

TWO SIDES TO STAGING PUBLIC SPACE
Enhancing Civic Function and Establishing Symbolic Content to the
Vancouver Art Gallery Landscape

by

GRAEME BLAIR GUPPY

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Department of LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE.

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date 26.04.2002

ABSTRACT

This paper explores urban design possibilities for the enhancement of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape. It is understood that urban public places are necessary for not only the daily functioning of society, but as venues of and for celebrations, demonstrations, and communication. All public urban spaces have the potential to serve as significant locations of human experience. The designed urban landscape should have the capacity to elicit response and heighten our perceptions, thereby furthering our understanding of the world. Understanding the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape as a central urban space of significant civic importance, it is necessary that its design illuminate the interactions between humans and the physical world – the actors, the audience, and the stage.

A literature review is conducted in order to discern possible connections between museum processes and designed landscapes. Analogies are drawn between the processes and display of art within and around galleries and museums, and the cultural meanings associated with these displays. These processes also reveal themselves in the designed landscape. Second, museum-landscape analogs are proposed, and from these, precedents are researched in order to identify criteria that support and reinforce these analogs. These analogs are typologies that may serve to inform the urban design, and landscape architectural process. In response to the research, the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape is designed according to one of the types (analog) identified – *Landscape as Theatre*. The design provides a model for the expression of the theatrical aspects of urban life that contribute to the vibrancy and cultural richness of the urban landscape.

The conclusions drawn herein are suggestive of urban design enhancement opportunities that exist within central downtown Vancouver, in particular the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape. It is recognized that significant investment in our urban spaces is a requirement for ensuring the successful evolution of urban life. In addition to the enhancement of human experiences within the city, successful urban projects that elicit international acclaim and recognition further the economic growth of, and investment in the city. Certainly, when public spaces are used and enjoyed steadily and repeatedly the experiences of places are enriched, and human experience is enhanced.

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Chapter I OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

"Despite the misty-eyed memory that many people have of the American town commons or village green, the plain truth is that most of our cities no longer have a good central, civic square" (Kent and Schwarz, 66).

Urban life is neither constant nor predictable, particularly over time. Individualization of urban life and changes in urban habit require solutions that offer both design and planning flexibility. In Vancouver, people have been forever succeeded by nature as the primary actor in the public domain. In the conversion of the former Provincial Court House into the Vancouver Art Gallery in 1983, the open space that was once the city's primary public gathering space was soon reduced to "the space of a backyard" (Berelowitz, 160). This "downgrading" was a direct result of the closure of the main (northern) entrance onto the square in favour of a new entrance facing Robson Street. Our preoccupation with an idealized image of nature has led to passivity and naivety, in design and planning, towards creating vibrant public spaces within the city. This naturalization of the environment has subverted our experiences within and of the city. The city center has become static, and is underutilized. The centrifugal forces of the city are a direct result of our fixation on the natural physical surroundings. The result is a propensity for activity and focus to be externalized. Some suggest this notion is manifest in the majority of public spaces throughout Vancouver, including Robson Square.

In fulfilling our obsession for natural tableaux we have overlooked the more spiritually rich and socially vibrant aspects of urban culture that contribute to the building of community vitality and civic function. The urban space surrounding the Law Courts and the Vancouver Art Gallery has substituted traffic for urban place and an image of natural splendor for a cultivated urban landscape perpetuating its isolation within an urban context. Arguably, the composition of the city, and its town views, lacks a resemblance analogous to that of a theatrical stage set. Vancouver as an urban form has been 'upstaged' by nature, stealing the performance away from, and created by its citizenry. The VAG square has the potential for re-establishing this precedent, where everyone is given an opportunity to interact with an ongoing urban 'theatre' – a stage where the actors can admire the audience (the city). This re-designed space would entertain not only the occupations of civil action, but also serve to reify these ephemeral tableaux of urban space; tableaux that reflect and respond to changes in urban habit and public life.

The Vancouver Art Gallery Square Plan proposes to integrate art and opportunities for artistic and cultural expression into the surrounding landscape. It is my intention to propose that the installations and opportunities for spatial intervention will continue to evolve beyond the completion of the design.

The primary goal is to bring an active and vibrant cultural life to the City's centre now, and in the years to come. Culture embodies both an acknowledgement of our history as well as the anticipation of future possibilities. The possibilities and opportunities for how this culture is expressed are numerous – visual, written, music, and theatrical forms of art. Ultimately, though, it is the spirit, character, and cumulative history of the city that is its ultimate form of expression - manifest in the designed landscape. The designed landscape must, however, ensure that the tremendous array and diversity of Vancouver's cultural milieu be represented.

In seeking to understand and distill the processes of museum culture and public space, there are themes that begin to emerge. These themes, I propose, are 'museum-landscape analogs'. These analogs are derived with the intention of their use as a framework for future design - an alternative way of interpreting site, as well as the greater landscape. Also, the museum-landscape analogs will serve to convey and communicate, to a broader audience, the potential for creativity and inventiveness in the designed urban landscape.

Landscape is produced and consumed repeatedly and cross-culturally, through an infinite number of media. Stage designs, like those illustrated here (see photos), are conceptual re-presentations of desired landscapes, likely conceived of through processes of what James Corner refers to as "prior imaging". These representations of landscape are themselves artFORMS. In this sense, these conceptual art forms ultimately become tangible frameworks for the recreations of urban life.

The Vancouver Art Gallery is currently engaged in the process of commissioning art for placement within the surrounding public spaces. It is intended that the infusion of art will animate the spaces, staging a dialogue between

the gallery and the public, and the public with each other. In addition, future expansion needs will provide further opportunities for the enhancement of Vancouver's civic centre. However, beyond aesthetic enhancement to what is one of Vancouver's truly central public locales, it is important that the space remains public, and that it responds to the needs of its citizenry. Enrichment of the Vancouver Art Gallery Square will begin the process of restoring vibrancy, recognition, and reverence to the center of the city, a center that shall ultimately invite people and reinvigorate public life.

1.2 Thesis Statement, Goals, Objectives and Process

In considering the ideas and issues discussed in the introduction, the current thesis was formulated. The section that follows sets forth the project goals and objectives that are derived from the thesis statement. It also summarizes the process and methodology followed to meet these goals and objectives.

1.2.1. Thesis Statement/Hypothesis

Redesign of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape is essential to the civic function of Vancouver's urban landscape.

1.2.2. Project Goal

To explore the connections between gallery/museum space and culture and Landscape Architecture as a means of enhancing the civic functions of, and establishing symbolic content to the Vancouver Art Gallery Landscape.

"One should never overlook the symbolic dimension of the city. While signifiers remain stable, signifieds are always transient" (Barthes, 1965).

1. To identify criteria based upon (urban) design theory and precedent, of what contributes to the successful functioning of public urban open space.
2. To develop a typology, or typologies of landscapes that are related to the functions of gallery/museum space, through precedent study.

