



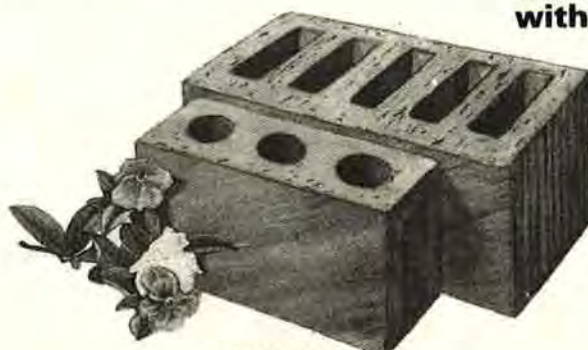
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JOURNAL OF THE NATAL PROVINCIAL INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
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PARCELS & BOUNDARIES

DURBAN CITY COUNCIL CONSERVATION AWARDS, 1989

The following awards by the Durban City Council were recently announced:

41 Cedar Road

— for the recycling and restoration of an important suburban National Monument being a Victorian villa featuring a gabled veranda

Quadrant House, 114-117 Victoria Embankment

— for the recycling and refurbishment of a significant corner building in an embankment setting and a fine decorative example of the Mediterranean Revival style.

303 and 309 Florida Road

— for the restoration and recycling of a significant pair of Berea villas complementing a remarkable Edwardian group in a garden setting which form part of a set of gabled veranda buildings unique in the country.

Queen Bridge Mosque, 21-25 North Coast Road

— for the continued care and maintenance of an important landmark and cultural symbol.

Lewis House, 9 and 11 Hampden Road

— for the recycling of a charming pair of semi-detached houses with front timber verandas.

Colombo Tea and Coffee, 465 West Street

— for the determined survival of a commercial remnant suggestive of Edwardian West Street.

Standard Bank, 114-116 Commercial Road

— for the continued care and maintenance of a four-storey city-centre building in the Union Classical style.

Livingstone Primary School

— for the continued care and maintenance of a notable school group in the Union style with tiled roof, pavilions and verandas.

St Thomas' Church, 195 Musgrave Road

— for the continued care and maintenance of an historic and religious landmark of the late Victorian period in the Gothic Revival style.



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PRACTICE NOTICES

CHANGES IN PARTNERSHIPS

W.M. Pickering is now practising under the style of William Murray Pickering Associates, PO Box 174, Westville. Stucke Harrison O'Shea & Partners is now styled Stucke Harrison Architects, C.A.V. Marinier is now a partner in Luis Ferreira da Silva at 33 Overport Drive, Durban.

D. McLagan is now practising on his own account under the style of Duncan McLagan Architect.

J.H. Royal and A. Skordis have entered into partnership under the style of Skordis Royal Architects, PO Box 37213, Overport.

P.T. Hoal is now practising on his own account under the style of Peter T. Hoal Architect at 15 Montcalm Road, Morningside, Durban.

G.F.W. Elphick and N.M. Proome have entered into partnership under the style of Elphick Proome Architects at 460 Ridge Road, Durban (previously at 144 Clarence Road).

B.R. McLaren is no longer a partner in McLaren Alcock Bedford but will continue with the firm as a consultant. R.J. Hardie and R.D. Morton have dissolved their partnership. Mr Hardie is practising on his own account under the style of Roy Hardie Architect at his previous address, and Mr Morton under the style of R. Morton Architect at 18 Rockdale Avenue, Westville.

The partnership of Price and Hackner has been dissolved.

CHANGES IN ADDRESS

P.J. Kerwan to HMM Architects & Planners, PO Box 373, Maseru 100, Lesotho.

D. Christer to c/o Franklin Garland

Gibson, 600 Standard House, Smith Street, Durban.

M. Hackner to 45 Rouken Glen, 381 Musgrave Road, Durban.

M. McKinlay (Joubert Owens van Niekerk Inc) to 1st Floor, Deloitte Building, 181 Berg Street, Pietermaritzburg.

D.W. van Heerden (Derek van Heerden Architect) to 56 Glade Road, Roseglen.

T.H. Smuts-Erasmus to Suite 14 Granada Centre, Chartwell Drive, Umhlanga Rocks.

R.A.W. Lavine to 27A Winston Road, Kloof.

N. du Preez to c/o ZAI — NOD, Private Bag A273, Maseru 100.

G.D.J. Wessels to PO Box 1739, Empangeni.

M.A. Pellegrini to Suite 1020 Maritime House, Salmon Grove, Durban.

K.I. Macgarry to 45 Glenwood Drive, Durban.

C.H.D. Howes to PO Box 3478, Durban.

J.A.K. Hope to 24 Kentucky Drive, Virginia.

R.W. Clifford to 15 Walker Street, Pietermaritzburg.

