

USING POETIC LANGUAGE TO RESTORE THE AMERICAN
METROPOLIS BY EXAMINING
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT IS REAL AND IMAGINARY

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SPRING 2020

USING POETIC LANGUAGE TO RESTORE THE AMERICAN METROPOLIS BY EXAMINING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT IS REAL AND IMAGINARY

A Design Thesis Submitted to the
**Department of Architecture and Landscape Architecture of
North Dakota State University**

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Primary Thesis Advisor

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THESIS ABSTRACT

Public interaction over the years has changed in many ways. Dating back to ancient roman civilization, the public life had been important to the typical man. Spreading and sharing of ideas, exchange of goods, questioning the world, were all topics that had been shared in public space with neighbors and even strangers. Today it would be accurate to state the attributes of a public man/woman have depleted.

How can a urbanity encourage a positive public interaction?

THE NARRATIVE OF THE THEORETICAL ASPECT OF THE THESIS:

The theoretical aspects of my thesis study will take a large jump into sociological and psychological questions that are going to challenge any prior knowledge I have about the design practice.

What makes a community breathe? What makes a community die?

I have always been interested in how cities operate, what makes them run, operate, serve the cities inhabitants, and even more so, successfully serve the community. I have seen areas of my home town of Fargo be generated and regenerated to attempt to gather people together. Some of these projects have been somewhat successful and some have fizzled out in short matters of time. I am intrigued to see why that happens on either end.

THE NARRATIVE OF THE THEORETICAL ASPECT OF THE THESIS:

I have always had a sense of business and economy when it comes to architecture especially what happens after the ribbon is cut. As I had stated before, I have seen far too many businesses/public areas in the Fargo area gain lots of hype and traction from the community only to see them not maintained or go out of use/business. In urban design class, a question had arisen; "Where is downtown Fargo? Where would you go where you cross a line and you are in 'downtown'?" I have dwelt on this question extensively since being asked this question. Is it a street corner? Is it a block? Does the City of Fargo's sector name it well? Those questions were not answered consistently by our class. These questions of urban success will be thought out, compared to, as well as analyzed throughout this process and applied to my potential project.

THE NARRATIVE OF THE THEORETICAL ASPECT OF THE THESIS:

The project which I aim to design will serve many purposes. As stated earlier, it will be necessary for this to include a large gathering area where people can congregate to or know a set area in which it is located. This is meant to bring together patrons of many different backgrounds and demographics. By doing this coexistence of persons, we will unite a town/city to all share ideas and cultures. This will take many political and economic factors that I am also interested in and I feel that I have a good understanding for in our local area to apply to elsewhere. It is that sense of deeper understanding that I wish to grow and advance in my problem solving techniques for my own future as well.

THE NARRATIVE OF THE THEORETICAL ASPECT OF THE THESIS:

This project that I will add to an existing community has a goal. Overall, that goal is to add to a place by more than just built environment. This will push a developing area in the correct direction hopefully. I want this thing to make people stop and think. Feel enlightened. Change minds about a city. These broad goals are positive to have at this point and will be necessary to revisit from time to time to maintain a “why” for this design.

PROJECT TYPOLOGY

The typology for this project will be a small to mid sized urban design project. This urban design project will act as an intermediary space between businesses, public institutions, and transportation stops.

The project will also influence people to interact with the project in several different ways; meeting place by landmark, accidental encounter, flow of view range around site.

This will more specifically include landscape elements, built spaces, variety of seating, and possibly infrastructural adjustments.

PROJECT TYPOLOGY

Urban design projects usually have been an afterthought when designing a large high rise building, or an office/apartment complex. Very few projects have sought to make their urban union to the public their first priority.

Urban Design is more than just adding landscaping, or a bench while people await their bus to stop, Its about creating an interactive space to enhance our built environment.

Case Study:

BLOCK 9

FARGO, ND



Though the project has shaped our day to day lives here in downtown Fargo, I am going to focus more so on the urban context of this project going forward.

Case Study: **BLOCK 9** FARGO, ND

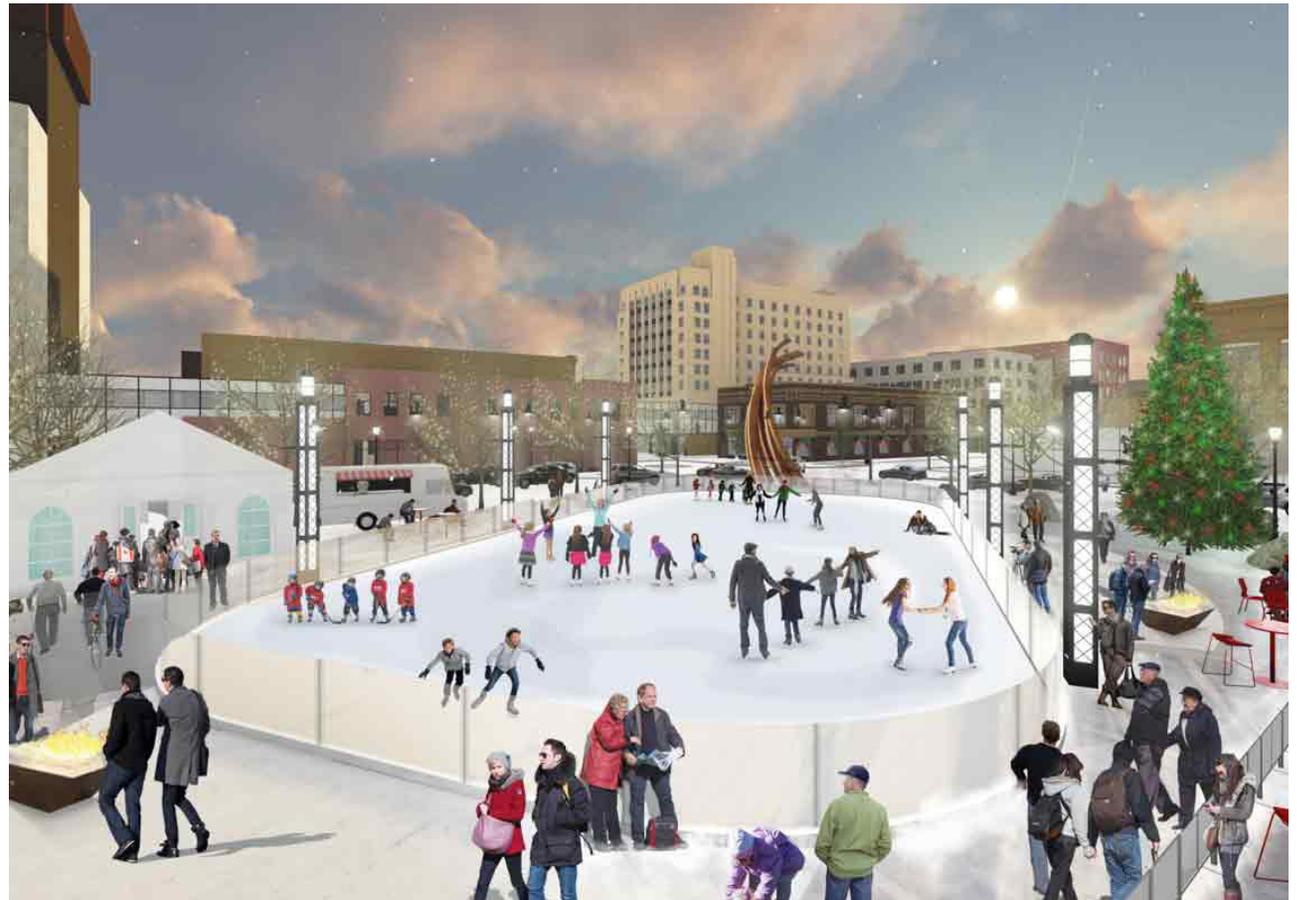
The community plaza is designed to be a hub for the community to gather. The Fargo Parks District will run the outdoor space as it will house events such as live music, events for the youth of Fargo, as well as operate as a functioning skating rink in the winter.



Case Study: **BLOCK 9**

FARGO, ND

The site's multi-use ability year round will determine the site's overall success. In the past we have seen downtown skating rinks fail to due under-use, so what will make this one different? The central area that will be operated in will have a much better location than the prior south main skate location. The ice will be cooled mechanically, the warming houses will be newly furnished and decorated. Unfortunately due to our harsh winters in Fargo, we have limited opportunity for what we are able to do outside in that area.



Case Study: **BLOCK 9** FARGO, ND



I included this case study in relation to my thesis research because of its locality and potential to have a community represented amongst all demographics. I've followed this project along since its ground breaking and am eager to see its finished product.

Case Study:

CRESCENT PARK

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



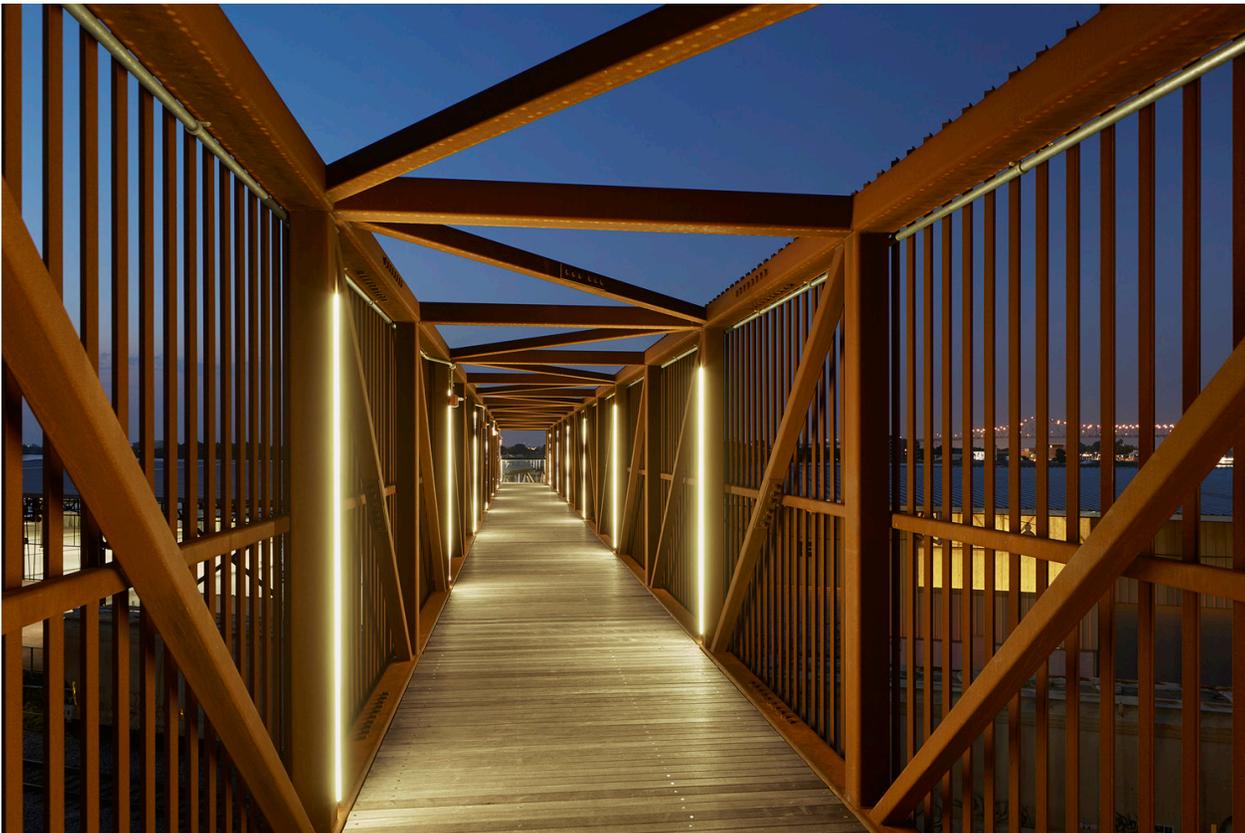
CRESCENT PARK in New Orleans is a 1.4 mile linear park that includes 20+ acres of indigenous foliage.

Case Study:

CRESCENT PARK

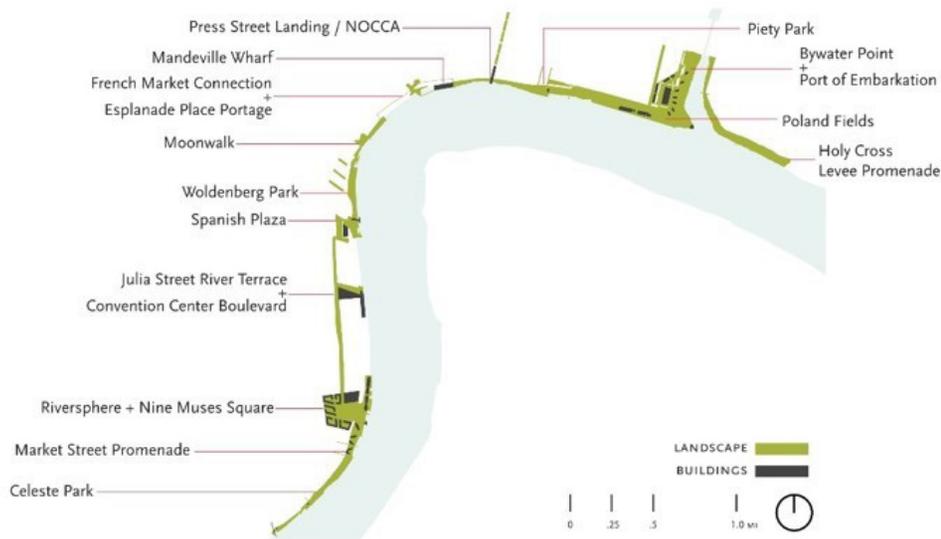
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

A network of paths suitable for walking, jogging, and biking; picnic areas, a dog park, and the adaptive reuse of two industrial wharves: the Piety Wharf and Mandeville Shed. Both structures have been stabilized and re-purposed to accommodate public gatherings, festivals and the host of artistic exhibitions that take place throughout the year. In lieu of new construction, the architects made a conscious decision to build upon the layers of history and character that already defined the sight.