1.2.3. Project Objectives

1. To examine the connections between gallery space and culture and the formation of urban space through literature review.
2. To develop an analogical framework for interpreting landscape.
3. To apply this framework to the analysis of precedents.
4. To use the precedents as tools for interpreting, analyzing, and re-designing the Vancouver Art Gallery Landscape.
5. To develop a design that may be offered as an example of successful urban design at the heart of Vancouver, one that solicits an active and vibrant cultural life at the city's center.

1.2.4 Design Objectives – The design attempts to resolve the following:

1. Expansion of the Vancouver Art Gallery's display/exhibit and storage space.
2. Places for commissioned artworks to be displayed.
3. A system of open space that allows for changes in public life and habit.
4. Adequate and regular programming of the site.
5. Management, maintenance, and security of the site.

1.2.5. Process and Method of Inquiry

1. Identify a potential site for design.
2. Conduct a literature search that focuses on:
 - a. Discerning approaches to the design of exciting and engaging urban landscapes. A thorough review of the literature on museum culture, gallery spaces, and designed landscapes; discerning possible methods for enhancing the design of public space. This review will also be supported by a critical reading of urban design theory as a way of understanding urban design structure, form, and principles that may guide the design of the site.
 - b. The culture and social processes of art museums and galleries. Exploration of the ways in which metaphorical connections between Landscape Architecture and museum culture/gallery space can be united to create stimulating and functional public places.
 - c. Identifying criteria of successful urban design issues and considerations.

3. Present my discoveries and findings of the literature review to my committee and colleagues. Approaches to design will be suggested and explained at this point. Critique and constructive feedback will be solicited from the audience.
4. Conduct detailed analysis, research, photo documentation, and observation of the selected site. Mapping the contextual urban fabric as a process of understanding and analyzing the complexities inherent in the urban landscape – Vancouver Art Gallery Square.
5. Exploration and critical analysis through the process of design. A pursuit of detailed design solutions for the site will be based upon the conceptual framework laid out herein.
6. Document conclusions and findings of the final design solution.

1.2.6.Deliverables

It is my intention to produce a rich visual display of design possibilities for the Vancouver Art Gallery Square that are both provocative and achievable. Proposed alternatives are meant to inform the gallery directors and city officials on opportunities for the future enhancement of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape. These alternatives are to be communicated as follows (*including but not limited to*):

1. A contextual plan and design at city scale will help to further illustrate connections with, and design responses to the urban fabric.
2. Detailed sections and elevations of the square illustrating the spatial relationships and design features that respond to the circumstances of site and context.
3. Design details that illustrate components of the design that are integral to the materials palette and language developed throughout the site, further conveying the relationship between programs and function.
4. A scaled study model of the site's final design, as well as computer visualizations/montages to better illustrate and suggest the intent to a wider audience.
5. A final design thesis document that includes recommendations, based upon literary and historical precedent, for the successful evolution of the surrounding urban landscape.

Chapter II LITERATURE REVIEW AND PRECEDENT STUDY

2.1 Understanding (Urban) Landscapes

2.1.1.Urban Space and Interpretation/Process

Cities are the amalgamation of a multitude of layers, created over extensive periods of time, comprised of not only artifacts, but also of ideas, trends, and habits. Like pieces of art, often revered and on display, these layers of urban history transform the nature of the spaces they inhabit. This transformation occurs as a result of the complex interactions that take place between the human modes of consumption and production, and the spatial systems within which they occur. Madanipour suggests, "a study of urban form therefore refers to the way physical entities, singly or in a group, are produced and used" (33).

Much like objects of art, the physical entities of the city that are produced and used ensure the attachment of both monetary and symbolic value to them (Madanipour, 33). This includes the landscapes and urban spaces that occur as a result of the social and physical dimensions of urban form. Unlike the artifacts of galleries and museums, and the architecture of the city, however, that stand as silent records of the society that produced them, the designed landscape arguably affords a greater freedom in its abilities to transform culture, and represent its urban spaces through a more critical lens. If, as Madanipour suggests, "architecture claims superiority over other forms of visual art" (43), it may be argued that the monetary and symbolic values that are imbued within architectural artifacts contribute to the privatization and commodification of public space. Landscapes, however, are the interstitial spaces that bind the objects and products of the city, and ultimately what comprise the canvas upon which space is rendered.

The trenchant effects of the designed landscape are unavoidable. The production of landscape thus becomes a priori in the creation, and reception of symbolic value. Monetary value emerges from the display of objects – the landscape – in much the same way it does from art. The medium is no more than a vessel from which culture gauges it's meaning, and its identity. Landscape as space – the display – serves to commodify artistic object – the architecture. In this process, landscape and urban space become secondary in the pursuit of value associated with the built form, as well as the privatized construction of the city. The public-private relationships that contribute to the structure of the city constrain the activities of the many in the interests of the few. In this, the space for the freedom of public expression

and civil interaction is impeached upon. What is lost is the symbolic content of landscape, the voice that, historically, has been the primary contributor to the functional, yet intangible spatiality of public urban space.

"Walking is more intimate to the [landscape] and therefore allows a more articulated process of interpretation and remembering" (Madanipour, 65). Ultimately, this more intimate connection with the urban environment leads to a more corporeal sense of place. Intriguing and exciting landscapes, like galleries, offer an opportunity to slow down one's movement and thus elicit a deeper consideration of one's surroundings, in addition to a more sincere and critical interpretation of its physical artifacts. As technology of movement continues to push us towards immediate transport and nomadic detachment from place, it is increasingly likely that our urban spaces will become even more threatened. Mitchell suggests "for architects and urban designers, the complementary task is to create urban fabric that provides opportunities for social groups to intersect and overlap rather than remain isolated by distance or defended walls – the laptop at the piazza café table instead of the PC in the gated condo" (82). Providing a purpose and a reason to slow one's daily activities, if just for a short time, through the restoration of civic function and symbolic content to urban space, will promote social belonging, and a sense of place that is both pleasurable and undeniable. "As traditional imperatives weaken, we will gravitate to settings that offer particular cultural, scenic, and climatic attractions . . . together with those face-to-face interactions we care most about (Mitchell, 155).

The speed of movement within the city, combined with tableaux of urban space that lack inquiry and exploration tend to reduce our contact with, and relation to the urban fabric. This lack of contact with urban space and the greater public, Madanipour states, "has profound impacts on our understanding of urban space and our approaches to its design" (78). Sennett (1994) goes further to suggest that this lack of understanding of urban space and the design problems it elicits are rendering the city's spaces "places of the gaze rather than *scenes* [italics mine] of discourse" (qtd. In Madanipour, 78). It seems fitting then that an approach towards a solution to this dissociation from an urban discourse be addressed in the landscape surrounding the Vancouver Art Gallery. Perhaps it is narrow-minded, or naïve to consider the gallery as merely a repository for the collective gazing of works of art and cultural expression. Certainly the gallery or museum elicits more engagement than this. The designed landscape should also stand as more than a constructed canvas for the gaze of its interventions - as artifact. It should serve as a scene of discourse, intended to reduce the fragmentation between the city and its inhabitants.