W.W. Scherer (Scherer Moull & Levick) to 22 Prospect Road, Stellawood Park.

J.E. Gourley (James E. Gourley) to 48 Clair Avenue, Manor Gardens, Durban.

NEW MEMBERS

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A.D. Hart (Ordinary) Suite 352, 101 Victoria Embankment, Durban.

T.G. Watkins (Ordinary) PO Box 22104, Glenashley.

K.H.P. Hold-Damant (Miss) (AnT)

22 Santa Monica, 158 Innes Road, Morningside.

S.R. Pratt (AnT) 259 Gray Park, Brighton Beach.

C.S. Sweby (AnT) 91 Anleno Road, Montclair.

RESIGNATIONS

S. Price.

DECEASED

E.A. Seirlis.

LETTER

SOME RESONANCE

Congratulations on your International Edition issue 3/1989 and in particular "A Tale of Two Cities". A bit of sanity amongst all the post-modern and other fashions that have been expressing society's vacuity.

A small criticism: the photographs could be improved, especially the printing thereof.

Yours faithfully,
VOS NAUDÉ, Johannesburg.

Thanks for the letter,
your comments have been noted.
Editor.

EDITORIAL

As you read this, there are numerous individuals, committees, developers and public bodies eyeing the vacant tracts of land around the Durban CBD. The Point, Esplanade, Centrum, the Drive-In site, block AK and the Warwick triangle are all the subject of proposals by students, architects, developers and schemers. The recent presentation of the City's proposals for the Centrum and Drive-In sites and the SATS proposal for the Esplanade, and the reactions from those present, suggest there is less than unanimity as to what should be built on the sites and the mechanism for their disposal.

The issues are complex; nevertheless, in the end, as architects, we are going to have to design buildings on these sites and we should be sure that the concerns that touch us have been dealt with — in particular the qualitative aspects of the spaces and places that these buildings will eventually define.

Some of the issues are touched on in the following pages. It is hoped that they will stimulate the current debate and lead to the conscious design of good public spaces — so that their occurrence is not just a happy accident, and major works of architecture are not the surprise package they sometimes tend to be.



Recent developments by the cities of Durban and Pietermaritzburg suggest a new awareness by the two local authorities of the need to improve the quality of our city spaces. The same cannot always be said of the main players in the game of city building — the developer and his architect. Like gifts from a distant relative, their parcels come to us in expensive wrapping but generally don't fit the wardrobe. The real problem is how to co-ordinate these disparate private actions in a way that one can be sure of improving the quality of the public domain.



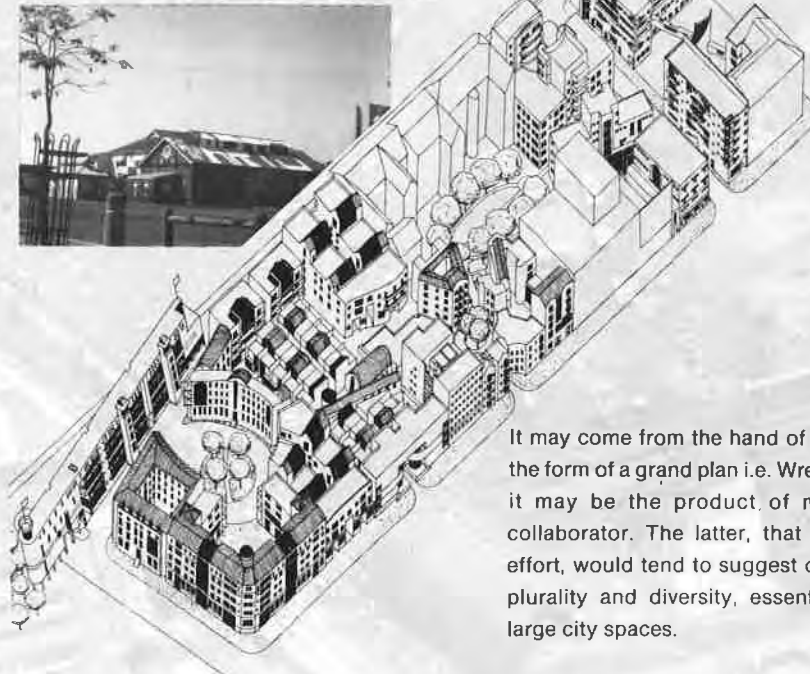
MASTERING THE MASTERPLAN

While Durban is shaping itself into a 21st century city, the continuing neglect of planners, architects and politicians to consider the city's coherent growth as an essential issue in terms of form (quality of space) and function (layering of activities) is disturbing to say the least.

