Productive Residue

Architecture for the Modern Day Vagabond

By

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PRODUCTIVE RESIDUE

*Architecture for the Modern
Day Vagabond*

SARAH ANNE FLEMING

When fun is outlawed, only the outlaws will have fun.

- Warren Bolster

Dedication

To my Mom, Karen Davis-Atkinson, for supporting me without fail through the ups and downs of this process.

And to my siblings: let this be a testament to the fact that, with a little [lot] effort, you can do anything you want to do; be anything you want to be.

Thanks

Thank you to my Dad, Bruce Fleming, for being the voice of reason.

And a special thanks to Roger Connah, for without him this thesis could be what it is today.

Abstract

It is a widely accepted fact that we are experiencing the city less and less, losing interest despite its ability to transform the way we live. We need space to engage with the city and with each other, reducing the placeless landscape. This presents us with the obvious issue: when space is becoming less available how can we turn the urban residue into something productive using architecture, its operations and interventions? This enquiry seeks to understand how architecture could instead inspire, critically and socially, a new productive attitude, not of things, but of space, time, and social being: a way of place-making. Thus, this work of architecture will set out to encourage users to impose themselves onto the city, becoming *modern day vagabonds*. This thesis investigates vagabondage over time in order to define what a 'modern day vagabond' may be, and ultimately propose an architecture *for* the modern day vagabond.

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Manifesto

■ Wilkins et al., *Distributed Urbanism: Cities after Google Earth*, pg. 173-180.

△ Hill, D. *Emergent Urbanism*. Oct 21, 2011
<http://www.cityofsound.com/blog/2010/02/emergent-urbanism-or-bottomup-planning.html>
Accessed 13.10.2011

● Ford, *The Spaces Between Buildings*.
p. 200

I believe quite strongly that as architects we must concern ourselves with the built environment, not merely with building buildings; we must look for creative ways to engage the unwanted spaces - the burned house or abandoned building.■ By exploring the city, one can find that many gaps exist, whether between buildings, the under used car parks, or the abandoned warehouses and buildings, many of which are quite beautiful despite their neglect. Many have the potential to turn into something that makes a difference to everyday people. Planning cannot react on this scale, and large urban re-development projects, with all the money spent, often cannot and does not make the same kind of difference in residents' lives.△ However for the most part planners, developers and lenders see a society filled with individuals waiting for any opportunity to misbehave. This pessimistic view of modern urban society is deeply rooted in North American culture, and has led these designers away from the real goal of good design, and towards *minimizing* conflict by *minimizing* any contact people have. They believe that people must be protected from one another, reducing any distractions that would disrupt the functioning of the community.●

Therefore, those of us who seek to humanize the city sphere have an uphill battle, where we must face decades of

□ Ford, *The Spaces Between Buildings*,
p. 204

planning procedures as well as the notion of liability. It is arduous to argue that the spaces between buildings can be transformed into some of the most meaningful spaces in the city, as developers have constantly attributed these spaces as being 'dangerous and unpleasant', but it is most certainly worth the trouble.□ It is up to us as architects to implement these changes, nudging our city with seemingly insignificant moves that as a collective transform the way people view and use the city, knitting it together into an ever-changing fabric. And in order to do so, we must respond on a human scale. We must look at urban design through the eyes of a pedestrian. How can we use creatively our cities' unwanted spaces? The challenge in this enquiry is to reconsider how we inhabit our cities. Do we leave the identity of our cities solely in the hands of politicians, governments, developers and investors? Can we start creating, inventing and changing the cities ourselves? And what role does architecture play in this? The public space is ours, yet we often forget that. Perhaps the answer is in the residual, empty, neglected space, leftover by poor planning. As architects today perhaps the responsibility is shifting, and instead we must concern ourselves with the built environment, not merely with building buildings. Will the design of these new spaces and environments be informal and functions unrecognizable? Will this allow city users and occupants to find their own uses for the space, inducing play?

Fig 0.3-0.11: Shopping malls, endless towers, track housing and cities based on the automobile are the result of modernity and modern urban planning

Introduction: Placelessness & Identity

For roughly a half-century (1930-1980), urban design was preoccupied with enclosing and protecting people. Vast blank walls and impersonal streets became the norm. While many have recognized the flaws built into this preoccupation, we have developed so many institutionalized procedures that it is difficult to change.

- Ford, *The Spaces Between Buildings*, p. 203-4

Thomas Gordon Cullen (1914-1994), an English architect and urban designer, was best known for the book *The Concise Townscape*, first published in 1961, and was a key motivator in the Townscape movement.

<http://eng.archinform.net/arch/29791.htm>
Accessed 26.11.2012

▲ Cullen, as cited by Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, p. 79

Edward Relph (Born 1944 in Wales) is a Canadian geographer and professor of geography at the University of Toronto, teaching undergraduate classes and classes for the Masters of Planning Science program. His interests lie in the ideas of place + landscape from the phenomenological perspective.

<https://sites.google.com/site/tedrelph/home>
Accessed 25.11.2012

There is an evolving attitude that, through industrialization and technological innovation, a placeless geography is being created, destroying any sense of localism and variety in our cities. Gordon Cullen suggested that we were to become 'a thinly spread coast-to-coast continuity of people, food, power and entertainment; a universal wasteland'.▲ Monotonous and meaningless are words that unfortunately describe much of the recent developments in our cities and towns. This agreed lack of diverse landscape, significant and meaningful places, and the general sense of placelessness that we are at present subjecting ourselves to, is generally understood to be leading to an increased loss of our sense of place, providing possibilities for only mediocre experiences.

This loss can also be attributed to cultural and geographical uniformity. As Edward Relph argues in his well known book that discusses ideas of urbanity, geography and identity,

○ Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, p. 92

↑ Fig. 0.12

◆ Webber as cited by Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, p.92

△ Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, p.92

↑ Fig. 0.13

■ Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, p.125

On page 93, Relph quotes John Ruskin, who in 1849, describes how honesty in the production of goods should be of the utmost importance: "... how is it that the tradesmen cannot understand that custom is to be had only by selling good tea and cheese and cloth, and that people come to them for their honesty, and their readiness, and their right wares, and not because they have Greek cornices over their windows, or their names in huge gilt letters on their house front?... How much better for them it would be-how much happier, how much wiser, to put their trust upon their own truth and industry, and not on the idiocy of the consumer."

Rationalism, described in terms of philosophy, is 'the theory that reason rather than experience is the foundation of certainty in knowledge.'

<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/rationalism?q=rationalism>

Accessed 13.10.2011

Place and Placelessness, these uniformities are transmitted through processes including mass communications, mass media (newspapers, journals, radio, television, and now at an exponential rate, the internet), mass culture, big business, powerful central authority, and the economic system which embraces all these.○ With the ease provided by these technologies, nations appear to be more steadily working upon each other and copying each other, deserting their own unique cultures for that of normalcy and the standard. These processes have reduced the significance of place-based communities by reducing the need for face-to-face contact and freeing communities from their geographical constraints.◆ Relph contends that these processes have made it possible to treat problems as widespread and general rather than local and specific, and 'hence propose general solutions according to the place-free dictates of current social science and planning'.△

It is also accepted we are now a 'culture of mass values' where designs, whether it be for fashion, products, buildings or urbanism, come from above to users, formulated by manufacturers, governments, and professional designers, and guided and communicated through mass media. This top down process does not allow for these designs to come from the people themselves, the heart of culture and uniqueness, but instead, Relph explains, uniform products and places are created for people of supposedly uniform needs and tastes, or perhaps vice versa.■

This idea of sameness or uniformity also has a close relationship with the rationalism that has consumed our society. There has been a shift from the reliance on thought to a dependence on methods of procedure and order. Mysteries and uncertainties of experience are not accepted but are investigated

† Fig. 0.14

△ Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, p.125

Craigslist, a popular site for free advertising to buy and sell items, to rent or find roommates etc. within a specific community, also has personals, with a specific section on 'Missed Connections'. The postings here range anywhere from long lost loves trying to reconnect, to recollections of 'catching eyes' with an unknown person in a specific location and time, hoping to have that person contact them in the off chance they were actually interested, without having to deal with the mortifying humiliation of being rejected on the street, at the bar, or at the coffee shop.

and explained. This limits options by removing the possibility of finding new, different, perhaps better, courses of action. Relph argues that this is found to be true across the board: in behavioural psychology, in political decision making, in business, in urban and regional planning, in recipe books and analyses of sexual behaviour. In all these cases knowledge is technical: it has been reduced to a set of principles, directions or rules; the means for success are made explicit and skill, wisdom and experience are replaced by mechanical procedures and expertise.△

As our society is becoming more technologically advanced we are becoming more introverted, despite vast amounts of people migrating to the city. We rely on technology to communicate rather than allowing chance encounters to happen on the street. Instead of starting a conversation with someone we see, we go home and post a 'missed connection' on Craigslist. As we exponentially become a faster and faster paced society, we experience the city less and less, losing interest despite its ability to transform the way we live. How do we feel about this? And if we need new ways to explore and use the city how do we go about it? This thesis will look into how the urban residue can be turned into something productive using architectural interventions that allow for social interaction. The urban landscape should not just be defined by the combination of the layout of roads and transitory passages and the buildings imposed on the city, the spaces in between must be considered. But how? Our proposal is this: architectural interventions can be created that engender new ways of viewing the city and the life it creates for us that promote social interaction; these interactions cannot be forced, but specific environments can certainly encourage face-to-face interactions to occur. It is in the un-instituted spaces of the city that these architectural interventions will flourish, along with user interaction.

Fig 1.1-1.9 The Abandoned + Leftover: sites for experimentation.

Chapter 1:
The Production of
Space + the
In-Between

Chapter 1: The Production of Space + the In-Between

Here, in the new town, boredom is pregnant with desires, frustrated frenzies, unrealized possibilities. A magnificent life is waiting just around the corner, and far, far away.
- Lefebvre, *Introduction to Modernity*

Henri Lefebvre (16 June 1901 - 29 June 1991) was a French sociologist, Marxist intellectual, and philosopher. He was best known for his work on dialectics, Marxism, everyday life, cities, and (social) space. His primary concern being the understanding of the production of social space, his work heavily influenced present day urban theory, largely within human geography.

<http://karactar.wordpress.com/2008/09/17/henri-lefebvre-biography/>
Accessed 28.09.2012

● Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp.166-7

□ Society is being ever more organized for the purpose of the consumption of goods - we are constantly pressured and persuaded to absorb signs and ideologies rather than uses. Land is bought, sold, and used based on its exchange value, one of the four attributes of a commodity as defined by Marxian economics.

Borden, *Skateboarding Space and the City*, p. 239

The body of the human subject has long been the primary site of revolutionary activity, both in terms of its effect on space and the external world, as well as the reproduction and redefinition of the self. Henri Lefebvre has argued that each body produces different rhythms of space and time based on one's experiences, as it is the human body that 'bears witness to all senses, emotions, birth and death, and orientations'. So, as Lefebvre notes in *The Production of Space*, it is crucial to remember how important the role of the human body is when designing architecture:

Any revolutionary 'project' today, whether utopian or realistic, must, if it is to avoid hopeless banality, make the re-appropriation of the body, in association with the re-appropriation of space, into a non-negotiable part of its agenda. ●

However much of what now creates the physical form of the street has been born out of the privileged sphere that is 'architecture': professionals, intellectuals, and politicians. And so by remaining in this sphere, one run by exchange value□, it exists outside

▲ Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p. 8

○ "Our feet wrapped in cotton and leather, we trod upon a concrete and asphalt sheath, the topographical inconsistencies paved over by a more biped-friendly habitat. Mobility is orderly and efficient: sidewalks, stairways and elevators ... With our eventual adaptation to our contrived civilization, we've adjusted and now take its sheltered nature for granted. The crosswalk signal turns red too fast. Please pay cashier first. My calling card has too many numbers on it. Don't even think of merging into my lane."

- Miki Vukovich, as quoted by Borden in *Skateboarding, Space and the city*, p.190

◆ Heidegger, *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, p.1 on <http://faculty.arch.utah.edu/miller/4270heidegger.pdf>
Accessed 24.11.2012

Use value, as opposed to exchange value, evaluates a building or space based on the useability of its spaces and places, rather than what it can produce.

- Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, pp.234-241

Elemental modes such as the 'conditions of the body, direction, or attitude to space' Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p. 266

Ian Borden (born in Oxford in 1962), currently Vice-Dean for Communications at the The Bartlett, University College London, and Professor of Architecture and Urban Culture, is an architectural historian and urban commentator.

He graduated from University of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1985, and went on to complete masters degrees at UCL and University of California, Los Angeles and a Phd at UCL. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Having a wide range of not only historical and theoretical interests in architecture, but also a deep knowledge of skateboarding as an urban practice, and an avid skateboarder himself has allowed him to take on a new perspective of the urban realm in his book *Skateboarding, Space and the City*.