2.1.2. Cultural Narratives of LandSCAPE

Reading the City as Artifact

The former Law Courts - its classical architecture and placement at the city's geographic centre - have been a stable signifier of justice and judicial strength in Vancouver since the beginning of its construction in 1907. However, the discourse between its original use and our understanding of the city has been subverted by changes in both the spatial and cultural languages that are now spoken. Cultural ideals, tolerances, and aspirations have changed dramatically over time. Museum landscapes have the potential to be powerful mediators of this change. As a creative endeavour and expressive place maker art has the capacity to unite, as well as engage the public in processes of conversation and self-reflection. As Kevin Moore suggests, the "ideological role of the museum has been revealed and questioned", establishing a "move to democratize museums, both in terms of how they interpret high culture and to broaden the subject matter to include the culture and history of all members of society" (vii). It is this comprehensive engagement in communication that further enriches the processes of public life. The VAG – a monument imbued with both civic and cultural history – holds the artifacts of many artists, and their temporal expressions of a changing culture. The landscape that is contextually bound to this repository of memories may well serve to enhance an urban life that remains fragile and insecure of its self.

In order to understand the meanings produced by landscapes, it is useful to distill the complex associations and meanings produced within them. Both landscapes and museums involve the interpretation of visual culture. It is not uncommon for "meanings rooted in the past [to] clash with contemporary interpretations that challenge their continued validity" (Hooper-Greenhill, 1). Like the museum, ideas of landscape, particularly urban, are continually being transformed, re-imagined, and re-presented. The landscape of the city, and its development are ultimately "being driven by questions of meaning" (Hooper-Greenhill, 1).

Visual culture, as a "new concept and an emerging field of study" (Hooper-Greenhill, 14), provides us with an alternative explanation of how we interpret, and dwell within the city. The social processes and practices of our society heavily influence how we look and see – our vision. This visual dimension is but one element of culture, and the

meanings imbued in the physical forms of that culture. The gallery/museum presents the public with material culture to be viewed. Like early landscapes of the nineteenth-century, "museums were intended to 'speak to the eyes'" (Hooper-Greenhill, 14). Humphrey Repton was one of the first to create a material culture that convinced the audience of a picturesque alternative to the rigid, traditional landscapes of pastoral England. The interpretation, not the perception of these new landscapes spawned a shift in the social understandings and interrelationships of the time.

It is suggested that "museums [are] also charged with demonstrating, and thereby transmitting the basic principles of citizenship through their clean and ordered spaces where controlled behaviour [can] be observed" (Hooper-Greenhill, 14). Are our landscapes not controlled, designed environments that attempt to display, and thus communicate social ideals, aspirations, and notions of citizenship? Certainly, some are more successful than others. Robson Square attempted to "take an optimistic view of human nature and of the institutions that symbolize North American and British democratic processes . . . elevat[ing] the human spirit and put[ting] the citizen in touch with a carefully orchestrated urban site and with nature" (Rosenberg, 106). Idealistic in its intent, the space now underachieves its goal as Vancouver's primary urban center. It is principles of visual culture, however, and the social understanding of objects and artifacts on display that contribute to our interpretations of this, and other landscapes. Further, we should anticipate the changing of values over time, along with subsequent changes in cultural meanings and understandings of designed landscapes. Within landscape "the style of the setting, the display technology used, and the codes of design are all influential in the construction of meaning" (Hooper-Greenhill, 15). Also, the objects in landscape may be interpreted as "museum collections [that] embody the ideas and values of past social formations" (Hooper-Greenhill, 16). In addressing the landscape surrounding the Vancouver Art Gallery, and its relationship to the city, these past ideas and values are an undeniable reality that must be included within the 'collection'.

For landscapes to enrich the lives of those that inhabit them, it is important that the social construction of landscape reflect the stories, experiences, and histories of those lives. As Potteiger and Purinton suggest, "we live within worlds of stories, and we use stories to shape those worlds" (3). It is the stories imbued within landscape that contribute to the form and evolution of a particular landscape. Landscape narratives are communicated in the forms and formation of landscape (Potteiger and Purinton, 3). More comprehensive and inclusive than a story, narrative implies "product and process, form and formation, structure and structuration" (Potteiger and Purinton, 3). Where the events, characters, and settings of a story provide the content and parts of the narrative, they are only fully realized, interpreted, and communicated when expressed through a mode, or modes of telling such as landscape.

It is certain that the urban landscape surrounding the Vancouver Art Gallery lacks a coherent sense of itself as a place. The fragmented pieces of this landscape have been ignored, and have gone unacknowledged for many years. As a space that has historically hosted many types of human occupation, it lacks any acknowledgement of these ritualistic acts in its current state. For a center of such primary importance within the city, these stories beg to be resurrected and narrated through a more exciting, vibrant, and expressive landscape.

Analogues are comparable and useful alternatives for the construction and expression of landscape narratives. While providing parallel comparisons to actual conditions, the analog allows for a provisional suspension of judgment and disbelief. This is often important to avoid ignorance and inhibitions to future possibilities and potentials of designed landscape. The often subjective and interpretive landscape layered and formed with multiple meanings and histories creates a language of time. The link between landscape and narrative is even more than an analogy between architecture and music (Potteiger and Purinton, 7). However, despite Potteiger and Purinton's suggestion that there are limits to analogy, the connections that can be made between landscape and museum/gallery processes and culture are particularly potent for landscape analysis and design. These analogies serve to connect humans with their environment through a layering of meaning that acknowledges the landscapes component parts, and its relationship to social culture and understanding. The landscape analog aids in the transformation of a realistic world of decoration into a theatrical world of metaphor.

2.1.3.A Distillation of Pertinent Language (<http://www.dictionary.com>, unless otherwise cited)

In order to understand the complexities in the design of space, it is important that we discern the meanings inherent in the language of the landscapes we create, and the social, cultural, and spatial environment within which we design them. Following is a list of pertinent vocabulary related to the connections I am trying to make, and the objectives I am attempting to achieve. The language cited here is carried forward to the final design; manifest in the details of the place.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Art: | "historically related . . . to the development of CULTURE and AESTHETICS" (Williams, 41). |
| Space: | a period of time. a limited extent in one, two, or three dimensions. a boundless three-dimensional extent, in which object and events occur and have relative positions and directions. |
| Gallery: | a room or building devoted to the exhibition of works of art. |
| Museum: | a building, place, or institution devoted to the acquisition, conservation, study, exhibition, and educational interpretation of objects having scientific, historical, or artistic value. |
| Landscape Architecture: | the branch of architecture dealing with the arrangement of land and buildings for human use and enjoyment. |
| Culture: | the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. those patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community, or population [Ex. Canadian Culture]. those patterns, traits, and products considered with respect to a particular category, such as a field, subject, or mode of expression [Ex. Museum Culture]. Raymond Williams notes: "that in archaeology and in cultural anthropology the reference to culture or a culture is primarily to material production, while in history and cultural studies the reference is primarily to signifying or symbolic systems" (91). |
| Theatre: | any room adapted to the exhibition of any performances before an. any scene of events; the dramatic art; the theatrical world the audience assembled for a dramatic performance. |