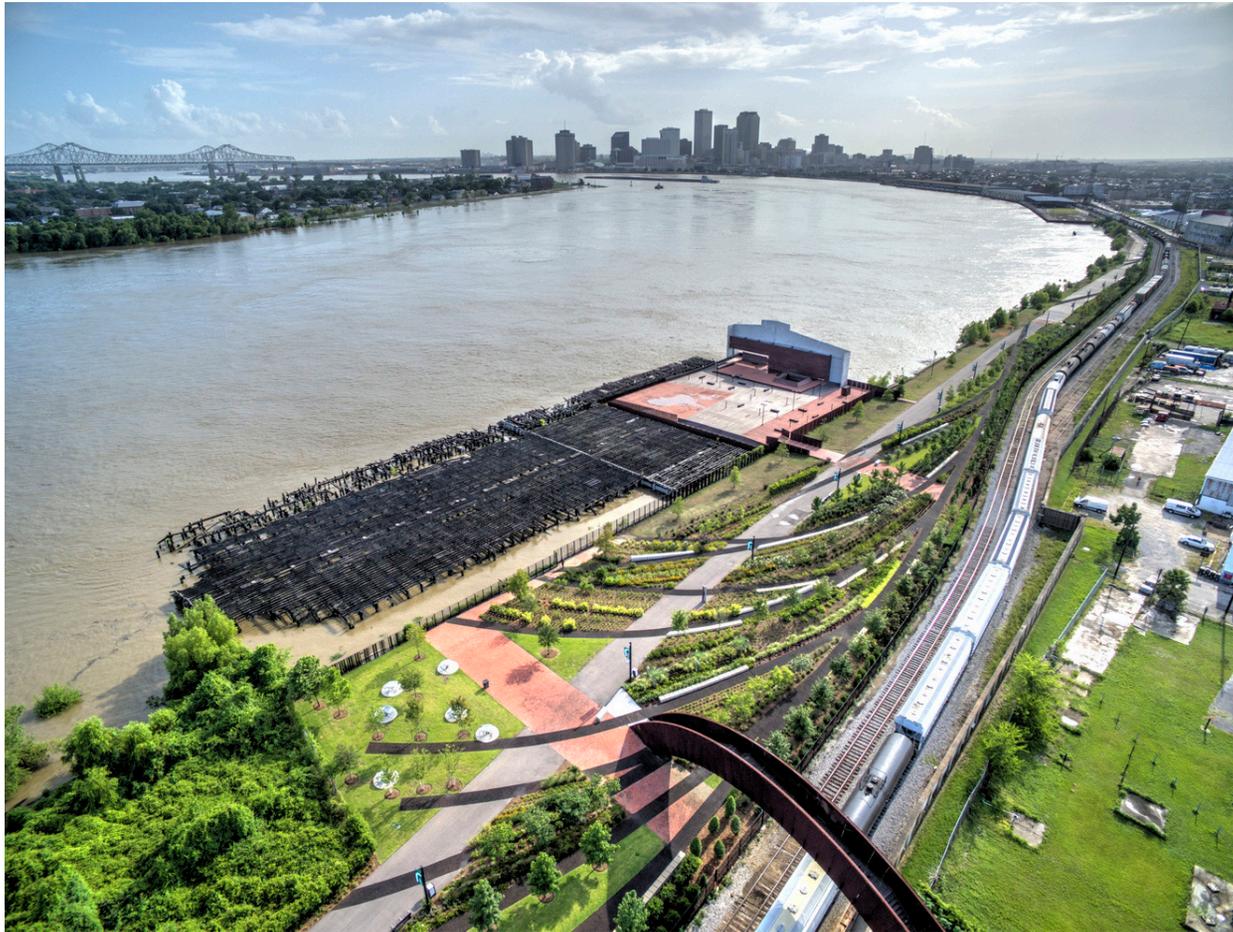
Case Study: CRESCENT PARK

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



In place of shipping and receiving goods, these two spaces provide opportunities for engagement and interaction, the exchange of ideas and conversation. By re-connecting to the river, New Orleans is following the trend of many world-class cities and exploring opportunities to restore and enhance the natural environment while simultaneously improving citizen's quality of life.

Case Study: **CRESCENT PARK** *NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA*



I included the Crescent Park as a case study in my proposal because of its history of industrial exchange translated into the idea of exchange of conversation and reconnection of the public with nature.

CASE STUDY: MILLER PARK

CHATTANOOGA, TN

“Miller Park spans two acres and is located in the center of the city, next to the Solomon building and one block from City Hall and the Chattanooga Public Library. As the heart of Chattanooga's Innovation District, the design challenge was to completely overhaul the space because its sunken plaza created a barrier and sense of disconnection from the city. By elevating the sunken plaza and bringing the entire park up to street level, we have made the park both more accessible and more inviting,” said Wes Michaels, Principal of Spackman Mossop Michaels.



CASE STUDY: MILLER PARK CHATTANOOGA, TN



MILLER PARK hosts formal public events for people as well such as pop-up shop events and concerts.

CASE STUDY: MILLER PARK

CHATTANOOGA, TN



SMM actually had a process involved to include the community throughout the design process of the park. They held six months of public hearings about getting the community and their voice on the design table.

This process was important for the projects flexibility during design and construction. This also made people feel like the park was theirs.

CASE STUDY: MILLER PARK CHATTANOOGA, TN



I included MILLER PARK in this case study because of its urban fabric like qualities, it connected people to the site very fluidly, through 2D and 3D elements

CASE STUDY: CHICAGO RIVER WALK

CHICAGO, IL

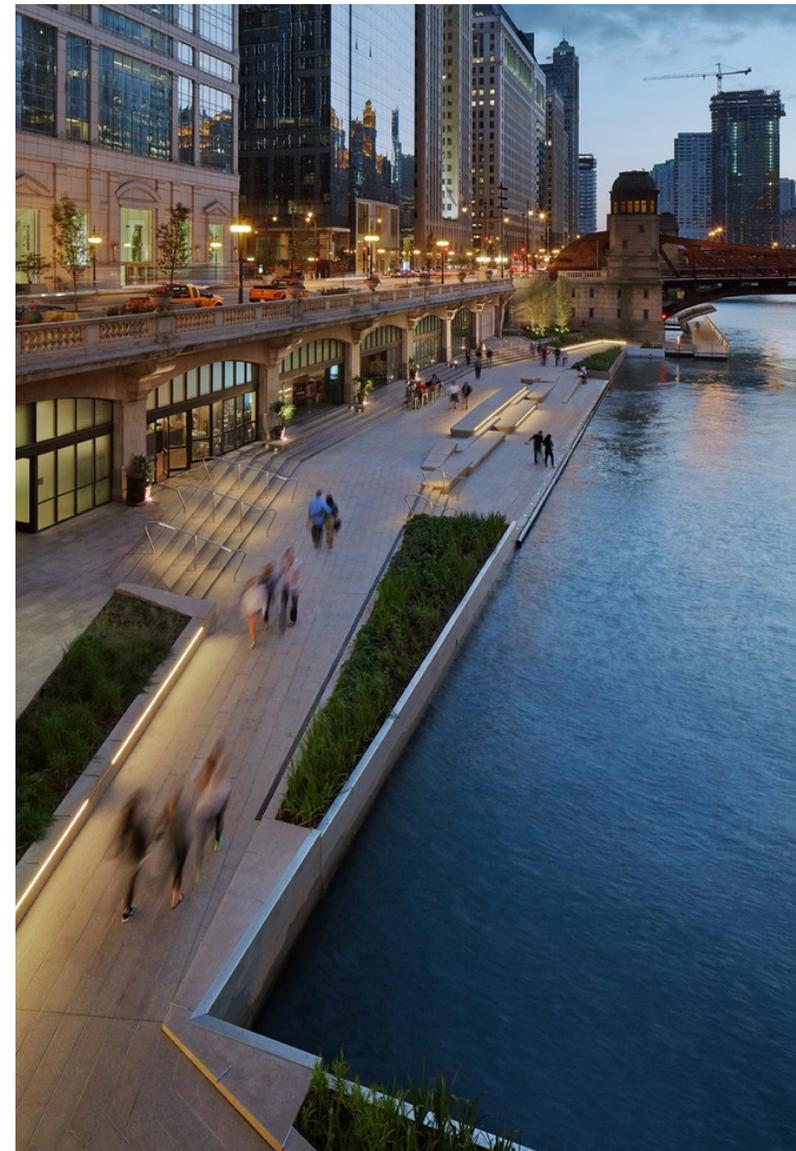


“The Main Branch of the Chicago River has a long and storied history that in many ways mirrors the development of Chicago itself. Once a meandering marshy stream, the river first became an engineered channel to support the industrial transformation of the city.” -Chicago DOT

CASE STUDY: CHICAGO RIVER WALK *CHICAGO, IL*



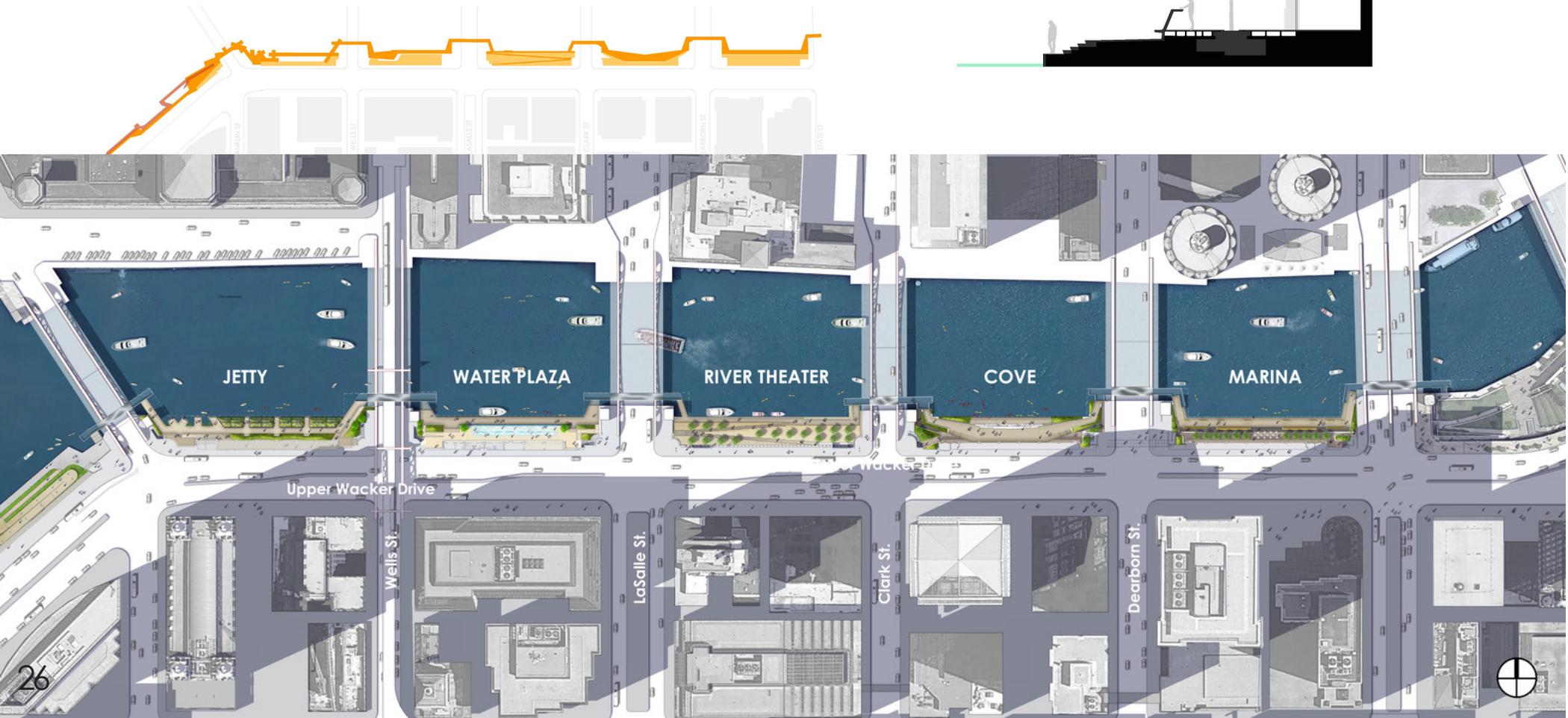
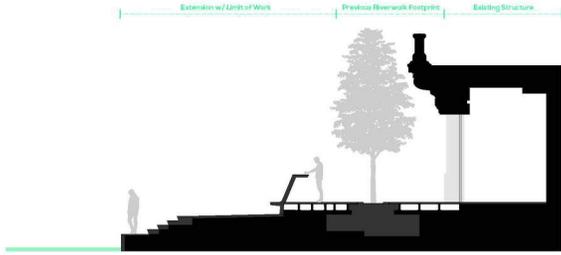
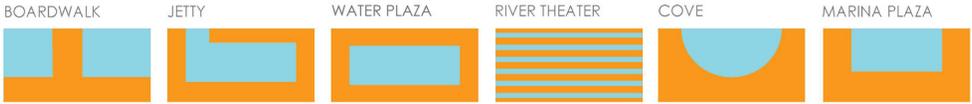
As opposed to the city of Chicago being built around the river as a definite border, the project architects involved brought the river through the border. Since reversal of the flow direction of the river for industrialization purposes, the purpose for this connection to reversing people in favor of the river experience. These elements make this walk through downtown Chicago one of the most scenic.



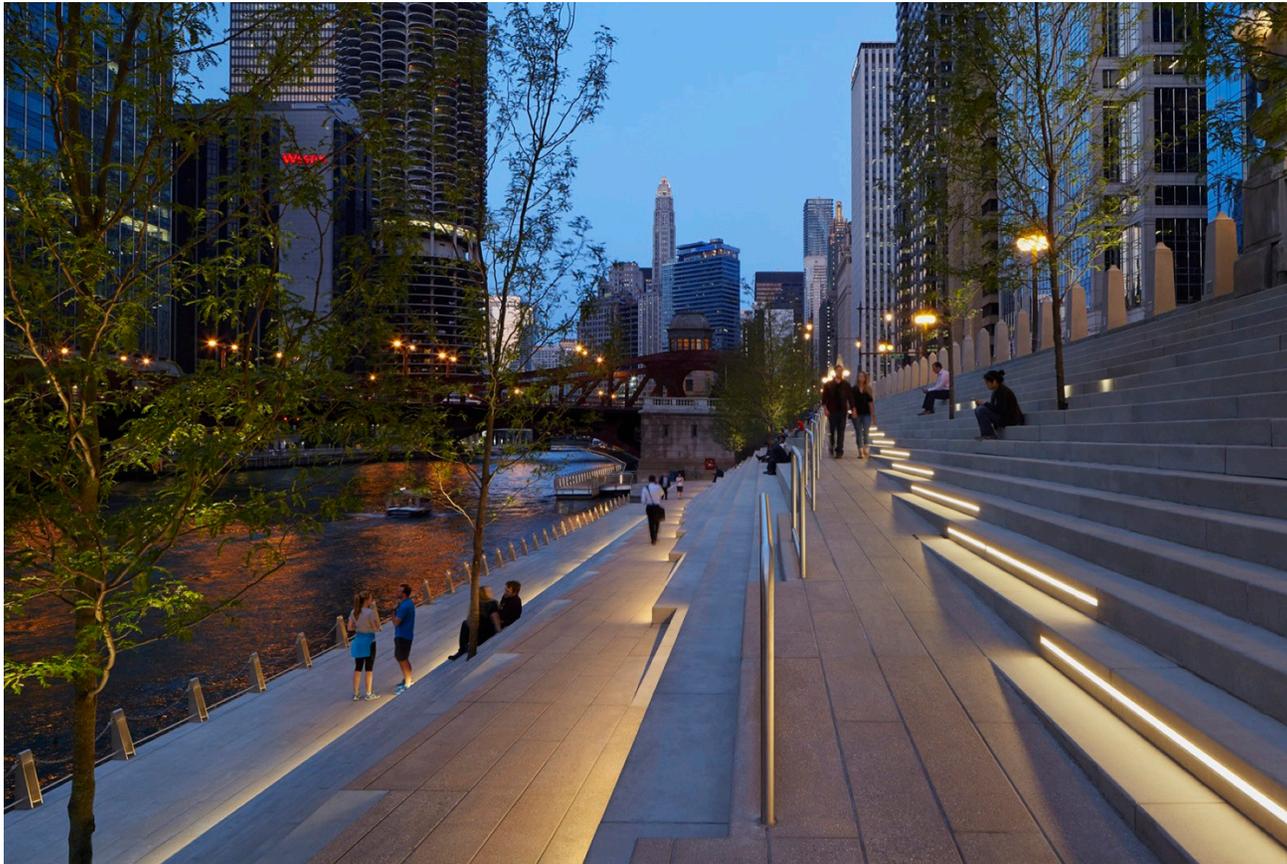
CASE STUDY: CHICAGO RIVER WALK

CHICAGO, IL

CHICAGO RIVERWALK CONCEPT TYPOLOGIES



CASE STUDY: CHICAGO RIVER WALK *CHICAGO, IL*



I included this case study in relation to my thesis research because the CHICAGO RIVER WALK has always been a busy path through Midwestern America's largest city. There are many different things to do along the way on your way to and from work, or just on a weekend stroll.

CASE STUDY: RIBBONS

SAN FRANCISCO, CA



Ribbons is described as a “landscape structure” which tends to raise some confusion whether or not it would be workable through architecture or landscape architecture as the primary discipline.

CASE STUDY: RIBBONS

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

"The courtyard design transforms the classical symmetry of the 1932 Arthur Brown building, by inserting a sculptural matrix of paving, seating, fountains and planting into the building's 20,000 sq. ft. courtyard."

-Cliff Garden Studio



CASE STUDY: RIBBONS

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

In the original plan from 1932, there was set to be two identical fountains at separate ends of the plaza. The design team was able to use that idea to make two identical granite fountains on either side.

“These sculptures made of recycled and cast concrete give the impression that the horizontal surface has been lifted to create a three dimensional interwoven form and create points of rest in the courtyard's circulation system.”