<http://www.bartlett.ucl.ac.uk>
Accessed 05.12.2011

Borden describes elemental spaces as what might be a boundary or a region, an alleyway or a stairwell, a window or a door. Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p. 266

of any real desire, revolutionary or otherwise, to reformulate its essence, its character, its foundation, so as to integrate with everyday life.▲ Perhaps then, by removing ourselves from this realm○ we can begin to look at the meaning of architecture in the broader sense, and what the city has to offer up to us to inspire new modes of design and ultimately new modes of living. This will require us to re-evaluate our understanding of what it means to *dwell*. The spaces and places we inhabit and comport ourselves to are accomplices to who we are both as individuals within society and as members of a community. The instituted and regulated places organized by urban planning have the power to arrange our instituted and regulated 'dwelling' ("being"); however the residual spaces are the places that have the power to bestow individualized 'dwelling', dwelling that in its temporary, fleeting and ephemeral nature supports the necessary semblance of independence. It is therefore important to architecture, in any attempt to understand the contemporary dweller, to consider and reconsider the spaces in which we inhabit, build and dwell within the contemporary urban environment, because, as Martin Heidegger has stated, "building is not merely a means and a way toward dwelling - to build is in itself already to dwell."◆

Instead of a city based on exchange value, one of use value must be created. In order to understand the use value of space and to contribute to the production of everyday life we must no longer dwell on the specific functions of spaces or prescribed activities, but instead start to think about elemental modes, argues Ian Borden in *Skateboarding, Space and the City* in reference to Lefebvre. And instead of the bounded space of buildings and cities, elemental spaces. Look around. The ordinary, everyday spaces between buildings may be more important than you think. These spaces are, or should be, the public city.

† Fig 1.10: Action no. 81: Pedestrians Populate Highway. A municipal ordinance enacted in 1991 turned the highway in Sao Paulo over to pedestrians and cyclists on evenings and on Sundays.

△ Lefebvre, *The Explosion: Marxism and the French Revolution*, (New York: Monthly Review, 1969), pp. 71-2

■ Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, p. 131

† Fig 1.11: Action no. 59: Zebra protects pedestrians. A Zebra Crossing allowed a six-hundred-person procession across streets, alleys, backyards and car parks in Kassel, Germany.

△ Borden, *Skateboarding Space and the City*, p. 267

● 'Only here,' Borden suggests, 'will a properly materialist history of the experience of architecture emerge.' *ibid.*

Space is not only perceived through the body, but space is also used to create each human being's own social identity, and Lefebvre argues that most commonly this identity is created in spaces of passage and encounter that become spaces of ritual and initiation. It is in the spaces left open to interpretation that one may find his or her place and identity and express this freely; the public space of the streets, the squares, the residual left over spaces of alleyways, vacant lots and abandoned buildings, or as Lefebvre notes, any space not yet dominated by the state. This is most commonly where one can find most counter-cultural activities. 'It was in the streets that spontaneity expressed itself - in an area of society not occupied by institutions' writes Lefebvre in *The Explosion*, 'Social space has assumed new meaning'.△ Streets form the urban landscape, however it is not just a physical form, but also a social and mental form, created by the simultaneity,

... of gathering, of convergence, of encounter (or rather, encounters). It is a quality born from quantities (spaces, objects, products). It is a difference, or rather, an ensemble of differences. ■

Lefebvre goes on to argue that 'appropriation is not the simple reuse of a building or space', but more concisely is 'a creative reworking of its time and its space'. His constant search for differential spaces was a new kind of sensibility, one which brought to light the need to contextualize the history and theory of appropriation. Borden emphasizes that we must, then, ask ourselves what it means 'to adopt, take over, colonize, emulate, repeat, work within, work against, reimagine, retemporalize, reject, edit and recompose the spaces of the city and its architecture'?△ But also '[h]ow can differential space be sought in the land and epoch of the commodified, the abstract, the homogenized, the reductive and the powerful'?● By answering some of these questions the experience of space and architecture may begin to play its proper role in the history of architecture itself. But for now,

as Lefebvre tells us, our task is to consciously construct, create, and produce everyday life.

□ "The streets are owned by everyone. Streets give the gift of freedom, so enjoy your possession." Brad Erlandson in 'Sacramento', Slap vol.6 no.1 (January 1997 p.53)

Alberto Iacovoni is one of the founding members of the *Studio ma0* which specializes in architecture and media. He is also a member of the office for urban planning, *Stalker*. His book *Game Zone: Playgrounds between Virtual Scenarios and Reality* follows the ludic aspects of architecture.

<http://www.amazon.com/Game-Zone-Alberto-Iacovoni/dp/3764301511>
Accessed 10.11.2012

▲ Iacovoni, *Game Zone: Playgrounds between Virtual Scenarios and Reality*, p.14

○ *ibid*, p. 12

◆ *ibid*, p. 43

Picking up on this we will go on to explore the numerous groups that saw the potential of the city streets, including the Situationists International, for whom life was a game as Alberto Iacovoni tells us in his book *Game Zone: Playgrounds between Virtual Scenarios and Reality*, 'a game whose aim is to discover the rules, rules that are always changing and that can never be discovered'.▲ These rules are what creates our framework of reference, and we realize that not only are the rules changing, but we may also bend the rules in order to fit with our needs and desires. So we see that the imaginary reality of games is not evasion, but a separation from this original framework of reference. We are then able to see how 'arbitrary the rules and the unwritten but tacitly obeyed conventions are' drawn by society, as we begin to cross them.○ So if life is a game, the end goal is happiness, achieved as a result of fulfilling 'the natural and innate desire to decide one's own life', writes Iacovoni.◆ In order to do so one must be constantly searching for new opportunities and adventure - a key element missing from most people's lives, constantly unfulfilled. Can we argue that there is, in fact, an innate desire in humans for discovery and exploration, one which only some allow to surface? These opportunities may then present new climates that are not only more favorable to one's personal mood, but also add opportunities of collective life that can offer up unpredictable and fascinating new relationships as a result of meeting like minded people in these new urban spaces.

These residual, leftover spaces are the lost or missing spaces on the city map of destinations and attractions; they are, in effect, the unregulated and uninstituted blind-spots of the contemporary megalopolis. It is to these lost places within the

contemporary urban fabric that this project turns. And in order to discover these spaces, we must explore the city. However we must try to understand not only the history of these spaces, but also the history of those who have attempted to find the meaning in the disregarded before us, the inhabitableness of the spaces deemed uninhabitable. As a starting point for inspiration, we look to those who have attempted to re-imagine and explore the urban landscape in the past.

Fig 1.12 + 1.13: Before and after shot of an Amsterdam playground built by Aldo Van Eyck

Case Study 1: Amsterdam Playgrounds

Aldo van Eyck: "I will mention the problem of the in-between realm. The in-between realm constitutes that place where false alternatives are no longer false, but become twin-phenomena. My idea of twin phenomena sort of loops through my thinking and anything I try to build. That is the absolute refusal to ... (accept the splitting of) ... twin phenomena into incompatible halves of which each half has no meaning. There are hundreds of twin phenomena which all belong together as brothers and sisters – one / family; inside / outside; closed / open; motion / rest; change / constancy; small / large; many / few; mass / space etc. – you can just carry on. So what I think we should do first of all, is to persuade these hard, narrow borderlines between one world and the next, between this place and the next place, between this moment and the next moment, between this person and another person, to persuade this narrow borderline, to loop generously into an in-between realm."

Aldo van Eyck: excerpt from *The Child, The City, The Artist*, in: *Byggekunst*, nr. 1, 1969.

Liane Lefaivre, previously the Chair of Spatial Planning + Strategy at TU Delft, is now the Chair of History and Theory of Architecture at the University of Applied Art, Vienna, and a Research Associate at TU Delft. Lefaivre has written numerous publications including three books on Aldo Van Eyck.

<http://www.paperplus.co.nz/author/Liane-Lefaivre?i=239297>

http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=la_B001IXRNX0_sr?sort=relevance&search-alias=books&field-author=Liane+Lefaivre
Both Accessed 12.11.2012

■ Lefaivre, *Ground-Up City: Play as a Design Tool*, p. 24

The *Amsterdam Playgrounds* created by Aldo Van Eyck remain one of the most successful precedents of place-making, and yet there has been a complete oversight by the profession of the viability of these ideas, as the project remains relatively unknown. The creation of place has been so widely discussed and yet there are very little successful examples. So why were these projects not taken as seriously as they should have been? There are numerous reasons, but, as Liane Lefaivre argues in *Ground-Up City: Play as a Design Tool*, the most plausible reasons are due to both the subject matter of the projects – the idea of play, which was not taken seriously in the profession, and the fact that the projects dealt with bottom-up concerns, which have almost always been overshadowed by top-down urban planning practices.■ However in recent years, in light of many failed modernist projects, the idea that bottom-up projects may actually be a viable alternative has become the norm, and projects such as the *Amsterdam Playgrounds* have come to light once again. To understand what made the *Amsterdam Playgrounds* so successful as a place-making scheme, we must break down the principles of the project.

Lefaivre argues that the *Amsterdam Playgrounds* can be seen more as post-war sculptures than as merely play structure, but unlike other post-war sculptures that were intended to be viewed in isolation of their surroundings, the playgrounds react to the context of the individual sites. In actuality, the playgrounds were the first site specific urban sculptures of the post-war period.

Fig 1.14+1.15: Number of Playgrounds in Amsterdam before and after the Public Works Project by Aldo Van Eyck

↑ Fig 1.16+1.17: Before and After, Van Eyck Playground

△ Liane Lefaivre, *Ground-Up City: Play as a Design Tool*, p.25

● ibid pp. 58-59

□ ibid, p.56

▲ Lefaivre, Aldo Van Eyck, *The Playgrounds and the City*, pp. 9-10

↑ Fig 1.17+1.18: Before and After, Van Eyck Playground

What made them even more unique was the fact that they were both urbanism and sculpture simultaneously. The playgrounds were part of a larger urban bottom-up planning concept that combined play and community, rather than one-off, isolated, individual playgrounds. Lefaivre argues that there are three main principles that create the underlying strategy: PIP, or Polycentric, Interstitial, Participatory.△

[The playgrounds] formed a polycentric net of public spaces around which community formed, creating micro-urban villages. These did not disrupt the urban tissue around them. On the contrary, they were inserted into the left-over spaces, the empty interstices. Moreover, they used techniques of democratic participation. The archives of the city of Amsterdam contain over 190 letters from the citizens of Amsterdam requesting playgrounds. ●

Van Eyck saw play as an integral part of the city sphere, much like Lefebvre “asserted the ‘right’ to the city as a place of pleasure and enjoyment, independent of the imperatives of the economy.”□ The near 700 playgrounds were created through the Public Works Department for which Van Eyck worked, and designed and built between 1947 and 1978. Van Eyck used relatively simple means to create an original, organized whole. The space was formed by basic geometric principles as a way of arranging and combining separate elements. Each asymmetrical space had its own character with a strong composition, despite many of the different elements being repeated hundreds of times. These elements, such as the different climbing frames and sandpits designed by Van Eyck, were not only implemented in his own playground designs in Amsterdam, but caught on all over the Netherlands.▲ These different elements were one of the most crucial aspects of Van Eyck’s playgrounds, in comparison to what children experience today, the elements inspired and stimulated a child’s imagination. Many of today’s prescribed playground objects allow little room for children to create their own framework of reference, encouraging

○ Hannie Van Eyck - *The Playgrounds and the City*, p.15

◆ ibid

↑ Fig 1.18+1.19: Before and After. Van Eyck Playground

◇ Döll, *Ground-Up City: Play as a Design Tool*, p. 124

■ ibid pp. 124-125

△ Lefaire, *Ground-up City*, p. 24

The mixture of top-down, where the designs come from professionals (city council, architects, urban planners), and bottom-up, where residents contribute to the design, maintenance and success of urban space, can result in much more useable spaces, by the melding of the expertise of the professionals and the local knowledge and needs of the residents.

↑ Fig 1.20: Children playing in Van Eyck Playground

passive play. ○

However the first and foremost crucial aspect of Van Eyck's playgrounds was the fact that he integrated a new element that had never been there before◆, creating a play-oriented inner city that offered real opportunities for people of entirely different backgrounds to come together in a social and creative space.△ These playgrounds demonstrate that...

...a play network does not have to be neighbourhood-based. The context determined the elaboration but, in every context, the play network offers a tissue of low-threshold public space that creates the urban conditions for meeting and exchanging, and within which play is elevated to urban culture"■

The playground instead can be seen as the smallest stitch in the urban fabric, one that 'would ensure its' cohesion', as Lefaire would say.△ This network weaves together the social and cultural aspects of the community in ways which we have not seen before as the outcome of an architectural intervention.

Secondly, these playgrounds are not taking up what is deemed as valuable space in the urban core, but instead turn the residual, interstitial, unused spaces that have been left to deteriorate, into a productive spaces which have the ability to bring the community together, among other uses. Lastly, these play spaces would not have come to fruition without the input from the communities in which they have been implemented. Every playground is the result of a letter from a resident in the neighbourhood, notifying public works of a space that would suit and benefit from a playground. Word quickly spread across Amsterdam that residents wishes were being heard, and the letters poured in. This mixture of top-down and bottom-up is what made this project so successful at place making, and also made it Van Eyck's most important works, along with the most important

● “When it comes to constructive solutions about how to create place, the literature is much more scanty, however, especially of late. There have, of course, been examples of attempts at place-making, - mostly from the 1960s, with populists like Jane Jacobs, with so-called Critical Regionalists, and with Dirty Realists - but Aldo van Eyck's Amsterdam playgrounds are among the most successful. They have also been among the best-kept secrets of the twentieth century.”

Lefaivre, Aldo Van Eyck, *The Playgrounds and the City*, p. 25

and “original contributions to architecture, urbanism and art of the post-war period.”● The potential of this kind of project is still viable and must be retested as a way of turning public space into place.

Van Eyck discovered very important design principles that need to be revisited. By using the residual and unwanted space in the city, we see that it is possible to weave together the social and cultural fabric of the urban landscape, imposing ourselves not only philosophically, but also physically on the city. By occupying spaces not normally meant to be occupied, we allow not only ourselves, but also onlookers to reconsider uses of urban space.