The residential component in planning proposals for the urban wastelands near the Durban CBD are at present very limited, and consequently the pressure put on transport systems to mobilise the workforce is enormous and the urban environment has suffered. Durban is a place where everyone commutes, it is a car city, subservient to the demands of convenience and accessibility. Radiating freeways, 5-laned streets, parkades, bus and taxi ranks are the criteria for change and development. Roads come before buildings, which come before pedestrian space, when in the fact the total reverse is required.

It is necessary for the profession to assert its influences wherever possible to ensure that the polemic surrounding urban development concerns itself primarily with architecture.

To date the potential of such activity has been employed mainly in conservational matters. Durban's old railway station was saved but is now isolated from its train shed and is further from public access. The less prominent Radio House facade was lost and so was the opportunity to demonstrate that the preservation and healing process is very necessary if new developments are to have any relevance at all.



In order to avert further fragmentation and discontinuity a co-ordinated effort is required so that the honourable individual efforts of those making buildings will be an integral part of an overall coherent scheme of things.

How is this to happen? It may well be in the form of conceptual masterplans or frameworks which can identify important building lines and masses, public spaces, pedestrian routes etc. Building design proposals could then express an awareness of urban contribution that relate to existing and future infrastructures.

It may come from the hand of one designer in the form of a grand plan i.e. Wren, Nash, etc., or it may be the product of more than one collaborator. The latter, that of a combined effort, would tend to suggest opportunities of plurality and diversity, essential qualities of large city spaces.

Furthermore, by considering the scale divisions of a building, urban block, and ultimately the city, new proposals can take on the proportions of historical growth by identifying the appropriate component scale.

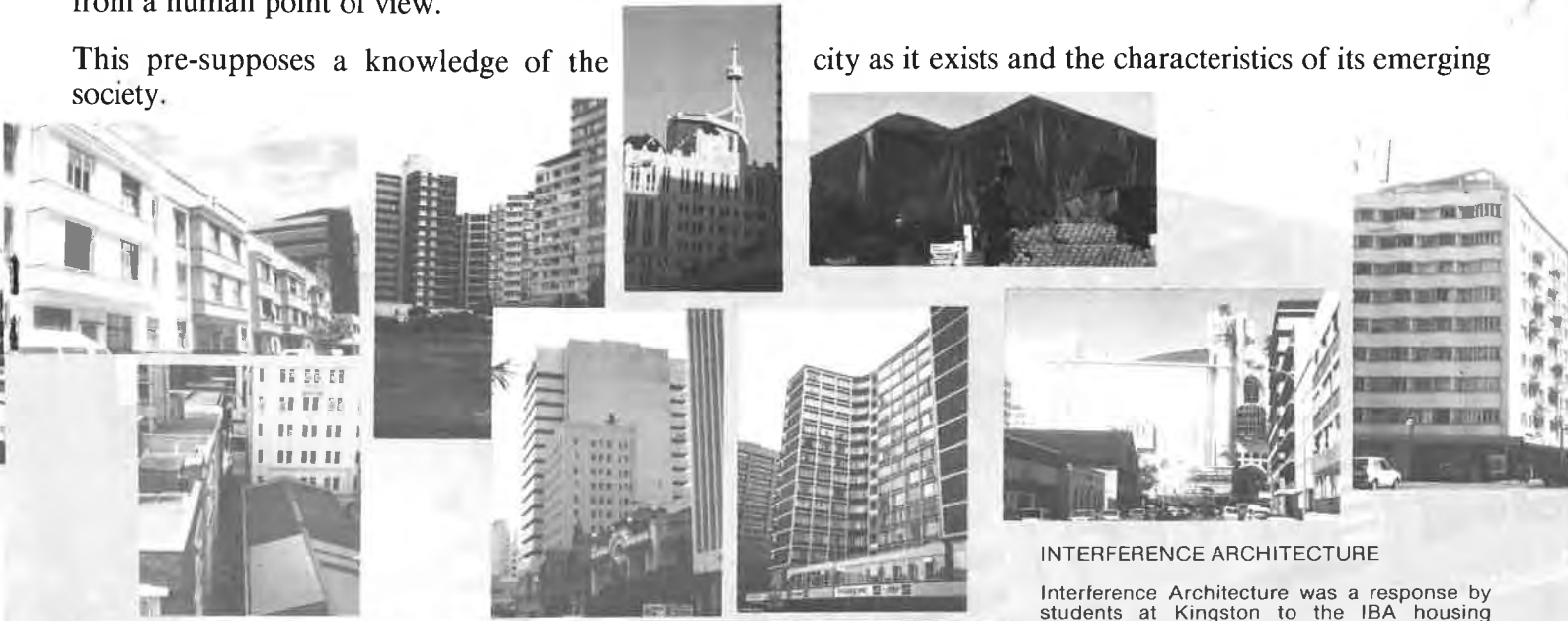
Alternatively the concept plan may be controlled by one designer. This has mostly led to systematic rationality and ordering systems that regulate spatial experiences and deny the intensity of juxtaposition.