-Cliff Garden Studios



CASE STUDY: RIBBONS

SAN FRANCISCO, CA



I included this case study in relation to my thesis research because its use of impromptu seating, and vast vegetation across the whole site.

CASE STUDY: USAQUÉN URBAN WETLAND

BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA



-Usaquén Urban Wetland is an urban winning design installment for a competition for the front plaza of the Santa Barbara business center.

CASE STUDY: USAQUÉN URBAN WETLAND

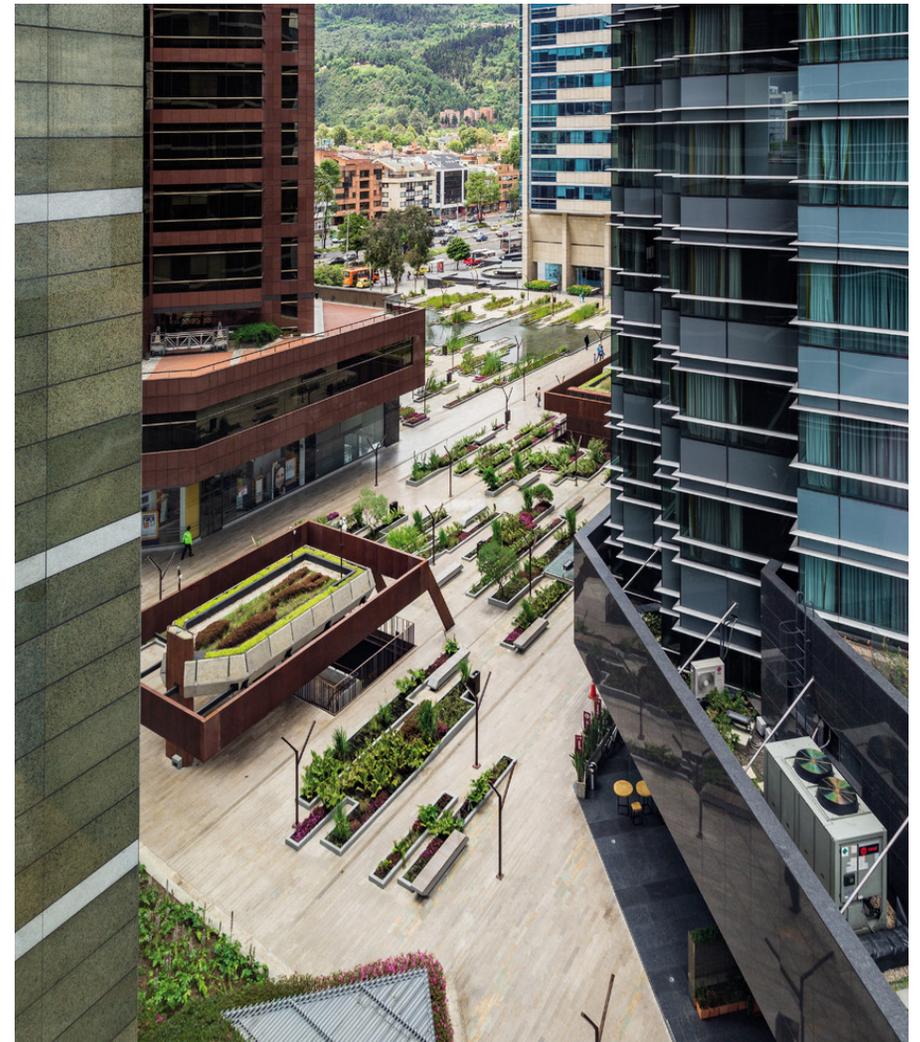
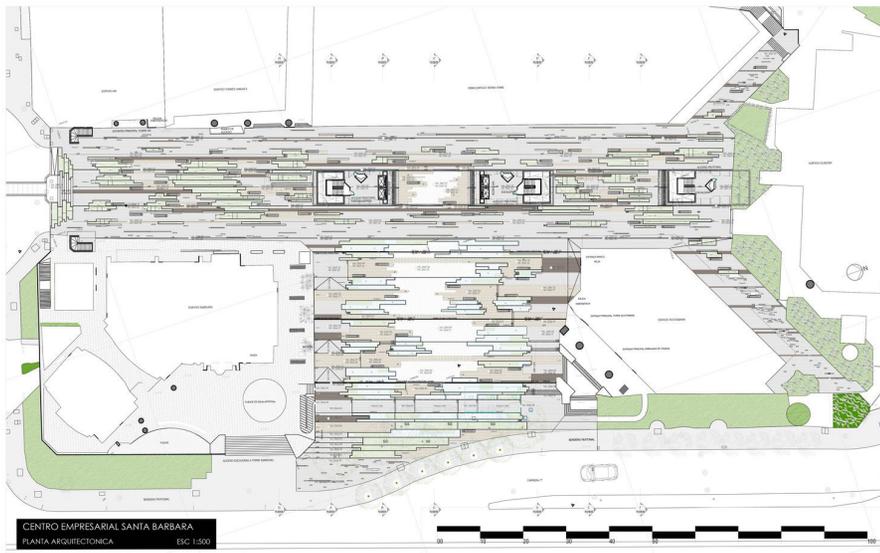
BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

-8,500 S.F.

-Includes free-growing landscape elements

-Uses recycled rain water from all areas of plaza

-Uses refurbished stair and elevator elements to access parking garage below.

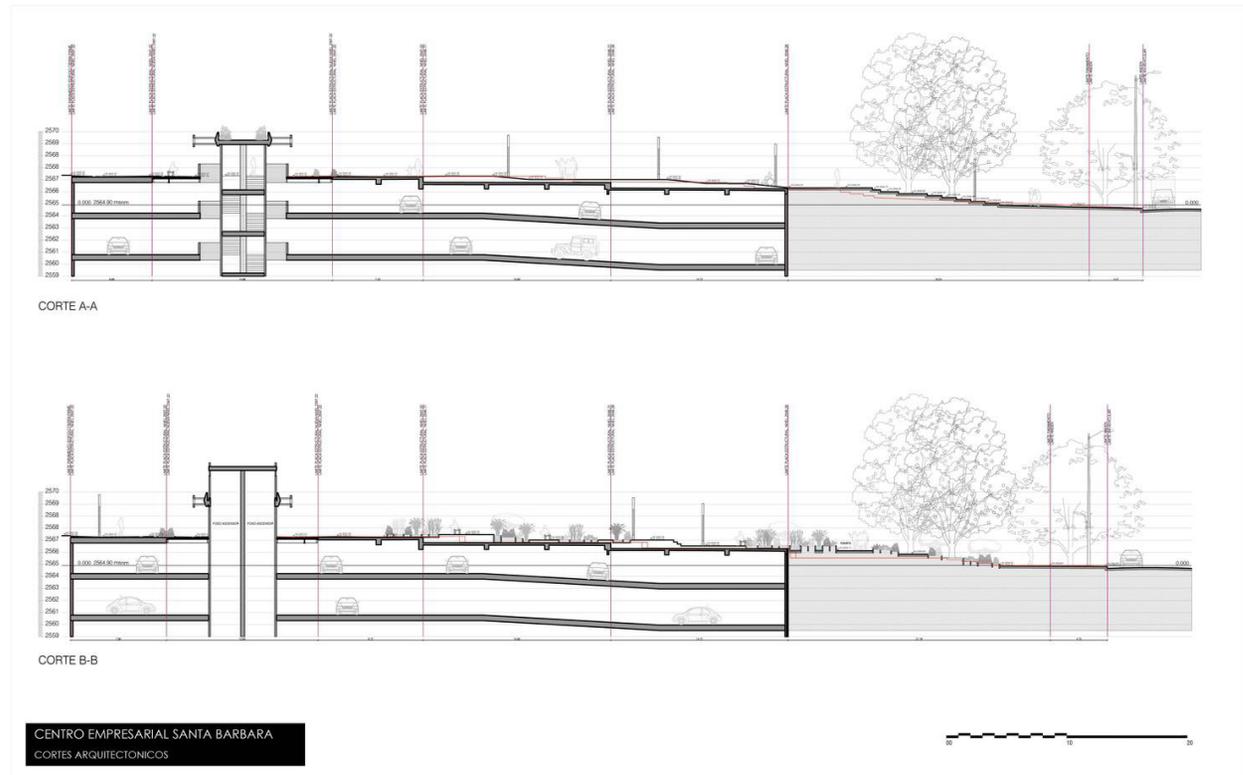


CASE STUDY: USAQUÉN URBAN WETLAND

BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

The team had done an impeccable job of bringing an organic flow of re-used elements to mask the parking structure below.

From Obraestudio: *“The pre-existing, dividing void of the parking lots is replaced by a linear park teeming with sinuous trails interspersed with lush native vegetation, water and gravel to inspire slow and meditative walks. Despite the seemingly wild, natural and free-form aspects of the urban design components, a clear, rationalized structure and construction style underlies this vastly spatial composition.”*



CASE STUDY: USAQUÉN URBAN WETLAND

BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA



I included this case study in relation to my thesis because of its expansive use of natural materials that bring about a new life to the business center plaza.

CASE STUDY: ONE CITY DEVELOPMENT

WUHAN SHI, CHINA



“Capital of Central province of Hubei, and the setting for the One City development project by Gemdale, with public domain design by Stephen Buckle and the team at ASPECT Studios Shanghai”

CASE STUDY: ONE CITY DEVELOPMENT

WUHAN SHI, CHINA



Inspired by a bird in flight, its feathers spread amongst the sky. Taking attributes of the phoenix the project is meant to unify the public.



CASE STUDY: ONE CITY DEVELOPMENT

WUHAN SHI, CHINA

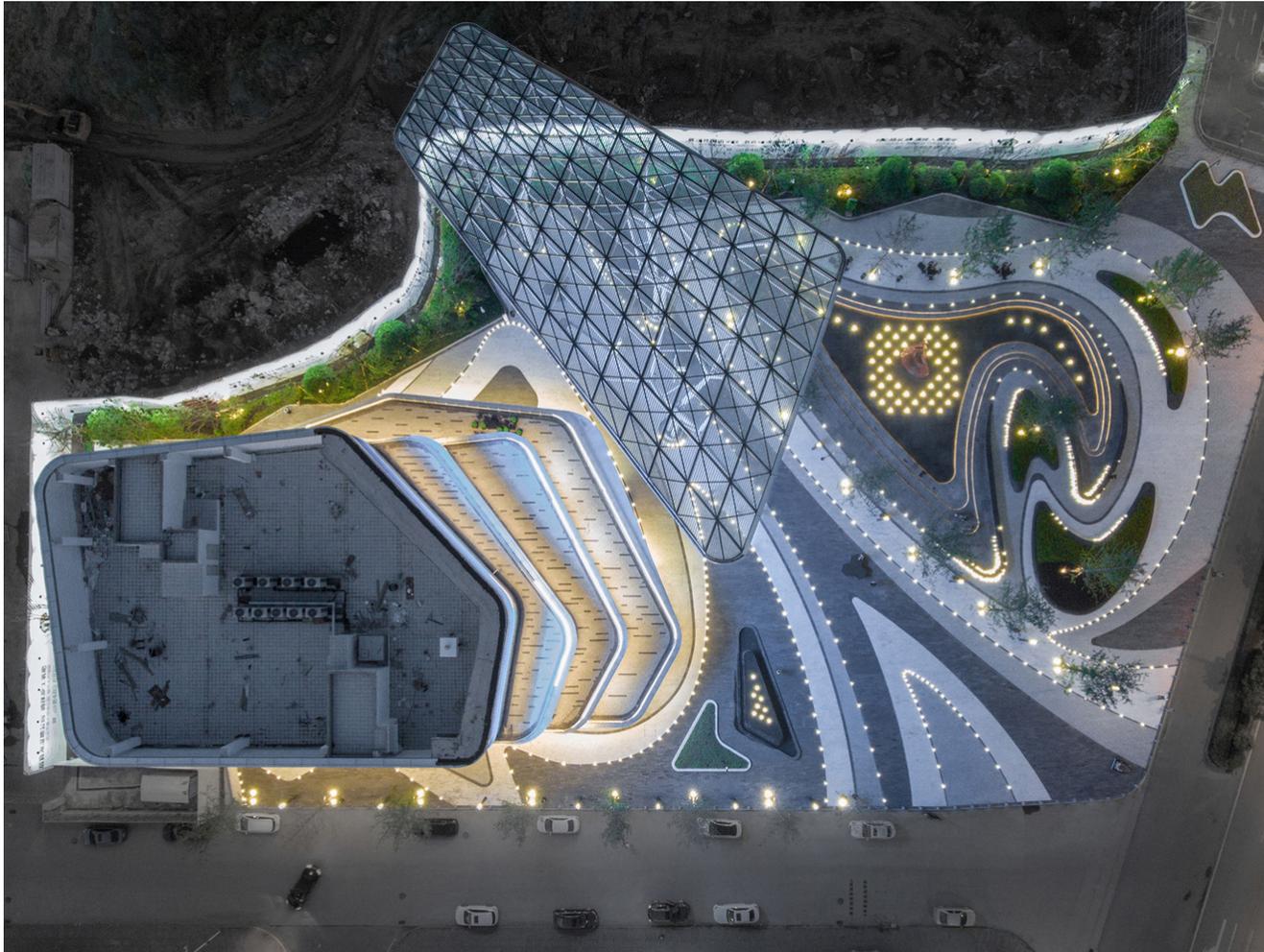
From Aspect Studios:

“Grand and inspiring, humanistic and engaging. It’s a landscape of many facets, scales and experiences, each contributing to a dynamic new public domain. The careful selection of native trees and shrubs will bring a seasonal dimension to the design, as the spaces take on different characters through the year,” says, Stephen Buckle, Studio Director ASPECT Studios Shanghai.”



CASE STUDY: ONE CITY DEVELOPMENT

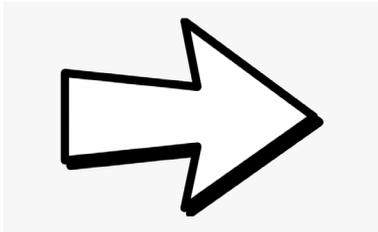
WUHAN SHI, CHINA



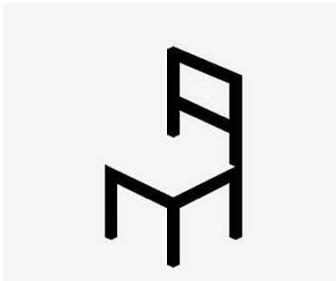
I included this case study in relation to my thesis research because its use of “PATH”. The way inhabitants are forced to walk around the site in a curved line encourages more contemplation and time in the site to interact with other inhabitants.

MAJOR PROJECT ELEMENTS

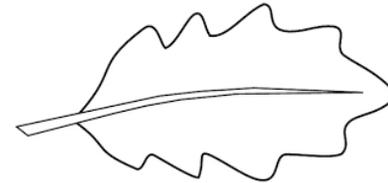
PATHS: The use of path will be crucial in the interaction of the site, the way one may stop and look around, look in a different direction than just forward, or intersect with others are all major elements in my urban design project.



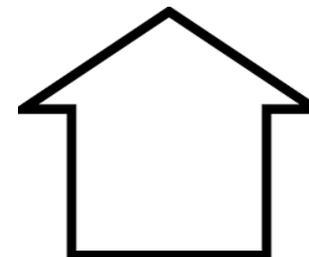
SEATING: In many successful urban design spaces, the use of impromptu seating can show how successful an urban space is.



LANDSCAPE: Natural elements such as vegetation, water, geological substances (rocks and dirt) are important because they offer a softness and inviting element to the project. People want to be in a space that feels just as alive as they are.



INSIDE OUTSIDE SPACE: The ability to offer some form of shelter from the elements will be crucial especially in the mid-west area that I will be basing this project from.



