exchange is mitigated in this section of the city.

Type: Element

This section of the city inherits new infrastructure.

01.1 – The Social City Deck

Type: Element

Citizen, entrepreneur and civil servant of the social city, Mr. Gregarious. Within his home context he assumes the role of the Sociable, participating actively through dialogue and participation.

Type: Element

The city becomes indirectly policed through the use and enjoyment of the city street by its community.

Type: Element

City section grows vertically and the negative space of the street is reused.

Type: Element

City section is approached in favor of the social; human wellbeing and growth of the communities identity.

Type: Element

The city grid accommodates the pedestrian, distance between city blocks is reduced.

Type: Element

City section embodies a multitude of daily interactions; brief, unique and transitory.

Type: Element

City section's inhabitants preserve its unique communal identity.

Type: Element

*City section's inhabitant's give life to the build environment;
the production of a soul.*

Type: Element

*Middle ground where lived experience can be shared by its
community members.*

Type: Element

*City section possesses an intricate ground plane, interesting
and inclusive.*

Type: Context

*Communities incubated within buildings incubated within
an even greater building; the social incubator.*

Type: Context

The free flow of design from street to building and back again, buildings reside in any desired pattern. The orientation of buildings relates freely to any and all; varying in height, width and depth. Light and air is accessible to and by all, buildings are rid of the visual assault.

Type: Context

*City blocks tower above the next, each its own defined and
unique community interconnected with each other.*

Type: Context

A greater interconnection and extent of social energy and interaction; local trade, retail and business improve when its community members are passing by on foot as opposed to on vehicles.

Type: Context

The most iconic and lively place within the social city.

Type: Context

The most commonplace experience of social interaction and exchange.

Type: Context

The imposing facet of isolation becomes isolated itself.

Type: Context

*Areas of transition govern the transformation from transport
to pedestrian and so forth.*

Type: Context

In favor of the social and exchange.

Type: Context

*A vignette of my hometown, both public and private,
reclusive and inclusive; the daily autonomy of life played
itself out on this middle ground.*

Type: Theme

A unique identity is formed.

Type: Theme

Social interactions occur.

Type: Theme

*The autonomy of life played out, chance encounter, planned
and spontaneous exchanges.*

Type: Theme

*The result of social interaction within the built environment,
a fragment in time, brief and transitory; a memory created.*

Type: Theme

*The middle ground where inhabitants represent themselves,
perceive and become perceived.*

Type: Theme

*The ephemeral transformation of the built environment
through social interaction.*

Type: Theme

The interesting appeal of the streetscape.

Type: Theme

*The built environment and its embodied potential to house
the social; facilitator.*

Type: Theme

The self-representation through playing a game, a to and fro movement which requires active or passive participants or spectators.

Type: Theme

*The result of Play in magnitude, the formation of community
and identity.*

01.2 - Rules of the Game

01.2 – Rules of the Game

Card Attribute

Theme

Context

Element

Playing Field

City Section A	City Section B	City Section C	City Section D	City Section E
Theme	Theme	Theme	Theme	Theme
Context	Context	Context	Context	Context
Element	Element	Element	Element	Element

Theme Cards:

A general topic or area of interest dependant on aspects of each card’s originating city. Theme cards set the tone and initial dialogue for each column/city section.

Context Cards:

Context cards depict a setting, environment or place of action that is defined by the previously played Theme card. Context cards offer insight on their initial characteristics through the descriptions provided by the resident of their respective city.

Element Cards:

Element cards indicate additional qualities, accolades or characteristics to further detail and flesh out the narrative of each column/city section.

Each column represents a new section of the city, describing its character. In their summation (all five columns) form a new city.

01.2 – Rules of the Game

The rules of the game consists of drawing cards until you can create, through matching, five new sections of a city. This in turn, creates new cities through the characteristics found in the cards, fate in shuffling the deck and the consideration of the player to place them where he deems fit.

The player initially draws a hand of three cards and places them in vertical succession of Theme > Context > Element to create a city section. Cards can be placed in any of the five city sections in any order as long as they adhere vertically to the previous rule.

The maximum hand size is limited to three cards, so the player must discard a card if they go over this maximum limit and continue to draw and discard until the appropriate cards can be placed. Which cards are drawn is left up to chance, which cards are placed, discarded and their stories, are up to the player's volition.

Playing Field

City Section A	City Section B	City Section C	City Section D	City Section E
Theme		Theme	Theme	Theme
Context		Context	Context	Context
Element		Element	Element	Element

01.3 - A Tale of Dualities

01.3 – A Tale of Dualities

The story begins with the *Identity* card being drawn and set, this card displaying a visualization of a unique essence or characteristic of a setting or community emanating from a source. This card embodies the formation of the ephemeral; an identity.