In short then, the more pieces, the more interesting the puzzle becomes.

A precondition to this notion is the need for a common vision of the future — a vision that is the answer to the fundamental question of "what is desirable"; what shall we build in any given place; what would be the best from a human point of view.

This pre-supposes a knowledge of the society.

city as it exists and the characteristics of its emerging



INTERFERENCE ARCHITECTURE

Interference Architecture was a response by students at Kingston to the IBA housing projects in Berlin. The original IBA groundplan identified over 150 competition sites for new construction. These locations were mainly barren city blocks with isolated surviving pre-war buildings.

In most cases the IBA projects have been designed by one architect — repetitive and extruded perimeter blocks have resulted. Only in the cases where the competition winners (Krier/Kollhoff) have produced a conceptual masterplan and then invited guest designers to realise allocated subdivisions do the projects achieve a sense of street scale or Alexander's concept of a "Growing Whole".

An interesting event took place between two new schemes on adjacent sites, by Douglas Clelland and Mario Maedesbach respectively.

These two architects had mutually agreed to a meeting, to divulge each other's proposals and progress. To Clelland's horror the adjacent scheme had incorporated double-storey windows into its street elevation, which was completely disproportionate to his own. After unsuccessful attempts to persuade his counterpart to alter his facade, Clelland was forced to compromise his own design and regroup his windows to imply the double storey.

The potential of a group design interacting across party walls became the main theme in the interference architecture project.

Nine students were invited to participate over six workshop sessions. The first meeting required the attendance of the student along with a building proposal, a blank sheet of paper over the existing site plan and a felt tip pen. Each student made a verbal application for site position and indicated this by means of a relative mark on the site overlay. Slowly a boundary plan evolved, party walls were defined and spatial relationships became apparent.

Once again there had been no preconceived masterplan determining the arrangements.

At each workshop the students would compare their proposals with neighbouring schemes and a series of interaction and compromise sequences took place until the sixth session was complete and the project drawn up. What was being defined was a process whereby an overall whole could be divided into diverse yet coherent components.

The open spaces around Durban's CBD are real opportunities to explore other such options which, if taken, could substantially contribute towards a coherent urban development.

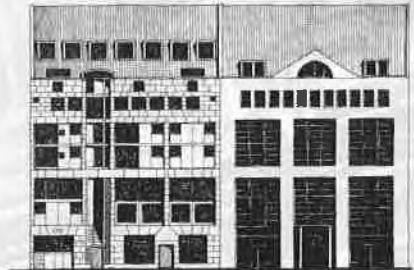
There can be no universal laws which govern masterplans, each location has its own specific requirements. The following schemes describe two occasions where the interaction of creative minds operating in terms of a defined strategy have produced rich framework plans.

GROWING WHOLES

In Christopher Alexander's recent publication "A New Theory of Urban Design" an understanding of "growing wholes" is offered to students participating in a scheme for a large waterside development in San Francisco. There is no masterplan, no preconception, no contrived ordering, only a single over-riding observation that "every increment of construction must be made in such a way as to heal the city (heal — make whole) it must create a continuous structure of wholes around itself." The over-riding rule is then made clearer and simpler through seven intermediate rules. The theory was then tested.

Each student was required to make a total of six proposals (3 large, 3 small), each proposal had to consider what had preceded it and what existed, the whole also providing for future continuity.

The first incorporated proposal was for a gatehouse leading into the project area, this implied an axial road which was then consolidated by buildings along it. Behind these buildings a courtyard was established which in turn provided the setting for an hotel and coffee bar. Further into the site an urban square was established and this generated its own local hierarchies and so the project carried on until there had been over 90 individual proposals (incremental growths). The site being unable to accommodate any further installations was therefore complete.



A feature of our city today is its incompleteness, fragmentariness and non-finiteness. Every building in the city has to deal with these pre-conditions and in turn will be ambiguous in itself, trying to come to terms with the absence of simple hierarchical relationships and an almost excessive mobility.