2.2 Museum:Landscape Analogs

Engaging in a review of literature on designed landscapes and an exploration of museum landscapes, themes, typologies, and metaphors began to emerge. Analogies were drawn between the processes and display of art within and around galleries and museums and the cultural meanings associated with these displays. These processes also reveal themselves in the designed landscape. If we entertain the notion of landscape as a medium, or canvas for the expression of form and meaning, we can hypothesize coexistence between it, and the display of art and object. There has been much written about the cultural meanings imbued within landscape. In fact, "in the second decade of the twentieth century, the transcendentalism of some nineteenth-century American landscape painting was distilled into an abstract representation of thought rather than a pictorial representation of a view" (Crandell, 162). Such socially constructed notions of what art is are often perpetuated through our misunderstanding of landscape, and its significant role in the cultural evolution of society. We might often refer to art as being simply an "object that hangs in a gallery or sits in a plaza" (Lipske, 14). Art may also encompass visual acts or a theatrical event. However, often overlooked is the potential for places to become works of art in and of themselves. Landscapes have the potential to "quicken our senses, stir our emotions, and convey aesthetic integrity . . . Each links us to the people who created it . . . Each holds

our history" (Lipske, 15). Increasingly, the landscape has become the primary medium for the expression of wealth, discontentment, and political criticism. Arguably, landscape is the ultimate work of art, and curator of it.

Museum-landscape analogs attempt to establish relationships and similarities between the processes and intentions of gallery space, and those of the designed landscape. It is necessary to understand these relationships as a way of better informing the processes of landscape design, and the architecture of the urban environment. The brick wall, billboards, and the public washroom stall have all become galleries for the art of our era. As our culture moves further away from public art traditionally associated with the statuesque, it is important to acknowledge this change, designing our urban landscapes as canvases for the future. Dated tableaux, and replicated images of nature do little to invigorate urban life. As Susanne K. Langer suggests,

Once nature provided us with this all-embracing milieu; now that we have ousted nature, we must set about providing ourselves with a new environment which is as inspiring, as harmonizing and as mentally integrating as was once nature, and this we now know is eminently possible . . ." (qtd. In Eckbo, 37).

2.2.1. Landscape as Exhibit: 'PLACE Makers'

The ability to intentionally construe and construct designed landscape is enabled through various forms and activities of imaging and display. This involves the notions of human consumption of landscape as an artFORM - as image. 'Landscape as Exhibit' speaks to the notion that SPACE, as a dimensional volume becomes a PLACE with repeated and recurrent interaction between the human bodies in proportion to the spatial dimensions of landscape. The relationship(s) one develops with a particular locale are, consciously, but more often unconsciously attached to the narratives of that place. This relationship is analogous to an object of art that, over time we may find ourselves to become extremely fond of. This attachment is manifest in the daily experiences of landscape and urban environments. 'Landscape as Exhibit' addresses the aesthetics that add the layer of decorative richness: embellishment commemorating place, and contributing to the narrative qualities of space and place.

Despite the city having become a "vast display case for the aesthetic consumption of nature" (Berelowitz, 61), the space surrounding the VAG poses unique opportunities for the coexistence of, and relationship between both museum culture and civil action (public expression). As James Corner suggests, "landscape and image are inseparable . . . that without image there is no such thing as landscape, only unmediated *environment*" (153). This argument is historically rooted in Europe, where "the word *landscape* was used to refer to a painted image long before it was applied to actual environments" (Cosgrove, 101). The term *landskip* referenced selective and composed representations of landscape, not the land itself. This imaging of landscape eventually led to the design and construction of large-scale estate gardens, picturesque 'backdrops', and ornamental. Corner draws conclusion to a contemporary understanding of the evolution of landscape architecture as a profession, derived, in part, from "an impulse to reshape large areas of land according to *prior* imaging" (153). Indeed, "imaging is central to forging landscape" (Corner, 153). Our recognition of landscape is ultimately perceived through the interpretation of points, lines, and planes, against a repeated and memorized exposure to prior images of human invention and construction. The collective synthesis and interpretation of this cognitive information perpetuates itself, simultaneously reinforcing our social understanding of landscape, and what it should be. At the same time, this randomized synthesis offers unique possibilities of what landscape could look like.

Museums and galleries of Western society, the art that they collect, and the architectural 'theatres' they are displayed in are constructed symbols of cultural meaning and symbolism that is both complex and multi-layered. Eileen Hooper-Greenhill alludes to the social construction, ideologies, and notions of what museums and galleries are and what their 'landscapes' exhibit. Ultimately there is a relationship that develops between a museum and its publics:

'Museums' are understood very broadly, to include art galleries, historic sites and historic houses. 'Relationships with publics' is also understood very broadly, including interactions with artifacts, exhibitions and architecture, which may be analysed from a range of theoretical perspectives. The analysis of the relationship of the museum to its publics shifts the emphasis from the museum as text, to studies grounded in the relationships of bodies and sites, identities and communities (Hooper-Greenhill, preface).

The relation of body to site, site to identity and community, and our subsequent corporeal connection with site, as manifest in its socially and culturally constructed form, can be associated with museum culture and gallery space. It is the human body and its unique dimensionality that responds to, and is manipulated by its surroundings - site. This repeated interaction between form/image and the body ultimately leads to the imbuing of form with a layered identity,

linking it to the community – identities - that interacts with it. Through this personal interaction we develop and maintain a deep, intimate connection with our surroundings, as we would our favourite piece of artwork - one that beholds our physical touch and soulful interpretation. It follows, then, that in attempting to understand and engage in the design of the Vancouver Art Gallery site, we must articulate the analogies that can be drawn between museum space and landscape.

In understanding landscape space, Condon et al. suggest that it is useful "to understand the nature of the frame within which this human existence takes place" (13). Many conceptions of space have been posited throughout time. These concepts have manifest themselves in architectural construction, painting, sculpture, and landscape design. As a spatial understanding of "motion and time as generally applied to the transformation of the human species [moved to] motion/time as it specifically applied to individual perception" (Condon et al., 14) in art, so did the means for displaying that art. Modernists broke away from a static conception of space. "Free flow of space around objects and the objectification of design elements necessary to create 'interpenetrating planes'" (Condon et al., 15) became prescriptive. The Vancouver Art Gallery is more aligned with cubist interpretations of space as a "concept of the contained room, basic to Neo-Classical concepts of both landscape and building design" (Condon et al., 15). Contrast with the Modern art museum, where reliance on the free-flowing interpretation of space and object is expected and designed for, the Neo-Classical architecture and interior layout of the Vancouver Art Gallery remains highly contrived.

The layout of a designed landscape should have a purpose and rhetoric. As espoused by Marc Treib, the designed landscape should be "shaped to convey human intention, providing accommodation and, perhaps, even beauty" (29). In addition, it is important that the landscape architect say something about the design's intent by means of the manner in which it is presented – exhibited - to the public. The intention, as well as the choice of context, is an important consideration in the exhibition of any landscape, just as gallery or museum curators "believe that there is value in bringing works together in quite large numbers precisely because this makes it possible to present them in an art-historical relationship: that works of art gain meaning and even quality from the context of other works of art" (Compton, 198).

