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Title

Living Library: How stories told through architecture can strengthen communities and the people within them.

By

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LIVING LIBRARY: HOW STORIES TOLD THROUGH ARCHITECTURE CAN

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES AND THE PEOPLE WITHIN THEM.

A Thesis
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ABSTRACT

Story has been passed down through generations, carrying with it the history and teachings of diverse groups of people. Storytelling has evolved to fit into an ever-changing society, trying to adapt and stay prevalent in it. With the ever-widening distance between strangers today, many stories and storytelling opportunities are being lost. Architecture is no longer being used as a tool to tell stories and provide places for stories to be told. The connections and spaces that once brought people from all walks of life together do not exist as they once did. The living library is an intervention, providing a place to rekindle and foster the connections missing today. By providing a place where stories can be told and shared with others, communities can begin to create stronger connections. The living library provides spaces for stories to be told, kept, found, and made.

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to cheer me on.

DEDICATION

To my architecture friends: we did it! We have worked so hard to get where we are, and we will

go on to do great things.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores how a city can be viewed through stories of its' past and how those stories shape that city and peoples' experiences within it. The research will explore concepts about public spaces, how strangers interact, stories and how they can help one to better understand a space, among other ideas. These concepts will help to frame the proposed architectural intervention of the Living Library in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

1.1. The Social Spaces We Live in Today

In today's world, we have forgotten many of our stories and the importance of telling them. As people move through spaces in their cities they call home, many do not know, or care to learn about the backstory of the spaces they inhabit. Society continues to keep its focus on the present and is not thinking about history and how it impacts the world around us. This has caused much information and context to be lost to time. As time passes, important stories are being forgotten about, and are waiting to be rediscovered.

Story has a longstanding tradition and impact on humanity. It has played a key role in how society operates both today and in history. Despite this, Stories of the past, once used to teach future generations, have lost their place in our daily lives. We still participate at some level in storytelling today, but it is no longer held in the same regard as it once was.

As people move through their cities, many do not consider the history and events that have helped to shape the landscape and architecture into what it is today. Cities as we know them did not simply happen in a day, but instead are a compilation of events and people's efforts over the complete history of the city. Events that may not seem significant to many can still have a lasting impact on the world we see today, and in the future.

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Along with the shift in priority away from history, there has been a large change in how people interact with one another. These changes in connection have created divides between people and communities. This separation between strangers can cause a loss in empathy for what others may be experiencing in their life.

Cities today have continued to grow but are focused not on the people that live in them. This shift can leave pedestrians with less-than-ideal conditions to move through their city. Cities focus instead on vehicles and space that generates income. These out-of-order priorities can lead to lack of safety, less than desirable options to move through the city, and can cause people to rely heavily on motor vehicles to live in the city, among other issues. These conditions compound in cities and create many less-than-ideal situations.

One space within cities that is focused on people is Libraries. Libraries of today have attempted to adapt and change to fully support the communities they are within. Libraries for many reasons are still not the idealistic community hub our cities need today. Many Libraries operate solely as a place to house and lend books and other media, and do not focus as much on how they can more fully create a sense of community. This issue may be due to lack of funding or other support, but it still leaves more to be desired. As society and its needs change, so should libraries.

Often when one thinks of a library and what type of environment it creates for the user, it is seen as a place strictly for the use and gain of knowledge. Spaces within them are thought to be organized and meant for singular purposes like reading, research, and so on. When this type of space may not be the priority for all community members, many may opt to avoid using the libraries near them because they do not see a reason to need the space.

1.1.1 Research Question

How Can the collection of stories of a city, its' teachings and cultural practices enrich the community in downtown Winnipeg?

1.1.2 Proposed Outcomes

Through this research, it is hoped that a more community based modern interpretation of the library can be created. With the goals of creating community, supporting those who use the space, and reconnecting cities with their past, this design will aim to create an impactful addition to the city it is located in. This thesis, through its design intervention hopes to reframe how society views and uses libraries and public spaces today and in the future. By creating a flexible design solution, the building could be adapted to fit future generations, and the city within which it will exist.

The resulting design hopes to address the ideas that people have about the cities they live within, by encouraging connections to its history and to others living in the same city. By designing a space that focuses not only on the content of the library, but on the community and its wellbeing, it would provide opportunities for connections. This design hopes to encourage meaningful connections and empathy between the users through their shared use of the space.

This design and the theories it employs could be adapted to suit any city around the world. Through the research, it is hoped that the outcome, yet specific to its proposed location, is flexible and adaptable in practice to help support communities around the world.

<div align="center">**1.2. OBJECTIVE**</div>

This thesis will explore how the Living library, a space focused on storytelling, could benefit the city of Winnipeg, Manitoba and provide a space to teach, learn, and begin to understand the world around us through the lenses of other stories and experiences.

1.2.1. Aim

The aim of this thesis is to create a building that would provide a place within the community that centers around storytelling, providing the opportunity to teach and learn from others, to help better the community and the city it is within.

1.2.2. Significance

This thesis addresses changes in architecture and its shift away from being a place for story to be told. The design will address this shift by creating a building that would openly tell the stories of the city and provide the opportunity for users to interact with it. In addition, the architecture would help to address the way people interact in cities today and provide a space to form connections and promote empathy within the community. By approaching the design through the inspiration of societal practices of the past, ideals not typically implemented in architecture today, it can be reimagined and utilized for the betterment of cities.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Brief Overview

Through the exploration of how cities of history and how the people living within them operated and communicated in the past, a better understanding of how cities function today can be found. As shifts in architecture and the spaces of a city and its uses happened in the past, it directly affected how society moves through cities today.

2.2. Research

Research was conducted on a variety of topics to support the ideas of this thesis. By approaching the research through theory to address social issues seen today, concepts could be related through metaphor to the design intervention.

2.2.1. History of Cities

The word city has many definitions, but the words' origin is found in the Latin word "*cīvitās*, meaning "citizenship" or "state," from the word *cīvis* meaning "citizen."" (Dictionary, n.d.). As observed by Sjoberg (1965), cities as we know them today are a product of crop cultivation, providing people with the ability to settle in fertile areas in large numbers due to food surplus (Sjoberg, 1965). He continues that food stability allowed communities to focus less energy on food gathering and allowed them to put more energy into other tasks. Cities evolved along with technology, allowing them to become centers for people to gather together (Sjoberg, 1965). He points out that it is not just food and technological advancements that created cities, but the overall organization to the communities that helped provide the structure that cities needed to survive (Sjoberg, 1965). He continues that as governments and ruling classes were created, a social hierarchy fell into place, helping to organize and distribute labor in cities

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(Sjoberg, 1965). This organization of classes also helped to document cities through writing, as the documentation of history and other information fell to the upper-class who had access and time to learn how to read and write, where lower classes kept to the oral tradition of storytelling (Sjoberg, 1965).

Cities continued to grow in both size and popularity throughout history, but a drastic upswing happened around the industrial revolution (Senet, 1978). Sjoberg observes that as western cities shifted their focus towards industrialism, cities saw improvements across many sectors such as agriculture, transportation, and communication (Sjoberg, 1965). He draws connections to the ability to harness sources of power beyond manual labor and nature, to cities being able to provide better lives for many (Sjoberg, 1965). As infrastructure improves and living conditions along with it, cities grew to be able to support more people living within them. Sjoberg states that the industrial revolution created the ability to harness machines, allowing for factory systems to take hold and begin to produce beyond what humans of the past could (Sjoberg, 1965).