MAJOR PROJECT ELEMENTS

ACTIVITIES:



USER CLIENT DESCRIPTION

Typical architecture projects usually have some sort demographic target for building users. With this project being a public urban design project, there is no set age, condition, or demographic that will be targeted for this design. I will aim to target as many people as I can because of the ability to use it from everybody. What I mean by "target" in my project actually means individual I hope to inspire or take away something positive from visiting the site. The age of people will be assessed based on what they are doing and who they are but does not limit them to anything. Below are a list of the ages that are separated by use, and follow by activities that are possible on the right.

BREAKDOWN BY AGE:

Young Children: ages 3-10 (With a guardian)

Children-Teenager: ages 11-17

Young Adults-Adults: ages 18+

Retirees

Groups (mix of any of the above)

USER CLIENT DESCRIPTION POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

ACTIVITY BREAKDOWN

-Passerby: Highest during “rush hour” time where people are trying to get to work, or get home from work. Those that pass through the site at these times will have the lowest desire to stay at the site.

-Stop and view or sit: The ones that I am trying to persuade to think differently. Users that are passing through that take a minute out of their day to look around. The unintentional meeting place for others, the awe-inspiring or thought provoking experience that I hope to give somebody.

-Seek out space for activity (ex. read a book): The one seeking solace or comfort in a place. Unfortunately the least social but also may be the most important. Showing that a space can inhabit calmness from others also makes others respect the space.

-Meeting Place/Landmark: These would be the most social at the site. Your sense of privacy evades when you are openly waiting for somebody to spot you and interact with you at a given spot. This would be an occasion where friends would say, “Lets meet at the _____!”

-Eat/Drink: May be the most comfortable at the site. One that finds it cleanly enough and welcoming enough to sit and have a quick meal or snack. Or one that would feel inclined to order an adult beverage (given city liquor laws permit drinking an alcoholic beverage in public for events).

STAFF DESCRIPTION AND SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS

POSITION BREAKDOWN FOR POTENTIAL STAFF

-GARDENERS:

People who are adept in ecological and landscape elements specifically expertise or preference of botany. These people would be needed mostly in the Spring, Summer, Fall seasons for up-keeping and installation of annual planting.

-TRASH/CLEANERS:

Though this would not be ideal, we would need people employed to keep the site tidy because unfortunately the tragedy of the commons is still a real downfall of the public today.

-REPRESENTATIVE:

Through the parks district specific to the city which this project will reside, there would be a representative for local parks to manage the above employees, schedule events, schedule cleaning, possibly even advertise the installation of the project. In the case of a privately operated plaza, the use of an appointed representative is important to be in charge of the above decisions.

PHYSICAL SITE REQUIREMENTS

PHYSICAL ELEMENTS IMPORTANT TO THE SITE

-PLANTERS:

The ability to bring nature in an urban area is something that is very sought after when people want to develop areas. The use of grasses and trees often include in points to certain ecological certifications as well.

-SEATING:

In any urban area, the way to offer a place for people to stay longer than just a walk through is the use of seating. Whether its temporary seating, intentional seating, or unintentional seating, people will find a way to stay and sit if they want to.

-PATHS:

The ability to traverse a site is important especially in any urban design project due to its intentional usages for the public. Often times people visit parks or urban areas to walk or to escape urbanity, and the ability to walk and not be blocked by a dead end can be an effective way to gain more flow through the site.

SITE UPKEEP AND SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS

Through the progressive use and wear on the site, there will be signs of progressive use. There may be trash left there by civilians of the city or there even could be animal droppings there from pets. The unpredictable possibilities are really endless. The parks districts of certain cities are very proactive when cleaning a site day to day in most public urban plazas unless there are special cases. With private urban plazas, the owners of the areas are more inventive when providing upkeep due to it directly being tied to their business image. The botanists will also need to keep a close eye on the sites landscape elements especially in the early stages of the project. The initial stage of a plants life can be the most important to its future life.

OTHER SITE REQUIREMENTS

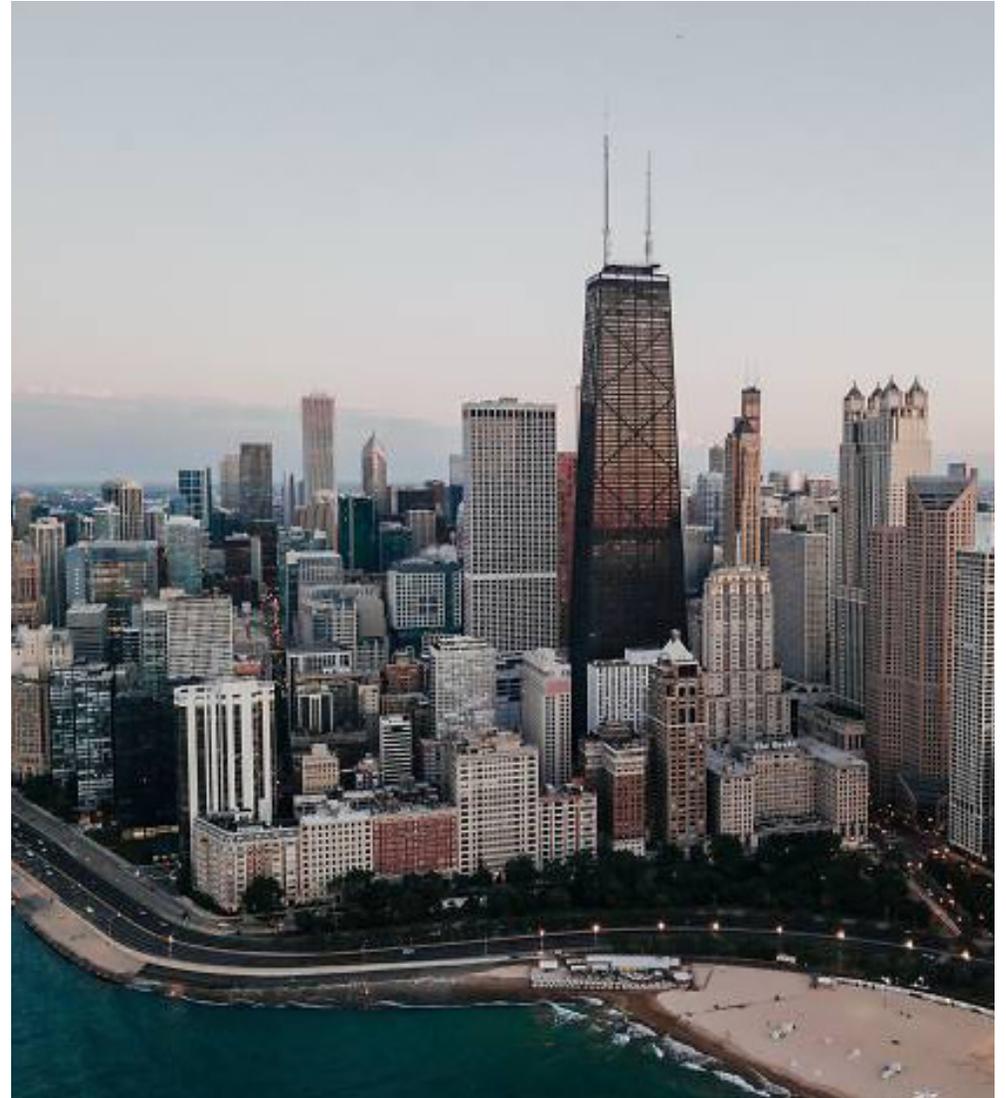
The site will require some **material** requirements due to it being a public project that's goal is to include many different types of inhabitants. Keeping with the mindset aiming provide an urban fabric for people, clean terrain and surfaces that provide easy travel and interaction is important to keep in mind when proceeding with form decisions. The attractiveness and warmness are also feelings that are often discussed when people talk about successful urban design projects. I have found, up to this point, that it is important to keep these things in mind when observing project examples.

THE SITE REGION AND CITY

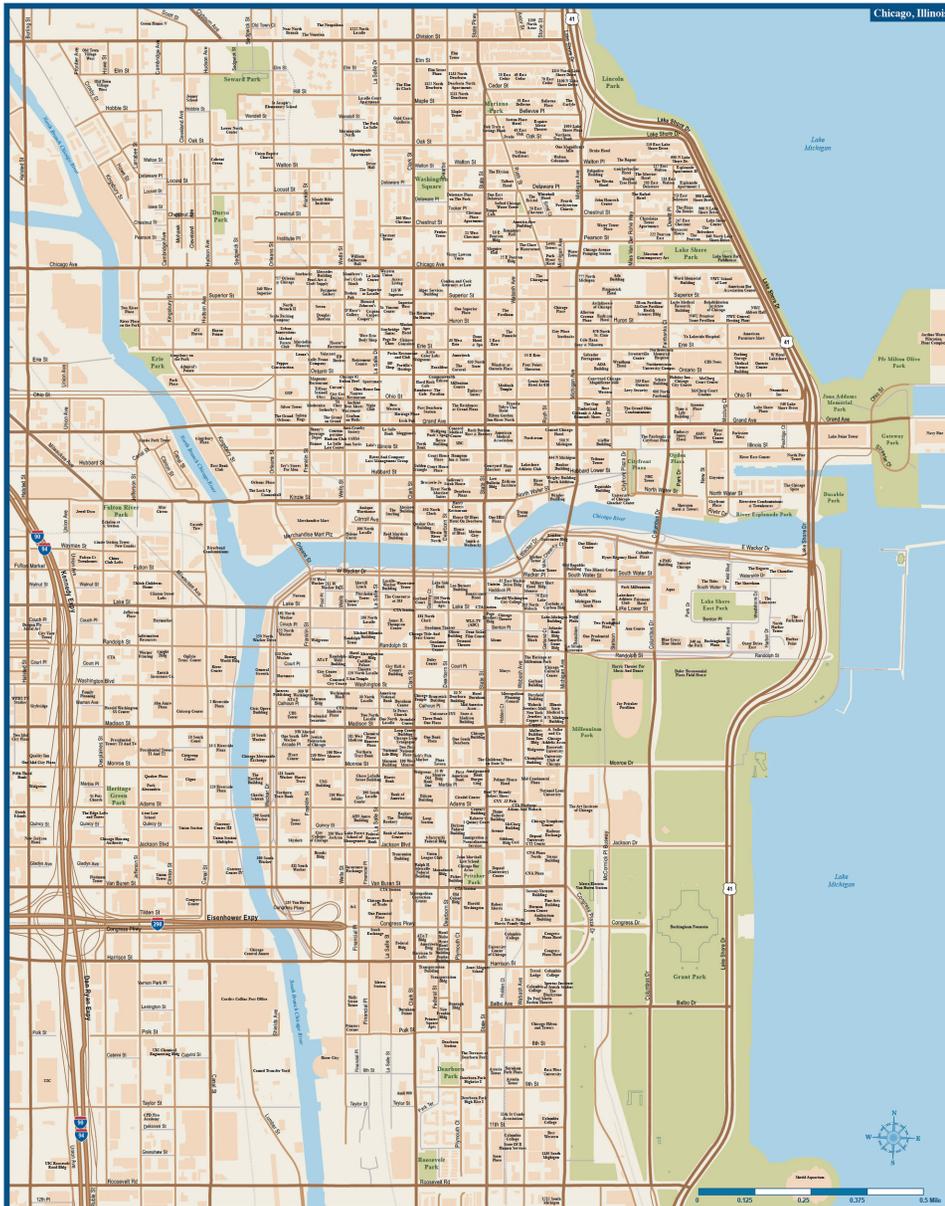
Chicago, IL

Chicago is located in the north east region of Illinois and butts up against Lake Michigan. A modern American city full of innovators, athletes, and people who take pride in the area they live.

Ranging from business, service industry, tourism, and entertainment, Chicago is full of people that offer many different stories that I will be looking forward to hearing.



THE SITE REGION AND CITY



City of Chicago road mapping

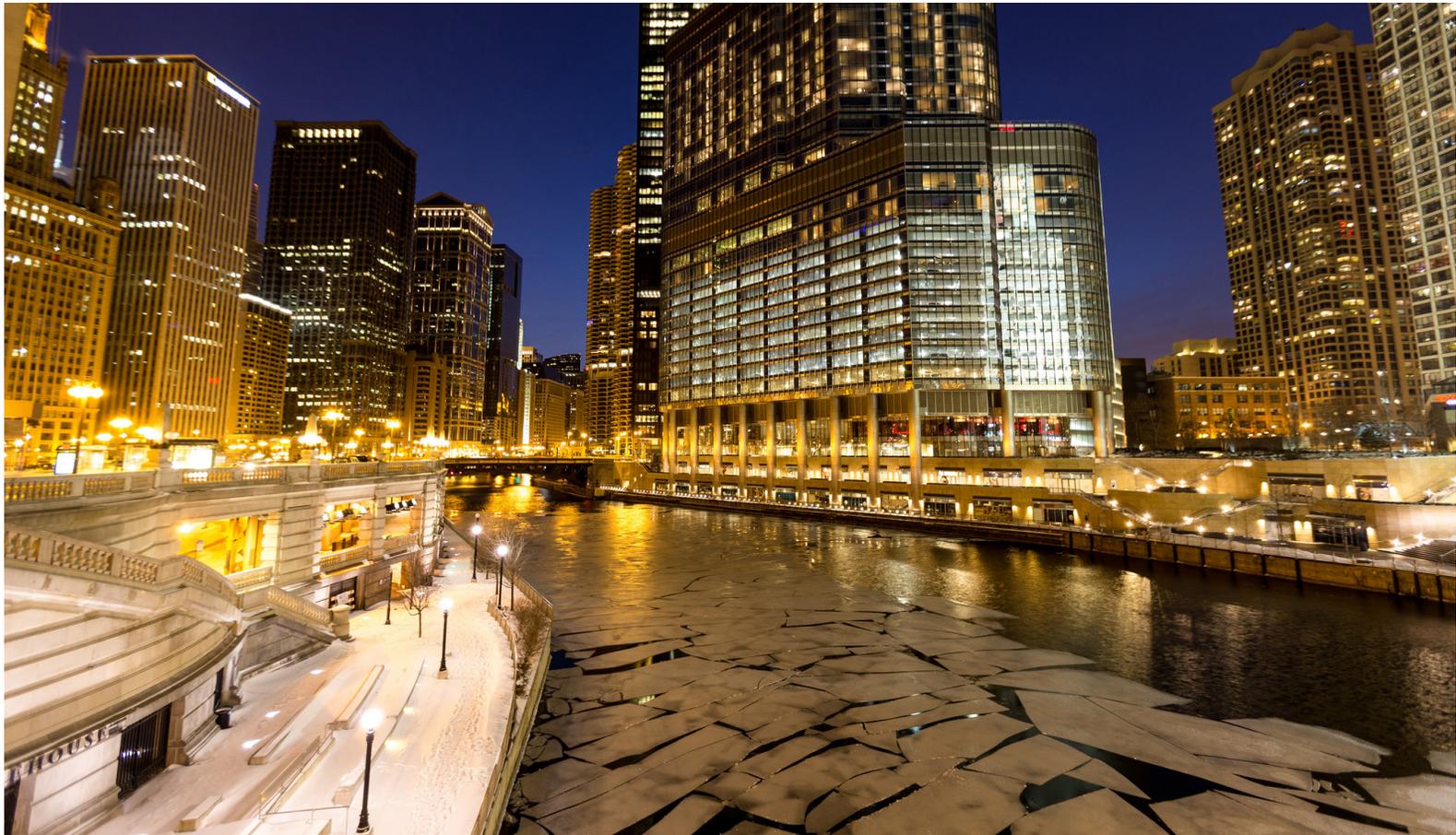
THE SITE SPORTING

Chicago is home to many professional sports teams. Being no major contending collegiate sports, fans have many options as far as who they would like to side behind locally. The Cubs and the White Sox are two commendable MLB teams. The Bears are usually NFC North Contenders in the NFL. In the winter, you also have the option to watch the Bulls in the NBA or the Blackhawks in the NHL. Each of which have had many championship winning teams.



THE SITE SITE LOCATION

My site will be located in the downtown region of Chicago, more specifically north of the Loop train system. That area has been chosen due to its largely business influenced patrons and entertainment.



PROJECT EMPHASIS

Theoretical Premise:

The use of architecture can promote connection and sharing of ideas between its inhabitants and the city itself.