Landscape architecture strives to establish and structure meanings within the designed landscape by relating, or juxtaposing the landscape against the context of its surroundings. It is through this complimentary, or contrasting relationship that urban space begins to take form. The Henry Moore Sculpture Garden extension, at the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City, is one example of such an approach, where Dan Kiley set out to "design [display] spaces in relation to the museum" (Kiley, qtd. In Lawrence, 80). In this design, Kiley chose to retain the formal central axis of the site, "a more precise and formal Beaux Arts treatment at the center, which is the museum's public face" (Kiley, qtd. In Lawrence, 80), and use the more informal edges to strengthen the experience of the public displays of art. The notion of this landscape becoming exhibitionist itself is generated through the creation and formal-informal contrast of the spatial forms of the site. In this, the exhibit is experienced by one's movement through the space, and further enriched by the use of designed landscape as image framing element. The more recent expansion of the Nelson-Atkins Museum embodies seven "light-gathering lenses in the sculpture garden [that] bring light into a series of connected gallery spaces below grade" (Holl, 117). The architectural additions to this site are "like crystalline sculpture around the classic original" (Cramer, 47). The interstitial spaces will still hold the original Henry Moore sculptures placed by Kiley and Robertson. The "juxtaposition should create an edgy ambiguity between foreground and background, architecture and sculpture, frame and framed" (Cramer, 47). In this, the Nelson-Atkins Museum may serve to illustrate possibilities for the design and expansion of the urban landscape that surrounds the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Public art can be viewed as a valuable design instrument, and complimentary spatial design tool that either aids in the production of public space, or at least questions a dominated space that has been officially intended as public (Deutsche, 288); such is the condition of the space surrounding the Vancouver Art Gallery. Contemporary artists such as Mary Miss make direct use of pictorial techniques in the construction and exhibition of landscape (Crandell, 171). Mary Miss' ability to engage the user's participation using techniques of false perspective, forcing the spectator's observation through framed views, renders her landscapes both unconventional and evocative. The conventional views previously established in our perceptions of nature are manipulated "in order to represent our visual and environmental experience" (Crandell, 172). Mary Miss "creates very specific views composed of vertically layered space, in overlaid screens framing shifting perspectives that unfold sequentially and yet are never fully revealed" (Crandell, 171-2). As Deutsche remarks, "the function of public art becomes to make or break a public space" (288). Within the designed landscape, it may be desirable to 'remove the place', conceptually, from its supporting environment. This effect is often

desired in gallery displays, particularly those that display modern art, often completely removed and anti-contextual. In executing this extraction or contradiction, associations and perceptions unfamiliar to us are elicited. Art often functions to facilitate a movement away from the realm of the familiar subverting our relationship to our contextual surroundings - space for the exhibition of objects – altering the site from function (space) to art (place).

Art in the public realm is often susceptible to contention and public debate, primarily as a result of its high visibility and susceptibility to scrutiny from a more general audience (Beardsley, 1981, 9). As Beardsley further suggests, “art in a museum context is protected, sanctioned by recognized professional opinion . . . sought out by a public predisposed to art and receptive to its various forms” (9). The extension of museum space into the landscape is therefore “open to public debate in a way that museum works are not” (Beardsley, 1981, 9). The Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, as well as the more recent Walker Art Centre landscape extension mediates this debate in their designs, “reveal[ing] an awareness that the types and scale of contemporary sculpture vary greatly, and that museums need versatile spaces in order to exhibit them to advantage” (Beardsley, 1992, 65). As Jean Feinberg suggests, “if the museum was a well-ordered series of white boxes in which to place art objects, so, too, the [landscape] would be a series of easily negotiated, open-to-the-sky green boxes in which to place sculpture” (68). This philosophy is very different to that of Kiley and Robertson at the Nelson-Atkins Museum. The Minneapolis Sculpture Garden is in stark contrast to the informality of the Olmstedian landscape tradition, accentuated by both Kiley and Robertson, providing an entirely different solution to the framing of space for the purpose of exhibitory experience. The extension of the museum’s architecture into the landscape creates a “formal, geometric garden in which movement and vision is controlled by straight paths and walls that intersect at right angles and in which works of art are displayed in ‘rooms’” (Feinberg, 69). Divided into three sections, the common link remains “the geometry of shared proportions, sight lines, and walkways” (Feinberg, 69). The designed landscape, as exhibit, has the power to create such versatile spaces. As Robert Irwin suggests, landscape architects have the tools of “presence, movement, scale, [and] phenomena” to use (qtd. In Crandell, 172). Given our movement, participation, and action in space, Irwin states “these are the elements you absolutely have got to have people involved in . . . Landscape architects have the power to put all that back in the picture” (Irwin, qtd. In Crandell, 172): the exhibit.

It is suggested that the function of public art could enhance the publicness of urban space. However, we must first question the meaning of art and space, and what they are to be public? The consumption of art, and museum culture may inform the design of the space that surrounds the Vancouver Art Gallery. It is my intention to re-envision and represent museum space as an active outdoor space that interacts with the city; the integral extension of an urban life that lacks discourse of many voices, and that is consumed by the natural tableaux that overwhelm Vancouver’s urban spaces.

Cited Precedents

1. Henry Moore Sculpture Garden at the Nelson-Atkins Museum (Figure 1 and 2)
2. Minneapolis Sculpture Garden and the Walker Art Centre Expansion (Figure 3 and 4)

2.2.2.Landscape as ARTifact: ‘PLACES as Art’

The archival aspects of landscapes are very similar to those of the museum and/or gallery. ‘Landscape as Artifact’ responds to the notion that like viewing an exquisite archaeological find, there are experiences of REAL places, but these often remain illusory in their meaning. Their detachment from PLACE can facilitate an inauthentic experience of their new location/place. Authenticity contributes to the sensorial connections we receive from the POWER of PLACE. This relates to landscapes by designers such as Andy Goldsworthy or Nancy Holt. These constructed vernacular landscapes, in contrast to those of Martha Schwartz at the Village of Yorkville Plaza, respond to regional location and the naturally occurring phenomenon of the place. Realness can be easily diluted by the separation and relocation of regional landscapes, as can be works of art or archaeological objects. These works re-presented lack the true POWER of place as a result of this severed connection. Real landscapes, as artifacts of place, communicate a more corporeal presence when deeply rooted in their regional landscape(s) of origin.

Landscapes as artifacts are as representative and critical of social structures and relationships as the cultural and historical objects collected and displayed in galleries. It is suggested that the integration of art and landscape, and landscape as art has the potential to enhance the publicness of urban space. In fact, John Beardsley (1998) proposes that we “have recovered the idea that art can attempt to determine its own social function and thereby attain a

prominent position in public discourse" (127). Some of the components for the successful integration and implementation of art in landscape, and landscape as art are as follows:

1. Tendency to match artifact with specific architectural character of room, or surrounding environment – (site landscape to context).
2. Cultural Artifact – as representative or critical of social structures and relationships (critical landscapes).