It is followed up by the *Waterfront* card, in which the player attributes a unique identity taking place within this setting. Where the raging city bustles above whilst a moment of respite occurs below upon the water's edge.

The final card of this set paints the remainder of the picture when the *Eye of the Community* card is placed. This section of the city emits a unique identity of unification, as the water's edge is a peaceful and tranquil section of the city, tucked away from the ebb and flow of the daily commutes and hustle of the day to day.

The use and enjoyment of these spaces attribute to a subtle and indirect policing of the area by the community, as there are always bystanders observing and participating both actively and passively.

The *Essence of Spontaneity* is set, indicating the autonomy of daily life; a dash of fate, coincidence and chance. A meeting or exchange in passing, one similar to the prior events that made this game possible to begin with.

The following card describes the most ideal setting for spontaneity to ensue, the *Pedestrian Street*, the middle ground of social exchange in the acts of Play and Festival.

The final card depicts a change in tone for the city section as the *For Movement* card is set as the final descriptor, a card depicting the city grid in favor of transportation and egress.

The city section resembles one of a dual-purpose street where movement and exchange occurred in the form of pedestrian travel. This dual-purpose role has now shifted into a new role solely in favor of movement for vehicles. The space previously allocated to the city block has been reduced and streets become thicker and more engrossed. The imposition of this dense grid narrates the physical and social alteration, one which negatively affects the essence of spontaneity in favor of transportation, through the reduction of exchange space.

A Tale of Dualities

The fourth column begins to expand its story when *The Gap* card is set, indicating a direct separation of the built environment through implementation of the street.

The *Mercantile District* becomes the afflicted setting of this new implementation, dividing up an area of the city which housed a concentrated social energy and exchange on the ground plane.

The final card in the column is placed, that being the *Street Wisdom* card, which details a unique outcome.

This card indicates that a new type of lived experience and wisdom has been introduced to the community. Knowledge that was commonly shared on the street has now been altered by the addition of the new infrastructure.

The *Material Container* card is placed immediately followed by the *Cathedral* card, in unison indicating the embodied potential of the built environment to house and nurture the social interaction that is placed within; referring to architecture as setting, the facilitator to these interactions.

The final card is one of optimism as the *Articulation of Interconnection* is set, which paints a heavily romanticised image of a spiritual section of the city becoming tightly articulated and interwoven into its surrounding city fabric and community.

A Tale of Dualities

The final column is placed swiftly within the same drawn hand, the *Sentient City*, *Avenue of Interaction* and *Mr. Gregarious* cards are played.

The *Sentient City* indicates a counter measure has taken place within the car-centric city streets depicted by the *Avenue of Interaction* card. This counter measure is in favor of the sociable as indicated through the *Mr. Gregarious* card, an action of dialogue and interconnection.

In the concluding of this narrative, this new city embodies a city which has undergone more contemporary changes in its implementation of new streets and the ideals and knowledge that comes with it. The regular roles of this city have been altered in specific ways to accommodate for movement and transportation. In this, these acts have imposed on existing aspects and characteristics of the old city but have also improved on others.

01.4 - A Tale of Multiplicities

01.4 – A Tale of Multiplicities

This next story begins with the *Festival* card being set in the middle column, shortly followed by the *Facilities* card, indicating a quaint setting where the congregation and formation of community is celebrated in Play.

Within this city section there resides the appropriate facilitative venues to house these social interactions. Acting as setting for these relationships to unfold within and contributing to the playing field in which they take place.

The final card placed is the *Mr. Thoroughfare* card, which indicates that much of these games adhere to a spectator-audience relationship, as the participants assume the role of Observant in their passive to and fro movement within the confines of these games.

The next city section begins with the *Intrigue* card, indicating the unique and interesting allure and appeal of the street on the ground level and its articulation as a whole.

The setting for this theme is contained in the *Home Territory* card which depicts a lavish streetscape, one that is inclusive and offers a comfort to residents and visitors alike.

The final card drawn is the *Imposition* card, a new city infrastructure is placed in this setting, a relatively negative card which holds a positive outcome in this scenario, embracing this addition, adding to the intrigue and character of this city section.

A Tale of Multiplicities

The second column takes life as the *Social Exchange* card is set down, followed by a unique setting for this, the *Overpass* card. This placement depicts a pedestrian bridge which passes over regulated streets, but this pedestrian bridge takes on its own social energy through the exchange card.