CONTINUITY AND EXCHANGE

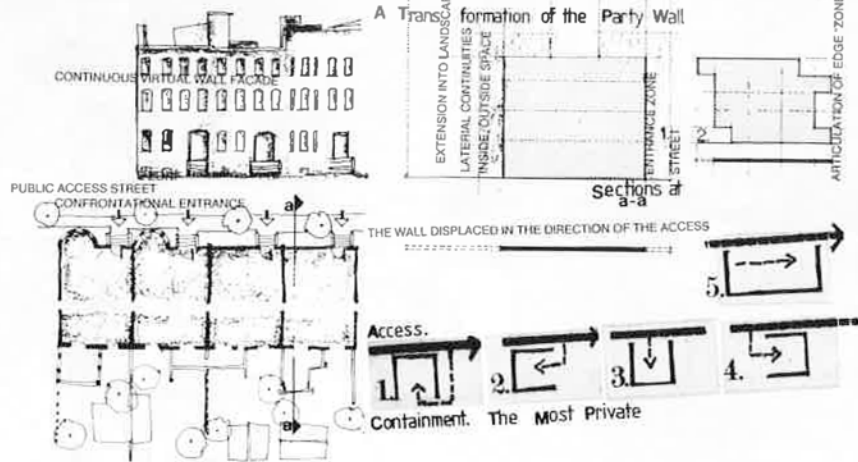
The cities of Durban and Pietermaritzburg have clear-cut boundaries. These boundaries occur at a city-planning scale where a classification of use and type, of places and peoples into separated zones, has become the structure by which we know our cities.

Exchange is a function of social behaviour. It is promoted by a need to share, and in turn promotes interchange and communication, and leads to awareness and understanding. Reciprocal exchange makes peaceful co-existence possible. Most optionally exercised (voluntary) human relationships are based on the philosophy of mutual exchange. Since all building is for the function of man, built environments by definition need to respond to the social needs that generate them.

With the building of high walls around our properties, the use of intercoms and remote controls, the making of containments for dwellings, we lock ourselves into an isolated social and political reality. We understand too well the behaviour of form in the building of private and defensive space.

The current singularity and self-containment of so many new public buildings and urban spaces reflect the same formal behaviours as the privacy we build in our homes. It should be the work of architects and city planners with their greater consciousness of form, to oppose the building of environments that by means of these same patterns of discontinuity locate territories so specifically, and inhibit the use and the accessibility of our public urban space.

AN OBSERVATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF 'PRIVATE' BUILDING
NO RANGE OF DIMENSION, CLOSED SYSTEM
CONTINUOUS WALL WRAPPING
NO SHARED TERRITORY
EX PUBLIC BUILDING, THE PARCEL
SINGULAR CONTAINED PRIVACY BUILDING DEFINITION
TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF 'PUBLIC BUILT FORM'



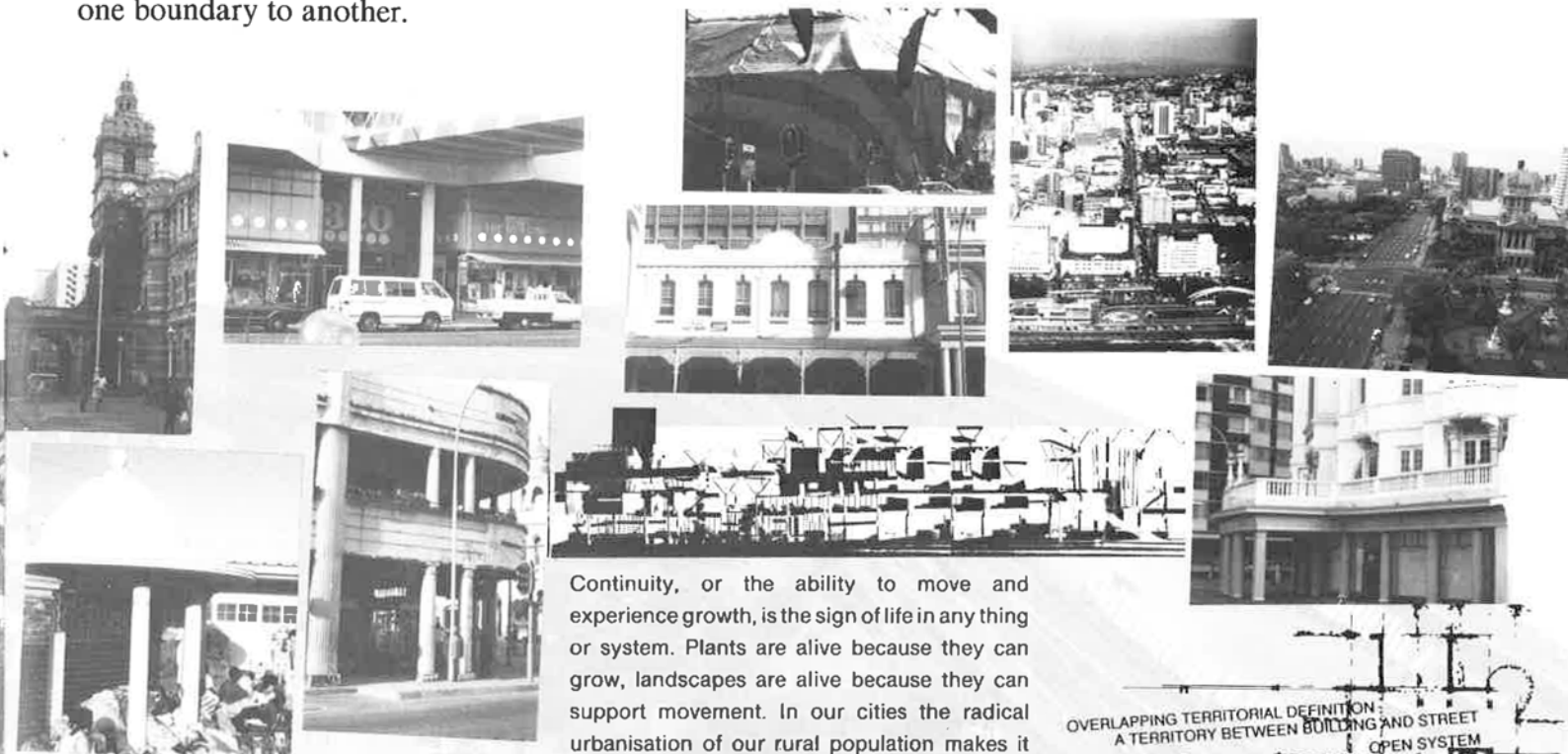
The incorporation of built exchanges at the edges of our environments should be seen as essential to facilitate awareness of and exchange between peoples and places.