The continued popularity of cities has only grown, with about 18% of the population of the world in 1950 living in urban settings and that number drastically increasing to 50% in 2001 (Wenzel et al., 2007). With the alternative of rural living no longer being a feasible option for most of the population, cities remain the first option despite its less than perfect reputation. As Wenzel et al. observed, a majority of the shift in living from rural to public has happened in developing countries, where the economy and opportunities are more stable in cities (Wenzel et al., 2007). This shift has introduced megacities to the world. Megacities according to Wenzel et al., are "densely populated urban centers with populations exceeding 8 million." (Wenzel et al., 2007). With the number of megacities around the world rising, there are issues that are

associated with them that may make them less than ideal to live in. Wenzel et al. (2007) pointed

out several issues such as but not limited to: limited resources for disaster relief, aging

infrastructure, lack of consistency in building regulations, and much more. They observed that

these issues disproportionately affect the larger cities in developing countries where resources

are not as accessible and regulations are not as strictly followed (Wenzel et al., 2007).

2.2.2. Strangers

In our cities, we encounter strangers, that Richard Senet has classed into two groups.

According to Senet, the first kind of strangers are seen as outsiders, they are those who do not

look, act, or speak like us and the second group are the unknown, or those which cannot easily be

placed (Senet,1978). Strangers make up cities, move and live in parallel to each other, but there

is a loss of connection and understanding between them. Strangers have always existed in

society, but the difference is how people choose to interact with the stranger today. Senet

discusses that prior to the rise of the bourgeoisie, people understood what roles appeared in

society, adapting themselves to fit a role so that others could understand them based on the

mutual understanding of society at the time (Senet, 1978). He continues that after the Rise of the

bourgeoisie, or the shift in the ranking system to be based on class and not strictly on familial

inheritance, the understanding of class and how to appear in them had changed, challenging how

strangers fit into society (senet, 1978). This shift made it hard for people to act in roles that had

once been clearly defined and understood in society. This change in class affected how people

moved amongst the ranks of society, creating further gaps between strangers.

Today we tend to avoid interacting with strangers and have created what Senet refers to

as a "paradox of visibility and isolation," where we still want to participate in the chaos of public

as we did in the past but refuse to allow ourselves to interact in order to protect our privacy

(Senet, 1978). As Montgomery states:

> We like to look at each other. We enjoy hovering in the zone somewhere between
>
> strangers and intimates. We want the opportunity to watch and be watched, even if we
>
> have no intention of ever actually making contact with one another. (Montgomery, 2013,
>
> p. 152)

This desire to participate in the public realm contradicts our want and need for privacy today.

The separation we see between ourselves, and strangers today has only widened further with the

growth and changes in technology. Technology, much like the shift in the class system with the

rise of the bourgeoisie, has once again created a space where people are unsure how to class

others in regard to roles that were once understood in society. The ability to interact with others

online is easily accessible with today's technology but has created a new public space for people

to operate within.

Prior understandings of how people were to act has shifted in today's cities. People of

the past would have different personas and roles to fill depending on where they were in cities

(Arendt, 1958). The realms of public and private life as discussed by Arendt, are classed as

public being how one acted when out in society and concerning the political realm, and private

life was how one acted at home amongst family and close friends (Arendt,1958). People would

have two different personas, acting one way in public spaces and following societal norms of the

time, but in private acted more like their true selves. Arendt observed that as cities developed

throughout history private life was more negatively affected, causing the two separate

personalities to shift and merge into one, prioritizing the public side over the private (Arendt,

1958). Arendt discusses the "space of appearance" as being the spaces power was found in the

public realm (Arendt, 1958). She continues that power is found, but not always guaranteed in the political or public realms but the public space or "space of Appearance" is the only place possible for power to exist (Arendt, 1958). She explains that without people, power does not exist, this power can be used to both positively and negatively affect cities and those that live in them (Arendt, 1958). This power came along with the exchange of information, as information often fed into and supported power or could take power away from others.

2.2.3. Public Squares and City Planning

As cities like London and Paris began to be rebuilt and reorganized in the 17th and 18th centuries, there was a shift in the focus of the public spaces (Senet, 1978). Senet observed that squares of medieval and renaissance time were "free zones" with more flexible use for the community (Senet, 1978,). He observed that inspiration was being taken from the Palace of

Figure 1 View of the Basilica
Note: This etching is by Giovanni Batista Piranesi held in the collections of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy (Battista Piranesi)

Versailles and Bernini's Piazza Obliqua in front of St. Peters Basilica in Rome (Figure 1), squares and streets themselves became a part of the event of moving through the space and no longer held the same purpose they once did (Senet, 1978). Public squares lost their primary use as a space of communication and interaction of the citizens, they shifted instead to accommodate and prioritize the movement and circulation of goods and services. Senet observes that the modern squares were being redesigned to create breaks in cities, which were meant "to be a monument to itself, with restricted activities taking place." (Senet,1978, p. 54) This change created a separation of activities that had taken place in the public squares for hundreds of years. Activities such as the buying and selling of goods, communication and other daily tasks were pushed out from these spaces that had functioned as central hubs. These activities were pushed into other more free spaces like the theater, cafes, or parks (Senet, 1978). Some of these activities are still taking place in these spaces today, but not as commonly as they had in the past.

This displacement of activities that happened in the community's daily life caused a weakening of the social norms (Senet, 1978). He writes of the disuse of public squares as they once were, causing the communities that had been built around them to splinter off, losing the diversity of the place (Senet, 1978). As more regulations on spaces within cities that were once used as free spaces happened, larger gatherings of people were no longer happening. He observes this shift created fewer open opportunities for people to meet and interact, creating a larger distance between strangers (Senet, 1978).

The shift in priorities of city planning to focus on the movement and circulation of services and goods over how the pedestrian moves through a space is still happening in many cities today. People and how they experience cities is largely based on how they move through

the city. Many cities require its users to have some form of transportation in order to participate in the activities that may happen there.

2.2.4. Diversity of a Place

Cities cannot succeed without diversity at their core, but diversifying a city goes further than a simple mingling of different communities and ethnicities in a city, it would also require an even distribution of wealth, goods, and services (Jacobs, 1993). As Jane Jacobs discusses, the components of diversity can differ in each situation, but they must all supplement and support each other (Jacobs, 1993). Cities and their communities suffer when its pieces do not collaborate with each other.

Diversity in a city according to Jacobs would require a combination of these four elements: a mixture of people who live on different schedules but have overlapping interests, smaller block sizes, a mixture of building types and design, and a large enough population to support the space (Jacobs, 1993). By adopting these four items to create a unique balance in each community, communities could all find their own diversity. These communities would be well sustained and used by those who live in and outside the community.

2.2.5. Story

History and cities have their origins in storytelling. The spoken word existed long before written language, and it allowed for the passing on of knowledge through story. Story is defined as "the act of telling or writing stories, or narratives" (National Geographic Society, 2023). One of the earliest depictions of story comes from Lascaux cave paintings in France (figure 2) from 30,000 years ago (National Geographic Society, 2023). The paintings show that the groups that left them found importance in the stories that were connected to the imagery. The pictorial

Figure 2 Lascaux Cave Paintings
Note: The paintings date from over 30,000 years ago. Photo taken by Ralph Morse in 1947 (Morse, 2014).

representations along with the oral tradition helped to share the stories that the people of the past felt were crucial for survival. Lessons learned could be shared and told as a story. Stories evolved and could take on many distinct characteristics, they could be epics, tragedies, poems, chants, songs, and much more (National Geographic Society, 2023). Stories can be told through a variety of different media beyond the written language such as paintings, photography, architecture, and more. There has been a longstanding practice of storytelling throughout the whole history of humanity (National Geographic Society, 2023).