↑ Fig 1.21+1.22: Before and After, Van Eyck Playground

Case Study 2: *Mésarchitectures and Double Happiness*

† Fig 1.23: Design Drawing for *Double Happiness*

DOUBLE HAPPINESS. 2009.

6,4 x 3,7 x 6,6 m

Billboard and swings mix, steel ladder, steel lattice platform, protective nets on steel structure. Urban reanimation device. Shenzhen-Hong Kong Bi-City Biennial of Urbanism and Architecture

© DIDIER FIUZA FAUSTINO

<http://didierfaustino.com/>

■ <http://didierfaustino.com/>

Accessed 21.08.2012

Double Happiness, a project by French-Portuguese Architect Didier Faustino and his studio *Mésarchitectures* (the name plays between meaning “bad architecture” and “my architecture”) founded in 2011, illustrates the important concepts the studio strives to embody. The studio’s work is on the border between art and architecture, creating installations that mix everything from performance art to electro-punk to sci-fi, and of course architecture. But most importantly these works illustrate the innate relationship between architecture and the human body, by using the body as the elementary unit of measure, allowing one to explore architecture as a “tool for exacerbating our senses and sharpening our awareness of reality”.■

Double Happiness is the reinvention of an everyday object found in the city; the reuse of something that highlights the spectacular nature of our cities and turns it into an experiential architectural space. Faustino’s depiction of his project from his studio’s website helps immensely to further understand the full intentions of project:

Double Happiness responds to the society of materialism where individual desires seem to be prevailing over all. This nomad piece of urban furniture allows the reactivation of different public spaces and enables inhabitants to reappropriate fragments of their city. They will both escape and dominate public space through a game of equilibrium and disequilibrium. By playing this “risky” game, and testing their own limits, two persons can experience together a new perception of space and recover an awareness of the physical world. Δ

Δ *ibid.*

Clearly Faustino’s project has its roots in the French art of the 50’s and 60’s, where the Situationist International sought to reactivate

fragments of the city in order to inspire a new perception of space, and ultimately inspiring new desires to emerge. The following chapter will look more closely at this movement among others.

Fig 1.24: *Double Happiness*

Chapter 2: *Walking as* *Politics*

Fig. 2.0: *The Naked City* by Guy Debord, exploring the psychogeographic relief of the city, the ambiances of certain areas and their connections.

Chapter 2: "Walking as Politics"

↑ Fig. 2.1: The Beatles emblematic cover for the album *Abbey Road*

The idea of assemblages comes out of the writing of Gilles Deleuze, and is described as 'an emergent unity joining together heterogeneous bodies in a "consistency"'. Thus a spatial assemblage can be described as the unified space made up of, for example, walls, ceilings, and the elemental spaces discussed earlier, or of the streets, facades of buildings, vegetation etc., of an urban space. A social assemblage, on the other hand, would be the accumulation of ideas and ideals that make up the current social structure of a place.

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/deleuze/>

■ Sonia Lacadinho, *The Pedestrian as Urban Actor*, in *Actions*, p.33

Δ In addition, walking helps to force perpetually renewed social ties, which is lost in the digital realm, only experienced through direct contact.
ibid.

~~~~~  
The stakes of culture would no longer be found within the artist's studio or architect's atelier, nor inside the rarified institutions of official representation, but out in the city's streets themselves. This was where an "integral" synthesis of the arts - that much-desired unification of painting, sculpture, and architecture seen as so decisive to a rejuvenation of culture in the later 1950's - would occur: at the level of everyday life itself.