Theoretical Questions:

How can one simulate an interaction based on physical elements alone?

What importance does the site have as opposed to another for this project?

How would somebody theoretically track successfulness of the project?

Project Capability:

In a non theoretical research setting, I will make this project as build-able as possible. In the real world this would most likely be a public fund raised project. That would most likely have to include a grant or some form of donation process.

PROJECT EMPHASIS

How can one simulate an interaction based on physical elements alone?

Real world simulation for this project may have to be done in a controlled experimental setting, or be simulated by observational research in an existing real world project.

What importance does the site have as opposed to another for this project?

The site located on the Main street of downtown Bozeman is important because of its existing mysticism and evident culture overall. Ideally the finished product however could be implemented in multiple cities with some modifications. Leaving the location of this project rather open.

How would somebody theoretically track successfulness of the project?

If this was built at the end of this process and somebody would like to track its success, there would have to be somebody who would keep track of public use by person, activity, and time use. This would be an observational process that would need to take place for about a year long.

GOALS OF THE THESIS

Physical Goals:

1. Design an urban plaza, or intermediary space located in the public and accessible by anybody.
2. Consult with Landscape architect the important types of foliage and how they would have to be maintained throughout the projects potential life cycle.

Theoretical Goals:

1. Give character to an existing urban fabric.
2. Have people stop unintentionally at the site to think and observe our current built environments.

GOALS OF THE THESIS

Social Goals:

1. Create an environment that would influence connection and sharing of ideas between people.
2. Create a site that people want to go to, meet at, or talk about.

Personal Goals:

1. Plan out my weeks meal structure day by day.
2. Continue to practice and get better at playing the guitar.
3. Advance to the next chapter in my life after graduating this spring.

A PLAN FOR PROCEEDING

Theoretical Premise:

Going forward, it will be important for me to get more specific with my premise overall. This will include in depth research to back said premise.

Project Typology

Urban Design as a project typology is under a very broad umbrella. I will be able to use that to my advantage however going forward to have much more freedom to have more fluidity in my design.

Historical Context

Understanding more in depth the rich history of Bozeman will better help me connect this project too the community for which it will reside.

Site Analysis:

I have been to this area a handful of times. It is the city in which I was born. I would need to revisit the specific site however to find a better way to tackle the ongoing differences and how it acts day to day.

A PLAN FOR PROCEEDING

Further Research

It will be important for me to visit the site and do as much research to the area that I can. I find that finding case studies closely relating to my project are also very beneficial in idea inspiration as well as what works and what doesn't.

Continued Reading:

Mask of Medusa- Hejduk

Fall of the Public Man- Sennett

Fictional Cities- Livesey

I have found that these readings (along with many more) have all had theoretical and specific ideas that are very influential in designing my project in the upcoming months.

Critique:

I have found that my greatest critics are my classmates, my peers. I take their questions and ideas close to heart and communicate my ideas best with them. It has been very beneficial to seek them out for project advise.

RESEARCH RESULTS

METHODS: LITERARY REVIEW

The research that I have conducted over the last few months has been heavily urban design related. The specifics of which are based on criticism, historical context, and observations on other successful projects. The findings of my research have been related to hypothesis I have made prior to this point and comparing them to what others have done before me. In this section I will begin by summarizing my literary analysis on works from John Hejduk, Hans Gadamer, Richard Sennett, and many other architects and philosophers as well.

I began the semester by reading **Fall of the Public Man by Richard Sennett.**

The vision of public domain has been abandoned. The environment that we built around us is no longer a sufficient medium for our us to use as public human beings. This has been because of a digression of thousands of years of public activity. In the modern era we live in today, we see more of a public domain in the multi-use office buildings that a majority of us operate in. The people that operate inside of them are forced to think of themselves as “in public” even if they are just in the elevator on their way to work. This unfortunately is a majority of the public activity that most people endure anymore.

Most people think of the street level as dead space. This is mostly because of its attachment to the street. Richard Sennett describes this space on the ground level as only being a passage to other levels in buildings where in the past, the streets flourished with activity and conversation.

RESEARCH RESULTS

METHODS: LITERARY REVIEW

“One does not use one’s car to see the city; the automobile is not a vehicle for touring today.” Another valid quote from Sennett shortly thereafter states, “...we experience an ease of motion unknowingly to any prior urban civilization, and yet motion has become the most anxiety-laden of daily activities.” Stating that the most stressful part of our day could be our morning and nightly commute. He has the same views about open office floor plans of the 21st century. “We make these open office plans for the inverse of their intent is why they are successful.” The original intent being that we work cohesively and together face to face and move around the office. Sennett argues however that the vision to see people makes us gossip in secret. People have an eye on everybody which makes them work diligently at their spot. Silence becomes ones only form of protection.

This is a brief analysis of the first part of *The Fall of the Public Man*. In an attempt to make man more public, Sennett uses criticism to compare areas of weakness in making man more public. Showing the importance of making man public again and providing evidence is something Sennett does effectively. Establishing a good base to broaden my knowledge of my topic was a necessity at this point and this book is very digestible and relate-able to what I’m trying to accomplish with my thesis project.

RESEARCH RESULTS

METHODS: LITERARY REVIEW

The next step for my research was to bring things deeper into the meaning of architecture. This was made possible thanks to many readings and analyzing works from **John Hejduk**. From **Mask of Medusa**;

“The imperative of efficient technological control has isolated the architect from the act of making.” A quote from Alberto within its theme is transposed throughout this reading. He states that the masques from Hejduk can be seen as a criticism of all evils because it improvises the emotional eloquence of urban environments. Very much like how Graham Livesy describes in fictional cities with the idea of background as a built world or a canvas and narrative or what actually happens in the city. Hejduk however emphasizes the narrative. He argues that these works are constructed as built environment of the “in-between” world. These works are the space between the Mask and the face, hence the name “Mask of Medusa”. This space is the difference between built and what is real. The in-between of reality and what is imaginary.

The *Mask of Medusa* was a collection of literary language meant to lead the viewer to a greater comprehension of the citizen's role in the creation of community. The use of models, sketches, and plans were also used to demonstrate interaction with people and their environment. Some of which were for certain projects or for competitions.

RESEARCH RESULTS

METHODS: LITERARY REVIEW

The entry for the 1984 Prinz-Albert-Palais competition in Berlin for the construction of a memorial park. The site of intervention is a former Gestapo headquarter adjoining the Berlin Wall, which contained a torture chamber employed during WWII. He titled the project Victims because he did not entirely wish to demolish the site to show its importance to its past.

The whole project is described by Hejduk as “a construction of time” with some of the structures literally embodying the subject of the passing of time like the clock turntable, the pendulum and the cantilevered hourglass. The plan presented for the competition is just one of the possible configurations among a large range of variables. Each structure, in fact, is not fixed in a single position, but can be contacted at three points becoming part of “a sort of pointal-connective tissue floating within a nature-grid”.

The Lancaster Hanover masque located in Pennsylvania begins by listing subjects. Places like the “Hotel” and the Sentinels, things that we can put our own images to in our minds. These are the objects that Hejduk relates to us by use of LITERARY LANGUAGE. “Although it’s possible to directly connect some of the drawings to their associated characters, for the most part this is an involved process,” according to Zubin in his own findings in “Inoculations” on how he dissected the masques. It also bears mentioning that there is no comprehensive site plan for this masque from which to determine the overall layout of the project and the relation of the various elements to one another. This again emphasizes the meaning of the prior knowledge of these events described by language.

RESEARCH RESULTS

METHODS: LITERARY REVIEW

The imagery is created in a poetic manner because it uses characters with purpose and a list of times that chronologically relates the subjects to its characters. This list of events is followed by scene sketches of these events. This is what makes this successful. It's as if we are walking in the Masque seeing people and being able to listen in on each conversation, each scenario, and everybody's doings. These Masques are meant to lead the viewer to a greater comprehension of the citizen's role in the creation of community.

'6:30AM to 6:30PM'

Events ranging from the specific and mundane

"The Summer Visitor holds up her mirror (1)... The Bargeman pulls in the rope (2)... The Transient sits on the edge of the bed (3)..."

To the deep and unseen...

"Lies are sealed (36)... Quiet (44)... Suspended (46)... Hollow guilt (58)..."

RESEARCH RESULTS

METHODS: EXPERIMENTATION

PERSONAL EXPERIMENT

Going back to my initial criticism, even I tend to find myself shying away from somebody walking by. Making visible subconscious body language signs that I will not be saying hi to somebody. If I'm at a restaurant or a bar, I tend to find myself more attentive to surface level conversation with group I'm with or waiting on my cell phone rather than even saying hi to or acknowledging other patrons or looking out the window.

I had time to perform my own social experiment by walking home from where I work in the mornings. The walk is approximately 1 and ¼ mile. I walk past a bridge into Moorhead, downtown Broadway, a public library and the main post office, as well as the college campus for Klai and Barry Hall. During this time, I found my most of this leisurely walk to be spent finding good ways to cross the street, walking in a straight line, looking to where I'm going, and mostly avoiding crossing paths with another person, or pedalist. I had made this walk three times with only minor alterations of my route and each time I felt in tune with where I was at but still had no urge to stop or leave the sidewalk. After doing all of these readings criticizing people that don't involve themselves with others in public, I still have done all of the things that I had criticized in my prior discussion.

RESEARCH RESULTS

METHODS: FILM REVIEW

SOCIAL LIFE OF SMALL URBAN PLACES

In 1980 William Wyte had made a documentary called "Social Life of Small Urban Places". This documentary started a revolution in urban design during that decade. It's study on New York plazas. For years, he studied and documented why urban areas worked, or did not work based on real life examples.

It showed that spaces that made our urban fabric more livable, executed public interaction. This will be vital for me in the next phase of the project to observe as well, not only in these successful plazas but other not so successful sites. What could make them better? Is there a way they can be saved? At what cost?



PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Why is the project that you have defined important to you as a person (your personal reasons)?

Well designed Urban Design projects in my own personal experience can really shape the way that I have viewed a city. A clean well kept urban fabric will make me view a city in a positive light. Spaces that give me the ability to walk through, stop and eat lunch outdoors, or sit and work on homework or sketch something have really made parts of Fargo and other cities really stick out to me and make an impact that I will take with me when visiting/comparing another city.

Why is it important for you to do this project at this stage of your academic development?

At this stage in my academic development, I have been able to produce many built works that focus on social and economic issues. Some projects have solved problems for a specific group, some projects have served a specific purpose for business. This more centric design style has been efficient for me as a designer yet I have been able to shut out the rest of the world/community when building one project. With my prior statement of personal purpose for this project, I think it is important to design more sociologically. The way my built project will affect the world around me is something I haven't been able to do in my academic career.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Why is it important to do this project at this stage of your professional development?

For my own professional development, I also have not had the opportunity to design for a public indoor/outdoor public focused project. This project will be important to have in my portfolio because I have always been interested in large scale urban design, city planning, and other development projects. I have had the opportunity to work on some semi-controversial projects in Fargo, but nothing where it was largely my responsibility.

How is the project going to add to your knowledge base?

This project will add a lot of depth to my knowledge base because it will force me to research many different disciplines that all view public building, human interaction, and perception. My prior knowledge base to research methods previously was very surface level. This project will make me ask the question “why” more and more.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

How is the project going to add to your set of skills?

My set of skills prior to this project, like my previous knowledge base was more surface level. The overall design skills are going to grow immensely in a theoretical manner. Idea exploration is going to expand to different routes that haven't been imagined before.

Why is doing the project important for the profession at this time?

We as a society are at a make or break point when we are looking at public interaction. We have shifted to a more of a sedentary lifestyle where ease in motion has become our most important stance when building and designing. I personally believe that we need to shift away from our current sense of public to be looked at as social media, or online forms of communication, where it should be viewed more as face to face with people in the public realm. The profession needs to do a better job at taking action and designing for the public.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Why is the project important as an academic exercise at this time?

The project is important for academic exercise at this time because it deepens my understanding of the human mind. It has greatly improved my ability to think and changed the way I go about projects.

How can you justify the project economically?

There are one of two ways this project could be justified economically:

A publicly funded urban project that would use an open lot or a space already owned by the city and completely revamp it to change its use and make it known to the public that we have used their tax dollars to something to give back to them.

A private urban plaza. Businesses and landowners have the ability to alter the area in which they own (of course code restricted, yes) and can develop them how they seem fit. Money budgeted to improving their urban context will show a great return from the public when somebody would pass by.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

How can you justify spending the funds to implement the project?

I would best prove the use of this project as a connection between the people and the city in which they live in. How people interact in a city is how they usually view the city as a whole. Positive light on a city will gain more business, make more people want to live their, and give overall return to the civilians in which inhabit it.

Where might the funds come from for your project and are the sources justified?

A publicly funded urban project that would use an open lot or a space already owned by the city and completely revamp it to change its use and make it known to the public that we have used their tax dollars to something to give back to them.

A private urban plaza. Businesses and landowners have the ability to alter the area in which they own (of course code restricted, yes) and can develop them how they seem fit. Money budgeted to improving their urban context will show a great return from the public when somebody would pass by.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Is your project justified based on a return on investment?

This project is based on a return on investment, like all projects, just in a different way than an ROI from a business plan. The return is greater than just a dollar sign. Community involvement, relationships, sharing of Ideas etc. There are so many ways that public parks, plazas, interactive public installments all give back to the community and in return, the community will usually give back to the public. I believe that the project is successful based on the outcome of its inhabitants.

What would be the environmental impacts of your project?

The environmental impact of the project can be observed by immersing oneself in the community it creates. The way the project aims to have environmental impact is based on a living organism that is a public community. It either lives or it dies, there are times where an urban environment thrives with people and operates like a lung of breathing in and out of people. There are mountains and caverns of highs and lows in urbanism and the goal is to maintain the balance between the two.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Why is the project important to be implemented in its social context?

The project is probably most important to a social context because we have lost what it means to be social anymore. For my generation, the idea of being social could be viewed as how many followers you have, or how many people know who you are. Social constructs have been very twisted and distorted over time and it's up to us to face this sedentary online form of social public that we live in and bring it back to shaking hands and using one's actual voice.

The goals overall for the project socially, if it were explained in a regression to simplicity, would be to provide an urban environment to overall influence interaction and relationships to proceed and aid in personal meaning. The way that we are able to remember certain physical places in our lives history that have provided positive (or negative) experiences are ways that make a space worth remembering.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Why is the project important to be implemented in its cultural context?

Cultural importance is important because of how new generations are viewed. These generations are going to be the ones making changes and speaking for nations some day. It is culturally important for us to promote healthy active lifestyles and get people out into the public to see their neighbor or make somebody's day by complimenting them. There are many different ways that an urban design project could be culturally important.

How is the project justified in its chosen site location?

Chicago is a Midwest metropolis that intertwines many different people from many different upbringings. This intertwining of these people has given many good things to the city of Chicago as well as many bad things. Crime rates are very high, public safety is very low. Building something that promotes a positive urban context for its users is something that will hopefully make them view their civilians differently.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT



Central business district, pre-1871 fire

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

CHICAGO

The 1871 a fire broke out destroying most of Chicago's central business district. 300 people were found dead and 300,000 were left homeless. This is known as one of the largest urban fire catastrophes in our countries history. Despite the destruction, the rehabilitation of the city made it grow exponentially. Chicago shortly thereafter became the Midwestern railway center, alluding to the real reason Chicago was able to grow in the first place.

Post world war one, there was a large influx of many different races of people moving to Chicago. This lead to sub-urbs booming around the outside of downtown from all directions. With a mix of people from different backgrounds and areas of work, an industrial boom happened in the early 20th century.

With the rise of industry in any American city, as does the rise of politics. During that time, local news press companies were started. Many politicians fought on either side of the work force and the wealthy. This is what lead to Chicago to be known as the "Windy City", not only because of its lake winds, but its political figures "blowing a lot of smoke".

SITE ANALYSIS

The overarching weather patterns for Chicago are broad and at some times, like most Midwestern cities, tend to stretch further both to the warm and cool throughout the year.