2.2.6. Understanding Cities Through Story

Cities are understood best as a collection of stories that have happened in that place (Livesey et al., 1994). Grahm Livesey states "the city becomes analogous to a book, a repository into which events are written" (Livesey et al., 1994, p. 110). This description of cities implies that cities are better understood as a collection of stories, providing a more complete image when viewed as a whole collection instead of just individual stories. When viewing a place through its stories and history, one can begin to see the different layers that have shaped the city into what it is today. Viewing a place through the lenses of others' stories and history allows for a unique perspective to be visible. The lens of history and of others colors our world today. To more fully understand a place, one must first find different lenses, or stories, and learn about them to finally view it and understand a fuller narrative.

2.2.7. Libraries and Their Function

Library is defined as "a place in which literary, musical, artistic, or reference materials (such as books, manuscripts, recording, or films) are kept for use but not for sale" (Marriam-Webster, 2024). As Libraries consist of the items it holds and not just the buildings themselves it is understandable that this would also dictate the uses of the space as well. The commonly understood use of Libraries is that they are for the gain of knowledge and understanding. Libraries are a free tool for people to have access to materials they may need, whether that is for research or leisure. As technology has developed, libraries have grown to support different media and today includes providing access to the internet for its users. Many libraries may host other activities for their community members based on funding and community engagement.

2.3. Project Typology

This thesis will address the current practices of city planning, the standard use of libraries, loss of gathering spaces such as the public square, forgotten stories of cities, and the widening gap between strangers.

2.4. Project Intervention

2.4.1. Resolving The Widening Gap Between Strangers

This thesis aims to address the widening social gap between strangers in cities today by encouraging an exploration into the story and history of a place. This proposed intervention would provide opportunities for people to share their experiences, culture, and other aspects of life with others. This opportunity would help to create connections and promote understanding amongst community members.

2.4.2. Modifying Libraries and How They are Used

By adjusting the current use and understanding of libraries, and their place in culture today, connections can be built through the architecture of this thesis. This thesis aims to help create a library that focuses on the unique stories that are from the surrounding city and provide a more community-based approach to the curation of its collection. By curating a library in this manner, the community has direct ownership of the space and collections in it. This would help to promote a sense of belonging and care for the space.

2.4.3. Focusing City Planning Back on People

This thesis will address the conventional ways in which people move through space and challenge those ideals by drawing inspiration from public squares of cities in history. By challenging the standard of city planning and putting people as the priority, a space will be

created meant to encourage gathering and interaction between strangers. This space is meant to provide a sense of connection to the community and the city.

2.4.4. Providing Places to Communicate

This thesis will address the prior uses of public spaces such as the public squares belonging to cities of the past. By creating a modern adaptation of these spaces, the architecture would provide the community with a place to gather and share stories and information that used to happen in public squares. The use of technology in the design would allow for a more permanent opportunity for stories to be kept beyond the temporality of the spoken word. This approach would allow for stories to be shared on a broader scale than traditional storytelling can.

2.5. Future Research and Exploration

In this thesis much of the research conducted is from the Western viewpoint. In future research, other views would be explored to be able to better adapt findings to fit into other communities around the world. As the implementation of the research and interventions for this thesis were designed for a western city, therefore research focused on these perspectives.

For future adaptations and a more detailed design, additional research would be conducted. Topics such as but not limited to libraries, storytelling and documentation, city life, social rules, and archival practices could be explored further. This research would help to create a more specific and detailed design.

Explorations into crime, homelessness, gentrification, displacement of communities, addiction and other issues of the site were considered in preliminary site research but not included as the scope and timeframe of this project was limited and could not properly address them. These are issues that exist around the project's proposed site but could not be properly

addressed or resolved through this design intervention. This research could be included and considered in the design with future research.

3. Methodologies

3.1. Approach

The design for this thesis developed through the exploration of concepts through research, and it was further explored through the selection of site, creation of an artifact, sketches and modeling, precedent and case studies, and development of architectural program. The following sections elaborate on each aspect of the design process.

3.2. Project Location

3.2.1. History of Winnipeg

Winnipeg, Manitoba, as all other cities, has a history that predates the establishment of the municipality. Prior to colonization, many Indigenous communities used this land and called it home such as the Anishinabewaki, Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Michif Piyii (Métis), Cree, Anishininiimowin and others (Native Lands Map, 2021). Fur trade began to influence the area as early as 1738, with the Hudson Bay Company moving to take control in the early 1800's (City of Winnipeg, 2023). Winnipeg officially became a city in 1873, steadily growing in size as the railway systems made their way to the city and almost one hundred years later over a dozen municipalities merged to form the unified City of Winnipeg (City of Winnipeg, 2023). Just as many other large North American Cities, the growth and success of Winnipeg ebbed and flowed with the changes in economy and events such as war (City of Winnipeg, 2023). "Today, Winnipeg continues to be a major commercial, transportation, and cultural center. It is a

multicultural city, enriched by the diverse peoples from across the world that have chosen to make it home." (City of Winnipeg, 2023)

3.2.2. Proposed Site

The Selected site for this design thesis is in downtown Winnipeg, between Carlton Street and Hargrave Street (figure 3). This site Currently has two apartment buildings, parking lots, and active businesses. The apartment buildings are historic architecture but sit in a state of disrepair. Many of the windows and entrances on these buildings are boarded over with signs of vandalism prevalent. The parking lots are accessible from both sides of the block with an alley running through the middle. The lots are undermaintained and lightly used throughout the day. The businesses on the south side are active and regularly visited.
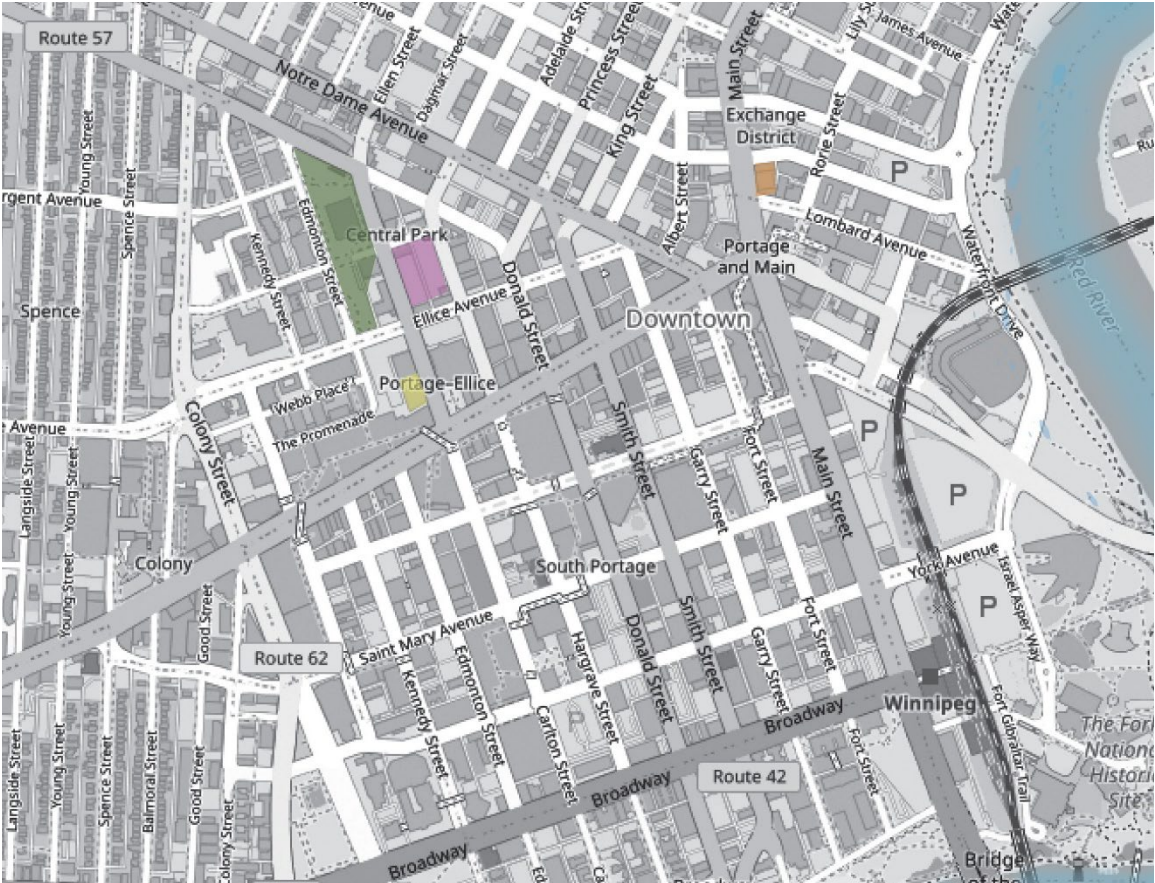