~~~~~  
- McDonough, *The Situationists and the City*, p. 14
~~~~~

The physical form of the city - the buildings and the streets - impose a social and spatial assemblage, which forces us through social norms to adhere to certain social contexts, behavioural codes, and political regulations. However, this spatial assemblage enables us to oppose and resist by providing us a space in which to negotiate. Walking, as the most primal form of movement, and as a spatial method, allows people to present their opinions as a political event, and take possession of the city through movement. According to Sonia Lacadinho in her essay *The Pedestrian as Urban Actor*, there is a performative aspect to what we might see as ordinary walking in the city.■ One may feel this even from the most simplest of tasks, as we cross a street's intersection, feeling the stares from the people sitting comfortably in their vehicles, waiting for us to pass. As we allow ourselves to be on display, we become part of the city and participate in its co-construction.Δ We become an "actor who contributes to

● Lacadinho, The Pedestrian as Urban Actor, in Actions, p.33

□ Hatuka, Walking as Politics, in Actions, pp. 71-72

▲ Flâneur— French noun, with the basic meanings of “stroller”, “lounger”, “saunterer”, “loafer”—derived from the French verb flâner, which means “to stroll”. Flânerie refers to the act of strolling, with all of its accompanying associations of the time. A literary type from nineteenth-century France, essential to any picture of the streets of Paris, the flâneur carried a set of rich associations: the man of leisure, the idler, the urban explorer, the connoisseur of the street.

It was Walter Benjamin, drawing on the poetry of Charles Baudelaire, who made him the object of scholarly interest in the twentieth century, as an emblematic figure of urban, modern experience. Following Benjamin, the flâneur has become an important figure for scholars, artists and writers.

<http://www.questia.com/read/103850984/the-flaneur>
Accessed 14.07.2012

† Fig. 2.2: Charles Baudelaire 1821-1867

its maintenance and success.”● However the same action, in doing so with hundreds or thousands of others becomes a form of revolt, a way to change the city and society. This ideology helps us to understand space as both a material and social construct, and that our actions within the city, no matter how small, can have a direct effect on this social construct. Walking as a form of resistance and of becoming ‘the other’ has helped to inspire many different critical attitudes towards urbanism over the last decade.

This methodology has been in use fairly consistently since the flânerie▲ of 19th Century Paris. Practiced by Charles Baudelaire and other literary inhabitants of the city, the flâneur was an archetypal male stroller traveling incognito through varying atmospheric environments, known to have a thoroughly established knowledge of the city and its people. Aside from establishing this knowledge base, a flâneur’s jaunt through the city was simultaneously a performance and a political statement. This act has transformed over time through different adaptations by artistic and political groups. Most notably by the Surrealists, the Situationist International, along with contemporary interpretations which we will look at in the forthcoming chapters.

→ Fig. 2.3: Paul Gavarni, Le Flâneur, 1842.

The Situationist International were a group of revolutionaries hailing predominantly from Europe formed in 1957 and dissolving after the May 1968 riots in France. Their ideas were rooted in Marxism and the 20th century European artistic avant-gardes, and through writings, publications and art exhibits, they advocated experiences of life alternative to those secured by advanced capitalism, for the fulfilment of human desires.

○ Iacovoni, *Game Zone: Playgrounds between Virtual Scenarios and Reality*, p.26

◆ Debord, p. 78

↑ Fig. 2.4: Guy Debord 1931-1994

△ Other writings on the *dérive*:

Ivan Chatcheglov, *Formulary for a New Urbanism*, 1953;
Report on the Construction of Situations, 1957;
 'Definitions', in *Internationale Situationniste* #1, 1958.

■ Several groups of two to three is ideal, using walkie talkies to communicate. The *dérive* can last anywhere from a few hours to the period between sleep; however some have been known to go on for months.

Debord, *Theory of the Dérive* in *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 62

△ Iacovoni, *Game Zone: Playgrounds between Virtual Scenarios and Reality*, p.26

According to Iacovoni, the Surrealist walkabouts aimed at 'drifting aimlessly around the city' in order to 'put oneself in the condition of verifying subconscious actions, in which the urban center is transformed into an adventurous forest in which stores, street corners, statues reveal their true nature as traps for desire.'○ The Situationist International - which from now on will be referred to as the SI - transformed this Surrealist walkabouts into the *dérive*, an act considered as "a swift passage through varied environments", unencumbered by their usual modes and reasoning for movement, such as their jobs and acquaintances, therefore releasing themselves to be influenced by currents of the city, otherwise known as the psychogeographic relief of the city.◆ In this sense the *dérive* is fundamentally different from the stroll. It was not only considered a crossing of the city, but a way to understand, map, and ultimately transform the urban and social fabric. In the *Internationale Situationniste* #2 Guy Debord describes in an essay, *Theory of the Dérive* (among others△), the many guidelines and rules for the *dérive*, from how many people can participate in a single *dérive*, to how long a *dérive* may last■. The SI refer to having a specific state of mind, or 'awakening of consciousness' while taking part in these adventures. The SI were really looking for a new way to experience the city; apart from work, even apart from leisure, the *dérive* was an action and movement of its own, and one which would enable the mapping of the psychogeographic regions of the city. The continuous *dérive* was, at some essential level, the search for the encounter with otherness, an entirely new way to live one's life. In order to break the "topological chains that regulate the use of urban space", getting lost, a form of disorientation was necessary, transforming what were once well-known places, places experienced daily while following a repetitive itinerary, into places to be discovered.△

The SI recognized that mass media was over-stimulating

† Fig. 2.5: Cover for Debord's publication, *Society of the Spectacle*

● Bogdanov, Branka (Director and Producer). *On the Passage of a few People through a Rather Brief Moment in Time: The Situationist International 1956-1972*. Boston: The Institute of Contemporary Art, 1989. Viewable on: www.youtube.com

□ McDonough, *The Situationists and the City*, p.11

† Fig. 2.6: *The Naked City*

Psychogeography, defined in the 'definitions' section of the *Internationale Situationniste* #1, is '[t]he study of the specific effects of the geographical environment (whether consciously organized or not) on the emotions and behaviour of individuals.' Psychogeographical is defined as '[r]elating to psychogeography. That which manifests the geographical environment's direct emotional effects'.

'Definitions', *Internationale Situationniste* #1, in *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 52

the population to the point of boredom, and the documentary film *On the Passage of a Few People through a Rather Brief Moment in Time: The Situationist International*, establishes that through this art-making, theorizing and the intended transformation of the urban realm, the SI aimed at the subversion of what Guy Debord called 'the Society of the Spectacle', the subversion of the alienation of people, and the creation of a new mode of living.● Ultimately what their ideas may be deduced to is a feeling not just of boredom in the city, but perhaps a feeling of entrapment as they were suddenly being surrounded by capitalist culture, no longer able to experience the city without being consumed by this new American commercialization through advertisements, signs, branding, etc. The city was no longer about its usefulness, its experience, its beauty, but instead merely about what it could produce. This led the SI to not only look toward future urbanistic ideas, but also led them to nostalgia, a longing for what the city once was.

"Cities were for the situationists profoundly historical landscapes, whose current appearances were shaped by successive events that time has buried, though never completely effaced. Throughout the years prior to the founding of the S.I., an important strain in their writings reflected a desire to rediscover and reconnect with that history" □

That desire continued, and the SI believed that through their experimentation with the *dérive* in order to psychogeographically map the city, they would be able to uncover certain historical memories to reinstate into the urban fabric. This aspect of SI thinking separates the group from other Utopian thinkers as they believed that they could improve and work upon the existing fabric rather than starting with a cleaned slate, a *tabula rasa*.

The idea of psychogeography and mapping brings up incredibly important ideas about the factors that lead to the total conception of our cities and the geographic milieu. Whereas

▲ Debord, Guy. Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography, in *The Situationists and the City*, p.59
and
Debord, Guy. Towards a Situationist International, in *The Situationists and the City*, p.95

† Fig. 2.7: *Discours sur les Passions de L'Amour* by Debord

○ McDonough, *The Situationists and the City*, p. 61

† Fig. 2.8: Psychogeographic Mapping

◆ Iacovoni, *Game Zone: Playgrounds Between Virtual Scenarios and Reality*, p. 26

† Fig. 2.9: Psychogeographic Mapping

geography records and determines the activity of general natural forces, psychogeography, as Debord describes in the *Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography*, aims to "study the precise laws and specific effects of the geographic milieu, consciously planned or not, acting directly on the affective comportment of individuals." ▲ Psychogeography attempts to decipher the distinct atmospheres of the city, whether appealing or repellent in nature, and the causality of these distinct zones - an area of study which has constantly been neglected. Although we are quite aware that the atmosphere of streets can trigger feelings, Tom McDonough in *The Situationists in the City* argues that the majority of the time we tend to generalize these feelings into two categories: well kept streets equate to a feeling of satisfaction and agreeableness, and poor streets are depressing and shift.○ However the possible environments and atmospheres are endless and everchanging, even within the span of a few metres, and are in no way a direct result of the housing conditions or even the architectural era or style. The only way to experience these atmospheres as a way of uncovering hidden truths and possibilities in the city, is to explore the city on foot. Nonetheless we must understand what our actions entail, that getting 'lost' in our own city is not just a game. For the SI,

"[t]he act of losing oneself was not blind; it was rather a conscious act of urban decontextualization, the prelude to a recontextualization that would produce new geographies, measurements of degrees of freedom, re-appropriation of existing urban spaces."◆

Through this higher state of consciousness of oneself and one's surroundings, sensory perception is heightened, allowing for previously unperceived spaces, smells, and sounds, both attractive and repulsive, to emerge. Through an architecture that allows these different atmospheres to emerge, a space for exploration, those who experience it may begin to understand that

there is more to their streets than previously understood. Through a psychogeographic architecture, one may begin to understand more fully the relationship their bodies have to the spaces they experience.

Fig. 2.10: Psychogeographic Mapping

† Fig 2.11: Constant Nieuwenhuys 1920-2005

Constant was one of the few longstanding members of the Situationist International, an artist by trade who became deeply interested in architecture. Constant had considered going back to school to become an architect, but Aldo van Eyck insisted that if he studied his books it would be sufficient. Van Eyck's playground were deeply connected to Constant's development of *New Babylon*, and Constant even helped design some of the playgrounds.

Lefavre, Aldo Van Eyck, *The Playgrounds and the City*, p. 14

■ Thomas Y. Levin, in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents*, ed. Tom McDonough, p. 130

△ McDonough, *The Situationists and the City*, p.14

● 'Definitions', *Internationale Situationniste #1*, in *Situationist International Anthology* p.51

Case Study 3: The Construction of Situations

Our central idea is that of the construction of situations, i.e. The concrete construction of momentary lived ambiances and their transformation into a superior passional quality. We must develop an intervention that takes account of the complex factors of two major, perpetually interacting components: the material setting of life and the behaviors that it generates and that transform that setting.

- Debord, *Toward a Situationist International in The Situationists and the City* p.94

The SI wanted to make of daily life a creative, continuously original, spontaneous and ever-changing experience. The more militant Situationists saw the potential of our cities, and believed that simply producing new mega-structural environments such as Constant Nieuwenhuys' *New Babylon*, would not displace the society of the spectacle, but that we could quite simply improve the existing.■ The SI wanted to facilitate moments of chance encounters, bringing a more social atmosphere to the city. Debord saw the *dérive* as leading towards new proposals of architecture, which modern possibilities of construction promote. McDonough identifies in *The Situationists and the City* that the creation of a situation was an investigation of art as a medium for lived experience and social organization.△ In the *Internationale Situationniste #1* the SI define the constructed situation as '[a] moment of life concretely and deliberately constructed by the collective organization of a unitary ambience and a game of events".● A constructed situation may or may not be experienced as built object, seen as performance, felt as ambience, or all of the above.

The SI believed that through the construction of situations new desires would emerge that would lead to radical new modes of living. A transformation of ordinary space where, at the level of the individual, building becomes a revolutionary political practice.

† Fig 2.12: Paris Rooftops

□ "Provide every streetlamp with on-off switches, for an illumination that is at the public's disposal."

"Project d'embellissement de la ville de Paris", in Potlatch, n. 23,

▲ S.I. Plans for Rational Improvements to the City of Paris, in *The Situationists and the City* p. 69

○ *ibid.*

◆ Chtcheglov, Formulary for a New Urbanism, in *Situationist International Anthology*, p. 1

Constant's creations were nomadic in the sense that they were designed for homo ludens, who would have no fixed abode or work, but would simply wander through the built environments creating their dwelling spaces as needed.

They believed that the atmospheric affect of rooms could create emotionally moving situations. However the translation of these 'situations' into physical creations was somewhat unclear. Some suggestions of situations that could happen in order to alter the lives of city goers were to open up the roofs of Paris for strolling, with the creation and rearrangement of walkways and stairs where necessary, and the opening of the metro at night after the trains stop, lit intermittently for exploration. They also thought that street lamps should be controlled by the individual. Each lamp would have its own switch, leaving the changing ambiance of the city to be decided by the public. ▲ Embracing technological innovations, the SI suggested that the acoustic environment of train stations could be heightened by broadcasting live recordings from all different stations and ports. ○ Although the intent of the creation of situations was to change the way people experience space and the city in their everyday life, the creations could no longer be considered architectural, but instead they were intended as a 'total work of art'.

The important ideas the SI bring u (despite some seeming nonsensical and out of reach) is that what needs to be considered here when developing architectural designs, whether urban in scale or small intervention, is the ambiance one creates in the city, as well as appropriate spaces for temporary dwelling. There is most certainly an inherent curiosity in humans that under the right conditions is allowed to flourish. But as Ivan Chtcheglov stated in the pre-SI text, *Formulary for a New Urbanism*, '[w]e are bored in the city, we really have to strain to still discover mysteries on the sidewalk billboards[...]' . ◆ Designing city spaces for exploration and experience will allow this curiosity to reveal itself more readily. The next case study will show one member of the SI that attempted to design entire cities and regions based on play, adventure and nomadicy.

Case Study 4: Constant's New Babylon

† Fig. 2.13-2.15: Constant's Sketches for *New Babylon*

■ Pinder, *Visions of the city*, p.198

△ *ibid.*

homo luden or 'Man the Player', comes from Johan Huizinga's book detailing the history of play entitled 'Homo Ludens'. A direct latin translation: *homo* - human, *sapiens* - knowing, *ludens* - playing. Like civilization, play requires structure and participants willing to create within limits, hence Huizinga outlines a new creation of being, which would live in this realm.

† Fig. 2.16: Constant's Sketches for *New Babylon*

We require adventure. Not finding it any longer on earth, there are those who want to look for it on the moon. We opt first to create situations here, new situations. We intend to break the laws that prevent the development of meaningful activities in life and culture. We find ourselves at the dawn of a new era, and we are already trying to outline the image of a happier life and a unitary urbanism - urbanism made to please. - Constant