The final card to further depict this overpass is the *Richness of Life* card which brings to fruition images of a Venetian bridge where the built environment takes on the characteristics of its community. This overpass holds within it a pedestrian street with shops and other leisure spots, its embodied social energy paints a serene picture.

The actions and interactions within this environment contribute to a production of a soul to the material world, this unique setting of an overpass depicts this section of the city.

The *Visual Assault* card is placed, one of which embodies the visual noise and space allocation for the facets of the street that impose visually and physically to the surrounding context in which it is placed.

The *Entertainment District* is where immediate density is commonplace, pedestrian and vehicle both occupy this space contributing to the volume of density and clash between the two.

The final card played indicates a positivity in this scenario, the *Verticality* card, a card that indicates a separation of the street and the rest of the city. The grid separated and confined in its own internal area of transit, whilst the rest of the city stands monolithically above.

The visual noise of the street and its associated facets do little to impose on the vertical city above and contributes to a unique section of the city.

A Tale of Multiplicities

The final section of the city is set carefully and considerably by the player, first the *Unfamiliarity* card is placed, depicting an uncertainty, a foreign or alien presence of the environment and communities residing within them. An uncertainty and lack of confidence in the player of this card, embodied in both the cards representation and the hesitant placement of the card itself.

The following card is drawn, *The City of Movement* card, the embodiment of Mr. Thoroughfare's native city, a city of transportation and egress. There is an uncertainty in the interconnection and complexity of this city, in the myriad of sprawling boulevards, avenues and winding city streets that bend in and out of one another.

The final card placed is one of relief and positivity, a card that changes the tone and description of this section of the city, the *For Exchange* card.

This card alters the grid of uncertainty and movement into one in favor of exchange, altering the existing fabric and watering down the intensity of the existing infrastructure. This allows for larger city blocks, more room for the city and ultimately, for the social incubator to come to fruition.

In concluding this narrative, this new hybrid fictional city is one that embodies a separation of the grid and the city, one in favor of the social but still intertwined with the street and the movement along it. The city sections were painted in a negative mood that soon faded once particular elements were added to alter or skew the overall depiction when played out through the cards.

*That which has imposed upon and diminished social aspects of the traditional city,
yet is an essential part of everyday life.*

Act II

A True Tale about Evolving North American Cities:
A Dialogue with the Sources.

01 - The Social

At Intervals — *The interspace between two points. Measured in distance,
time and sound. A period of time between two instants.
A pause or interlude. Now and then; periods in time.*

At Intervals — *The condensed city as incubator, to bridge the relational disconnect between generations. Passive facilitator. Architecture as setting.*

01 – The Social

01.1 – Living in Place.

*Safe haven where identity is reconfirmed.*¹

The home is an individual's safe haven, their source of comfort and solitude, one which is isolated and private yet shared between neighbouring individuals, in their summation, make up a community. Within the city context, the density of neighbouring individuals and shared spaces increase significantly. With an increase in communal size, so does the amount of social opportunities, resulting in a socially richer lived experience.

Neighbourhood life is built upon exchanges in passing; or as Jane Jacobs refers too, sidewalk contacts.² These interactions occur within in-between spaces, spaces that are within the public domain.³ These are the formal joints for social interaction. The space between is where interactions play out, when this space is diluted and infringed upon, the opportunities for social exchange outside of the household are diminished.

1. Engwicht, David. *Street Reclaiming: Creating Livable Streets and Vibrant Communities*. 1999.

2. Jacobs, Jane. *Death and Life of Great American Cities*. 1961.

3. Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition: Second Edition*. 1998.

01.2 – That which is Lost.

Social interactions aid in building identity, one that is a shared identity by a community of people. The social interactions within a space/place contribute to this sense of identity much more than visual and physical indicators. The resulting product is what establishes a sense of home and a sense of place.

Each individual member of a community contributes both actively and passively to their surrounding context, in what they do and how they live. Each member of a community offers a multitude of unique gifts, traits or in terms of an audience, a participant or spectator. These gifts and traits become essential to emotional, spiritual and psychological well-being, they are classified as Trans-Generational Interactions.⁴

Our youth, elders and those in-between, possess elements of worldly experience, the daily social exchanges between members, allow for shards of wisdom to be exchanged within the community. These exchanges solidify and build attachment to our environments, how they play out in our daily lives is best described through the example of interaction within the traditional city structure. Our youth, elders and those in-between, possess elements of worldly experience. The daily social exchanges between members, allow for shards of wisdom to be interchanged within the community. These exchanges solidify and build attachment to our environments, how they play out in our daily lives is best described through the example of interaction within the traditional city structure.