Figure 3 Map of Downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Surrounding the site are many large apartment complexes, ranging in age and popularity. To the northwest is Central Park, a well visited green space. This park has a wide range of activities and was last updated by the city in 2010 (Gruwel, 2019). This area of the city is home to many buildings on the historical registry as well. This area of downtown has close connections to entertainment, dining, shopping, libraries, museums and more.

Winnipeg is a culturally diverse city, attracting people from many different walks of life. According to the 2021 Census, 19.7% of Manitoba's population was immigrants and 27.3% of the population in Winnipeg were immigrants (Government of Canada, 2023). The city attracts many people to move there. The area around the site has a large immigrant population bringing with them their culture and history.

3.3. Site Visits

On several occasions, the city and site were visited in order to gain a better understanding of the site and the use of the space. Winnipeg is a popular destination for people to travel too with many attractions and events. It was noted that the city has an active public bus system that is well utilized and easily accessible from most areas of town.

The site is located north of what was observed to be a more popular area of downtown, but still easily accessible to travel to and from this location. Many buildings in this area are older, both of historic importance and those that predate many of the newer Highrise buildings that are popular in downtown Winnipeg.

Figure 4 Central Park.
Note: 2010 revitalization plan for Central Park. Image courtesy of Scatliff+Miller+Murray, the firm who did the redesign. The proposed site would be in the lower right-hand corner of the image. (Bernhardt, 2019)

People, both individuals and families, leisurely spent time in Central Park (see Figure 4) during the day. The surrounding area has people moving through it with a purpose, not wanting to spend too much time around certain buildings. There are signs of vandalism, addiction, and homelessness in the area. Activity was present in this location at all times of day and evening and throughout the different seasons.

3.4. Artifact

As a part of the research, the creation of an artifact helped to explore concepts and implementation of design ideas. The artifact making process resulted in an interactive experience for viewers.

3.4.1. Story Collection

As this thesis explores the impact of stories and how they can affect the understanding of a city, it was important to collect stories connected to the site to better understand it and its history. When looking at what stories may impact this location specifically, it was determined

that not all stories must originate geographically from the exact site but rather that events and experiences that were important enough and held enough cultural significance would in turn affect the community of the area and the site as well.

When looking for stories, the first avenue of exploration was to look first for local historical images and text. In this process, time was spent in antique stores in Winnipeg, looking for items such as but not limited to photos, photo albums, postcards, letters, newspapers or clippings, journals, etc. These items were collected for later use and exploration into stories of the city of Winnipeg.

The second search for stories happened in the online database of the Manitoba Archives. In looking through their digitized collections, more images and stories were found. Personal journals were helpful in gaining understanding of daily life at different points in the city's history.

The third search happened through books on the history of Winnipeg and Manitoba. Within these texts images with brief descriptions could further obtain more important events in the city's history. Most helpful were a collection of photographs by L.B. Foote, who took photos throughout Winnipeg and would write notes about with the images captured (Jones, 2012).

The search resulted in the collection and curation of seven stories about the area's history. Not all stories were tied directly to any one specific character but were instead important for their impact on the community around them. Each story helps to understand the city's history and how the city developed into what it is today. The stories chosen are not the only ones of importance but were chosen to more broadly represent the Cities history and the people who have lived within it. The stories are about the following events and places: Historic use and ownership by the Indigenous communities of the land that Winnipeg sits on, Central Park, First

Congregational Church, the Free Press Building, the 1919 Strike, Visits of Royalty, and the flooding of the rivers.

3.4.2. Exploration of Ideas

The following sections will give a brief description of the individual items that make up the artifact. This process was iterative and many stories that were originally explored did not make an appearance in the final artifact. The selection of stories used was chosen to provide a broad understanding of events that happened in Winnipeg. The concept for the artifact could be expanded further to include more stories, but due to time constraints the following seven stories were chosen and turned into books.

3.4.2.1. Creation of the Books

After the collection of the stories for the artifact, each story was written into a brief narrative. This narrative gave the viewers text from which they could build a story. Next images were found that fit to help tell the stories. All images were from Winnipeg's History, helping to ground the stories in reality. The information was then compiled into different books that visually had ties to each of the stories. How the books were designed, how they unfolded, and even the color palette were chosen to help support the stories written within the books.

The stories that were created are fiction based on historical events and photos. Photos were used to illustrate an idea but may not directly depict the story told in the book. Each story is centered around a location or piece of architecture that is tied to a historical event or space. When considering if it was necessary to use a completed historic event exactly as it has been documented, it was decided that the narratives could be better related to by connecting images of people to them. When possible, stories were told how they are documented.

Figure 5 Ledger Book
Note: This book contains examples of traditional ledger art, found historical images, and art.

3.4.2.2. Ledger Book

The first of the seven books is about the Indigenous community that had historically used the land the City of Winnipeg sits. This book is bound by a single pin, allowing for the contents to spin around a single point. The book is modeled after old ledger books, that historically were used by Indigenous peoples to create ledger art (Figure 5). Ledger art is defined by Kelley as:

A type of narrative art developed by Plains Indian people and was popular from the 1860s through 1920s. Plains artists traditionally painted on buffalo hide; however, the

buffalo eradication program by the US government in the 1800s made buffalo

increasingly scarce. Plains artists began using paper as the canvas for their narrative

designs: artists often used ledger books, the portability of which were ideal for the

nomadic Plains lifestyle. (Kelley, 2023)

Examples of ledger art and current Indigenous artists were included in the book along with

photos and ledger pages that were created based on names of people found in existing books in

archives.

3.4.2.3. *Central Park book*

The second book is about Central Park. The story of Central Park focuses heavily on the

fountain that is still located in the space and the woman it was created to honor, Emily Waddel

(1908). She put a stipulation in her will that if her husband wanted to remarry after her death her

husband would have to build the fountain in her honor in the park worth $10,000 (Gruwel,

2019). The book also covers different activities that could have happened around the park

throughout the years, helping to show the evolution of the park around the fountain. This book is

centered around a popup image of the fountain, just as the stories within the park are centered

around it.