Artist-architect Constant Nieuwenhuys worked on *New Babylon*, a cross-discipline urbanism exploration, from 1959 until 1974, when it was shown in its near entirety at the Haags Gemeentemuseum, in the Hague. A utopian, anti-capitalist project, it was designed for a post-revolutionary society. In *Visions of the City*, David Pinder explains that Constant argued it was an 'experiential thought and play model for the establishment of principles for a new and different culture'. ■ Through this new space and society, Constant believed a new kind of creativity would manifest itself in daily life. 'The object of a mass creativity' that was based on 'the activation of the enormous creative potential which, now unused, is present in the masses'. △ Artists would no longer exist as we know them, as everyone would be creative constructing their own environments collectively and playfully. The category of artist, just like categories of work and leisure would be wiped away as revolutionary changes occurred and automated technology took control of production. In *New Babylon* women and men were no longer the maker, *homo faber*, but homo ludens, woman or man the player. This was a project based on a ludic and nomadic society.

Constant envisioned *New Babylon* as a massive interconnected space. A megastructural environment lifted above

↑ Fig. 2.17: Model for New Babylon

● Pinder, *Visions of the city*, p.200

□ ibid.

↑ ↓ Fig. 2.18 + 2.19: Model experiments for New Babylon

the ground fifteen to twenty metres by pilotis, or as a suspended or self-bearing structure to leave the ground free for traffic or public meetings. The sectors would be ten to thirty hectares in area and several stories high. The space-frame was built to allow flexibility once inside. All the spaces were transformable, a world altered everytime another person enters according to their needs and desires, 'in harmony with what Constant called their 'experimental life-play'.

Constant expressed his ideas of New Babylon through models, photographs of the models, drawings, and paintings. The models, made of metal, wire, wood, plexiglass, oil paint and ink are still striking and praised in the field of architecture today, not just for their ingenuity in model making, but also for the formal relationships established by these models.

Constant was right to criticise the way modern functionalist landscapes eradicated or confined the play element in cities, however his overthrowing of entire cities with a megastructural environment most certainly has utopic if not dystopic qualities. As much as Constant saw this project entirely viable and attainable at the time or in the near future, transforming not just the urban fabric, but society in such a drastic and instant way is without a doubt impossible. However, there are certainly very interesting and viable ideas within the project of *New Babylon*, and perhaps applied in small portions over the urban fabric to create play or adventure networks, without disturbing the current interworkings of the city, could potentially bring more life to the urban realm.

Gelbe sector Constant, 1958
[Sector amarillo Yellow Sector]
Haags Gemeentemuseum
Photo courtesy of the artist

Fig. 2.20 + 2.21: Model experiments for the Yellow Sector of New Babylon

Chapter 3:
Vagrancy/
Vagabondage

Fig. 3.0: John Hejduk, *Victims*: Musician Studio B: Elevation + Plan

Chapter 3: Vagrancy/Vagabondage

↑ Fig. 3.1: Political cartoon by Art Young, The Masses, 1917.

■ Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online.
<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vagabond>
 Accessed 03.09.2012

△ Oxford Dictionary Online
<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/vagabond?q=vagabond>
 Accessed 03.09.2012

Theodore Homberg wrote *de la Repression du Vagabondage* in 1862.

http://www.amazon.ca/Repression-Du-Vagabondage-Theodore-Homberg/dp/1160397368/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1354228765&sr=1-1
 Accessed 21.10.2012

A man who leaves home to mend himself and others is a philosopher; but he who goes from country to country, guided by the blind impulse of curiosity, is a vagabond
 - Oliver Goldsmith

Since its conception, the word vagabond has gone through an immense transformation, now loaded with meaning and negative connotations previously nonexistent. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, it's first known use was in the 15th century. Stemming from the latin word *vagari* - to wander - it was transformed to Anglo-French *vacabund* - whatever strays - and finally to today's version originating from Middle English. ■ Defined by the Oxford Dictionary, vagabond as a noun demarcates 'a person who wanders from place to place without a home or job'. As a verb, vagabond is described as "[wandering] about as or like a vagabond: he went vagabonding about the world". △ However it is the informal, pejorative definition that has taken a word relatively poetic and translated it into a word describing the homeless, law breakers. Presently a person with vagabond characteristics is seen as leading an unsettled, irresponsible, unprincipled or disreputable life, such as a gypsy wandering and overtaking space for a period of time that is not their own, or a homeless beggar, disturbing daily life. A vagabond was described in 1880 by Theodore Homberg

● Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 210

□ Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 210

▲ *ibid.*

† Fig. 3.2: John Everett Millais "The Blind Girl":
vagrant musicians

The punishment for vagabondage or idleness ranged anywhere from branding and whipping to conscription into the military services and transportation into penal colonies.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/188217/English-literature/12808/Social-conditions>
Accessed 03.09.2012

† Fig. 3.3: Vagrant being punished in the streets in
Tudor England. Woodcut circa 1536

○ Vagrancy, in Britannica, online encyclopedia. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/621519/vagrancy>
Accessed 03.09.2012

◆ *ibid.*

as outside of society with no family, no regular work, and no fixed home.● To those within modern society anything outside of what is normal is immediately seen as frightening and naturally repels. As Anthony Vidler points out in *The Architectural Uncanny*...

Vagabonds, then, were guilty of no crime but that of vagabondage; potential criminals, outside the law not for a crime committed but for what might be committed in the future as the product of a wayward life.□

Ultimately, then, the laws created over the centuries pertaining to vagabondage were laws entirely based on assumptions, a 'social and legal construction of bourgeois society'.▲ What separated a vagrant from other beggars was that they were thought to be someone able bodied and minded who made the conscious decision to adopt this lifestyle of begging, unlike someone with mental or physical disability who ended up with no other choice. These laws were created in order to force these 'idle' people back to work. The laws were vague and yet punishments harsh. A vagrant in English law had many different meanings, including a man who deserted his wife and children, as was any man who gave a false account of himself. In order to combat the vagueness of the common-law meanings, in most countries vagrancy must be accompanied by begging in order to be punishable. However in some countries it has come to define those who commit more serious offences such as prostitution or gambling. In the United States some of the vagueness still remains, as vagrancy is still used by police or prosecutors in order to proscribe a wide range of behaviour under one law, including 'political demonstrations, the obstruction of streets or walks, riotous activities, and loitering'.○ The ever-shifting application of the law has been inordinately criticized by legal scholars and civil libertarians, as it is not explicit enough in order to inform the public what activity would hold them liable.◆ As a result, it seems that the idea of vagrancy as a law is analogous with attempts to segregate those whom strive

to challenge current cultural and political ideas. A construct of 'bourgeois' society turned into a construct of modern political leaders.

For this reason, Vidler argues, *vagabondage* became

→ Fig. 3.4: Photo of the Situationist International graffiti "Ne Travaillez Jamais" or 'Never Work'

↑ Fig. 3.5: Photo of the Situationist International poster "La Lutte Continue" or 'The Struggle Continues'

the preferred role for poets, artists, bohemians and the like. Here we see the strong link between the idea of vagabondage and the groups and characters discussed in the first chapter, among others such as the poet Arthur Rimbaud. Over time this grew to be part of an artist's job. Being outside of the norms of society was a necessary endeavour in order to successfully create meaningful art, and this certainly peaked during the time of the SI, when art was becoming analogous with protest, political backlash and counter-culture. Much like a vagrant, by not 'working' and contributing to the capitalist economy they believed they were removing themselves physically and metaphorically from current society, becoming 'the Other'. A term mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, and an important component of vagabondage, 'the Other' or Constitutive Other (also the verb 'othering') is a key concept in Continental Philosophy. The Other refers to that which is other or "different" than the initial concept being considered, and opposes the Same. The spelling of the Constitutive Other is often capitalized as it is meant to denote a person, other than oneself. A person's definition of the 'Other' is part of what defines or even composes the self, in both a psychological and philosophical

sense, as people tend to construct roles for themselves through a reaction to the 'Other'. Othering helps distinguish between home and away, the uncertain or certain. This idea has been used in order to understand practices of admittance and segregation, in which different groups, or entire societies subordinate 'Others'.

The SI, then, embrace the idea of being the 'Other': subordinated as the uncertain, the stigmatized, and use it to their advantage. Much like a vagabond, they separated themselves from the bourgeois society. However unlike the common description of a vagrant, which under law usually meant a life of idleness, these groups saw it as a way to reinterpret daily life. Rather than idleness the SI used the time to explore the city, searching for new meaning in old histories. In the case of Rimbaud as well as the Situationists, Vidler states that:

△ Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, pp. 209-8

... the link between poetic and literal vagabondage was [...] more than metaphorical, as the poet searched relentlessly for "infinite walks, rests, trips, adventures, wanderings, bohemienneries," with a sense of being constitutionally "depaysé".△

Essentially depaysé translates to becoming disoriented or changing one's habits, and is a very important aspect to our defining of vagabondage.

So perhaps, then, we define a vagabond as someone willing to risk going against the forces that be in order to experience, or at least test, new ways of living other than the accepted paradigm. Historically it seems as though those with vagabond tendencies are often more interested in the use value of spaces - what the spaces can offer up in terms of experience, of connections, of ambiance, of adaptation, and of the different ways in which the space can be used - than what the space can produce in terms of monetary exchange.

Case Study 5: Hejduk's Victims

† Fig. 3.6: Sketches from *Victims*

John Quentin Hejduk

(19 July 1929 – 3 July 2000) was an American architect, artist and educator who spent much of his life in New York City, USA. Hejduk is noted for his use of attractive and often difficult-to-construct objects and shapes; also for a profound interest in the fundamental issues of shape, organization, representation, and reciprocity.

Hejduk studied at the Cooper Union School of Art and Architecture, the University of Cincinnati, and the Harvard Graduate School of Design, from which he graduated with a Masters in Architecture in 1953. He worked in several offices in New York including that of I. M. Pei and Partners and the office of A.M. Kinney and Associates. He established his own practice in New York in 1965.

http://www.greatbuildings.com/architects/John_Hejduk.html/
Accessed 08.07.2012

† Fig. 3.7: Sketches from *Victims*

■ Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p.209

"This troupe accompanies me from city to city, from place to place, to cities I have been to and cities I have not visited. The cast presents itself to a city and its inhabitants. Some of the objects are built and remain in the city; some are built for a time, then are dismantled and disappear; some are built, dismantled, and move on to another city where they are reconstructed."

—Hejduk, *Victims*, p. 4

As an architect, poet, artist and educator, John Hejduk transcends the division of seemingly unrelated fields, and has manipulated our understanding and definition of architecture by pushing the limits with his conceptual work as it is on the verge of art. Hejduk uses poetry to define both his architecture and the users that inspire his architecture. Hejduk's project and publication *Victims* does just that, creating a series of architectural objects each with a specific character. Although the characters border on the threshold of being notional, Hejduk uses concise architectural drawing methods to ground the project in reality. Of all of his projects, *Victims* is able to synthesize Hejduk's main objectives in architecture: counter monumentality, mobility and nomadicy, memory, and the fundamental issues of shape, organization, representation and reciprocity.

In *The Architectural Uncanny*, Anthony Vidler identifies Hejduk's *Victims* as a 'vagabond architecture'. Vidler discerns Hejduk's project as an interpretation of Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*, where the characters of the project playfully seize and explore the city.

...Hejduk's play is deadly serious; it invades and repopulates the cities en route; like an original carnival, his troupe overturns daily routines and commonplace thoughts, upsetting hierarchies and crowning fools. ■

↑ Fig. 3.8+3.9: Plan and Elevation Drawings for 'Painter - Studio A' from *Victims*

● *ibid* p. 210

↑ Fig. 3.10+3.11: Plan and Elevation Drawings for 'Musician - Studio B' from *Victims*

□ *ibid* p. 213

Here Vidler is hinting towards the “deadly serious” source of the project's creation - a kind of memory theatre for the victims of World War II. As well, Vidler is beginning to explore not only the counter monumentality inherent in Hejduk's work but ultimately Hejduk's defiance of current modes of living and creating architecture.

In fact Hejduk's horde contains its own threat: emulating those vagrants, vagabonds, and strangers that were so distinctly disquieting to nineteenth-century social order, it invades its "host" cities like a band of ruffians. They are not here today and gone tomorrow; rather, like George Simmel's "stranger," they come today and stay tomorrow. This refusal to be dislodged once arrived is the source of their willed unacceptability. △

Vidler sees Hejduk's characters as an invasion of the modern city set to overturn ideas about architecture and the city. By identifying himself and his architecture with the conventions of vagabondage, Hejduk's work is automatically correlated to the roving and roaming characters and groups discussed in the second chapter, activating the many inherently critical roles. Vidler argues that these architectural interventions materialize the intentions of this long line of investigators of the concept of “situations”; a 'part-random, part-preconceived intersection of objects and subjects, insistent provocateurs of the urban unconscious'.● Just like the Situationists practiced the *derive*, Hejduk's characters roam the city in a kind of experimental behaviour, a passage through varied environments and ambiances with the intent of creating chance encounters, finding the random in the planned, and the resulting associations with objects and people. However the difference being that the situations 'would no longer be constructed out of the mental response of citizens subjected to the behavioural experiments of the architect, but now out of objects that themselves are occupied in a continuous *derive*'.□ The interaction of these objects and their related movements create Hejduk's psychogeographic labyrinth through Europe.

Case Study 6: Parc de la Villette

↑ Fig. 3.12 Sketches

↑ Fig. 3.13 Axonometric

△ Kroll, Andrew: AD Classics: Parc de la Villette / Bernard Tschumi
<http://www.archdaily.com/92321/ad-classics-parc-de-la-villette-bernard-tschumi/>
 Accessed 10.11.2012

↑ ↓ Fig. 3.14+3.15 Follies

■ Bernard Tschumi Architects: Parc de la Villette. <http://www.tschumi.com/projects/3/#>
 Accessed 10.11.2012

Any relationship between a building and its users is one of violence, for any use means the intrusion of a human body into a given space, the intrusion of one order into another.
 - Bernard Tschumi

Parc de la Villette is a result of an international competition in 1982 and 1983 that aimed to revitalize an area in Paris which had once held the French national wholesale meat market and slaughterhouse, but had since become abandoned and neglected. Unlike the other 470 entries for the competition, which included world class firms such as OMA/Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid, and Jean Nouvel, Bernard Tschumi opposed the traditional mindset of nature as the predominant driving force of a park, and instead designed 'a place of culture, where natural and artificial (man-made) are forced together into a state of constant reconfiguration and discovery'△. Instead of relying on history as precedent the project concentrated on contemporary issues of the 21st Century, a goal which the competition had requested of the entries. The site is quite expansive, and so the park was meant to be developed as a complex program of cultural and entertainment facilities and activities such as workshops, gymnasium and bath facilities, playgrounds, exhibitions, concerts, science experiments, games and competitions, as well as including the Museum of Science and Technology and the City of Music.■

Tschumi's design is a superimposed organization on an expansive space of 135 acres, consisting of points, lines and surfaces. A series of architectural 'follies' make up the points, which are organized as a uniform grid throughout the site. Despite each follie being unique, a sense of place is retained through the

† Fig. 3.16 Exploded Axonometric of the Site

△ Kroll, Andrew: AD Classics: Parc de la Villette / Bernard Tschumi
<http://www.archdaily.com/92321/ad-classics-parc-de-la-villette-bernard-tschumi/>
 Accessed 10.11.2012

† Fig. 3.17 Folly Drawings

→ Fig. 3.18 Folly

large park due to their repetitive organizational nature. The 'lines' or paths through the park do not follow the same structure as the follies but instead lead visitors to various points of interest not only within the park but also to the surrounding urban area. 85 of the 135 acres are dedicated to green space, or 'surfaces' which are separated into 10 themed gardens.△