This refers to the coming together, the articulation of different and opposite definitions, entities that we are too fast identifying as absolutes; the open-closed, small-big, part-whole, public-private, commercial-residential, etc. definitions, as part of an effort towards providing for a stronger spatial continuity.

This is the concept of give and take — of reciprocity, where the space in between is designed or is simply allowed on its own accord to become a place where attributes from both the adjacent territories, e.g. the commercial and residential, the street and the shop, contribute to make a self-contained, and at the same time transient space, which is both "somewhere" and "in-between".

There is, in the dialectic between part and whole, a tendency in our cities for the part to dominate at the expense of the whole. In itself this is not necessarily a bad thing, it is an element of expression in the continual struggle of private over public good. What needs to be recognised is that these points of development become significant points of attachment, points of connectivity, points of healing, of bringing together.

So there is a need to look beyond the user's brief, to recognise and make the connections, in their broadest sense, one boundary to another.



Continuity, or the ability to move and experience growth, is the sign of life in any thing or system. Plants are alive because they can grow, landscapes are alive because they can support movement. In our cities the radical urbanisation of our rural population makes it essential that we acknowledge and design for a potentially connected and continuous city growth. The territories and local regions of the resulting city form, if successfully built for a rich and interactive environment, will be defined and interwoven in such a way that they derive strength from one another.

Continuity may be achieved by means of **progression**: a range of hierarchical territories between different use zones in an understandable and consistent order, therefore building continuity by

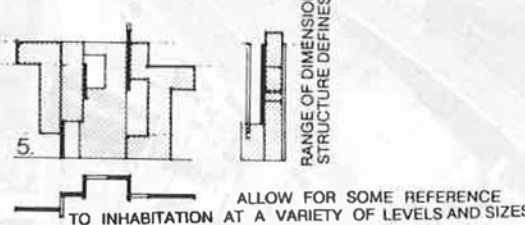
- layering: a zone of transition, a grey area, a territorial building of screens in linear demarcation;

- overlapping (collage): an intensification of the edge zones into the making of a third place;

or by means of **extension**: the interlocking or alternation of elements; the claiming of the space of the other world;

- light/dark, open/closed, inside/outside, sky/building, building/landscape, path/place.

One definition shapes the other and is in turn shaped by the other.