3.4.2.4. *First Congregational Church Book*

The third book is about the First Congregational Church and events that may have

happened within it. The First Congregational Church was demolished in the 1930s, leaving

behind little documentation and displacing its congregation (Manitoba Historic Society, 2024).

The book cover has a rose window, one of the few described architectural elements found about

the building (Figure 6). The book unfolds in the form of a cross, with each branch depicting

different events that would have taken place in the building.

Figure 6 First Congregational Church
Note: The cover of this book is an imagining of the rose window that may have been in the demolished church.

3.4.2.5. *Winnipeg Free Press Book*

The fourth Book is about the Winnipeg Free Press and the impact is had on the city though what it published. The Winnipeg Free Press book is created from newspapers. The outside consists of a collage of newspapers, representing all the additions the Free press has created. The interior of the book is made from a centennial copy of the newspaper that was purchased. Within the found newspaper, different articles and headlines are highlighted to represent the different events that the newspaper may have impacted the city's history, ranging from writers selling fake stories to politically skewed coverage of events.

3.4.2.1. *1919 Strike Book*

The fifth book covers the story of the 1919 strike, The book about the 1919 strike is made from aged metal, representing the steel workers who were a part of the strike (Kingwell &

Figure 7 1919 Strike
Note: This book depicts those who would have been a part of the strike.

Moore, 1999, p112-113) (Figure 7). Within it, the pages unfold, and the story follows through

the weeks events that led up to Bloody Saturday. The book covers the viewpoint of those who

were on strike, looking for livable wages and good working conditions (Kingwell & Moore,

1999, p112-113).

3.4.2.2. Flooding Rivers Book

The seventh book is about the Red and Assiniboine rivers. The book on the rivers shows

how water can change and damage the city. The book was water damaged and colored to show

the different flood levels in the area around the rivers. The historical flood images tell of the

many different times the floods have impacted the city (Figure 8). Floods damage the city and its

architecture but, in the past, brought life and revitalization to the land. The book unfolds and

Figure 8 Rivers Flooding
Note: This book depicts the effects of the flooding of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.

represents the rivers moving through the city. The story was created using images taken from

different floods throughout the city's history.

3.4.2.3. Audio

The idea of audio was explored through the creation of soundscapes. Each story had its

own sounds to help ground the viewer in each of the various locations. The audio consisted of

sounds one may find in each location and helped to transition the listener through the different

settings. Audio was used to call back to the oral tradition of storytelling throughout history.

3.4.2.4. Map

Finally, a map was created to help the viewers spatially understand where the stories took

place even if they had never entered the city of Winnipeg before. The Map was drawn on fabric

from a historical map of the city. The area of downtown Winnipeg was centered on the map, as all the stories revolved around the area. The map was simple in design with no labels given. The map was made from fabric to allow it to fall over the edge of a table and the lines were tapered off, so the map eased into the blank edges.

Each of the stories' locations was marked on the map using different colors. Each story had a specific location except the story of the Indigenous community, since this story is about the area the is located on in general, there was not a singular space dedicated to ground this story. The other stories are tied to a color on the map that ties back to a color found in the books through different materials used to make them. The sites on the map are marked through the use of embroidery or a different fabric.

3.4.3. Final Artifact

The artifact was displayed for viewers to experience at the Memorial Union Gallery on North Dakota State University campus (Figures 9 and 10). During this show, users were encouraged to move and open and close books. By the viewers participating in the artifact, the ideas behind its creation were explored. Only once the viewer interacted with all the parts could they have the full understanding that the artifact curated. The viewer had a better understanding of the city of Winnipeg and empathy for those the stories were about. The overlapping of the unfolded books demonstrated how stories are woven together throughout time and can be tied together in the city today. The viewer had a unique experience, dictated by what order they interacted with the different books. This is a representation of how everyone has a unique experience in life, many may follow the same path, but each has a different experience.

Through viewing these selected stories, the idea that stories of a place can help one to better understand the city, was explored. By considering that when one is looking through the lens of history, the more information one has the better they understand the place. The idea of layering stories was explored by allowing for the viewer to interact with and open the books and overlap the pages.

Figure 9 Artifact Displayed in the Gallery.
Note: The artifact was curated as a part of a larger gallery show to highlight the developments made through the exploration of ideas and concepts.

Figure 10 Artifact Displayed in the Gallery (2)
Note: as the viewer interacted with the artifact books and their stories would begin to overlap and interact with each other.

<center>**3.5. Precedents**</center>

Diverse types of precedents were looked at to better understand the concepts of architecture and how they would apply to the design. Both conceptual and architectural inspiration will be covered in this section.

3.5.1. Literary Exploration of Cities

This section will Explore two literary Precedents.

3.5.1.1. Lancaster/Hanover Masque

One precedent that was used was John Hejduk's Lancaster/Hanover Masque found in Mask of Medusa (Hejduk & Shkapich, 1989). In this masque, he creates three parts. The first are two lists, one for object and the other for subject. His list of objects is about various places in the village, his second list is about the people of the village (Hejduk & Shkapich, 1989). Hejduk writes a description for each, allowing the viewer to take the pieces of information and begin to connect them with other items on the list. The second part is again two lists once again broken into object and subject, but this list consists of actions, providing a theatrical element to the masque (Hejduk & Shkapich, 1989). This set of lists allows for the viewer to connect people and places to actions, bringing the village of the masque to life. The third item is a number of drawings, related to the objects and subjects, architectural in style, further allowing for connections to be made between the objects and subjects (Hejduk & Shkapich, 1989). In this manner, Hejduk gives the viewer bits and pieces of the story and leaves the connections to be made directly by the viewer observing and studying all three portions of the masque. Hejduk provides pieces of information so that the reader can build for themselves the town in their imagination. Hejduk's Masque Highlights how people interact with the world today. People

<center>30</center>

gather information through their experiences in daily life, and from that interpret the pieces of information to better understand the world.

3.5.1.2. *Uncharted Tides*

Another approach to view stories and history is through the creation of a literary map introduced by Angeliki Sioli (Sioli, 2017). By telling stories of a place over time, one can begin to build up a better understanding of a place. In her essay "Uncharted tides," she builds a map of Saint Petersburg by layering several narratives over a period ranging from 1824 to 1916 (Sioli, 2017). This map shows the "lived experience" of Saint Petersburg. The layering of stories tells of landmarks in the city and events happening that have helped make the city as it is today (Sioli, 2017). By viewing a city through the many different stories of that place, one can begin to gain a fuller understanding of space and those who have moved through it.

Through the concepts of Sioli stories were explored through the creation of the artifact, a literary map of Winnipeg. This practice helped to create a deeper understanding of the artifact and benefited the proposed design.

3.5.2. Real World Implementation of Ideas

Through the exploration of a similar conceptual practice, success and interest of users can be gauged.

3.5.2.1. *Human Library*

The Human Library is a not-for-profit organization that operates as a learning platform to help with diversity and inclusion (The Human Library Organization, 2024). Created in Denmark in 2000, The Human Library helps to create spaces internationally to promote and open dialogue about Diversity, equity, and inclusion (The Human Library Organization, 2024). This organization works by creating events where "open books" or people with different stories and

backgrounds about their life and culture, can be borrowed for discussions (The Human Library Organization, 2024). This allows for others to participate in open conversations and learn about perspectives and experiences outside of their own.