Instead of the picturesque parks that attempt to embody centuries past, Tschumi envisioned Villette as an open expanse meant to evoke movement in order to be explored and discovered, by establishing a sense of freedom within the organized space through the ambiguous follies. Each folly is unique and meant as a space to endorse activity, and yet each is unprogrammed, and so the actual activity taking place is then up to each user, encouraging exploration, interaction, play, relaxation, and gathering. In this way Tschumi is encouraging users of the park to be vagabonds in their own right, to explore and overtake these seemingly "urban" spaces. Tschumi has provided the framework for a creative reworking of the urban sphere's social and cultural organization through ambiguity and adaptation. If, instead of being surrounded by large expanses of grass, these follies were surrounded by buildings creating a network of cultural spaces through the city scape, the city may just become more lively and liveable.

Fig. 3.19 Explosion, Tschumi

Case Study 7: The New York Highline

↑ Fig. 3.20: The Highline in use.

↑ Fig. 3.21: An entrance to the Highline

■ High Line.
http://www.architizer.com/en_us/projects/view/high-line/447/?sr=1#.ULEmYc1cwUU
Accessed 24.11.2012

△ *ibid.*

↑ Fig. 3.22: Sunbathing beds overlooking the water

Formerly the West Side industrial railway, a 1.45 mile-long elevated steel structure built in the 1930's for freight trains, the Highline is now a large public park cutting through New York City. The last train ran on the structure in 1980, and since then had been left empty and derelict. The competition for the conversion project was ran in 2003 and 720 teams from 36 countries competed. The winners, James Corner Field Operations with Diller Scofidio + Renfro, designed a park not just for walking and wandering, but also for rest. This emphasis on accessibility allows the park to truly be for everyone, which is not commonly the case with many parks, designed for cycling, jogging and other activities. Instead this park allows for sunbathing, look out points and resting areas among the plants.

Walking along the Highline creates a feeling of floating among the rooftops, and yet still connected to the street, without the burden of motorvehicles. The park was inspired by the pre-existing wayward beauty of the postindustrial ruin. The park interprets nature's inheritance of the infrastructure and consists of three sections completed over a period of time. The design takes into account the biodiversity already present on the railway - an array of 'sunny, shady, wet, dry, windy, and sheltered spaces', as described in the Highline profile on Architizer.com.■ In order to accommodate the vegetation and allow it to continue growing in its wild and uncontrollable fashion, the team designed a paving system consisting of 'individual pre-cast concrete planks with open joints to encourage emergent growth'.△ Some paving stones dip and turn into planting beds, all in all creating a landscape where users can wander in unscripted ways.

Fig. 3.23 + 3.24: Bird's eye view

Fig. 3.25 + 3.26

Case Study 8: *Raumlabor*

† Fig. 3.27-3.29: The project featured above takes place in Place de la Paix, Montreal, a square along St. Laurent which is one of the chosen sites for this thesis.

■ www.raumlabor.net
accessed 21.11.2012

△ *ibid.*

● *ibid.*

Raumlabor is a firm located in Berlin, which creates both ideological and built projects that deal with local conditions of urban areas, cultural activities, and interaction. The firm consists of eight trained architects who collaborate on an “intersection of architecture, city planning, art and urban intervention”.■ The firm looks for difficult urban locations, locations which are torn between different eras of planning and urban systems, lost in the translation. Abandoned or transitioning spaces are the basis for their experimentations. Raumlabor calls their work ‘research-based design’, dealing with spaces at a human scale, investigating the conditions of the site in order to uncover untapped potential, and using the findings to initiate the active design and appropriation, without destroying the integrity of the existing site.△

“We do not solve problems, rather we initiate processes that give actors the opportunity to know, understand and use the city and its dynamics as well as its possibilities.”●

The actors Raumlabor refers to are the city residents whom they include in the design process as they play an important role in their team of interdisciplinary experts. Raumlabor believes they can gain invaluable information from these residents who

→ Fig. 3.30:

↑ Fig. 3.31-3.33: The Big Crunch

experience the places daily and have an insight into the 'history, fears, desires, existential needs, as well as deficits, that exists like an invisible network over every spatial situation'. By creating alliances between their external experts and these local actors, Raumlabor is able to open new fields of experimentation.

With these projects Raumlabor attempts to create a new image of the city in the minds of its users through the merging of space with individual experience, by creating places that are far from expectations, but at the same time places that users identify and connect with. Instead of seeing architecture as a an end solution to a problem, Raumlabor sees the architect as activist, and architecture as an experimental laboratory; a tool in the search for new possibilities for a new city. These ideas are directly in line with this thesis.

□ www.raumlabor.net
accessed 21.11.2012

↓ Fig. 3.34 Good Manners Bad Habits.
A project for an art gallery; a layout for an art show. The main mediums in the show were video projections, performance and interactive art.

† Fig. 3.35 Stadthalle Karlsruhe Design for unknown Raumlabor project (No translation available)

Chapter 4: *Modern Day* *Vagabonds*

Fig. 4.0 Austin Chartrand-Fyfe, kickflip
Miami, FL / Concrete #119 (2012)
Photo by Josh Hotz

Chapter 4: Modern Day Vagabonds

Places are spaces that you can remember, that you can care about and make part of your life. Much of what is built now is too tepid to be remembered. The spaces with which we are surrounded are so seldom memorable that they mean so little to us. - Charles W. Moore, *Donlym Lyndon: Chambers for a Memory Palace*.

By reinventing the notion of vagabondage in a different light, perhaps we can inspire a new generation of players ready to explore the cityscape. In order to argue that this is possible, This chapter will bring to light three forms of modern day vagabondage which already exist and are only becoming more centralized to today's culture, especially with (but not limited to) the youth, adolescents, and young adults: skateboarding, parkour, and gorilla interventions including gardening and art.

↓ Fig. 4.1: Freerunner over businessmen

Parkour

Parkour 'is the physical discipline of training to overcome any obstacle within one's path by adapting one's movement to the environment' - American Parkour Definition

Parkour - like street art - is a re-imagining of the urban landscape. Where graffiti and street artists use the city as their personal canvas, traceurs (parkour practitioners) use the

↑ Fig. 4.2: Traceur Sequence Shot

city as one sprawling, integrated jungle gym. Where we see solitary structures separated by alleyways and railings, they see opportunity. Traceurs are able to knit the city together into a cohesive whole through their fluid movement. This is where the American Parkour definition is mistaken. Although parkour is about adapting your movement to the environment, it is also about creatively adapting the environment to your body and movements. It allows you to look at architecture and not just see a railing, a wall, a building, but something completely new. You see the possibility of movement, ultimately making Parkour not only a physical practice, but also an artistic one. Perhaps that makes

→ Fig. 4.3: Traceurs and children adapting residual space

→ Fig. 4.4: A different use of a wall and handrail

l'art du déplacement, another name for the activity a much more accurate one. Much in the same way the SI wandered the city in order to enter a state of *depaysé*, traceurs are able to experience even more aspects of the city from new perspectives because of their ability to move within space in ways the average human could not. We often get caught up in the routine of the city and our environment, and traceurs are able to shatter our assumptions about city space, jarring us out of our vegetative state by showing us that the everyday objects in our city can have many different interpretations and uses.

↑ Fig. 4.5: Sam Lind, frontside nosegrind
Ottawa, ON / King Shit #4.2 (2012)
Photo by Josh Hotz, who is a local skateboarder
and photographer in Ottawa, ON.

"Being in a place where skateboarding is prohibited pushes against social norms, expectations, and rules. I enjoy skateboarding, and photographing it, because of the moment of freedom it creates for the photographer and subject. It doesn't matter if the parking meter is running out, or you don't have rent money, or the security guard says he's calling the cops, everybody involved is focused on doing their thing in that moment. The art of skateboarding consists of using everyday surroundings, whether it be the transition of a quarter-pipe, a bank, ledge, or handrail. The skateboarder chooses a trick that would be aesthetically pleasing for them with the features of the spot in mind. The skateboarder is always trying to establish a harmonious relationship between their intentions, their movement and the environment. The freedom to produce a photograph in a place that was never designed to be used for skateboarding is a creative and liberating moment for everyone involved. [...] I hope the images will open the eyes and minds of the general public to the side of skateboarding they don't see."

- excerpt from show description taking place on October 2, 2012, at Must Wine Bar, Ottawa.
Josh Hotz - *Photos for my homies in the name of skateboarding*.

■ Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p.29

△ *ibid.* p.33

Skateboarding

Over the past 30 years skateboarding has moved from the suburbs and skateparks to the core of urban conflicts: downtown. It is a sport that has been continuously misunderstood and misjudged as being irrational. For the common capitalist it seems absurd to expend such a great amount of effort without producing any commodity or spectacle ready for exchange. It has continuously been referred to as something of child's play, however Borden argues that it has become an entirely alternative, yet complete way of life for the majority of practitioners. Unlike capitalism, which "sub-divides and controls, measures and turns land into a commodity - in short produces abstract space," Borden contends that skateboarders create a kind of spatial enclave by "adopting and exploiting a given physical terrain in order to present skaters with new and distinctive uses other than the original function".■ Unlike the urban escapism of activities such as mountaineering, skateboarding is a repositioning of the urban, where the space of the city is found, adapted and reconceived into an alternate space.△ And these fundamentals are exactly what we hope to learn from.

↑ Fig. 4.6: Sam Lind, Backside lie air, Ottawa. Photo by Josh Hotz

→ Fig. 4.7: Rodney Torres skating the aftermath of hurricane Sandy, in New York. Photo shot by Calvin Nonato, 2012.

↓ Fig. 4.8: Mitch Barrette, Backside Blunt, Ottawa. Photo by Terry Worona

● Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p.231

□ *ibid.*

↑ Fig. 4.9: Sam Lind, Grind, Ottawa. Photo by Josh Hotz

▲ 'Skateboarding reasserts the here-ness and now-ness of architecture'.

ibid., p.236

Use Value

As briefly stated in the first chapter, modern capitalist culture is organized for the production of exchange of goods; nearly everything - buildings, products, sports etc. - are evaluated based on their exchange value. Even architecture has been molded and manipulated so that its intent is for the production of things - either products as commodities in factories,

knowledge in universities and museums, labour power in housing, information and decisions in offices, and so on. In this sense all buildings are places of the expenditure of energy, engaged in the production and distribution of things.● However skateboarding does not contribute in this way; it consumes the building while not engaging with its productivity. In this way, skateboarding 'implicitly denies both that labour should be productive of things and that architecture should be directed toward that purpose'.□ By occupying spaces outside of businesses and offices, where owners want only a society based on exchange and consumption, skateboarders deny any engagement with that model and in turn create use value where there should not be any. "Skateboarders then, 'represent more than just secondary users; they essentially redefine business and governmental spaces'," and Borden argues that the act of skateboarding advocates for a recovery, through

† Fig. 4.10: Keith Lancot, Nollie Lipslide, Photo by Josh Hotz

† Fig. 4.11: Ben Duncan, ollie, Albany, CT (2012)
Photo by Josh Hotz

○ Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p.234

◆ *ibid.*, p.236

† Fig. 4.12: Sam Lind, Photo by Josh Hotz

△ *ibid.*, p.233

appropriation, of time and space.▲ As such, skateboarding consumes architecture not as projected image, much like the pedestrian may submissively study advertising, but instead gives the human body the opportunity, through creating interest in other materials and forms, along with the skateboarder's own physical presence in the city, to use architecture as material ground for action.

This brings to light an interesting irony, as street skating is a result of the 'architectural wealth of the city', a product of waged labour.○ Perhaps then, argues Borden, the 'dead labour' that Marx believed to be contained in the means of production of the city, is resurrected through skateboarding's production of space and promotion of use values through adaptation of unused and derelict spaces.

"Through the production of space ... living labour can produce something that is no longer a thing, nor simply a set of tools, nor simply a commodity. In space needs and desires can reappear as such ... spaces for play, spaces for enjoyment, architectures of wisdom or pleasure. In and by means of space, the work may shine through the product, use value may gain the upper hand over exchange value."◆

And this has certainly been revealed through skateboarding, which challenges the idea that space is there to be obeyed, and instead shows that it can be manipulated for use. Production takes on a whole new meaning. Although the act of skateboarding produces no 'product' other than the move itself, and so the 'principle of economy' sees it as a 'waste' of expendable energy, by thinking in those terms one reduces life to mere survival. Borden describes that, in opposition to this principle, skateboarding sets about 'a release of energy that either creates or modifies space, espousing play (ludo), art and festival - Eros (the pleasure principle)', echoing the thoughts of Lefebvre.△ And so, for many, skateboarding has come to represent a small fragment of the utopian conception of

Fig. 4.13: Will Marshall, backside smith grind
Ottawa, ON / Skateboarding Photo Magazine #4 (2010)
Photo by Josh Hotz

"Skateboard made of wood, metal and plastic, costs about £100, runs on leg power; causes chips and scratches on bits of stone and metal. Car, costs a fortune, runs on poisonous shit, pollutes the air and water, fills the city with 'smog', causes the death of hundreds of thousands of people every year. Mmmm? And yet despite all this cars are o.k. but skateboards are evil, objects of vandalism, a dangerous menace that must be stopped."

Ben Powell, 'The Number One Four Wheeler', *Sidewalk Surfer* no. 9, August 1996 n.p

■ Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p.166

△ *ibid*, pp.166 and 234

↑ Fig. 4.14: Mark Gonzalez, one of the most important street skating pioneers, grinding a concrete handrail (1987)

● *ibid*, p. 234

↑ Fig. 4.15: Mitch Barrette, backside 180 switch front crook
Toronto, ON / SBC Skateboard #13.3 (2011)
"Mitch built one of his famous ghetto-fab teeter-totter roll ups to get over the parking blocks they put in the run up; after about 12 frames he rolled away." Photo and text Josh Hotz

the urban sphere as space for use.

Skateboarding as Subculture: Alternate means to an end

Not only is skateboarding seen as a waste of effort that produces no product for exchange, but it is seen as simply childish. However skateboarders are not, like some believe, simply choosing between childhood and a conventional adulthood, but instead Borden explains that they are actually 'creating a third condition which is irreducible to the former two'.■ And this condition is what I would like to identify as a form of a Modern Day Vagabond. Older skaters will reject some of the normative behaviour patterns associated with being adult, and instead create an entirely different way of living, rather than a temporary escape from the routinized world; a sub-culture with its own conventions apart from school, family and social traditions, a life outside of 'labour'.△ Identifying as 'The Other' this definition of the skateboarding sub-culture is not unlike the definition of vagabondage, outside of normalized culture. However unlike the apathetic nature of the traditional idea of vagabonds, skateboarders instead re-evaluate energy use and apply themselves in other ways, that to them are no less meaningful than waged labour.

...the reproduction of labour power becomes not reproduction of future workers but of energetic desiring bodies, capable of creative expenditures of effort. Skateboarders, as young adults, see themselves not as the reserve army waiting to serve in industry, but as living according to a different rationale. ●

This may be one of the main contributing factors to the adult disdain toward skateboarding. Many may in fact realize that these skaters have chosen another way of life, rather than simply being 'childish', and seeing skateboarders around the city act as a constant reminder that one did not have to make the choices he or she did to live according to normal adult social conventions. By using the public space in the city, which is normally seen as 'adult space of serious productivity or consumption', Borden contends

□ Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p.167

↑ Fig. 4.16: Brand Grade Select's 'Skate Thru The City' Stickers

▲ *ibid*, p.257

↑ Fig. 4.17: Sam Lind, Frontside Ollie, Ottawa
Photo by Josh Hotz

○ As *Sidewalk Surfer* put it, skaters oppose 'the real criminals, who despoil the world in their never ending quest for capital.'
ibid, p.237

↑ Fig. 4.18: 'The 'forever' oscillation within a desert pipe.' 1977

that skateboarders reappropriate and redefine the adult realm and what adult space might be.□ However not everyone appreciates this reappropriation.

Legality

"When fun is outlawed, only the outlaws will have fun."
- Warren Bolster