Differing greatly from portable works of art, landscapes have seen a marked increase in representation since the late 1960's. This re-presentation has not been limited to simply pictorial representation. Artists and landscape architects have created, and continue to create "works [that] are inextricably bound to their sites and take as a large part of their content a relationship with the specific characteristics of their particular surroundings" (Beardsley, 1998, 7). Similar to art displayed in contemporary/modern galleries and museums, sculpted landscapes of today are not "intended for isolated appraisal, but fully engaged elements of their environments, intended to provide an inimitable experience of a certain place" (Beardsley, 1998, 7). The "earthworks" or "land art" as contemporary landscapes have long been referred to, are becoming increasingly recognized as artistic mediators of urban landscapes. As Beardsley (1998) notes, "adapting the scale and ambition of earthworks to the challenges of the urban space, some civic-minded sculptors are now shaping a new kind of public landscape, strong both in sculptural form and in symbolic allusions" (7). In fact, "as environmental art, including sited sculpture, has increasingly become the focus of public commissions, more and more of these commissions have been for inner-city locations" (Beardsley, 1998, 127), such as that of Yorkville Plaza in Toronto, or South Cove at Battery Park City, New York.

Galleries and museums serve the interests of the local and the regional through the encapsulation and perpetuation of a city's regional collective identity and history. These public 'hope-chests' are physical manifestations of this intention, and a process of social cohesion. According to Kevin Moore, "the rationale was that museums were established as temples of high culture, in part to bring the reforming power of the 'highest and best' achievements of our 'civilization' to the 'masses'" (vii). On a more ephemeral and experiential level are the city's public spaces. "They are the repository of memories and memorials, and have the capacity to bind generations" (Charney, 26). Rick Andrighetti describes the Village of Yorkville Park Project in Toronto as a series of "landscape boutiques" or "Victorian Collection Boxes" (Andrighetti, 20). The park, located in the heart of Toronto's chic commercial/retail shopping district of Yorkville, is overtly synthetic and artificial in appearance. However, it is the juxtaposition of spaces and materials that contributes to its success as a significant public open space within the city. The site's layout and orientation is closely analogous to that of the Vancouver Art Gallery/Robson Square (see photo above previous and below). In Yorkville, however, "the vegetation, heavily framed by the park's geometric order, provides miniature tableaux of a variety of notional landscape types – meadow, marsh, prairie, Canadian Shield, etc. – which become interactive, museum-like elements" (Andrighetti, 20). Through the process of distilling these regional landscape types in a single location, the space begins to encapsulate, and become representative of the many voices that may in fact interact with it. Literal in its representation, the notions of regional landscape becoming a representative artifact within the urban landscape are rather potent and critically engaging. The landscape becomes a way of framing and maintaining an identity in much the same as the museum or gallery would.

To enliven social interaction and restore civic function to the urban realm it is important that we consider the democratization and dissemination of art and freed artistic expression to a broader audience. For urban space to embody symbolic content, deeply rooted in civic function, attempts to democratize the spatial forms of the city and the power relations that are perpetuated within their spaces should also be entertained. Yorkville Park "is completely contextual and an appropriate response to the fashionable Yorkville shopping district in which it is situated" (Andrighetti, 20). Martha Schwartz is attempting to subvert the relationship between landscape and consumer culture through the collection and organization of 'natural' material in a manner that recalls both public museum space, as well as the spatiality of the retail environment. Deutsche concurs that "democratic public space must be understood as a realm not of unity but of divisions, conflicts, and differences resistant to regulatory power" (267). When public art, or landscape as art is combined with that of the urban fabric, the art itself contributes to, and reinforces the experience of landscape as a spatial activity. The potential of extending the functions of the museum into the city's fabric would serve to undermine the domination of private and governmentally affirmed facilitation of the expression of social groups, excluded by the current organization of the city and its public spaces. In Minneapolis, the Sculpture Garden also succeeds at creating a space that is "both an extension of a pre-existing museum and a public park . . . where environmental design has been exploited for pleasure and education, in the service of having often difficult-to-

understand works of modern art enjoyed by the public" (Feinberg, 68). Environmental art and the contemporary landscape serve not only to provide opportunities for artists and landscape architects, they also "stimulate tourism and economic development generally, and they help promote civic identification and pride" (Beardsley, 1998, 127). The Vancouver Art Gallery, as a signifier of democracy and civil rights and freedoms, serves to exemplify the nature of art as it relates to civic function and expression. Its contextual juxtaposition to privatized institutions requires, and has the potential to reinforce its iconic notions of civility, and contribute to one's sense of self as a citizen.

Cited Precedents

1. Yorkville Plaza (Figure 5)
2. South Cove, Battery Park City

2.2.3. Landscape as Theatre: Transitions and Transformations

There is a special poignancy in moments of transition. Landscape and public space can be articulated as settings, or 'scenes' of urban event. Memorable public spaces experience a constant state of flux, or changes in scenery. Like the theatre, the individual affects, and is affected by changes in their environment. Through this interaction, the urban landscape frames its own presence, and defines its relationship within and to the city. Historical notions of, and meanings associated with the theatre can inform the design of landscapes; for the "theatre itself not only had the architectural meaning, derived from the ancients, of a playhouse and the performances staged there, but also meant a conspectus: a place, region, or text in which phenomena are unified for public understanding" (Cosgrove, 101). The tableaux of urban life should serve to facilitate civil action, recreation, and public awareness, at the same time allowing for the flexibility and continuity of scenographic transitions over time. Like stage designs, the ephemeral nature of the life of urban spaces requires design solutions that serve current needs, while remaining flexible enough to accommodate future uses.

If we posit that art mirrors life – (pictorial, sculptural, and theatrical manifestations of social trends) - and space mirrors social relations – (the interrelationships and power struggles perpetuated by spatial forms) - then it seems reasonable to draw an analogy between art and the creation of space. According to Denis Cosgrove, "theatre, understood as a glass or mirror to the greater world, was a common metaphor for revealing order in the macrocosm through and interplay of image and text" (102). He goes further to explain, "in the case of the microcosm, the human body was examined and displayed as a public spectacle in the anatomy theatre" (102). It was the human body that ultimately created this form of spectacle and theatre, and was manifest in the architecture of the period: an architecture that responded to the structure of the greater world. The designed landscape is also constructed as space that responds to, and defines our social and cultural structure, as well as manipulates the ways in which we engage the environment and each other. As Clark might suggest,

The only reason for bringing together works of art in a public place is that . . . they produce in us a kind of exalted happiness. For a moment there is a clearing in the jungle: we pass on refreshed, with our capacity for life increased and with some memory of the sky (qtd. In Duncan, 13).

This description exemplifies the truly theatrical and humanistic experiences of both the museum and landscape space.

The public spaces of the city "facilitate the routine of daily life and the spectacle of urban theatre" (Charney, 26). Further, these interstitial spaces, ideally, take precedence over architecture in their ability to reflect the spirit and character of our society and our culture. Rituals associated with museum culture, and one's personal experiences with museums involve the act of performance. In fact, Carol Duncan confirms "this notion of the art museum as a performance field [that] has also been discovered independently by museum professionals" (12). Spaces within the urban fabric are also "programmed for the enactment of performance . . . [and an] engage[ment] in some other structured experience that relates to the history or meaning of the site (or to some object or objects on the site)" (Duncan, 12). The landscape, as Duncan further explains the nature of the museum setting as a constructor of "dramatis personae", also serves the function of providing a setting for the performance of urban rituals in which people "actively invent, consciously or unconsciously, their own programs according to all the historical and psychological accidents of who they are" (Duncan, 13).