The concepts of the Human Library align with the ideas of this thesis. By looking at the success of this organization as working proof of concept, it is clear that there is need and want for these opportunities in cities around the world. This thesis works to translate this practice into an architectural space.

3.5.3. Buildings of Inspiration

The implementation of concepts studied from existing architecture helped to make the intended results in the Final design. The Study of portions of these buildings helped to gauge if ideas could be executed and understood easily by the viewer.

Figure 11 National Museum of African American History and Culture
Note: The double Façade with curated views of the Mall in Washington D.C. Image by Alan Karchmer (Mena, 2019)

3.5.3.1. The National Museum of African American History and Culture

The National Museum of African American History and Culture is located in Washinton D.C. and was observed as a case study. The building has many key design aspects, but the Façade was explored in research for this thesis. The façade consists of an inner layer consisting of glass and an outer decorative bronze lattice (Mena, 2019). The decorative lattice gives the building a dynamic façade, creating a unique architectural design compared to the buildings that surround it. The lattice itself changes in density throughout the building allowing for the curation of different views for those that are within the building (Figure 11). In doing so, the architecture itself is directing the viewers' attention by blocking views and opening to others at different key points.

This dynamic façade provided inspiration for the architectural design. The architecture successfully guides the viewers' attention to curated views at various locations within the museum. It allows the viewer to draw connections to the spaces that exist around the museum that have ties back to the history and stories held within.

3.5.3.2. Qaumajuq

The Inuit Art Centre, Qaumajuq, is the newest addition to the Winnipeg Art Gallery, located in downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba (Micheal Maltzan Architecture, 2024). This addition was created to join with the already existing unique architecture of the gallery. The main entrance of the Qaumajuq is home to interactive archives that allow for the viewer to see items that when stored in a typical archive setting would not be visible to the public (Micheal Maltzan Architecture, 2024). The unique three-story glass vault is coupled with a touch screen database, which allows viewers to see items up close and get more information on them (Micheal Maltzan Architecture, 2024) (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Visible Vault at Qaumajuq
Note: the vault was a part of the addition to the Winnipeg art gallery. Image by Lindsay Reid (WAG, 2023)

Inspiration was taken and expanded on for the final design of this thesis. While viewing the archives in the Qaumajuq, one was left to wonder what it would be like to enter the space within the archive. The final design allows the viewer to have these experiences by entering a similar space.

3.6. Sketches & Modeling

After the completion of the artifact, Ideas and concept were developed through the use of sketching and mass modeling. A series of images were created to help support the leading ideas and developed around the organization of use and spaces for the final design. Quick mass models were made to help understand ideas in three-dimensional space.

3.7. Space & Program

The proposed program was centered around the act of storytelling. The building was organized with the most public spaces on the ground floor of the building and the most private spaces on the top floor. Considerations were made to include storytelling in as many variations as possible, so spaces to tell stories orally, written, recorded, through art and many other media were included. Spaces were included for safekeeping and display of stories of different media. People are welcomed to share their story in whatever media they feel comfortable with, written, audio, video, art, etc. These entries would then be added to the collections of the library for others to view and learn from.

Along with storytelling, spaces were designed to encourage interaction. Several sizes of group spaces, both public and private, were incorporated into the building. These spaces were designed to be flexible, so that they could fit the needs of the community. The building would also provide spaces for artists and local venders to be able to display their work and interact with the community.

4. Results and Conclusion

The following sections will cover the resulting architectural intervention in consideration of the research and methods covered in this thesis.

4.1. Final Project Description

The Living Library is a proposed intervention for the community of downtown Winnipeg. The Living Library is a place for stories to live in all points of time, past, present, and future. The building is a place for communities to come together, learn and share about one another and the city they live in.

4.2. Project Objective

4.2.1. Beter Understanding of Place

The Proposed design promotes a better understanding of place by collecting stories from the city and allowing them to be easily accessible. The building contains spaces to collect stories in different media and houses them for users to view on their own or as a group. The building encourages the creation and documentation of stories to further its collections and the community's understanding of the city and its residents.

4.2.2. Storytelling Through Architecture

The building design addresses storytelling on many levels. The façade dictates and informs views from within the building. The Vertical archives create a unique experience for those who are within them, allowing the user to participate in a dynamic interactive display. The building provides several different spaces for stories to be told ranging from an open theater, art gallery, and private workspaces. The community-based design promotes the creation of new stories and encourages users to participate in them.

4.2.3. Reimagined Public Square

The building reimagines the ideas of public squares, recreating how they were used in cities throughout history. The design creates large communal spaces that allows for people to use them for however long they want to stay, they can pass through the ground level, moving from one place to another, stay and gather as a group to talk, listen to a presentation in the open theater, or shop the market spaces. The mixed-use of this building is akin to the uses of public squares, recreating the connections of community they once held.

4.2.4. Connection Between Strangers

The building provides many spaces to encourage interaction and communication between users. The spaces range in size and levels of participation, allowing for people to use the space at their own comfort level. Connections are encouraged through interactions based around storytelling in all its forms.

4.3. Project Design

4.3.1. Site

The choice to use this site was based first on location and second on the disuse of the space for its existing purpose. The use of this site would remove several parking lots. This choice was made since the existing lots were lightly used and there is ample street parking and other areas to park nearby. The existing public transport system services the area, providing easy access for those without a car. Additional changes to the existing site would include the removal of the alley and two apartment complexes on the north side of the space. The removal of the apartment complex was due to their current state of disrepair. This site also has several businesses on the south side of the site that were to be left as is.

The site would be surrounded by public sidewalks that provide a straight path around the site. The primary areas of the outdoor portions of the site would be paved with a permeable paver system creating an open multi-use space without the typical narrow dictated paths of city green spaces, allowing for freedom of movement. This system would create a level space for movement while still allowing for grass or other ground cover to grow between the pavers. Along the exterior of the site planters, green space and trees can be found. The green space helps encourage people to move into the site along the pavers and ties to the greenspace of Central Park located adjacent to the site. The green space could be used however people would like, such as picnics, group activities, events etc.
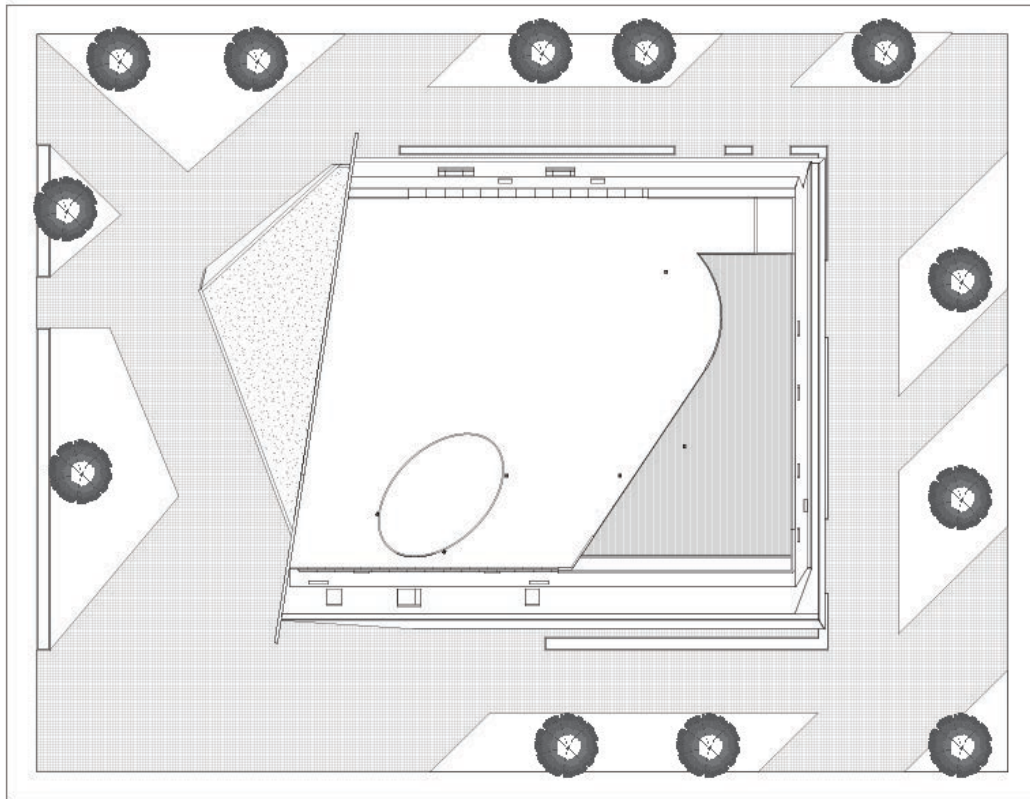