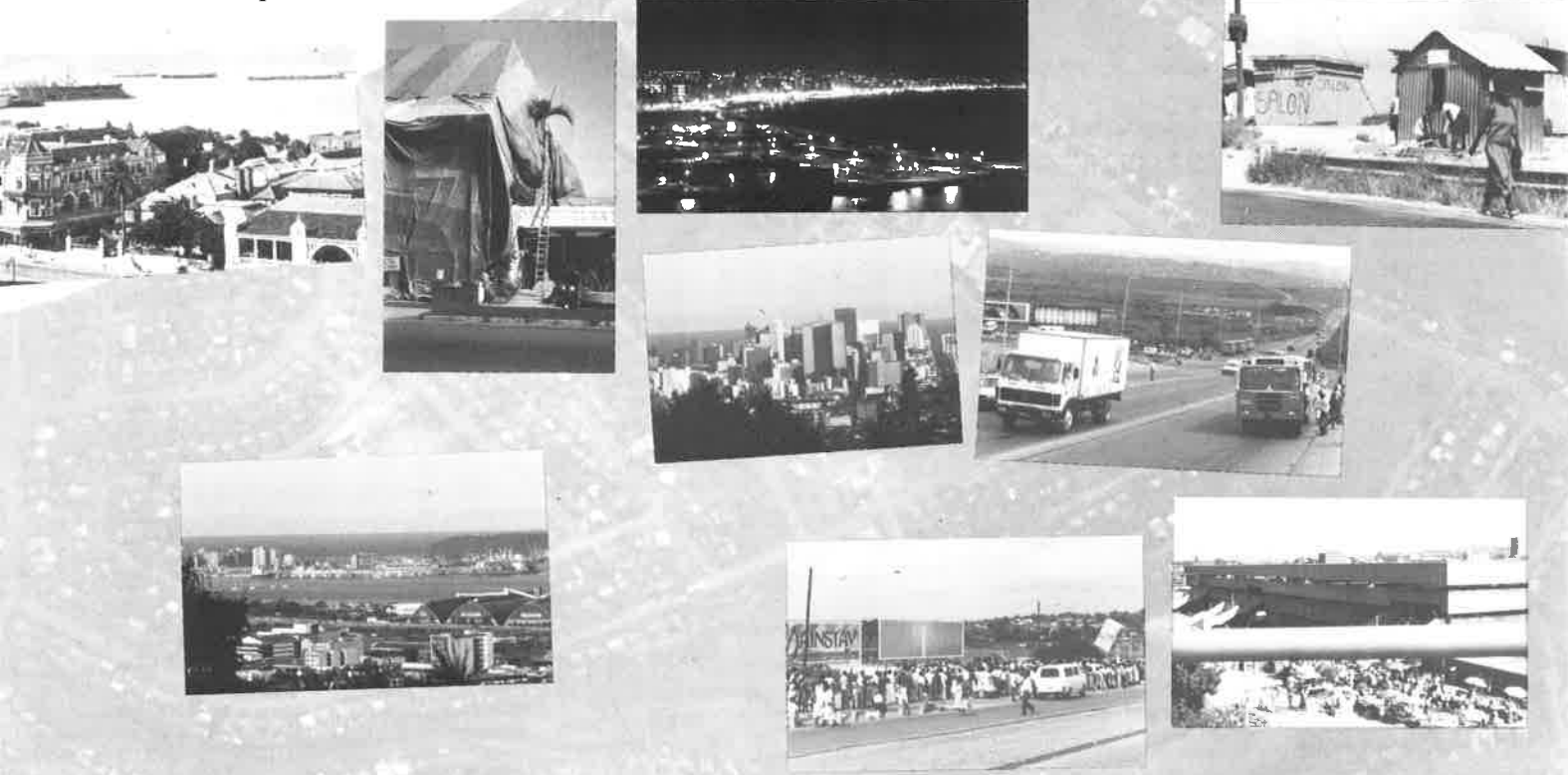
We deprive ourselves of a multiplicity and diversity that should be a natural outcome of a collective living where, side by side, are the resources that serve communities of people. The results are city centres that die after 5 pm, empty streets and a sense of alienation, high fences, enormous parking lots and mega-markets that have blank faces turned inside out with their backs to us as we drive by. As designers of physical environments with which people must interact and therefore find formally legible and coherent, we need to take heed of the formal rules that are established in very basic understandings of spatial definition.



Concomitant with the notion of connection is the idea of mobility — not in their literal sense as they relate to more general sense of people having free access to Durban and its satellite towns, this means lots of small concerns with limited financial resources. It means a city whose shelves are stacked with goods aimed at this market, and in terms of city growth it means lots of relatively modest developments.



of accessibility and movement, but in the opportunity. In terms of



MAKING DURBAN WORK FOR ARCHITECTURE, OR VICE VERSA

The success of architects in Durban in the last two decades seems less in buildings built than in setting the ground rules for the next round of building. What has been sought in paradigm, is the best approach, the setting in which appropriateness and imagination can best flourish.

First there is a beginning of understanding of the physical possibilities that Durban presents — through its man-made and natural features. The sweep of the shoreline thrusting through to the Bluff, despite a small-scale and fussy shoreline, can still stir the architectural imagination; the developed core of lanes of Durban's downtown can be spread further afield and the links visual and physical with the bay can be enhanced.

There are new ideals — or rather long forgotten principles, being resurrected. The idea that several buildings assembled appropriately can make new urban space, that public spaces and semi-public spaces can inter-connect to make new and dynamic environments, thereby encouraging pleasing and safe human contact, is entering the psyche of architects and planners.

That is to be welcomed. But are we equipped for the task? Urban Design is much talked of as architecture by another name — it certainly is not just making the outside spaces pretty.

The major element of building design is that of appropriateness of form and structure. It is not the external equivalent of interior decoration. Disney rather than Christopher Wren or Michelangelo is the danger of ignoring appropriate built form.