The disdain for skateboarding has been long-standing, and many attempts have been made in order to remove any trace of it from the city. However, because skateboarding is aimed at the appropriation, rather than domination of time and space, it cannot fully be represented as an illegal activity, and so it can only become 'criminal' through petty-minded laws,▲ just as vagabondage did in the past. It has been revealed in some city centres that the banning of skateboarding has been less about damage to property, and instead to allow for the government and private sector workers to look out their windows without having to see 'untidy people skating'. Here, 'untidiness', as Borden explains, is seen as a form of 'disorder', and disorder is what is being challenged with these laws rather than any real crime.○ Skateboarding, made into a 'false crime' helps to validate the city oriented towards business and commodity, much like tidying and putting to work the vagabonds in the 16th century. Naturally, skateboarding implicitly opposes the capitalist principle of ownership, as skateboarders view all space as public space, denying the implicit logic of zero degree architecture's conditions and causes. So, perhaps then, the legislature directed at skateboarding is more concerned with *legitimizing* the conventionalized operations of society, than finding skateboarding a crime.

However some bystanders disagree, and feel that skateboarders help to bridge the gap between the public and what some have called 'relentlessly austere, even inhumane'

◆ Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p.196

↑ Fig. 4.19: Skaters in the pipe being watched by a security guard. c. 1987

△ *ibid*, p.210

↑ Fig. 4.20: The production of urban bodily senses. Balancing, moving and responding while seeing, hearing and touching architecture in Leicester' c. 1989

■ *ibid*, p.135

△ Borden goes on to say that "[c]ities are not things, but the apparent form of the urbanisation process. Cities are filled with ideas, culture and memories, with flows of money, information and ideologies, and are dynamically constitutive of the continual reproduction of the urban. To see the city as a collection of objects is then to fail to see its real character."

ibid, pp. 247 and 213

modern structures by architects such as Mies van der Rohe that make up the modern city, specifically noting that Chicago spaces like Mies' plazas are the 'natural turf' for skateboarders.◆ Apart from the validation of urban capitalist culture through the expulsion of skateboarding from the city, damage to private and public property does play a part. However where owners of properties see these marks and scuffs as damage, skateboarders, especially youth, see this as a sort of 'writing on the ground' as inscribing of ownership of space. Where adults make their own marks on the city, disguised as objects - porches, decorations, gardens, and vehicles - skateboarders Borden explains, view 'urban phenomena such as litter, scuff-marks, smells, noise, pollution, and also deliberate inscriptions of fly-posting, graffiti, skateboard marks, schoolyard scratchings and so on' as versions of a counter-inscription.△

Production of Space + the Co-opting of Place

As a result of the modern metropolis, the skateboarder's senses, including sight, touch, hearing, balance, speed and responsivity is heightened, the relationship becomes one not just of mutual respect, but of attraction. Borden contends that skateboarding, at an elementary level, is the rebirth of the self, body and terrain, and that it 'is nothing less than a sensual, sensory, physical emotion and desire for one's own body in motion and engagement with the architectural and social other'.■ It is able to show us that there are other possibilities of use than those that are pre-existing or predetermined. Instead buildings, architecture, and urban space can be consumed by activities, and reimagined as places of use and lived experience. We should not view architecture as a thing, 'but part of the appropriation of the world, life and desires, space and time'.△ The redefining of space by skateboarders is not only a physical act, but also a conceptual one. This act is not so much appropriation, argues Borden, but an

† Fig. 4.21: 'Searching, Finding, Living, Sharing'. Psychogeographic mapping of everyday urbanism in R.A.D. Magazine, c. 1989

Co-opting or co-optation is described by Borden as 'taking over without mastering, appropriating without ephemerality, and can be a useful strategy where control is guaranteed by other means such as by political rule or law. Except that skateboarders did not own or otherwise control the spaces...'

Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City*, p.128

◦ *ibid*, p.55

† Fig. 4.22: Sheep and lambs as lawn mower in public space. Action no.83, in *Actions*

The term guerrilla gardening, Richard Reynolds explains, 'was first coined in a city that was at that time headed down the tubes: New York. In the early 1970s it was a mess as money and people left Manhattan for the suburbs, and crime and dereliction stayed in their wake. In the notoriously grim Bowery district of Manhattan a group of artists and students formed the Green Guerrillas and transformed a litter-strewn lot at the corner of the Bowery and Houston Street into a community garden that is still there today. The legacy of the Liz Christy Garden is several hundred legitimized community gardens.'

- Reynolds, in *Actions*, p.81-82

◆ Reynolds, *Guerrilla Gardeners and Public Space Professionals: Between Conflict and Co-operation*, in *Actions*, p.79

† Fig. 4.23: Nighttime Guerrilla Gardening

act of 'co-opting space and time', an act which borders between 'domination and appropriation, and between exchange and use'.◦

This is a key component to the creation of place, and in creating a sense of authorship and connection between users and a space.

In order to feel authorship or ownership, one must feel a certain sense of power over the space, in turn making it their own place, while still sharing in the appropriation with others.

Guerrilla Actions

From graffiti, to gardening, to art, to music and dance, there are many actions taking place in the city which can be considered 'Guerrilla', bordering between legality and illegality. The aim of these actions most often is intended to better the city by dealing with problems that have been left unsolved by city officials. This is especially the case with guerilla gardening, where residents transform left over public spaces both small and large, typically urban, that have been neglected for various reasons, though most often because of a city's budget. There are various reasons these guerrilla gardeners do what they do, sometimes it is simply about the beautification of the city, but other reasons may range from food security, community involvement and creating biodiversity. 'Plants can also be used by guerrilla gardeners as weapons in the war against the urban pollution generated by cars, commercials and poor design,' says Richard Reynolds in his article *Guerrilla Gardeners and Public Space Professionals: Between Conflict and Co-operation*.◆ The work of a guerrilla gardener is almost always unpaid and unregulated, and can be unpredictable and sometimes even unplanned. These gardeners tend to pick up where the professionals have failed.

Toronto's grassroots Public Space Committee has a guerrilla gardening division, who explain that there is just not the

△ Reynolds, in *Actions*, p.81

■ City of Vancouver, engineering services.
"Green Streets Program," Streets, <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ENGSVCS/streets/greenstreets/index.htm>
Accessed 20.11.12

† Fig. 4.24+4.25: Before and after Guerrilla Gardening

△ Reynolds, in *Actions*, p.83

● through cases such as Reynolds' own attempt to mend the gardens in his apartment building and around the city. Read more about his trials and tribulations in Reynolds' article in *Actions*.

budget in their city 'to tend the public spaces they aspire to'.△ Both Edmonton and Vancouver have guerrilla gardening groups as well, and Vancouver even launched a "Green Streets Program" in 1994, which encourages people to look after roadside traffic circles and "corner bulges," in order to not only save the city money, but to encourage and promote 'a sense of community pride and ownership which ultimately benefits the city.'■ Montreal has seen a drastic change in their greenery, as the city's previous mayor, Pierre Burgue, was 'famously flower-friendly' in Reynolds' words, and since his departure the city has seen immense cutbacks. As a result one of the city contractors has taken to guerrilla gardening in his spare time, making gardens illicitly, and eventually with permission. Other issues with public gardens are a result of the top-down conception, where landscape architects develop flagship projects where 'the aim is shock and awe, something that wows the local media, creates cultural capital for urban marketing and looks good in the architect's portfolio.'△ However the cost of these spaces usually drains the city's budget, leaving nothing for the actual maintenance of the space, and over time the gardens become unkempt, overgrown or die, and eventually the entire public space begins to deteriorate.

By helping these public gardens flourish, guerrilla gardeners are not only beautifying the city, but most importantly creating a sense of community through the creation of space for the community. Having public space that the community can author does not only help with the functionality and useability of space, but ultimately helps to boost a community's sense of pride. However it is apparent● that the only way to successfully do so is unfortunately by undermining the city, and only those willing to border the line between legality and illegality will really be able to make a difference in city life due to by-laws, and health and safety regulations.

Case Study 9: Para-Architectures

Para-Architectures is a research project by a team that works under the name of CityLeaks, the team remaining anonymous. The work explores Heidegger's dwelling and being, and attempts to find ways that urban forms of contemporary dwelling can inform being. Much like this thesis, it sets out to offer places in unusual spaces yet to be discovered. A series of prototype projects were created in order to test certain ideas, using the urban dweller as a pivotal agent in the studies. All of the prototypes were meant to be temporary, and they ranged from lasting a few hours to six weeks. The team designed and installed the installations, and then took down observations for the duration of each installations life, while remaining anonymous. The group also had a suggestion box at each location, as well as a social networking site and blog, where users were able to post praise, concerns, images, ideas, and any other contributions they may think of. Three out of four of the installations are created out of milk crates secured together into larger structures. The milk crate allowed for quick and easy construction, as well as enabling users to modify and change the space using milk crates that are left unsecured, which could be turned into seats, tables and other assemblages.

↑ Fig. 4.26: Instructions on becoming a 'city agent'

↑ Fig. 4.27+4.28: Steposit in use
→ Fig. 4.29: PlayMo Design Drawings

↑ Fig. 4.30: Suggestion Deposit Box

↑ Fig. 4.31: View from above

↑ Fig. 4.32: Stairway down

□ CityLeaks, *Para Architecture*. http://issuu.com/cityleaks/docs/para_architecture_cityleaks
Accessed 09.15.2011

→ Fig. 4.33: PlayMo in use

called PlayMo, lasted the longest at 6 weeks. Located in a dead end lane off of another lane, the structure consisted of two mezzanine levels each with two access routes. The colour coded structure (black - platforms, grey - stairs, green - moveable) encourages users to occupy, dwell, rearrange and add so that the structure becomes 'their' own place, rather than 'a' space. CityLeaks' observations of this structure has been able to bring to light some important truths about users and a space's longevity, cleanliness, and detriment. CityLeaks was able to prove that when a designed space is authorless and therefore shifts ownership to the users that claim it, the users tend to look after the space as if it was their own. During the weeks that passed users set up garbage cans, asked other users to clean up after themselves, and made the space more livable adding cushions etc. However by the fifth week there was some neglect and garbage left in the space, and after a clean up it remained in good condition until it was taken down by city council. What this highlights is that public spaces will always need care-taking, whether it be by the users, by the designers, or by the city.□

↑ Fig. 4.34: Nuit Blanche Sign

↑↓→ Fig. 4.35-4.39: Installations

Case Study 10: *Nuit Blanche*

Nuit Blanche, literally translated as 'white night', is an all night, one night only festival first started in Paris in 2001 by mayor Bertrand Delanoë who invited Jean Blaise to create the event. The event has since been adopted in cities worldwide, including the Canadian counterparts in Montreal, Toronto and as of 2012, Ottawa. The festival is an exploratory event, where residents are invited to drift through the various galleries all night free of charge, as well as various outdoor art, performances (including dance, film, music and performing art), and installations. The festival attempts to create various ambiances through the city, and endows citizens with the realization that there are many opportunities in our cities for cultural experience and experimentation with new modes of dwelling.

↑ Fig. 4.40

↑ Fig. 4.41 Contour Model Drawing

▲ Landhausplatz. <http://www.dezeen.com/2011/06/02/landhausplatz-by-laac-architekten-and-stiefel-kramer-architecture/>
Accessed 23.10.2012

↓ Fig. 4.42

→ Fig. 4.44

↓ Fig. 4.43: Transition of concrete finishes

Case Study 11: *Landhausplatz Innsbruck*

A joint venture between Stiefel Kramer Architecture and LAAC Architekten, *Landhausplatz* is a newly completed redesign of a public plaza in Innsbruck, Austria. A huge concrete slab undulates and swells upwards to frame the existing elements of the site: four separate monuments, as well as the new trees, benches, lighting, fountain and drinking fountain. The goal of the project was 'to create a contemporary urban public space that negotiates between the various contradictory conditions and constraints of the site and establishes a stage for a new mélange of urban activities characterised by a wide range of diversity'.▲ The undulating surface creates a landscape to accentuate the surroundings of the city, but ultimately is one large sculpture as a result of its urban context. The texture of the concrete surface changes as it rises up, becoming rougher along the sides of the contours, and then as it is sliced across the top becomes a beautifully polished surface, as if the concrete is actually marble. The architects insisted that this public plaza stay public, and that it be used by anyone and everyone, including skateboarders, despite the dismay of city officials. As a result the space has become a haven for all types of users, where skateboarding and other activities become a performance.

↑ Fig. 4.45: Birds eye view of contours and pedestrian parking entrance

↑ Fig. 4.46: View of project in the mountainous Austrian context

1 Fig. 4.47

† Fig. 4.48: Groups of skateboarders watching a competition

† Fig. 4.49: Skater ollieing off a large contour

Chapter 5:
*Architecture for
the Modern Day
Vagabond*

Chapter 5: Architecture for the Modern Day Vagabond

Subversive architecture doesn't just break the rules - it challenges them and thereby makes us question what the rules are meant to achieve. - Robert Kronenburg

■ Ford, *The Spaces Between Buildings*,
p. 208

↑ Fig. 5.0+5.1: Action no. 38: Foamy Velour Suits Challenge Authority. Artist Sarah Ross develops the 'Archisuit' which fits into different negative spaces of urban elements designed to keep humans off around the city of L.A.

△ McDonough, *The Situationists and the City*, p. 11

When we argue for certain types of spaces, be they as simple as a front porch or an alley, it is indicative of the more important urban issues at hand. We seek a sense of place, a sense of belonging, a sense of history, a sense of community and by extension a feeling of an overall involvement in our environment.■ However the methods for implementing these qualities are in no way straight forward, and so we must look for a starting point, a point of departure. And it is not arduous to argue that the appropriate point of departure would be first establishing a sense of history. This sense of history should already be embedded in the site, however buried this history might be. Through design we shall be able to draw upon these histories and emphasize its importance in order to begin to establish a sense of place. Knowing where one stands in history can be as important as knowing where one stands geographically.

The city assumes the guise of a vast storehouse of slumbering memories awaiting potential awakening.△

● Perez-Gomez, Alberto, echoing Ricoeur in *Hermeneutics as Discourse in Design*, p. 78

Fig. 5.2-5.5: A project by Recetas Urbanas that uses a form of action that makes use of the loopholes in urban planning. The team describes how this play space can easily be put together for a length of time. By filling out a permit one can install a 'skip' or dumpster in one's neighbourhood at a low cost, creating space for various desires, such as a playground, information point, reading room, exhibition space, large flowerbed etc.

www.recetasurbanas.net

A rebirth of the forgotten in our city will act as the base for an infinitely extendable new centre of unknown, waiting to be discovered programs. Passages for the Situationists 'drifting' and 'exploring' will emerge. "Historical narratives will constantly open up our 'space of experience,' while fictional narratives allow the imagination to engage the 'horizon of expectation'."● However not everything that is forgotten should be remembered, therefore it will be about choosing carefully; there will need to be a delicate balance between how much is designed and how much is still left to be 'unknown'.

The architecture for the *Modern Day Vagabond* will allow exploration through unusual city spaces, while also inviting users to interact, adapt, and change their environment. Not a Vagabond Architecture, as with Hejduk's victims, in the sense that the architecture has itself characteristics of the vagabond, occupying different cities. Not necessarily a moveable architecture, as an architecture for those in movement. Not something for the vagabond to take with them but an architecture that heightens the experience of those Modern Day Vagabonds wandering through these altered spaces of the city. Not an architecture of permanent dwelling but instead of temporary occupying, dwelling, exploring, and adapting. A way for the Modern Day Vagabond to impose oneself on the city, inviting others to join in creating useable space in the city's residue. The architecture will create a network of remnant spaces ripe with history and ready to be overtaken. Space for ludic behaviour, for relaxation, for art, for nature, for encounters and discussion will be created. Space worth occupying. A permanent, yet adaptable architecture reminiscent of the temporary spaces created by festivals such as Nuit Blanche.