4. Engwicht, David. *Street Reclaiming: Creating Livable Streets and Vibrant Communities*. Pp.39.

01.3 – Autonomy of Life Flourishes.

The core values of living in place are found within the traditional city structure, where public squares, residences, the street and mercantile districts all contribute to one interconnected entity.

These cities were designed in favor of the human scale, and to the specifications of his/her natural ability for movement.⁵ Through this approach, public and private spaces of social interaction and recluses were intriguing, unique and commonplace; living in place ensued. Pedestrian streets were the circulation corridors of the city, connecting the city as a solidified whole; the arteries of the city, the extension of the household. The street contributed to an extended sense of home, it is where the social exchanges of daily life played themselves out. The traditional street played a dual-purpose role, it housed two types of spaces, Exchange Space (social) and Movement Space (physical).⁶

This intricate articulation of interconnection occurred through the natural growth of the city, while the resulting fabric became increasingly more labyrinthine. Circulation through the city became more interesting due to a multitude of different passageways, shortcuts and routes; the richness of interaction paired with intricacies of the built environment gave way to a variety of spaces. The intrigue of everyday exchange lends itself to autonomy, or better described by the transportation, urban design and community development theorist David Engwicht as Spontaneity. With Spontaneity, there exists two types of social exchanges transacted within the city, that being, planned and spontaneous exchanges.⁷

Planned Exchanges

Primarily focused and goal oriented; the interactions at the start and goal of the journey. The foreshadowed and expected social interactions, prior to the journey.

Spontaneous Exchanges

Exchanges that are autonomous, unique and coincidental, occurring whilst on the journey, in-between the point of departure, the destination and the return trip.

The goal of walking, can commonly be a planned exchange, yet it harbors the essence of spontaneity when carried out. The act of walking within the city increases the opportunities for one to enjoy the richness of everyday urban life.

5. Breines, Simon. Dean, Williams. *The Pedestrian Revolution: Streets without Cars*. Pp.16.

6. Engwicht, David. *Street Reclaiming: Creating Livable Streets and Vibrant Communities*. Pp.19.

7. *Ibid*. Pp.25.

02 - The Street

02 – The Street

02.1 – The Core.

A city is defined as an invention to “*maximize exchange opportunities and minimize travel, where goods, reciprocal relationships, knowledge, wisdom, creativity, culture, work, education and spiritual support are plentiful and accessible.*”⁸

A city in definition is a concentration of these exchange opportunities; the core component of life, both in diversity and accessibility. The street is the means to enable and allocate the much needed movement and transportation. Cities historically increased their efficiency, density and diversity of exchange opportunities through using streets as dual purpose spaces, for both movement and exchange.⁹

This is counter acted within our contemporary cities.

Reclamation

8. Engwicht, David. *Reclaiming Our Cities and Towns*. 1993.

9. *Ibid.*

02.2 – The Contemporary City.

Negating an Avenue of Interaction.

Over time streets began to grow wider and wider to accommodate new types of transportation, and ultimately arriving at a contemporary condition in servile accommodation of the automobile. The contemporary street serves a single function, passageway and storage for vehicles, “no longer is it a place for human exchange and artistic enterprise. The pedestrian of the past was better off than the pedestrian of today.”¹⁰

“The convergence of cars, trucks and buses in urban centers results in sheer vehicular hell. In the midst of this chaos, one easily forgets that cities exist for the care and culture of people, not the passage of motor vehicles”¹¹

The private automobile is an essential tool and commodity in our contemporary lives, as movement and transportation is vital. Although it has also encroached on territory that possesses social, cultural and economic life. With the accommodations made for the automobile, street space in our cities has transformed almost entirely from its original dual-purpose role. Having city streets be predominately for movement imposes on the quality of life within the city setting, negating a large potential for exchange opportunities, ultimately diluting the benefits of the city, in definition.

Avenue of Interaction

10. Breines, Simon. Dean, Williams. *The Pedestrian Revolution: Streets without Cars*. Pp. 23.

11. *Ibid.* Pp.6.

02.2 – The Contemporary City.

“What we value about our house is not the movement between rooms but the activities facilitated by the rooms... good house design minimizes corridors and maximizes room space. To achieve this goal, rooms take on the dual function of movement space and living space.”¹²

In addition, the use of the private automobile is based solely on the reliance of planned exchanges, it counteracts spontaneity, ensuring no other exchanges can or will take place on the journey. Engwicht describes it as a “privacy capsule, within the spontaneous domain of the city,”¹³ one which denies exchange opportunities for one self and the other; allowing one to enter the public realm fully shielded.