What are the main challenges? Durban is the fastest growing metropolis in South Africa and is for its size also the poorest per capita. The buildings and architecture it gets will reflect the limitation on resources that this means. There are few chances for great big boulevards! So, like the profession in the sixties and early seventies when we tackled new urban problems, the architects of Durban now need to identify further goals. Who will be a young Danie Theron of the 90's?

What about these for a start?

- The area from Grey Street up to the Berea Road and freeway triangle calls out for a bold idea that will capture its vitality and give it a new and more appropriate order.
- Along the dreariness of Umbilo Road up to King Edward VIII hospital lies another opportunity for urban development.
- The same applies to Umgeni Road — starting with the re-establishment of Soldiers Way (it was South Africa's finest entry to an historic urban core) out past the "slum" around the new station.
- And lastly but most important, making KwaMashu and Umlazi part of the great functional metropolis. There are surely ways that Isipingo Rail and Umlazi can be linked and the Spinal Road can become an exercise in linear city design.

The isolation of KwaMashu and the separation from other areas like the access to Phoenix, call for bold urban ideas to give expression to the ideal for the next 20 years.

By doing so, architects in Durban will help to establish a diverse, rich and integrated City with an architecture to match.

The large institutions will argue otherwise but cities grow from small sites assembled in medium and then large tracts. We may like to think we are at the top end of the scale, but in fact we are not. Our time scale is shorter term and if we are sincere about meeting the needs of our emerging society then it may be appropriate to simply carve up public owned land into small lots and sell it off to the little man.

While architecture seeks to resolve these problems, it also affirms through its concreteness (mass) the limited dimension of human space. Thus the task of architecture in the city, particularly in our age of insecurity, social conflicts and fluidity, is to construct an urban image that reflects this complexity and is socially significant — an architecture that fixes thresholds and impassable boundaries to the all pervading flux.

Raffles City, Singapore, designed by I.M. Pei, has the tallest hotel block in the world together with a convention centre, offices and retail shopping centre.



One of the latest privately developed apartment blocks in Hong Kong which experiments with colour and has a six-storey void punched through the middle.



ANDREW MURRAY CITY GROWTH AND THE WAY AHEAD

CITY GROWTH AND THE WAY AHEAD

Singapore, a city that has been described as an "urban laboratory" of modern planning and architecture, provided the ideal setting for a conference dealing with urban design issues of the late 20th century. As we approach what is being termed the "Pacific Century" the lessons of the advanced developing states of South East Asia are being translated into urban design concepts and strategies.

Subjects as diverse as the "Future of World Cities", "Vertical retailing and skywalking", "An entrepreneurial approach to urban design" and "Planning for the downtown of tomorrow" were discussed during the three-day conference, with delegates drawing on the experiences of Asian City States and Australian cities. The impact of the success of these dynamic, newly industrialised economies on current western planning theory makes for excellent case studies.

The title "World City" could be applied when certain criteria are met, such as the phenomenon of astronomically high land values, a 24-hour global business cycle, an ongoing transfer of multinational company staff and the free flow of international finance and investment. Cities such as LA, New York, London, Paris, Sydney, Hong Kong and Tokyo fitted this definition, with numerous other cities approaching this status.

The impact of enclosed centres on the life of the city street with the resultant destruction of a human-scaled streetscape was highlighted. The new wave of "skywalks", upper level pedestrian connections, has exacerbated these problems, and the call was made to city planners to consider the negative consequences of these developments on the downtown urban fabric.

The Concept of the Multifunction Polis (MFP) was presented. Basically, MFP's are high-tech towns, or technopolises that would be built by the Japanese in parts of Australia. Proposals for the multi-billion dollar developments are receiving secret scrutiny by the various states with the lure of the vast inflow of finance being gauged against any negative political and social impacts.

In contrast to the talk of technopolises, mass rapid-transit systems and high density vertical living, perhaps one of the most important lessons to come out of the conference was the need to preserve and learn from the best examples of history in order that we can apply the lessons to our rapidly developing cities. This was highlighted by Paul Rudolph (of all people) in his opening address which proposed a return to humanist values with a call for well defined city spaces together with human-scaled architecture.

The example of Melbourne was presented as a city that has utilised an entrepreneurial approach to produce "urban design by stealth", so to speak. The city employs a system of negotiating plot ratio bonuses to provide funding for urban design initiatives such as bluestone paving to public areas, retention of historic buildings, and the creation of street level pedestrian links or squares. While intense development is taking place (over 100 building sites at present in central Melbourne), the overall identity of the city is being enhanced and reinforced. This approach has provided many public benefits, but the key to this approach is firstly, that the city must have the political will and the commitment, and secondly, the planning authority has to have the necessary commercial skills to negotiate, with an understanding of the economic parameters of the various developments.