Figure 13 Proposed Building Site Map
Note: The surrounding site promotes freedom of movement without restricting access for visitors and people passing thought the site.
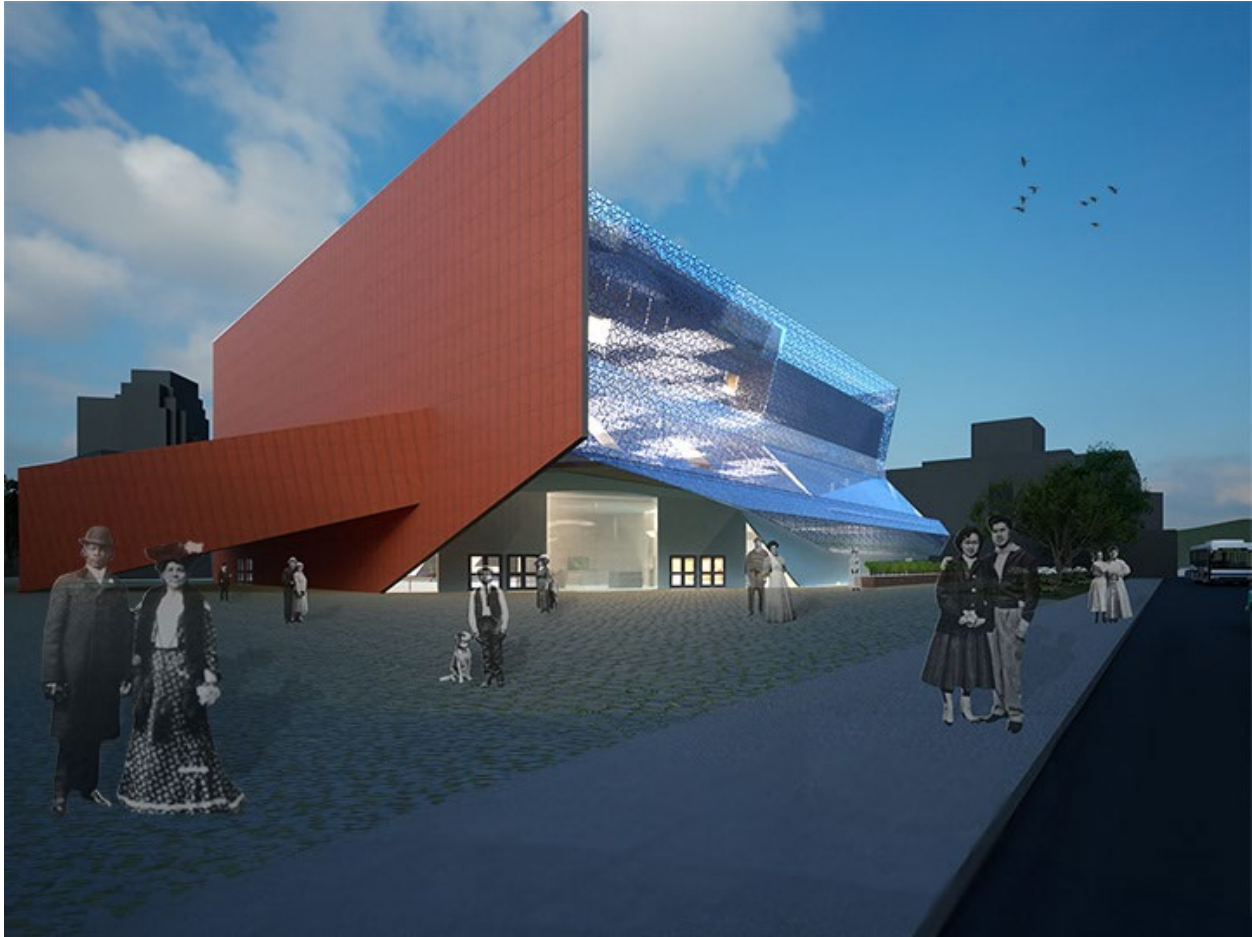
Figure 14 View from the Northwest of the Main Entrance
Note: The image shows the north façade of Corten steel, the double façade and main entrance. This viewpoint would be that of someone entering the site from Central Park.

4.3.2. Building Exterior

The ground level of the building includes many points of access to allow people to come from any direction into the building easily. The main entrance, located on the northwest corner directly addresses people who would be entering from Central Park (Figure 14). The building has a double façade on three sides (Figure 15). The interior portion of this façade consists of large expanses of glass and textured site cast concrete. The Second layer is a decorative metal panel system that sits away from the interior. The Metal panel façade obscures the users view from the interior out, without fully blocking it. At selected locations, metal panels were removed to give

clear views, curated to show stories related to the city (Figure 16). At each of these viewpoints, a plaque with information would be placed for the users to be able to learn about what they are seeing and would contain a QR code to link them to items in the collections about the view. These views could be added or removed by taking away or adding panels to the façade in the future.