This method of movement and transportation negates potential social exchanges between individuals, ensuring the occupants of the car be fully protected from any and all interaction. This approach offers full control to the occupants, ultimately diminishing spontaneity and denying passers-by any and all means of autonomous interaction in passing.

The private automobile operates best under long and uninterrupted streets, the streets of the modern city counteract the efficiency of this purpose built vehicle with signs, streetlights, space accommodation, pedestrian density and the gridlock produced from the influx of other automobiles.

12. Engwicht, David. *Street Reclaiming*. Pp.21.

13. *Ibid*. Pp.26.

02.3 – The Zone of Influence.

Physical and Social Impacts.

With the increasing progression of density and the influx of private automobiles, our contemporary city streets have interrupted and diluted the room for social exchange space. Current city streets allocate almost the entirety of their space in favor of movement, which has both physical and more uncommonly noted, negative social impacts.

“The automobile has penetrated virtually every crack and crevice of our cities.”¹⁴

Physical Impact

The physical impacts of streets consist of immediate physical and environmental hazards, leading to both visual pollution and noise pollution.

The figures below depict space allocation in favor of movement space versus a traditional grid. There exists a larger disconnection and interruption of pathways, as well as a further distance to travel between points.

For Exchange

For Movement

14. Breines, Simon. Dean, Williams. *The Pedestrian Revolution: Streets without Cars*. Pp.4.

02.3 – The Zone of Influence.

Social Impact

The urban designer, professor and theorist Donald Appleyard¹⁵ conducted an evidence based case study of three nearly identical neighbourhood roads in San Francisco, with three varied levels of traffic density; 2,000, 8,000, 16,000 approximate vehicles per day. The study showed visually through plotting on charts, the user input of where friends and acquaintances were located within their respective street. This approach presented a different way of depicting and measuring the invisible impact of traffic on neighbourhood streets.

The findings concluded that the street with the lightest amount of traffic was conducive to three times (3x) more friends and two times (2x) more acquaintances within the community, than that of the busier street; individuals would gather in more places, knew more people and conducted a larger amount of exchanges.

When the study compiled user input for what was considered home territory to the residents, it was concluded that not only does the presence of cars impose on physical space, but also on the quality of life with a projected Zone of Influence. The noise, danger and physical imposition of cars and traffic generates a sense of intimidation, and affects a space psychologically as well.

The indications on the busier street expressed that residents only considered the spaces in which they lived or the confines of their building to be home territory. The street and its surrounding context were not an extension of what was considered home territory or a place of comfort, safety and interaction.

The final set of charts consisted of composite drawings that Appleyard produced by asking the residents to draw and depict their street. The heavier traffic street indicated the least amount of details and familiarity, whilst the lighter traffic street depicted a larger familiarity to it, where details, contours, plantings, buildings and so on, began to appear.

15. Appleyard, Donald. *Livable Streets*. 1981.

The Importance and Phenomena of Social Interaction.

03 – Poetics

The following section establishes the philosophical framework with regards to social interaction and engagement; it describes phenomena itself and the requirements for it.

03 – Poetics

03.1 – The Individual and the Other.

Activities of Play and Festival.

Play

Social – Players – Audience

Within the public realm,¹⁶ and in relations to Hans Georg Gadamer,¹⁷ the most vital activities to this discussion take place, those being Play (games) and Festival (community). Within the confines of a game (for ex. a live performance, event or social exchange), one plays oneself out, through focusing on the task of the game. This action enables one to achieve self-representation by actively or passively playing and participating (a to and fro movement; a gesture and response), allowing for a political and social interplay to take place.

The game is wholly idealized when the players play their role, represent themselves and are received by a spectator (audience) who is captivated and begins to participate in a passive manner.

Play according to Gadamer, is a game of to and fro movement, this movement belongs so essentially to the game that there is an ultimate sense in which you cannot have a game by yourself (community being vital; isolation impedes this game to be played). In order to have a game, there always has to be literally another player, but also something else with which the player plays and which automatically responds to his move with a countermove (an audience; spectator). The players and participants of the game are engaged on both an emotional and intellectual level, thus allowing for Play to flourish; a richness otherwise unobtainable in isolation.

The intent of Play is found in the necessity of self-representation, to strive to express oneself, a self-identity. In order for Play to occur, it requires onlookers, those that can engage and play along with, where no acknowledgement of distance is present.