The notion of public space being interpreted as an urban stage for the construction of dramatis personae is evident in many urban cities, particularly in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The Schouwbergplein (theatre square), a "prominent site in the post-war center of Rotterdam [was an] inanimate space [that] has been brought back into use as a lively urban square" (Van Cleef, 44). A Dutch Landscape Architecture Firm, West 8, has quite literally reinterpreted the

Schouwburgplein "as a city stage raised slightly above street level" (Van Cleef, 44). The square reflects the different patterns of use as well as the changing patterns of the sun in its layout. The landscape is a constructed 'stage set' for the choreographed actions of public activity, "a place for spectators and a place where everyone is an actor" (Holden, 33). The Schouwburgplein's site dimensions are similar to those at the Vancouver Art Gallery; "more like a broad plain than a square, and yet it is an enclosed space" (Brummel, 55). The contextual surroundings – a growing skyline – are a major characteristic of the site, providing an evocative backdrop to the square, "a stage from which the Rotterdammers [can] admire their city" (Brummel, 55). The square becomes "even more powerful at night when it is brightly lit up around the edges" (Brummel, 55). West 8 has used the lighting of the square, in-ground and above, to "underline the theatrical quality of public space" (Brummel, 55) producing a stage floor. As Brummel suggests further, "a good square must be able to function as a stage . . . Although no one can predict exactly how it will be used, seeing as how the city does what it wants with it anyway, to some degree stimuli can incite certain activities" (55). The act of designing the urban landscape, much like the act of stage design, is specific and instructive in shaping and forming 'scenes' for the actions of the public.

The physical layout of museum rooms, corridors, and vertical connections exerts a strong influence over patterns of movement within. Such considerations are not only important in the design of museum space, but also landscapes. Understanding the behavioural effects of museum spaces can serve to inform the physical layout of museum landscapes, allowing their design to facilitate access, encourage way finding, and match curatorial programming. Often, basic human considerations are forgotten in the pursuit of contemporary design; aesthetic achievements that do little to invigorate public space – dulling the contextual background, or 'display space', in order to render the design autonomous. The spatial layout of urban landscapes also mediates the pattern of co-awareness and convergence between actors as they circulate through exhibition spaces. Compton posits:

. . . a 'field of reciprocal social visibility' that is, that museum visits are not only based on the desire to view the museum's collection but also to have a social occasion – the notion that at some level, the visitor is aware of the other people in the space, while pursuing their own interests (Compton, 195).

Compton also acknowledges the significant forces driving the public's patronization of museums, suggesting that the visitor may be seeking a gallery experience more as an attempt at personal discussion, contradiction, and social discourse; confirming one's place in the city and their relationship to others. According to Compton, "individual works of art are . . . merely incidents in the whole [while] much of the best art has been to change people, [and that] an important role may still remain in the elaboration of or confirmation of existing values" (199). The "genius urbis", or spirit of the city, is evoked through this ritualistic discourse of affirmations and confirmations.

From his studies, Compton was able to draw some conclusions about museum space and patterns of movement. The programmatic and intellectual tensions that arise from his models relate to issues of artistic expression, and the venues or landscapes designed for this presentation. Museum layouts, according to Compton, may be distilled into two types: a deterministic model, which structures and defines sequences of movement and encounter, and the probabilistic model that varies exploration and encounter. "The findings imply that curators and designers alike can work with the layout to differentiate and yet control the possible experiences of visitors without imposing a rigid spatial pedagogy" (Compton, 201). This differentiation and control may also inform the designed landscape. The manipulation of urban landscape space, used to provoke and increase the likelihood of human interaction – in much the same way as a set designer and director create environments that engage both the actors and the audience – ultimately attempts to infuse the city with vitality and meaning. Civic function, identity, and community are the ideal outcomes of this goal, and it is these elements that create and sustain a successful urban theatre.

Landscape is produced and consumed repeatedly and cross-culturally, through an infinite number of media. Stage designs are conceptual re-presentations of desired landscapes, likely conceived of through processes of what James Corner (1999) refers to as "prior imaging". These representations of landscape are themselves artFORMS. In this sense, these conceptual art forms ultimately become tangible frameworks for the recreations of urban life. Extending the social and imageable functions of museum space into the landscape transforms the fabric of the city into a theatrical event. Holding argues that "some urban design solutions which have been introduced into places such as London, New York, Tokyo, Osaka, and Las Vegas owe more to rock sets than traditional urban forms . . . In effect, what appears to be taking place is the theatricalisation of the city" (Holding, 49). In the words of Edward T. Hall, the experience of place is "a transaction between man and his environment in which both participate" (qtd. In Amidon, 12). The combination of planned urban form, aesthetic design, and aggressive programming will ensure positive transformation of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape, and others.

Cited Precedents

1. Pioneer Courthouse Square (Figure 6)

In 1984 Pioneer Courthouse Square was successfully completed and dedicated to the city of Portland, Oregon. In response to a design competition issued by the City of Portland, the winning architecture and landscape architecture design team of Willard Martin and Douglas Macy led the creation of what has now become a veteran, "having run the gauntlet of public scrutiny, competition juries, and professional and publication critics" (Murphy, 94). The site is approximately a 200 square foot block that is strategically located at the intersection of two major transportation systems, and is bounded by department stores and the historic Pioneer Courthouse. Among many design features inherent in the design of the plaza, including a "plethora" of seating, "a large amphitheatre to the east and a smaller, more intimate amphitheatre to the west have proven popular for a variety of noontime and evening performances" (Hudetz, 61). The landscape palette is cast outward into the surrounding urban fabric, creating a central district that converses with the surrounding architectural language. Pioneer Square lacks a formal consistency in its many elements which, according to Martin's concept of "architectural episodes . . . [was] established so that human episodes would take place within them" (qtd. In Hudetz, 61).

In addition to the square's successful staging of programmed events, the city of Portland recognized the importance of creating an independent nonprofit organization to manage the space. Yearly fundraising ensures that the city's maintenance costs are reduced. Unquestionably, this has led to the assurance of a square that "brims with activity . . . and all the spontaneous urban life William Whyte could ever imagine" (Hudetz, 61). As an urban stage, metaphorically and spatially, Pioneer Courthouse Square is exemplary of a designed landscape space that stages the actions of the city in a forum that is both civic in its design, and responsive in its use.