The north façade is made from Corten steel panels (figure 14). Corten as a building material was chosen as it directly shows the passing of time though the oxidation of the material. This visual representation of the passing of time helps to ground the building in its space and shows that it has existed on the site for a time. The Corten façade also helps to ground the users in as they move in and around the building. The material is both on the exterior and interior of the northern wall, helping to orient users within the space. The physical and visual weight of this wall function as an anchor within the space.
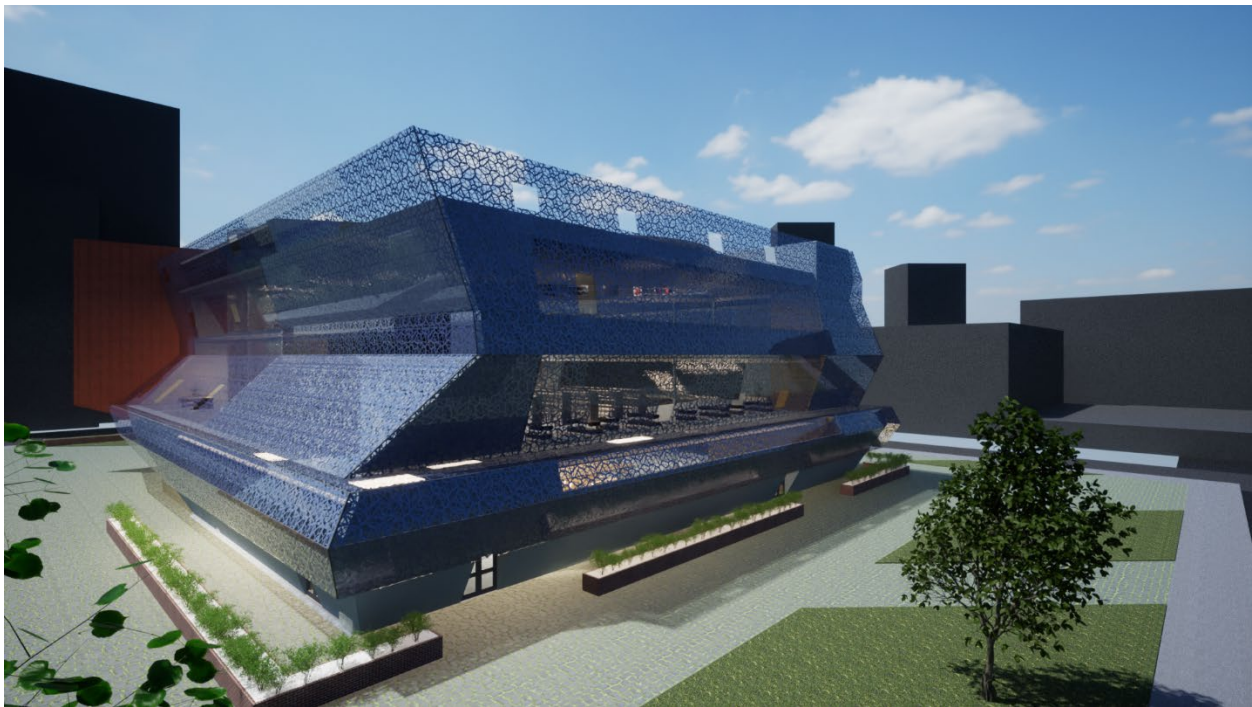

Figure 15 Double Façade
Note: view of the double facade of the south side of the building

Figure 16 Viewpoint of Central Park
Note: This is one example of the viewpoints that would be located throughout the building. Each spot would have a plaque that provides the viewer with information about the curated view.

Figure 17 Main Entrance
Note: shows the approach to the main entrance. The Vertical Archives peak through the façade.

At the main entrance, the two different facades meet and lift away from the ground (Figure 17). This design aspect creates interest drawing people into and under the façade to move into the building. The vertical archives also cut through the exterior between the main doors of the ground level. This action provides a point of intrigue for people outside of the building, allowing a glimpse into the space.

4.3.3. Building Program

The building includes space for communities to gather and interact, the collection and creation of stories, and the shift in use of space to be centered around people.

4.3.3.1. Organization

The overall organization of the program and spaces of the building is based on how public or private a space and its activities are. The most open and public spaces are located on the ground level of the library and begin to become more private as the user moves up through the floors. Most spaces are flexible and were created to accommodate many diverse types of activities.

4.3.3.2. First Floor

As people enter the building, they enter a modern interpretation of the public squares of cities past (Figure 18). This floor holds a market space (Figure 19), seating for people to gather, a multi-use community room, access to the vertical archives, and an open theater space. This floor encourages users to stop and spend as much time as they would like to, whether they stay to experience a presentation in the theater, browsing the venders' stalls, or simply passing through the building on their way to a different location. This floor is open to those above, allowing for users to get a glimpse of the activities taking place at different levels of the buildings.

Figure 18 The Public Square Reimagined
Note: The main floor of the Living Library acts as a reimagining of the public square. This space provides places for people to gather and share information.

Figure 19 Market Space
Note: Vender stalls would be available for different small businesses to be in the living Library. Vendors could include artists, Cafes, and services of entrepreneurs of the community.

Figure 20 View from the Second Floor
Note: The second-floor houses collections of stories and public places for viewing them. This floor allows for the users of the building to see down into the public square below.

4.3.3.3. Second and Third Floors

Moving to the second and third floors, they house the main collections. On these floors, the users are encouraged to browse items within the collection and use the provided spaces to view and learn about stories. The second floor has a large opening over the open theater and portions of the public space of the ground floor, allowing for users to be able to view events from this floor (Figure 20). The second floor provides more group spaces to interact, with open seating and larger group rooms that could be used for teaching and learning opportunities, events, or group research into different stories.

The third floor provides several smaller spaces where people can have a more private experience in the building (Figure 21). These small viewing rooms would also double as spaces for stories to be recorded and entered into the archives. This floor is separated into two offset

Figure 21 Private Viewing Rooms
Note: The third floor provides a series of more private viewing spaces that could be used to look at existing collection items or to create new additions.

floor planes. This creates various levels of separation from others on these floors while allowing

for views of other floors and activities below.

4.3.3.4. Fourth Floor

The fourth floor is designed to be the most private of the spaces. On this floor, the viewer

will be able to experience the gallery (Figure 22). This gallery would allow for local artists who

may not have the opportunity to yet show in larger spaces, with the opportunity to be represented

in a professional setting. This floor also features an offset floor plane that allows for the most

private of gather spaces to be separated from the gallery. This floor also has an outdoor patio that

could be used by guests on a nice day or to hold more intimate events for the community.

Figure 22 View of the Gallery
Note: The fourth floor houses the gallery space and the most private spaces. This floor allows users to see down into the floors below.

Figure 23 Pinning Archives
Note: the overhead shot shows the Vertical archives pinning the building and its activities in place.

4.3.3.5. *Vertical Archives*

The vertical archives act as a pin for the building to operate around (Figure 23). The Vertical archives are the only spaces that is experienced the same on each level in the building. This space is visually consistent through the use of location and material throughout the building. This space and its use provides a consistent experience as they move throughout the building and its dynamic spaces. The archives are made from translucent Concrete blocks to create a visual separation of spaces while still hinting at what is beyond the wall itself. The use of this material creates a ghosted view of what is on the other side by allowing light and shadow to penetrate through. This material reminds the user that even though we cannot always see the effects a story may have on a place; they are important to the understanding of that place.

When entering the Vertical archives, the user will move into a more confined experience. As one enters, they will first notice the visual separation from the rest of the building through use

Figure 24 Inside the Vertical Archives
Note: The Vertical Archives house a dynamic collection of items for viewers to explore.

of material. The user will then notice the audible separation from the rest of the building. The more muted experience of the Vertical Archive allows the viewer to designate this space from others in the building, connecting each of the various levels of the archive as one continued space, despite having to move along an indirect path throughout the building's floors to experience the next level within the archive.

The archives would house a dynamic collection of items and stories to be viewed. Items could range from audios, videos, items of note, art, and so on. By keeping the collections within the Vertical archives changing regularly, visitors are encouraged to visit and encounter this space often. This space would evoke a sense of curiosity, drawing people to enter it.

4.4. Future development of design

This design solution could be further developed in the future by addressing the gaps in research and adapting for different locations. This future application could be modified to address other community concerns to strengthen the community it is within. By addressing viewpoints from around the world on what communities want and need, resulting libraries can be made to better suit the people it would serve.

4.5. Conclusion

This thesis proposed a design solution for the community of downtown Winnipeg. This intervention addresses the changes in community and public spaces of cities today. By creating spaces that encourage communication, interaction, and storytelling, communities and the people within the can be brought closer together. This thesis examines how through the use of story, a community can more fully understand their city and how it has been shaped into what it is today.

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