16. *Where action and politics occur, outside of the private realm (household/biological); Arendt.*

17. *Gadamer, Hans-Georg. Truth and Method: The Ontology of the Work of Art and its Hermeneutic Significance; Play. 1975. 2006 Reprint.*

03.1 – The Individual and the Other.

Festival

Community from Play

The participants in the act of Play in the city, each perceive the similarities in the game, but engage in Play differently. When people come together in Play, it is referred to as Festival, where the idea of community emerges. People act in Play as celebration, they are governed by a common intention of being together; an inclusive act.

When acting in Play, the self and the other appear, Gadamer explains that truth is at stake in presence, the true being is revealed and recognized when engaged in Play.¹⁸ Through the disclosure of the human identity, users and participants, are offered possibilities otherwise unavailable; to act, transcend and perceive.

In situations of pure isolation, a large degree of cognitive stimulation and disconnection occurs, these options for integration, participation, exchange or self-realization are otherwise unavailable. The intimacy of community through daily public interaction is a vital social experience towards healthy urban living.

With the public intimacy of Play and Festival, there is the requirement for players and participants and the social linkages between them, but there is also a spatial component (both Architectural and ephemeral) required, one that is both physical and temporal.

18. Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method: The Ontology of the Work of Art and its Hermeneutic Significance; Play*. 1975. 2006 Reprint.

04 - Architecture's Role

The following section elaborates on the phenomena of Play and Festival spatially to emphasize the important role that Architecture plays. The example of live musical performance is used to better illustrate the transformation of spaces through social interactions and engagement.

04 – Architecture's Role

04.1 – Architecture as Setting.

Static Built Environment – The Stage.

In relation to Play and Festival, the built environment has a dual role, it acts as a physically static stage which houses social interaction and allows for it to flourish within; Architecture is a setting for the playing out of social interactions. The secondary role of the built environment comes to fruition through Play and Festival with spatial agency, where Architecture as setting becomes dynamic and ephemeral, acting as temporal facilitator.

Alberto Perez Gomez, writes about the Chora, a space that is both a cosmic and abstract place; its presence and reality both difficult to grasp.¹⁹ In Architecture, it can be thought of as a contained space that exceeds the definition of a material container; the following description elicits this idea of the built environment allowing passage of social interaction, time and other ephemeral qualities that cannot be contained, captured or retain as a record of an activity.

An invisible ground exists beyond the linguistic identity of being and becoming, while making language and culture possible in the first place; the region of that which exists.²⁰

In spatial agency, the disclosure of the human identity is what contributes to the political aspects of Play. Architecture as facilitator sets up and allows opportunities for others to act within it; it sets the stage in providing spaces which allow for these actions to take place; again, to actualize and realize within.

The Stage

Gadamer expresses that games differ from one another in spirit. The rules and regulations of games prescribe the way the field of the game is filled. The playing field, that is, the location in which it is set, helps to define and determine the game and the movement of it. This space, is not only that where one plays oneself out but one that is specifically marked out and reserved for the enactment of the game. A closed sphere of players, where there is an invisible transition brought out through interaction and Play (public significance).

19. Perez-Gomez, Alberto. *Chora: The Space of Architectural Representation*.

20. *Ibid.*

04.1 – Architecture as Setting.

Social interaction affects the internalized environment.

These examples encompass Architectural setting as facilitator, creating a dynamic and temporal environment through social interaction.

*The Peter Zumthor – Daniel Ott collaboration (Expo 2000)
Swiss Confederation Pavilion in Hanover, Germany.*

Large timber spaces poetically reference their musical counterparts through their construction methods (solely compression). In plan, these walls are oriented in a pinwheel labyrinthine design, creating a sonic environment (playground); acting as facilitator to the actions of Festival and Play.

The built environment establishes the sonic and temporal parameters for the improvisational musical performances that occur within the space. The performers are engaging in Play and are linked together through their common intent, the sounds produced establish space through its interplay with the stacked timber walls. Sound fills these voids in a harmonious way to create unique tonal experiences. The Architectural setting gives way to offer opportunities for self-expression on the part of the individual performers. Basing itself around intimate connections, the participants of Play become encapsulated and lose themselves in their own intentions of performance, which is received by others who are engaging with the space actively and passively.

The Architecture as setting, houses interaction. The social element, in this case, the interaction of mobile performance with the audience, allowed the space to transcend the built environment and take on a dynamic facilitative role.

04.1 – Architecture as Setting.

Material Container

*The Renzo Piano – Luigi Nono collaboration (1983–84)
Purpose-built performance space for the Opera Prometeo.*

The aim of the design for Piano's Ark was to strengthen the interaction between sound and space, by placing the audience in the central space and integrating the musicians around, above and below them. Specialized seating was incorporated to facilitate the audience's new spatial relationship to the performers, as they moved through the space enveloping the listeners in a dynamic and shifting sonic environment.