Being a Midwestern city, the area does receive some winter like months. This will be important to keep in mind going forward as well because of the need for people to be outside during those colder periods as well.



In the 18th century a Cosmopolis grew as a place where people would most likely meet in public and began to grow with one another, face to face. This is all also while being faced with the unknowing of what may loom out in the public along with other people. Interactions of the modern time periods do not influence the cosmopolite to thrive. When we don't interact day to day with people we are losing our sense of interaction as human beings. The built environment that is built for us goes underutilized. Thoughts aren't provoked and sharing of Ideas have been dismissed.

SITE ANALYSIS

Ogden Plaza located at 429 N. Columbus Dr., named after Chicago's first Mayor involves a small plaza and stepped green spaces. The sculptural floor clock was designed by a Brooklyn Artist Vito Acconci in 1940. His intent was for people would be able to sit with the numbers and interact with a minute hand that would float radially around the site, which no longer exists. Many people review the park as small and old. From the pictures I've seen, it seems poorly kept and yet is still in the center of Chicago just a block away from the river.

The block resides two blocks east from the University of Chicago downtown campus building and many bus goers appear to get on and off the bus route in that area to go to the school building. Neighboring the block to the north are large franchised businesses such as Whole Foods, various fast food locations, as well as franchised gyms.

SITE ANALYSIS



Ogden Plaza located at 429 N. Columbus Dr.

SITE ANALYSIS



Ogden Plaza Sculptural Clock by Vito Acconci

SITE ANALYSIS

The plaza is also ideal for its linear natural shape, the ability to have grown elements is present because of its vegetation and grassy areas. The space's sculptural clock used to be a popular area when it was operable and able to be interacted with.

Today the park is not used very effectively and people overlook it. Even for it having a sculpture from a well known sculptor, it has not been kept up well either. As I stated earlier, it will be important for me to make sure the site is placed well in a site that will fit the project for as long as possible.

The surrounding business area will hopefully prove to be patrons of the site. People that treat it properly and also use it properly.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Performance Measure

What aspect of the performance of your design is measured?

The cost would be measured, the space allocation will be a given number of area. For an urban design project, much more of my success be qualitative. The way people actually use the site and when is what will matter. The measured elements from my design would include pre-design research of site area occupancy, and post-design occupancy levels.

What are the kinds and units of data involved in the measurement?

As stated previously, the units involved in my measurements are going to be occupancy in humans. That number of humans can be collected in data amounts separated by time. There will most likely be a square footage with in where this project will reside as well.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Performance Measure Source:

How and where will you obtain the performance measure?

The way that I will have to obtain these performance measurements will have to be pre- and (theoretical) post-design decision based data. The way that performance is measured for my project will not be quantitative. This will be a very qualitative research and performance project.

Performance Analysis:

What kind of analysis is done, if any, to generate the performance measure?

What tools or instruments will be used (drawings, scale models, computer simulations, etc.)?

The use of many models and drawings will be done in order to support a in depth analysis. There is no way for one to simulate the emotions of humans during certain times of the day, in certain moods, in route to do certain things. The qualitative nature again of this research is not something that can be given a number to as easily.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Performance Judgment:

The project will be judged based on emotional importance. The use of language's connection to understanding and perception are going to heavily influence the outcome of the project, and that outcome will be compared to the relation that somebody has to another urban environment. We will track the overall success of the questions answered based on the perception of the reader.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Executive Summary

Urban design projects in the U.S. are mainly located in metropolis cities, however you can also find them located in many small to mid sized cities as well. The purpose for urban design can be between a number of different things. Some projects are for leisure or sitting, some may hold pieces of art, others may just be for user accessibility. The way these projects come about is dependent upon what the city or area needs it for. The success of the project will be determined based on use.

Over the past few decades, we have seen many urban design projects come and go. In some cases, there have been some that are only temporary installments that last only weeks, others have lasted until today. There are reasons whether or not they have worked or been just another concrete heap amongst a sidewalk that pedestrians do not wish to stray from. What is it that makes an urban design project good? Why does a city even need an urban design project? In what ways are we able to measure my potential project's success? These, and many other questions will hopefully be answered in the research and findings.

At this point, my project has many well rounded qualitative research references to support elements that I will be putting into my project. I would again like to emphasize the use of qualitative in favor of quantitative research in my project because urban design projects of the scale I am using is not tracked by lots of numerical data. The way this project will be measured will be by its inhabitants experience, the way it fits into and supports a neighboring community, something that will make people want to continue to return to the project. I will be supporting stories and memories connected to a space. The idea that a built environment can make people think differently while they are a part of it is an idea that a majority of projects don't even acknowledge anymore.

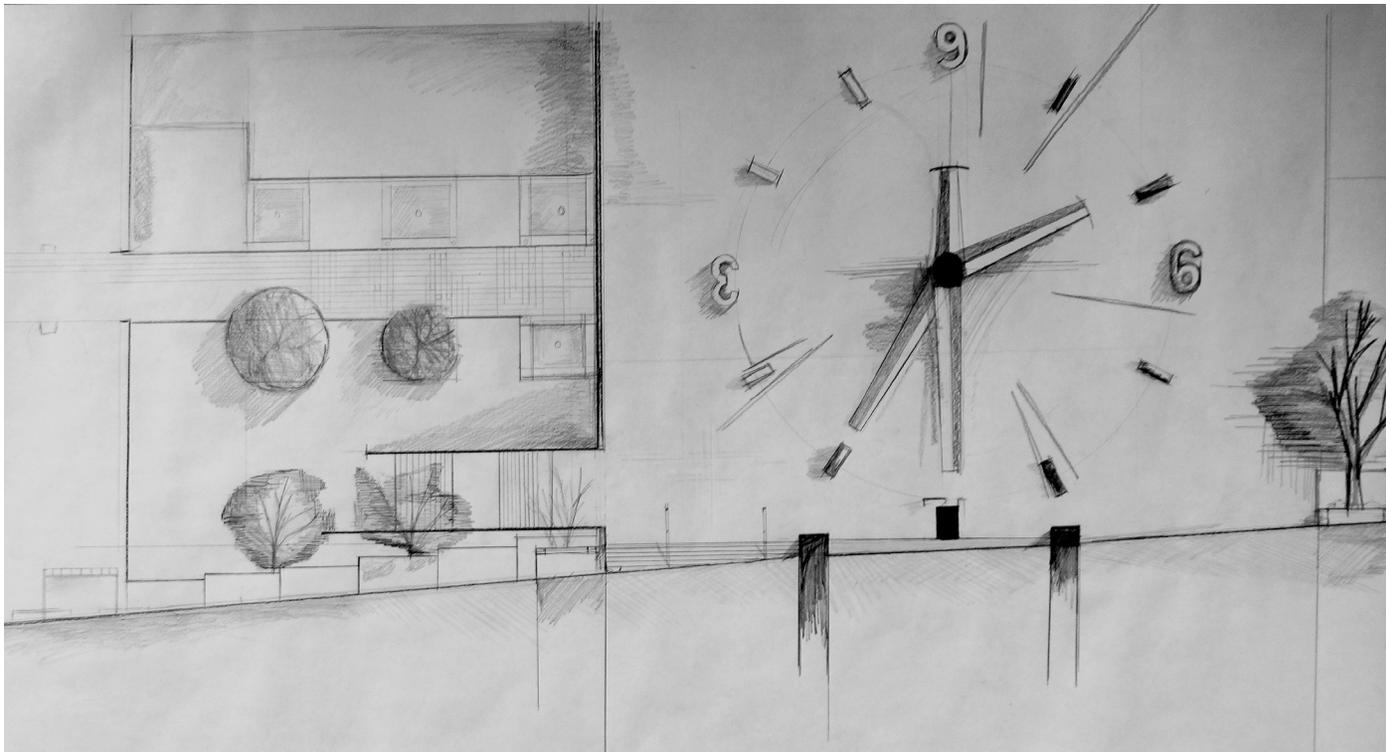
DESIGN SOLUTION

PROCESS

Throughout the development of the project, there were several ways that ideas were explored. Some of the most influential being sketches and readings extending throughout the entire year. Project Artefacts were also produced in order to give deeper meaning to the projects metaphor in a visual representation. Though many of the readings were touched on in the literary analysis portion, I believe that it would be important to revisit them when discussing the design influence overall.

SKETCHES

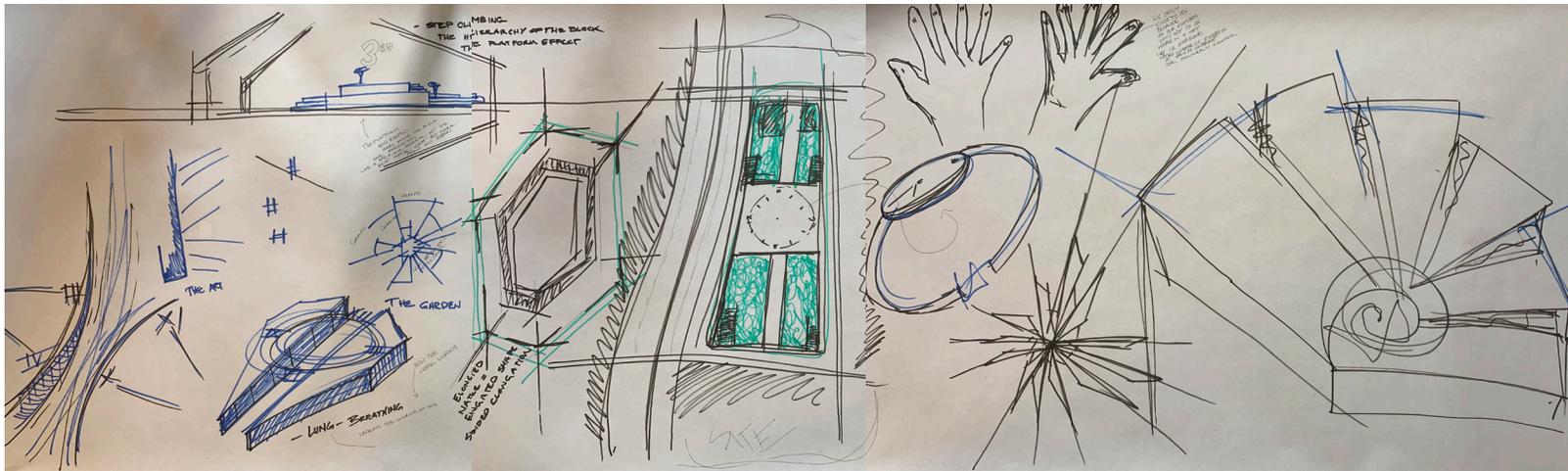
I explored many different ideas from the beginning through sketching, the use of pen on paper was the most efficient way to test ideas out quickly and efficiently.



PROCESS

SKETCHES

A number of these quick sketches were done by using a large roll of paper spread across my floor. When the project was at this beginning stage, I still imagined it to be an urban design project that used heavy influence of its inhabitants to help design the space.

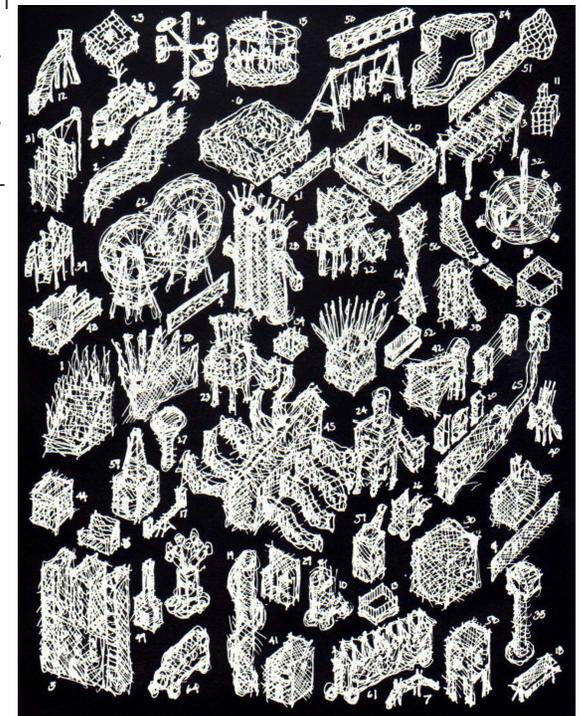
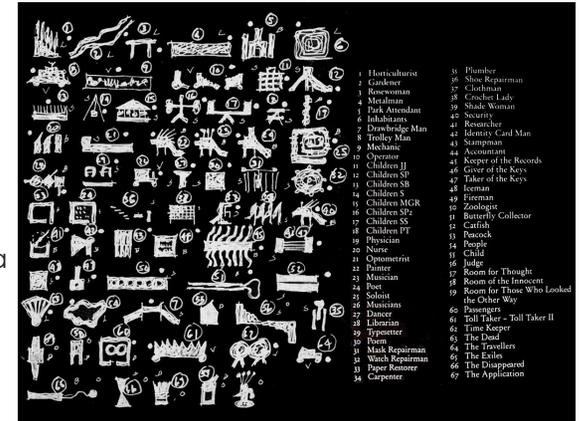


It was also important to point out that the sketches and hand drawing methods were things that I found to be influential throughout the entirety project.

READINGS

Mask of Medusa - John Hejduk

In 1985, Hejduk published a collection of his works titled; The Mask of Medusa. John Hejduk at this point had published some of his projects and books The Mask of Medusa however featured some of the more prevalent projects that he features are what he titled "masques". The Mask of Medusa specifically and the masques in the book are named as such after a mask someone would wear on their face. It's the replication of something else covering what is whole. It's the space between the mask and the face where the tension is triggered. That transformation between the two is what makes them in between what is real and what is imaginary. The masque projects more specifically dive into either project proposals or solutions by acknowledgment. The work "Victims" for example was a design competition that Hejduk submitted for that was a re-purpose project of a Nazi gестапо headquarters. Many of the submitted projects by other architects were aiming to cover up the space or to demolish it and start over. Hejduk project was aiming to leave some of the ruins there and make it more of a memorial. The project had a site plan and these objects located about the plan. The objects were obscure sketches that represent everyday objects such as lighthouses, watchtowers, industrial buildings, train tracks, to name a few. The objects would have been built in obscure ways to show that the space would be thought of in a new light such as the site itself. Zumthor ended up winning the project with a large concrete structure that later had to be torn down due to its structural failures and attendance issues.



PROCESS

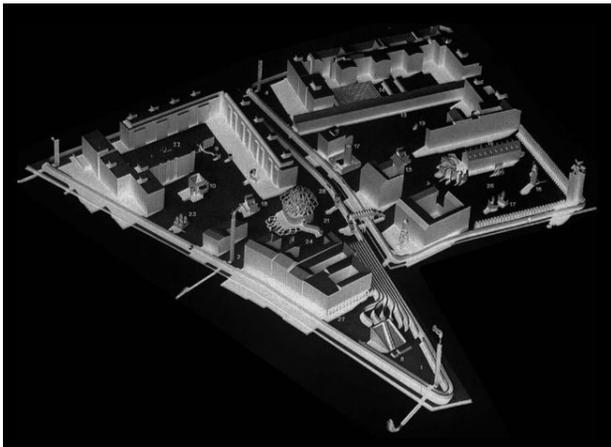
READINGS

Mask of Medusa - John Hejduk

Keeping in close distance proximity, one of his masques titled "The Berlin Masque" done in 1981 was a project that heavily focused on written work. The Berlin Masque was done for submission for a project competition. The proposed projects all began with a statement from Invisible Cities by Italo Calvino. Rarely do we see a project open with a physical passage from a fictional group of stories.

This is a deeper exploration of the program for what is actually possible for the project. "In Maurilia, the traveler is invited to visit the city and, at the same time, to examine some old post cards that show it as it used to be: the same identical square with a hen in the place of the bus station, a bandstand in the place of the overpass, two young ladies with white parasols in the place of the munitions factory. If the traveler does not wish to disappoint the inhabitants, he must praise the postcard city and prefer it to the present one...." This description of a city transformed is what gave Hejduk the idea for the Berlin Masque. Hejduk sets out to create a plan for a reconstructed site.