PrePortfolio: Ludicontainer

↑ Fig. 5.6: During construction.

↑ Fig. 5.7: After completion.

Crew:
Lead Designer, Project Management +
Construction: Sarah Anne Fleming

Design Associate + Construction: Kristina
Corre

Construction: Robert Berkman, Ray Chow,
Jay Brauneisen + Matthew Megannety

A prelude to the thesis project and an initial exploration into these ideas, an installation was designed and constructed during the first months of research and writing in October and December of 2011. Created for the Azrieli School of Architecture's annual Gala named *Kosmic*, the installation made use of a shipping container to create an enclosed and intimate playspace within the grand space of the Aberdeen Pavilion at Lansdowne Park in Ottawa, Ontario.

The primary conceptual theme behind the project was to investigate how ludic spaces easily encourage those which have surpassed the “play stage” of their life to once again explore and interact with space. A pool of water lit from beneath was created at the back of the container in order to project a visualization of the music from the stage nearby onto the roof. The mirrored cubes were meant to project and expand these shadows both within the space and into the grand hall, attracting more visitors. Plywood cubes mirroring the shape of the hanging boxes were produced to create more seating within the container as well as in the threshold space between the container and the pavilion. To encourage interaction and add another textural and olfactory-based dimension, grass, both real and synthetic, was used to cover the space. However it was the implementation of a slide that allowed users to recognize and appreciate that this was not only a space for rest, relaxation and encounters, but ultimately a space for ludic behaviour.

And play they did.

↓ Fig. 5.8: During the party

reflect →

gather →

fold →

play →

structure →

[sound] waves →

projection →

enclose/embrace →

Fig. 5.9: Exploded Axonometric of design.

↑ Fig. 5.10: Bird's Eye Render

↓ Fig. 5.11: Approach Render

↑ Fig. 5.12: Approach Render 2

↓ Fig. 5.13 Reflections

† Fig. 5.14: Finished Installation

↑ ↓ Fig. 5.15 + 5.16 : Installation being played in during the Gala

Montreal

↑ Fig. 5.17: View of Montreal from Mont Royal

■ Statistics Canada. Canada's Ethnocultural Mosaic.
<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-562/p19-eng.cfm>

↑ Fig. 5.18: Aerial View

↑ Fig. 5.19: Old Montreal

△ UNESCO. Montreal, Canada appointed a UNESCO City of Design. June 7, 2006.
http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=30945&URL_D0=D0_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
 Accessed 10.12.2012

↑ Fig. 5.20: Old Montreal's Historical Buildings

The city of Montreal, located in the province of Quebec in southeastern Canada is the second most populous metropolitan area in Canada after Toronto, and is the fifteenth largest in North America. ■ Originally populated by native americans, the city is one of the oldest in Canada and became the centre of the fur trade because of its location along the St. Lawrence River. It was not until 1976 that Toronto surpassed Montreal in population and economic strength. Originally the city was named Ville-Marie. The name Montreal originates from the naming of the hill located in the heart of the city, Mount Royal, or Mont Réal as it was spelled in Middle french. The city itself is located on the Island of Montreal, and french is the official language. Montreal has a history of turmoil between cultures, not only between francophone and anglophone cultures, as 26% of Montreal's population are visible minorities, including the second largest population of african canadians, and the oldest Jewish settlement in Canada. However this turmoil and friction between cultures is seen as being responsible for the dedication to, and support of their cultures in the city. Montreal is seen as "Canada's Cultural Capital" and was also named a UNESCO City of Design, one of three in the world. △ It is seen as the City of Festivals and there is an enormous appreciation for the arts, dance, music, and individual expression, making it the appropriate location for any experimental urban design. However Montreal is no stranger to vacant lots. The city has a tendency to demolish buildings with no real plan for the spaces, or at least no settled deal, resulting in overgrown spaces left for years. Yet the people of Montreal make the best of these spaces, using them for musical concerts and performances.

Downtown Montreal (Arrondissement Ville-Marie)

The district of Ville-Marie is not simply an arrondissement, but the centre of Montreal and the economic centre of the Province of Quebec. This had not always been the case, and it was not until the opening of the central train station and shopping centre - Place Ville-Marie - that the area began to develop. Place Ville-Marie was developed out of the railway tunnels hollowed out of Mont Royal by CN, and is the largest underground shopping centre in the world at 32 kilometres in length. The central business district was the location of the first stock exchange in Canada. Canada's busiest commercial avenue, Saint Catherine street, creates the central axis of downtown Montreal. The area sits at the bottom of Mont Royal, and is bounded by Sherbrooke street to the north, Papineau Avenue to the east, Guy Street to the west, and the Ville-Marie Expressway to the south. Ville-Marie is also home to the main campuses of UQAM and McGill University as well as a campus of Concordia University. The city of Montreal boasts an intriguing juxtaposed contrast between old and new architecture. The Tour KPMG is adjacent to an Anglican cathedral, and 1000 De La Gauchetière is adjacent to a Roman Catholic Cathedral, for example. However in recent years, parts of Ville-Marie have slowly been deteriorating, including parts of Saint Catherine Street as well as Saint Laurent Boulevard, leaving many gaps in the urban fabric.

The chosen area surrounds a section of Boulevard Saint Laurent that is commonly referred to as 'the lower main', and is considered to be the red light district of Montreal. The area has been deteriorating exponentially since the middle of the 20th century, the process only being heightened by the poor urban planning decisions of Montreal. What can only be thought of as mistakes have equated to the de-populization of the downtown.

↑ Fig. 5.21: Tour KPMG

↑ Fig. 5.22: 1000 De La Gauchetière

↑ Fig. 5.23: Street art during Culture Week

↑ Fig. 5.24: The Lower Main during its 'prime'

The street car system was removed, Boulevard Rene-Levesque was widened, a freeway was built, an emphasis was made on surface parking and sidewalks were narrowed to expand street parking and vehicle access, and office space was concentrated into what is now considered "downtown". This long line of poor planning decisions (which is not unique to Montreal, but all of North America) has eviscerated the core of Ville- Marie.

† Fig. 5.25: The Lower Main during its 'prime'

† Fig. 5.26: Tam Tams at Mont Royal

Fig. 5.29 + 5.30: Mapping of all empty lots and surface parking in the chosen downtown area.

Chapter 6:

Productive Residue, The Project

Chapter 6: The Project

↑ Fig. 6.0: Mapping

The specific sites were found as I experimented with my own derives through the city, wandering looking for spaces and places that pulled me in, and chosen for their ambience, history and potential.. The sites are located in downtown Montreal, in the area of Ville-Marie which includes the lower main (the red light district) and saint catherine street, a famous shopping area.

Figs. 6.1 + 6.2: Psychogeographic mapping experiments

C o n c e p t : ***the project***

P L A N - 1 1 7

- **Metaphorical**

- The pathway connects eight sites chosen based on the *dérive* for their ambiance, history and potential. The pathway is a continuous circle, allowing the *modern day vagabond's* adventure to begin an end anywhere, and to emphasize the fact that these sites are always changing, that they can be visited over and over again with a different experience each time

- **Physical**

• Lights

- The main indication of the pathway, as it is best experienced at night, are the lights. The lights lead users through different methods, for example projections, or lights placed to create a forced perspective, indicating a move to the next spot.

• Colour

- Where lighting is not possible, or in addition to the lighting, colour is used. This may be realized as painted walls, ground, or as projections (also categorized under light).

• Constructions

- In some cases it is necessary to unveil a different view of the city, or reach places currently not reachable. In these cases, bridges and platforms may be constructed.

S I T U A T I O N S

- **Acts**

- Each of the chosen sites will be modified in some way, some to enhance the history or current use, others to overhaul something vacant into useable space. Each its own unique moment, the experience of each situation will be different. Each moment is meant to provide the basis for an endless array of uses decided upon by the user.

† Fig. 6.3: A mapping of the pathway, showing the various lighting and colour techniques, including projections LED's and even a slide.

1901-1902

1-1901-1902

STAY IN THE TOWN
THAT'S RIGHT

STAY IN THE TOWN THAT'S RIGHT
STAY IN THE TOWN THAT'S RIGHT
STAY IN THE TOWN THAT'S RIGHT

3/15/11

Site 3: 1998
1998

1. The 1st Year Site
2. The 2nd Year Site
3. The 3rd Year Site
4. The 4th Year Site
5. The 5th Year Site
6. The 6th Year Site
7. The 7th Year Site
8. The 8th Year Site
9. The 9th Year Site
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97. The 97th Year Site
98. The 98th Year Site
99. The 99th Year Site
100. The 100th Year Site

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR THE
USE OF THE PERSONNEL OF THE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
AND IS NOT TO BE RELEASED TO THE
PUBLIC.

Site 2, P.O. Box 167, Fair

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS FOR THE
USE OF THE PERSONNEL OF THE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
AND IS NOT TO BE RELEASED TO THE
PUBLIC.

BRAND Empty
LOT

Site 2 Empty

Site 4
Community Garden

Site 4 - Community Garden

Site 4 - Montreal
Montreal's community garden program started in 1975, which includes 97 gardens across the city, the garden offers plots of land to nearby residents for growing produce. Montreal's 18 boroughs have managed the program since the municipal reorganization in 2002. The program supplies resources including written documents on gardening, gardening instructors, tool sheds, soil, tables, fences, sand, paint and flowers, to some but not all gardens. However the fate of these gardens have been long at risk from being developed as high rise projects, says Michelle Craig and Steve Richter in an article in the online journal Alternatives International. This is not usually the case with privately owned land, which usually has long term leases and tax exemptions for land owners, but if the land is city-owned then the livelihood of the garden all depends on a site's designation. If the zoning for the garden is determined to be a park, then the city is unable to sell of the land to developers, however if it does not have a park designation then the city is to sell the land, as is the case with this garden.

Site 4 - Montreal
Montreal's community garden program started in 1975, which includes 97 gardens across the city, the garden offers plots of land to nearby residents for growing produce. Montreal's 18 boroughs have managed the program since the municipal reorganization in 2002. The program supplies resources including written documents on gardening, gardening instructors, tool sheds, soil, tables, fences, sand, paint and flowers, to some but not all gardens. However the fate of these gardens have been long at risk from being developed as high rise projects, says Michelle Craig and Steve Richter in an article in the online journal Alternatives International. This is not usually the case with privately owned land, which usually has long term leases and tax exemptions for land owners, but if the land is city-owned then the livelihood of the garden all depends on a site's designation. If the zoning for the garden is determined to be a park, then the city is unable to sell of the land to developers, however if it does not have a park designation then the city is to sell the land, as is the case with this garden.

Part of Montreal's community garden program started in 1975, which includes 97 gardens across the city, the garden offers plots of land to nearby residents for growing produce. Montreal's 18 boroughs have managed the program since the municipal reorganization in 2002. The program supplies resources including written documents on gardening, gardening instructors, tool sheds, soil, tables, fences, sand, paint and flowers, to some but not all gardens. However the fate of these gardens have been long at risk from being developed as high rise projects, says Michelle Craig and Steve Richter in an article in the online journal Alternatives International. This is not usually the case with privately owned land, which usually has long term leases and tax exemptions for land owners, but if the land is city-owned then the livelihood of the garden all depends on a site's designation. If the zoning for the garden is determined to be a park, then the city is unable to sell of the land to developers, however if it does not have a park designation then the city is to sell the land, as is the case with this garden.

The community garden will not be altered greatly, but a pathway will run through the centre, and the design will look at more effective and advantageous ways to set up the plots.

Site 5: Looked Garden

THE GARDEN WAS
LOOKED AT
THE GARDEN WAS
LOOKED AT
THE GARDEN WAS
LOOKED AT

Initial Response to Site 5 - Locked garden

Working with the existing site, the intent of the majority of these design ideas were to create a framework for which the plants can continue growing freely and over time take over the built structures, turning them into covered spaces in which to dwell. Lighting inside of these spaces will allow them to be used at any time.

→ Figs. 6.22-6.27

The intent of this garden is to create an intimate yet playful space that does not interfere or attempt to tame the current plantlife. The overhead structure creates the feeling of enclosed space underneath, while the top becomes a space for ladic behaviour. The spheres are meant to create individual "rooms" within the larger space, and are meant to blend with the garden over time as the design allows for integration with plant life.

Site 3 Locked Garden

Initial Response to Site 6 - Alleyway + Graffiti Wall

Initial reactions to this site led to designs with two different, but related motives. The first being to aid in the implementation of the graffiti through lighting, or as in fig.6.49, creating a system of blocks that the artists could rearrange in order to paint certain areas of the wall. The second motive was to be able to put the graffiti art on display, as if it was in a gallery or part of a performance, contradicting the idea that graffiti art is an act that 'defaces' architecture and is instead the creation of something beautiful to be admired. That is where the idea of framing comes in, and the idea of creating seating (figs. 5.50-5.53) to allow for an audience to watch the painting taking place.

→ Fig. 6.34-38

St. Louis, Saint
Louis, Missouri
1897

A second gap exists in the block of buildings containing the historical facade. This small gap is the fire escape for two buildings, the stairs nearly reaching the roof. These stairs make the perfect access route to the rooftops, which could have many interesting uses. The simple intervention will require adding a last set of stairs to reach the roof, which will provide the access to the slide leading to the next situation.

Fig. 6.10 Fire escape

Details

Building Blocks
Site:
in the details

† Fig. 6.50 Exploded Isometric View of Place de la Paix

Net 5000

LA 100-10000

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FLANGE

FLANGE

FLANGE

FLANGE

10/15/51

In the future

Garden Site:
in the distance

† Fig. 6.65 Exploded Isometric view of Sphere

Gravel Site
in the details

Graffiti Site:
In the details

The design for this site is meant to be rather ambiguous, a starting point for users to begin to adapt the space to their needs. A catwalk is added to a current fire stair on the connecting building, to allow graffiti artists to reach all sections of the wall. The wall is well lit, presenting the graffiti as what it truly is: art. The plywood painted objects scattered on the site provide seating allowing for an audience. The objects are meant to be temporary, and it is encouraged that artists take to their surfaces as well.

Post Script

As Ivan Chitchetglov stated 'We are bored in the city'. And this, we may argue, is the result of the lack of space *for* the public, space that the public can use and manipulate *for* desired uses; space that does not require one to purchase a 'mocachino-latte-frappe' in order to rest, or watch an overpriced prescribed 'film'. The goal of this study was to create spaces and places for people to remove themselves from the confines of life's 'rules', obligations and conformities, and allow them to get in touch with their true, innate desires. Exploration and play create adult intelligence in children, so when does that stop from happening? It is clear that we do not lose our imaginations as we are still able to dream up and create new ideas, things and art everyday, so when does the childhood ability to turn a mop into a horse or a hairbrush into a microphone evacuate the mind? Or does it? Perhaps, in the confines of the current city and society we do not allow ourselves this pleasure, but the appropriate space might. We cannot help but swing on a swing when we are in the park, whether we are young or old, so it is not arduous to argue that the desires are there. This architecture was created with the intent that it could allow those willing - the *modern day vagabonds* - to let their desires surface, and for it to be the planted seeds of ideas and possibilities of our cities, showing that the current model is *not* the only one.

For this reason, it was decided this project would not be one of participatory design, but that it could lead to such practices in the future, through the design of the remaining lots and others in the city. Instead these designs are meant to show possibilities and to learn - what could work and what doesn't, and who those possible users will be, in order to find those passionate about the spaces to collaborate with.

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