The composer Luigi Nono expresses “*We must learn to live with the plurality of times and spaces, with multiplicities and with differences ... it is in the conceptualization of the performer–audience relationship, however, that architecture becomes an essential component of the piece.*”

Festival

04.2 – Spatially Dynamic and Temporal Structure.

Ephemerality is a product of social interaction

The ephemeral quality of social interaction stems from its ability to freely take place. A spatial location can suddenly take on a whole new presence, a new life through the interactions that can take place within, as seen in the Swisse Sound Box (Zumthor) and Ark (Piano) case studies. This was achieved through the interaction of sound and space, performer and audience, in the temporality of Play. These interactions are authentic, unique and never reoccurring, they obtain a richness that cannot be captured; ephemeral. If we perceive and approach all magnitudes of social exchange in this manner, parallels can be drawn to the importance of the ephemerality of interaction in the everyday life of the city.

“It is the essence of being present, within the temporality of Play we appear.”²¹

In a social light, the built world can be seen as dynamic in regards to sound and its audience.

“Performances are individuated by reference to the works they are of, the spatial and temporal locations they occupy, and the identity of the performance group ... united as groups on particular occasions of performance in terms of their joint goals and mutual cooperation.”²²

21. Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method: The Ontology of the Work of Art and its Hermeneutic Significance; Play*. 1975. 2006 Reprint.

22. Davies, Stephen. *Musical Works and Performances: A Philosophical Exploration*. Pp.186.

The architecture of the city in question, acts as the facilitator of these actions, the built environment (both open and closed) articulates the space of interaction. The Architecture is the framework (structure) in which Festival and Play can occur within; it is both temporal and spatial. This structure can be imagined as a temporary construct that appears for a moment in time, enveloping a chunk of the built environment where the act of Play occurs, only to then disappear once the game ends, in all its temporality. The experience is one that is both unique and authentic to the participants within that moment in time; these exchanges occur rapidly in large magnitudes.

Richness of Life

Through these examples the elements and mysticism of social interaction become clear. The way in which individuals coming together can alter and give life to the built world. The devoid material container gains its characteristics and feeling from the communities and the involvement (actively or passively) of the individuals residing within.

04.3 – Ephemerality.

Presence of Domain.

“A sense of place is a feeling of affinity with the physical environment. The elements that make up our physical environment become the repository of our memories and affections and therefore cease to be merely physical elements, but grow into an essential part of our mental landscape.” ²³

When a community forms, it possesses its own ephemeral presence, it is both tangible and intangible. This feeling of community is a sense that distinguishes an environments’ characteristics upon entering said domain or setting; a translation of lived space. A community setting should evoke a sense of belonging and comfort whilst offering private spaces as well.

The ephemeral quality of these interconnections give life to spaces and allows them to become social incubators. The users input and participation (their action), aid in creating a footprint that cannot be captured or contained, determining the life and soul of a physical environment, its characteristics and attributes, which originate take the community that resides within them.

The intimacy of a community through daily public interaction is a vital social experience towards healthy urban living.

23. Engwicht, David. *Street Reclaiming: Creating Livable Streets and Vibrant Communities*. Pp.14.

The chain of events is as follows...

Environments are constructed.

Social Interactions occur within.

These interactions give way to Play and Festival.

The environments transform in multitude for brief periods.

The interactions are unique, authentic and transitory.

These moments come to fruition and disappear soon after.

Ephemerality is the product.

The built environment reverts to a stasis until the next act of social interaction.

An appreciation of that memory and moment in time is developed.

A richness of life through exchange.

05 - Memoirs

05 – Memoirs

05.1 – The Gap.

Movements Imposition.

When one views the masterplan of a city, we see a grid, avenues and boulevards, major and minor streets, circulation for transport, a dividing line, a separation, a gap.

The streets defined on plans are the lines that divide parcels of land, developments and districts, they are the indication of barriers. They indicate an avenue of travel for machines, as opposed to a passageway for citizens. Streets indicate what remains here and what lies over there, no social exchanges occur on these grounds, they have become more endangering than stimulating.

The street remains within the middle ground, at intervals with what's been established adjacent; the street acting as the dividing line. Streets appear as both the line drawn on plan and a physical line simultaneously, governing an invisible influence on its surrounding context.

Accommodation is made in even the densest of areas for automobiles. Self-contained gridlock; the street shelters itself within, surrounded by metallic walls of parked cars along busy hubs and major roads.