The Berlin Masque had been carried out by a list of structures that were numbered that corresponded on a site map. The site map consisted of two enclosed shapes with scattered groups of smaller shapes. The next few pages describe each of the structures and detail what dimensional attributes they possess as well as describing their use in a rather poetic manner. All of these things seem pretty remedial at times but again it is important to just read along and let the people that operate in the spaces make themselves.



READINGS

Mask of Medusa - John Hejduk

Another more specific work published in *Mask of Medusa* that shows an importance of mental representation by fragmentation is the "Lancaster-Hanover Masque". The masque's description begins by listing a list of 68 different objects that operate within a setting. The objects are named and followed by a short description. For an example; "44. Farm Cemetery - Partially surrounds the Hospital. Comes from a planning relationship in Oslo. A hospital was located directly across from a cemetery divided by a flat blacktop road." Within each of the objects are things that relate them to one another but they each lack specific names and proper nouns as well as precise locations. There are some of the objects that are more general and short in length and some that are long and thought provoking. After reading the objects, you already paint a general mental picture about the setting such as a reader of a fictional novel would. Directly following the list of objects, there is a list of subjects. The list of subjects follow a chronological order of events from 6:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. There are short statements that describe events that each of the objects does and may have some things related to one another. These describe the actions and provide more of a context to the architecture that has been written. After the objects and subjects lists, there are pages of diagrams that describe these scenes depicted by scribble-like sketching of the objects and subjects interacting with one another. Some of the sketches are quick and hard to read, some are in a painted medium and more methodical. What this does is makes the reader reassign some of the events in his head to what he normally thought a mundane place, such as a post office, would look like. The reader may initially place some black and white building with a mail drop box, but hejduk makes you totally drop all of your per-assigned norms of building typology and look at things from a completely different angle.

PROCESS

READINGS

Invisible Cities - Italo Calvino

Invisible Cities is a collection of narrative like readings that each explain a city. The city is explained in descriptive writing that seeks to invoke the inner emotions of the reader in different ways. He does so in ways that trigger nostalgia and prior understanding of ones memories. Such as the city of Maurilla that was used earlier in Hejduk's Work, The way that Calvino has the written these stories are in that there is no images or plans or sketches to go along with them. The readings are something that are developed through the readers mind. Below you will find the excerpt from the city of Diomira;

"Leaving there and proceeding for three days toward the east, you reach Diomira, a city with sixty silver domes, bronze statues of all the gods, streets paved with lead, a crystal theater, a golden cock that crows each morning on a tower. All these beauties will already be familiar to the visitor, who has seen them also in other cities. But the special quality of this city for the man who arrives there on a September evening, when the days are growing shorter and the multicolored lamps are lighted all at once at the doors of the food stalls and from a terrace a woman's voice cries ooh!, is that he feels envy toward those who now believe they have once before lived an evening identical to this and who think they were happy, that time."

READINGS

The Fall of the Public Man - Richard Sennett

Aiding in my initial criticism, *The Fall of the Public Man* by Richard Sennett takes an abstract approach on how one views the day to day lives of urban human beings. We fail to create a permeable fabric between our buildings and the public. We cover our buildings in glass to make it appear like we have a connection with the public from the inside, yet there is still so much separation between the two environments from this actually happening. Richard Sennett feels similarly about the private automobile, "One does not use one's car to see the city; the automobile is not a vehicle for touring today." Another valid quote from Sennett shortly thereafter states, "...we experience an ease of motion unknowingly to any prior urban civilization, and yet motion has become the most anxiety-laden of daily activities." Stating that the most stressful part of our day could be our morning and nightly commute. He has the same views about open office floor plans of the 21st century. "We make these open office plans for the inverse of their intent is why they are successful." The original intent being that we work cohesively and together face to face and move around the office. Sennett argues however that the vision to see people makes us gossip in secret. People have an eye on everybody which makes them work diligently at their spot. Silence becomes ones only form of protection.

PROCESS

PROJECT ARTEFACT

My project artefact was heavily focused on the "perception" of time. Each person perceives time at any given moment differently than one another. What makes that difference in perception between time is the relation of one event to another event. The way an event can feel longer or flash by quickly in the moment is our brains doing a good job at comparison to prior knowledge. Each event has a certain weight to it emotionally as well that can leave a mark in one's life. When reading events from Hejduk's narratives we can assign those perceptions in our own minds.





PROJECT ARTEFACT

When the artefact was performed, I played two regular yet different clock sounds ticking at different frequencies. The audience then read a list of objects and subject events based on what would happen in my project. As each event was read, there was a corresponding bag on the artefact that was cut open, releasing the weight of sand inside and creating a third noise. The addition of the light, rain-like drizzle from sand hitting the ground added my third frequency of audible time. The focus was shifted to the sand falling under the dim light when each event was read.

After the artefact was performed, what was left was the aftermath of the fallen events. With that pattern left on the floor, we were able to see what mark was left from the events. Blended together, one was not able to see which bag the sand had originally come from. All we saw was the collection of each event to create an environment at our feet. This is how the artefact came full circle back to my building site. Because of the site's current condition, we began to know now that it wasn't one thing that made the block undesirable.

PROJECT SOLUTION

PROJECT SOLUTION

Overall, I am going to break down the design solution in two different ways;

THE PROJECT MANUSCRIPT

AND

THE PROJECT VISUAL RESPONSES THROUGH LANGUAGE

The way the project took shape was from reading and descriptive writing that followed along with metaphors. It was the genesis of heavily focused literary imagery along with prior understanding that makes this project work. The use of plans and sections that were completed was not the goal of the projects completion and understanding. The plans that I chose to include were done by hand sketches. This was done in order to not limit the projects output for deeper meaning.

The main focus on the architecture was the use of writing, which as you see above was done by a written work that I called "The Manuscript". What the Manuscript does is bring the reader into the inhabitants eyes as they travel through the site or use it day to day. The reader understands more of the site through the reading and understanding the trials and tribulations of the sites objects.

PROJECT SOLUTION

Language is the root of our communication as human beings. The ability to communicate ideas through speech or writing has been the reason for so many advancements in humanity. The use of effective communication can promote more efficiency, can aid in healthy relationships, and expand one's knowledge overall. The transfer of language through books, phonetic speaking, and even conversation are all more specific ways that we use our brains' adapted language section. Now, people are telling stories and explaining new magical worlds by the use of descriptive language to paint visual pictures in your mind. There are even architects that use language to describe built or theoretical projects.

In the 15th century, our buildings were based loosely off sketched plans. The profession of the "architect" at that time was thought of in a different light during that era as well. People such as Leonardo De Vinci were inventors, designers, artists, and architects. The term architect was more of an all-encompassing term to describe an innovator. The architects of the 15th century were civilizations' smartest people. During this philosophical era the understanding of our world was progressing cohesively with art, science, philosophy, and nature in a more copacetic manner than today. The ability to work in a poetic fashion at that time was much more necessary and pertinent in the field of architecture because of the coexistence of the ideas. There was a combination of knowledge based on philosophy and poetics at that time that had led to a cohesive understanding of human nature.

How do poetry and philosophy relate to one another? Two entirely different areas of study and theory that are, on paper, two completely different minds of thought. Cyril and Lilane Welch's essay form a different impression however. One that relates to a broader spectrum of goals and processes that are actually not far off from one another. How I see my project fitting in this comparison is simple and to this point has been more about aforementioned processes. Up to this point in our thesis research and progress, we have had a heavy focus on said process.

PROJECT SOLUTION

It is this back and forth of trying to find organization in chaos, and trying to find meaning in the mundane. This battle is similar to the Welches's comparison of nodding the poets from the philosophers and vice versa. This confrontation has been something that is important for me to figure out and try and find a balance between the two. I feel that my design has been at odds with one another at times, and seamlessly finds answers at other times. My work makes sense when the criticisms have been noticed, that were always there and shifts to begin to not be tolerated. It's toleration that has led to distaste in the current situation that I'm trying to solve. Describing the "why" for my project can best be taken from the Manuscript that explains my project until now. There is a section that basically makes a meaning happen because of the cause and effect and the pivotal moment of that change...

PROJECT SOLUTION

THE PROJECT MANUSCRIPT - LITERARY BREAKDOWN

The Block - "The steps were imperfect. Cracked and aged. The dirt from decades of use and mistreatment seemed to fuse to the rough concrete that always seemed dark even on the brightest sun filled day."

Objects - People who would dwell in and around my site include people like; the restaurant Owner, the old man, the beautiful women, the taxi driver, the gardener.

Objects Before the Change - People live lives of their own inspired by what they want to see in themselves, always searching for something.

The Spark - What would the action of one person have the power to do? What would the actions of a community have the power to do?

The Change - An Avalanche of descriptive changes that were made physically that would lay groundwork for a community to prosper

Objects After the Change - The subjects begin to see the change they want to see in themselves and reflect it upon a community that wants to make a difference.

Results - When we begin to see what our community can do for ourselves, we begin to give that change back to the community.

THE PROJECT MANUSCRIPT

The Manuscript was meant to instill emotional connections and inspire visual imagery through descriptive writing. Below I have placed an excerpt from the Manuscript titled "The Child's Story".

The Child

"His feet ran faster than his thoughts at times. Always running around, sometimes too fast and too far, he would run. Running "too fast" isn't normally an issue but the boy was young at the age of four. To keep him from running too far ahead or in the wrong direction, his mother had one rule, he had to hold his mom's hand when they were in public. On and off the bus and on the sidewalk especially of North Columbus street. They would get off the bus and walk over to the college two blocks west of where the bus would drop off."

This is then followed by a multitude of other stories until we reach a climactic change that happens on the block, or what kind of built work follows the site as it undergoes restorative changes.

PROJECT SOLUTION

THE PROJECT MANUSCRIPT - CREATING ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

"THE DAY THE CLOCK STOPPED TICKING

The only redeeming quality of the block was the clock that kept ticking. Timing was truly everything. This was because one late dusk afternoon, the lance-like arms stopped moving...

When people noticed that the clock stopped working, people questioned what somebody was going to do about it. From those subtle whispers and spider like lashes of negativity from the dark and anonymous on the block by the public created friction. Those whispers would have to reach the right ears. Not only the right ears but the perfect ones. You see, the easy way out to accomplish any sort of change that is noticed by the public may be that only of a spit shine and another coat of paint. Would the public be satisfied? Sure. Would they be likely to visit the block? Maybe some, but not for long. Would they be in awe? Not in the slightest.

When the city gets involved in any sort of public pushed project, it takes time. More importantly it takes public funded money. That's where the public gets divided. "Why should our money go towards that thing?" More whispers. People kept pointing fingers. The taxpayers pointed at the neighboring businesses. The businesses pointed at the city. The city pointed back at the taxpayers. Nothing happened. Sunup to sundown, the clock continued to lay stagnant, motionless on the dirty concrete ground."

THE PROJECT MANUSCRIPT - CREATING ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

"THE SHIFT - *The Spark*

The day the clock stopped ticking made people think the block was no longer useful. The only redeeming quality of it was now inactive. Day in and day out, people began to see the block as an even bleaker atmosphere. The ones who would commute through the block even took separate routes around the block's large platforms because they felt even less safe now than before.

It was until one outlier in the crowd had enough. One divergent soul who got tired of the blanket of dirt, the cigarette butts, yellow grass, and broken time mechanism did something. It started with the trash piling up in the corners being picked up and thrown away in the city receptacle across from the dying grass. Such a simple neighborly task. That was the spark that was needed. The spark needed to light the fire and make change.

It was from that point that the garbage began to fill around the block faster than before, and the businesses around the block, whose job it was to empty the garbage, did so and noticed that the clock was not working. The message went up the chains to the building managers of the hotel company to the south, then to the branch's business managers, then to the executive boards of the company. The simple message that started out as more of a notification turned into a "what do we do about it?", question.

PROJECT SOLUTION

THE PROJECT MANUSCRIPT - CREATING ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

Best describing the meaning of the change is something that has happened because of my divide of poetics and philosophy. I was searching for a poetic manner to proceed and found the words to do it was only until I started to write it out when I found the reasoning in my mind and began to tell myself that I had to make something happen. Some roadblocks that my project had to solve were definite. Why was all of this happening? What reason could I see somebody proceeding with my project going forward. These questions slowly answered themselves really and when I figured that out, via the “spark” and the “change”, things began to design themselves based on the already written objects and subjects.

THE PROJECT MANUSCRIPT - CREATING ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE

It was this change that happened because of human nature. One could argue that the change had combined overall modern philosophies and ideas based on evolving social norms even. Because my project was so ambiguous at the beginning and strayed into some different territories than other projects, it was important to keep the big picture in mind and that was; to make people come together as a community again.

PROJECT SOLUTION

THE PROJECT MANUSCRIPT

The manuscript then titles certain attributes that each subject brings to the site.

"A story about how youth was brought back to the block

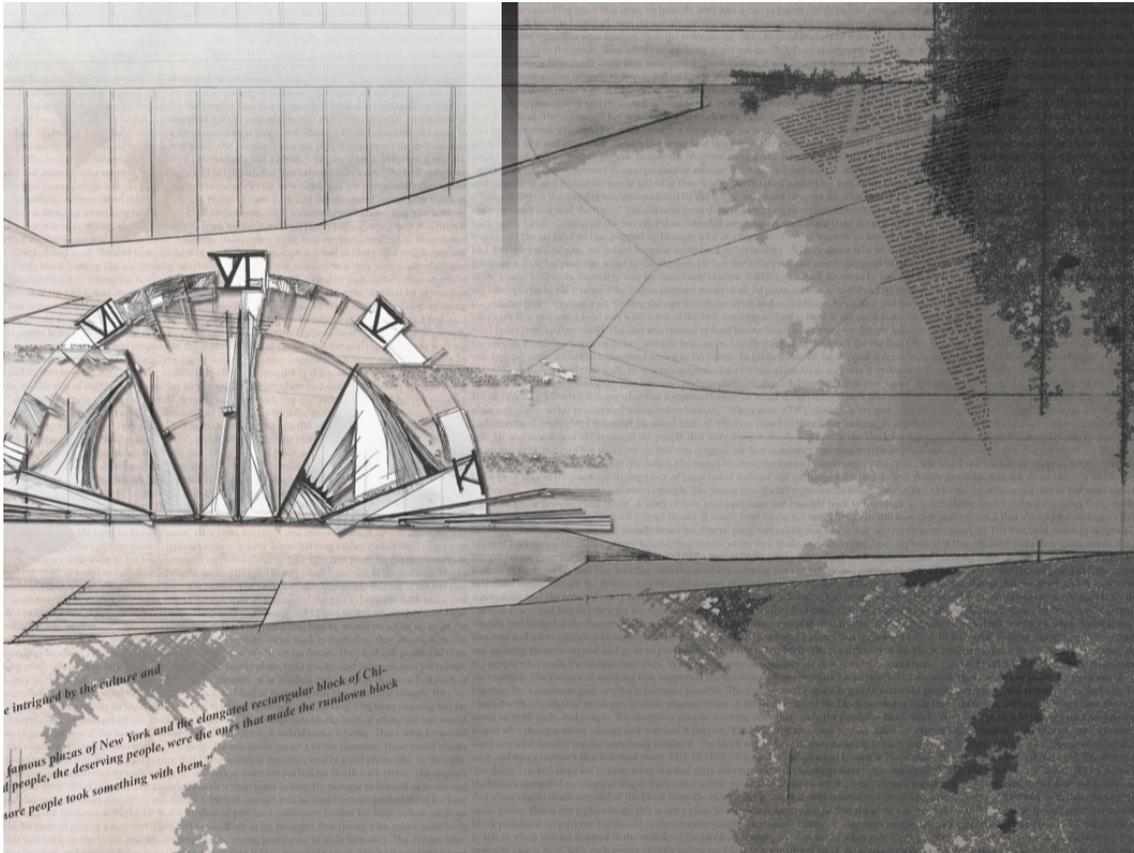
Getting off the bus on a slow Saturday morning on their usual stop, the boy held his mother's hand as they walked down the west side of the block. They noticed that the block was different than before. The change made the boy and his mother look at it. The food trucks and the art exhibits that popped up brought a lot of attention. "Do you want to go look?" The mother asked her son. He looked up and nodded to her from her side. "Okay go take a look but no too far!" She said as she let go of his hand. The boy's feet ran just as fast as they ever had, but not until he gave the softest happiest smile back to his mother."

THE PROJECT VISUAL RESPONSES

There are times that I realized writing this short section that I could not imagine what it would be like to be a young kid in a metropolis like city such as Chicago. Though how would the child in the story know any different. The child represents youth and innocence in a few ways, one of which is that his story is short and pretty simple and that was fully intentional. He also did not describe his world outside of what he had experienced with his mother. He has not been exposed to too much pain or corruption yet that he views the world very lightly. Everywhere to him is viewed as some sort of playground or some sort of obstacle there for his enjoyment. We don't see much into the mother's life other than that she must be a student and an assisting father figure is not mentioned in the story. This is also something from the child's perspective that isn't thought of yet because the child at this point in his life doesn't know any different. Unfortunately, many people that live in the city of Chicago have the stereotype to have a harder upbringing based on where you are from. Some of those connections were aiming to get tackled in this section without actually displaying them.

In the end who would get the most out of the new block? I wondered to myself as I had written this. The child's enjoyment that he gets when his mom lets him run is something that is so wholesome and raw that it could allow the reader could be a bit nostalgic at that time. The kid may hold memories that we also have when we were kids. You probably remember where you went to elementary school and went to the playground as a kid and those memories may be whole and unblemished, but if you were to return today, nostalgia may make you feel sort of resistant in ways because by this point in your life you have probably experienced some things that take that youth and innocence away from you.

PROJECT SOLUTION



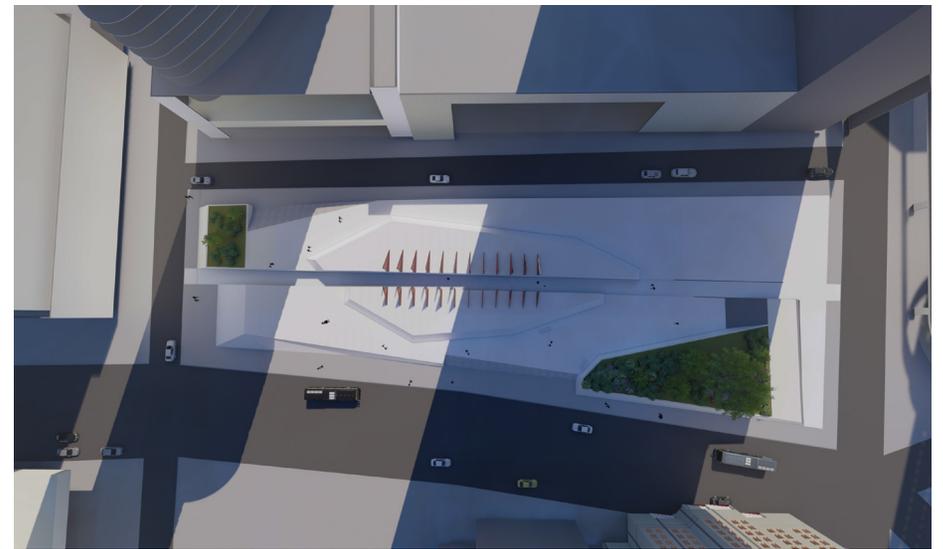
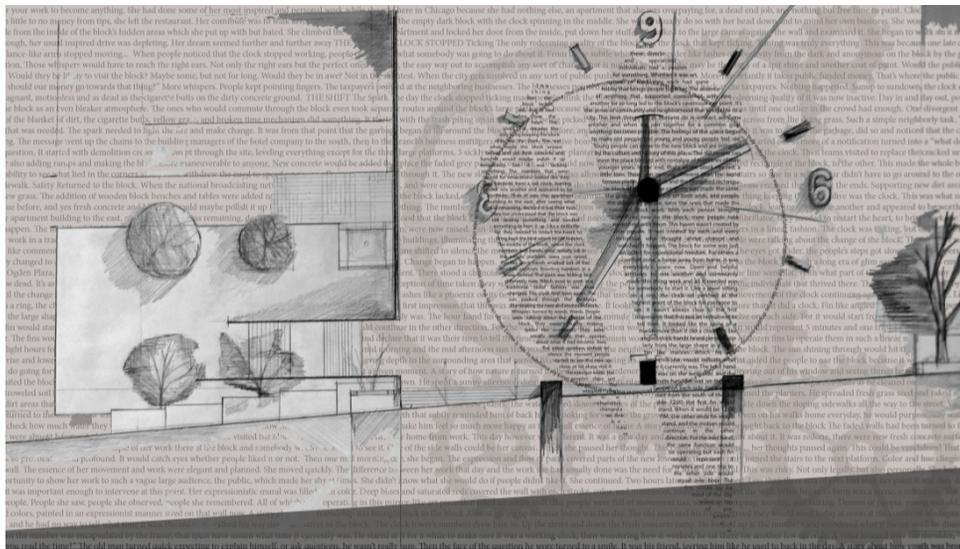
THE PROJECT VISUAL RESPONSES

There becomes a sense of architecture when the literary language is understood, however there is still some areas where we need to have some supported imagery for the project to take shape and instill any sort of mood. Below you will see some fragmented images that aided in visual imagery.

PROJECT SOLUTION

THE PROJECT VISUAL RESPONSES

There was a noticeable amount of influence from 3D modeling software in that it was used to produce forms much more so than to produce perfect imagery. Again, imagery was intended through language, though there were some traces of skewed renderings spread within the visual board presentation. To the left you will see the imagery that was more effective to communicate the writing of board scenes. To the right you will see an image that shows space. For this project, renderings such as the one on the right were from a 3D model that I had intended the site to look like, but were a bit regressive when discussing experiences.



PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

RESPONSE TO THE SITE:

Chicago as a whole is a very diverse and audacious city. Internationally recognized for art, music, sports, and many other culturally significant interests. Downtown Chicago specifically the areas in which I was viewing earlier tend to walk a fine line whether or not they are safe or attractive to its inhabitants. There are areas such as Millennium Park or the steps to the Art Institute of Chicago that are heavily watched and usually very touristy. Then there are blocks and areas that become less watched and stray further away from public interest. The block that Ogden Plaza resides in is one of the blocks that has fallen under the radar for the last few decades since its inception.

The project that I have placed in the site hopes to provide an urban gathering area that would rival sites across town such as Federal Center, The River Walk, and even Grant Park as far as destination spots. This also is a project, unlike mostly every previously listed sites, that aims to provide an environment for every demographic available that would walk by downtown Chicago. The goal was to provide a haven for Chicago that would support its inhabitants in ways that have never been done before. When reviewing thoughts of what people wanted for downtown Chicago, I found that people want more areas to openly share their talents such as cooking, art work, crafts, etc. The problem is, is that there are not many areas that legally allow people to do that when they want, and in the current zones that do, require major licensing and requirements that often inhibit a new business to get off the ground. The goal for my projects plaza was to provide a “haven” where there were easier restrictions as far as vendor laws, or made it easier for people to share their trades.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

RESPONSE TO TYPOLOGY

The idea of urban design for cities is unfortunately something that is more of a latent expenditure when city municipal bodies begin to proceed with development. More often than not, the plaza or entry areas for major buildings are an after thought that gets cut down or left out due to project budgets or people believing that those spaces are not as important that they are. When we begin to analyze what kinds of positive attributes that proper urban design can give to a city, we begin to treat it as more of a primary solution to public interaction's downfalls.

The project views typology in different ways that view it as a primary source of expression. A subtle goal of mine throughout the language design of this project was to blur the lines of typology as much as possible. When we begin to see what people actually do in a space instead of just making them under an all-encompassing umbrella of types, we begin to make architecture for living. Spaces should be defined by the experiences that happen in them. If a gallery room is meant to lead a patron to walk slowly and observe, then the design was focused for slow walking and watching and waiting. If a space was meant for sitting resting and eating, then the space was designed for people to sit and rest and eat. Our architecture can become more effective for livable urban environments when we make those actions seen as primary acts of human existence.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

RESPONSE TO GOALS AND PROJECT EMPHASIS

Revisiting the previous questions proposed for my project emphasis, it would be effective to answer them at this time when the project has seen more competition.

How can one simulate an interaction based on physical elements alone?

Physical elements that are involved in urban design projects can influence interaction in one of two ways. The first being unintentional. Things like planters obstructing path, tables that pull people in to sit, art installments that catch ones eye (such as the clock structure in the new block), and events that draw people in that didn't intend on staying. All of these events are things I have seen happen in downtown Chicago and even in other urban areas in smaller cities.

Secondly, the other form of public interaction is the intentional appearance in public. The possibilities here could be a scheduled public event such as an art showing that would bring people to the site specifically. There are also less planned events such as lunch breaks, meeting destination spots, service communications, and even common interest small talk. These things get people together for a deeper influenced meeting and as well could lead to better public interaction overall.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

RESPONSE TO GOALS AND PROJECT EMPHASIS

What importance does the site have as opposed to another for this project?

The site of Ogden Plaza I believe was the perfect site for this project to reside. This is because of a number of reasons first including some of the project premises. The initial growth of this project was heavily influenced by public criticism. The current site of Ogden plaza was a perfect example of a loss of interest and a steady decline of use over a number of decades. The elements of my criticism were aimed at loss of influence from the public and block in such an influential American metropolis has so much potential to be accomplishing just that.

Looking deeper at the site in a more metaphoric way, the clock structure that has stopped working is the perfect remnants for the design of a project heavily influenced by John Hejduk. Hejduk uses the element of time to influence design in more ways than just a featured clock tower. Some of his projects feature a built process that is constructed over time. The broken clock on the site heavily influenced my project artefact as well in that it made the project perceive time in a different way.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

RESPONSE TO GOALS AND PROJECT EMPHASIS

How would somebody theoretically track successfulness of the project?

Traditionally, urban design projects are tracked by their use or capacity. This also depends on what type of ownership the site has as well. There are many plazas across the United States that are successful and have events going on weekly that are owned or supported by the organization that owns it. These places are all ones that also have crews that run the events and clean the site. With Ogden plaza, in the state it is currently in, it is up to the neighboring businesses to provide any maintenance or upkeep that the site needs. At the current time, the only help it gets is maybe a weekly-monthly trash sweep that happens during an ideal climate period.

For the project that I have placed to be successful, based on literary reasoning, it is more successful if it inspires people. Numbers and visitors are great, but what outcome does that provide for a project based on a fictional writing? I could say that hundreds visit the block each day and that would be a stretch. For this project to be successful it is based on its inhabitants to take things with them that inspire them, thoughts, ideas, conversations and that to me is more successful than a number at the end of the day.

Digital Presentation:

The thesis presentation was conducted on May 6th, 2020 at 8:00 A.M. The presentation was given via “Zoom” due to the quarantine process of 2020. We have been virtually meeting for roughly the last two months and it has provided a learning curve for the entire class. We have had to adjust to strictly digital meeting times and have had to abandon any use of in depth physical model building.

There is something about meeting digitally and talking through cameras and microphones that removes emotion and feelings from conversation. With that being said, we have to deal with our current situations. For my project before the quarantine, it was at a pivotal moment. I was debating on keeping this a strictly written based presentation which would be more daring and audacious or I would be doing a traditional project where I would be doing digital models and renderings. I took the first route and went for the more novel based thought provoking approach. For the current situation, it was actually a better opportunity to write more intently and have limited distractions. Progressively going deeper into writing was something I was very glad to do and enjoyed the process.

My pairing of slides along with spoken language gave a balance of perception and essence of my writing that would not have been possible with 3D images taking over the visuals of the project. The most interesting picture images in my presentation were probably of my project artefact. When reading my board presentation (featured left), there is an intent of reading for this as well. The boards were laid out in a manner that makes the reader read it like the pages of a book. As you read along and story unfolds in your mind, you get images that cascade over the words that you are scrolling through. This is not meant to take over the perception but to aid in providing the mental imagery by fragmented pictures that get filled in by the mind of the reader.

APPENDIX

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Zubins Dissertation Zubin K Singh School of Architecture McGill University, Montreal, Canada

December 2016

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-Spring Semester

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-Fall Semester

Regin Schwaen

-Spring Semester

FOURTH YEAR STUDIO:

Bakr Aly Ahmed

Fall Semester - Capstone Design Project

David Crutchfield

Spring Semester

FIFTH YEAR THESIS

Stephen Wischer

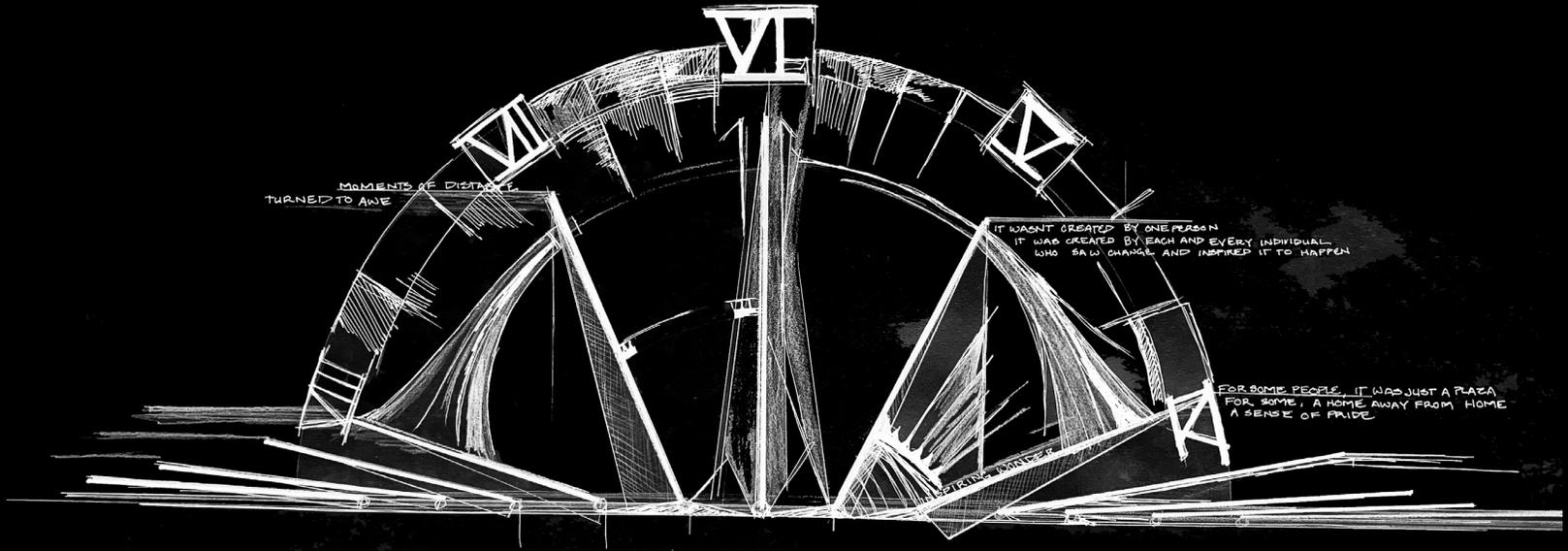
Thesis Advisor Full year 2019-2020

PERSONAL STATEMENT

The past five years have been a journey. Academically, professionally, and mostly personally, this time spent while being a NDSU Architecture student has allowed me to grow to who I am while writing this. I have grown to greatly appreciate my academic growth as well especially in my year as a fifth year graduate student. Many early mornings and late nights for every different reason will be missed. These opportunities would not be possible without my friends, teachers, and honestly some luck.

I will look back on my collegiate career with a heavy heart.

-Bradley Nelson



MOMENTS OF DISTANCE
TURNED TO AWE

IT WASNT CREATED BY ONE PERSON
IT WAS CREATED BY EACH AND EVERY INDIVIDUAL
WHO SAW CHANGE AND INSPIRED IT TO HAPPEN

FOR SOME PEOPLE, IT WAS JUST A PLAZA
FOR SOME, A HOME AWAY FROM HOME
A SENSE OF PRIDE