As density increases, divided by streets, our city blocks become isolated and self-contained, bordered into their own intimate parcel of land. Their inclusion of the surrounding context reaches to the extent of the sidewalk. This disconnection dilutes and pushes individuals into their own lived space; a constrained territory, as opposed to an integrated addition to the existing community; home territory.

The city allows easy access to prime consumer goods, services, resources and exchange opportunities. The automobile allows for greater travel and a means of escape, allowing individuals to move and transport items in greater distances. The private automobile gives the privilege of freedom of movement, but not within our dense urban cores; there can be a healthy duality of the two.

The Gap

05.2 – At Intervals.

A Manifesto.

This intention aims to bridge the gaps between generations through tightly knit interaction and engagement; a socially richer lived environment.

Issues of mobility, desire, cognitive stimulation and emotional fulfillment can be better addressed within a setting that allows for Play and Festival to be much more integrated. The removal of physical barriers, allows for larger community input and involvement, ideally aiming to make living-in-place within the city richer.

Setting the stage physically and programmatically in the environment, can easily allow for a myriad of different generations to take part in their own respective ways to the overall sense of community.

This idea lends itself to a more internalized fashion, treating each city block as its own individual community, unique and interconnected with itself and the neighbouring districts. A greater emphasis on the spaces between buildings in an almost favorable retreat, in pulling back and disengaging from the street.

Approach the Built Environment Poetically – For the Social.

The Architecture of the city may allow for a setting where Play and Festival can take place, one where Architecture assumes the role of setting; material container. Aspects of spectator and participant, communal festivity and event; performance as in daily occurrence, interaction and exchange. Create a lively space, where the social transforms the surrounding context, creating a sense of community, bringing life and engagement. The poetic and physical interconnection at the ground plane is the primary area of concern for the success of the pedestrian district.

Mixed Communities.

Social wealth resides within each specific community, every member of that community provides their contribution to the life of that particular district indirectly and passively, positively or negatively; the richness and autonomy of life.

Individuals are not out of sight nor mind and are integrated within the fabric of the community regardless of their active or passive involvement.

City Centre

05.2 – At Intervals.

Dilute Proximity – The Gap – The Street.

Social linkages become closer entwined, the gaps removed or altered, both physically and poetically; the street and barriers between are diluted and reclaimed by citizens. The space between offers the ideal location for these exchanges and interactions to take place, it is the ground of inclusion and escape; both private and public. A call for hybridity, one predominately for social exchange over movement, in similar fashion to the street found in the cities of old, the street should offer a ground for community opposed to a runway for transport. Other modes of internalized transport can better regulate and assist the needs of the community.

Mixed-Use Program.

Differing programmatic elements existed in unison in the traditional city and the street presented the opportunities for social and economic exchange. Residences approached the street as an extended part of the home; an outdoor room.

Verticality

Social Hub

The Sidewalk

05.2 – At Intervals.

By-Product – Aging-in-Place.

Aging in Place

The growing preference of retirees to choose to remain in their own homes and neighbourhoods; the home is a repository of physical, social and biographical meanings of place.²⁴

The driving motivations behind wanting to age in place incorporates a myriad of housing, finance, health, wellbeing and social challenges that are both distinctive and individually unique. In advocating for the social incubator, a great majority of these issues can be better addressed and have a higher potential of alleviation, greater than in their current state.

There are vital physical, social and emotional issues, which the pedestrian districts' framework can address. Pre-emptively establishing a setting which can allow for an easier transition to foster a possibility for retirement within the city for all.

Physical Barriers

Distance, proximity, ease of access, maintenance and alteration.

Social and Emotional

The roles aspects include, room for inclusion, room for isolation, program and setting allow for daily interactions, things to do, to be a part of, meaning, drive, to spectate or most importantly to share lived experience and trans-generational wisdom.²⁵

Street Wisdom

Lived Experience.

The elderly assume the role of mentors and nurturers of the community, the field in which these interactions play out is within the public realm; in passing.

Wisdom

The art of knowing when and how to apply accumulated knowledge.²⁶

Street wisdom

The elderly and those on the margin of society have a vital role to play, that role being the purveyors of wisdom.²⁷ The street was historically the context in which those who possessed street wisdom would sit and share their everyday experiences with those who passed by. This freely given commodity was more valued than knowledge as it had to do with the art of living.

24. Pastalan, Leon A. *Making Aging in Place Work*. 1999.

25. Engwicht, David. *Street Reclaiming: Creating Livable Streets and Vibrant Communities*. 1999.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*

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