2. Bryant Park (Figure 7)

Bryant Park, New York City typifies *landscape as stage*. Quoted as one of the most -frequented spots in midtown (Thompson, 7), Bryant Park represents the successful adaptive reuse of a landscape redesigned to satisfy circulation, security, and historic commemoration. The landscape architectural firm of Hanna/Olin was asked to undertake the restoration and redesign of Bryant Park, in collaboration with Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates Architects. The redesign reflects many of the recommendations William Whyte had given during his earlier evaluation of the existing park. Whyte's observations suggested certain physical certainties that led to the unintended misuse of the original park. In fact, the original design's primary intent -to provide a hidden oasis and retreat from the city -led to the successful dissociation of street life from the public onlooker. The end result was occupation of the park by "undesireables" and undesirable activity. By failing to provide for the successful, and regular use of this primary urban space, the original design in fact deterred people from inhabiting it.

Bryant Park, as it currently exists, is once again an urban stage where the audience is simultaneously removed and involved. Simple yet necessary changes to the original landscape are experienced on a much more interactive level. Hanna/Olin "strove to replicate the original design intent as closely as possible" (Thompson, 29). The primary goal of this project was to "introduce new life into the park (Olin, qtd in Thompson, 29). Successful staging of activity in Bryant Park is now dependent upon this new life for its survival. However, as a result of the spatial and physical changes to the Bryant Park landscape, the social theatre that unfolds here on a daily basis now supports itself. Olin states that "as designers we can provide the armature, but we can't make people use the space (qtd. In Thompson, 33). Thompson suggests the spaces Olin have created "appeals . . . to New Yorker's sense of theatre" (33). A plethora of flexible seating, food, and large numbers of people create a situation that is ripe for the sporadic and unpredictable occupation of urbanites. The Bryant Park project maintains its ability to "stay flexible as the situation evolve[s] and change[s]" (Thompson, 34).

3. Schouwbergplein, (Figure 8)

2.3 Public Space as Cultural Assembly, Informal Arena, and Urban Event

Throughout history, public spaces have served as stages for the dissemination and communication of ideas, opinions, and public announcements. Despite the relatively recent inventions of modern communication systems and processes, "public spaces continue to function in the role of public forum" (Gehl, 1996, 67). Jan Gehl acknowledges the categorical distinction of urban communication activities: "One encompasses the informal, small-scale events: street musicians, street performers, [and] religious groups . . . at the other end of the scale are the larger, pre-planned events like

festivals and cultural activities, which use public spaces as their stage" (67). Public events and cultural activities make the city a vibrant, intriguing, and surprising experience. It is the 'urban theatre' that provides the observer with information on the city and society, both politically and culturally. The Georgia Street Plaza at the VAG is an obvious choice for the implementation of ideas for using public space as a stage for popular events. Jan Gehl (1996) argues, "in some cities, especially in the USA and Canada, urban spaces have become privatized indoor space that is heavily commercialized and controlled . . . the idea of the public forum has completely disappeared in the process" (67). Failure to acknowledge the theatrical qualities and potentials of this and other public spaces will further contribute to the disappearance of one of our most important public forums, civic space.

Granville Island is an excellent example of an informal arena of urban event that serves as precedent for the future design of our core urban spaces. Currently it is suggested, "as a set of public spaces, Granville Island is the most vital urban theatre in all of Vancouver" (Shack, 115). In Shack's further description of the Island, he indicates a possible cause of the failings of our public space system:

Like the city itself, the island [Granville Island] has no single center, but many centers; its public space system is diffuse yet generous, fluid yet memorable. In less than a decade Granville Island has become the spiritual heart of Vancouver and a model site of urban theatre and romance in the metropolis (114).

Certainly, Vancouver's public space system is multi-centered. This many-centered system exists to the detriment of civic life. For Vancouver has no truly central civic location. Georgia Plaza, at the Vancouver Art Gallery, is diffuse, static, and less-than-memorable. If the connections to this geographic center were more closely associated, then we would have a stage from which the rest of the public space system could act upon.



Figure 1

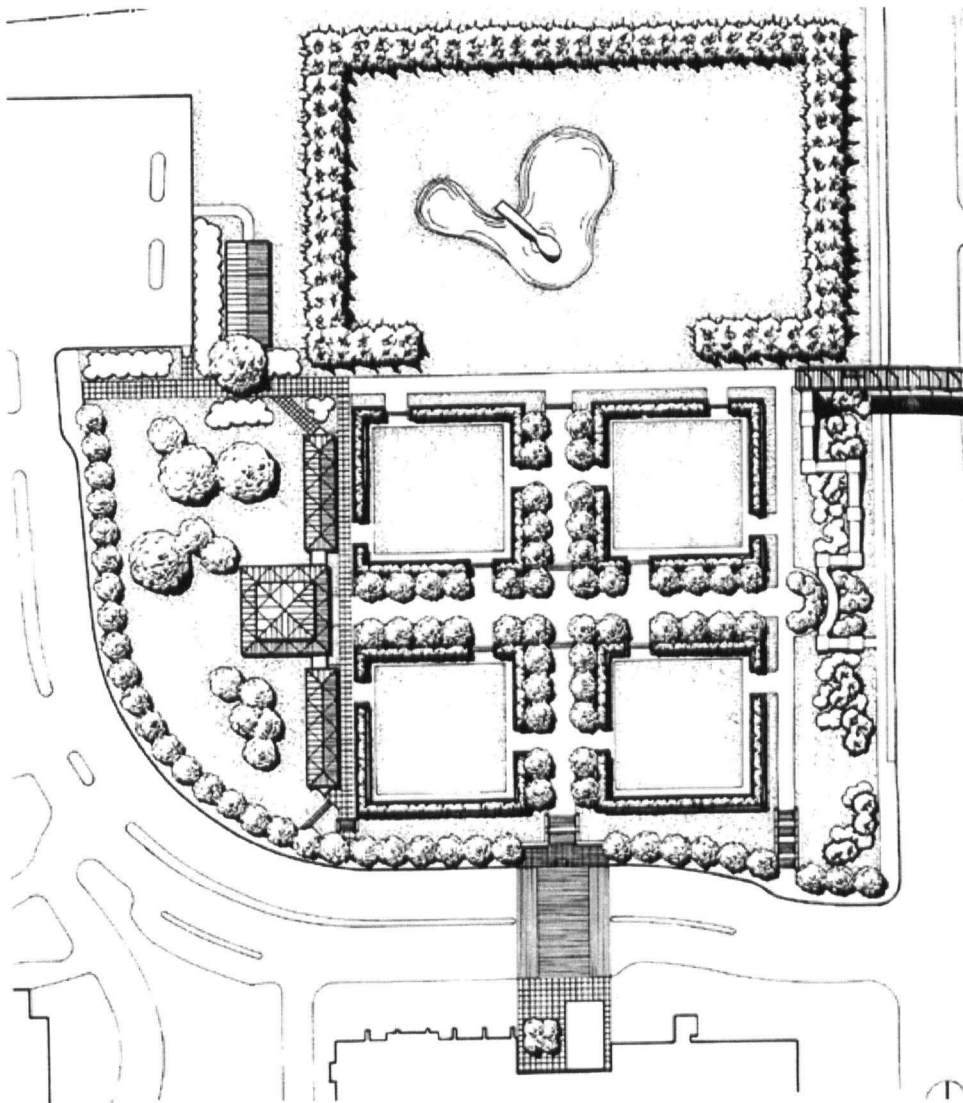


Figure 2

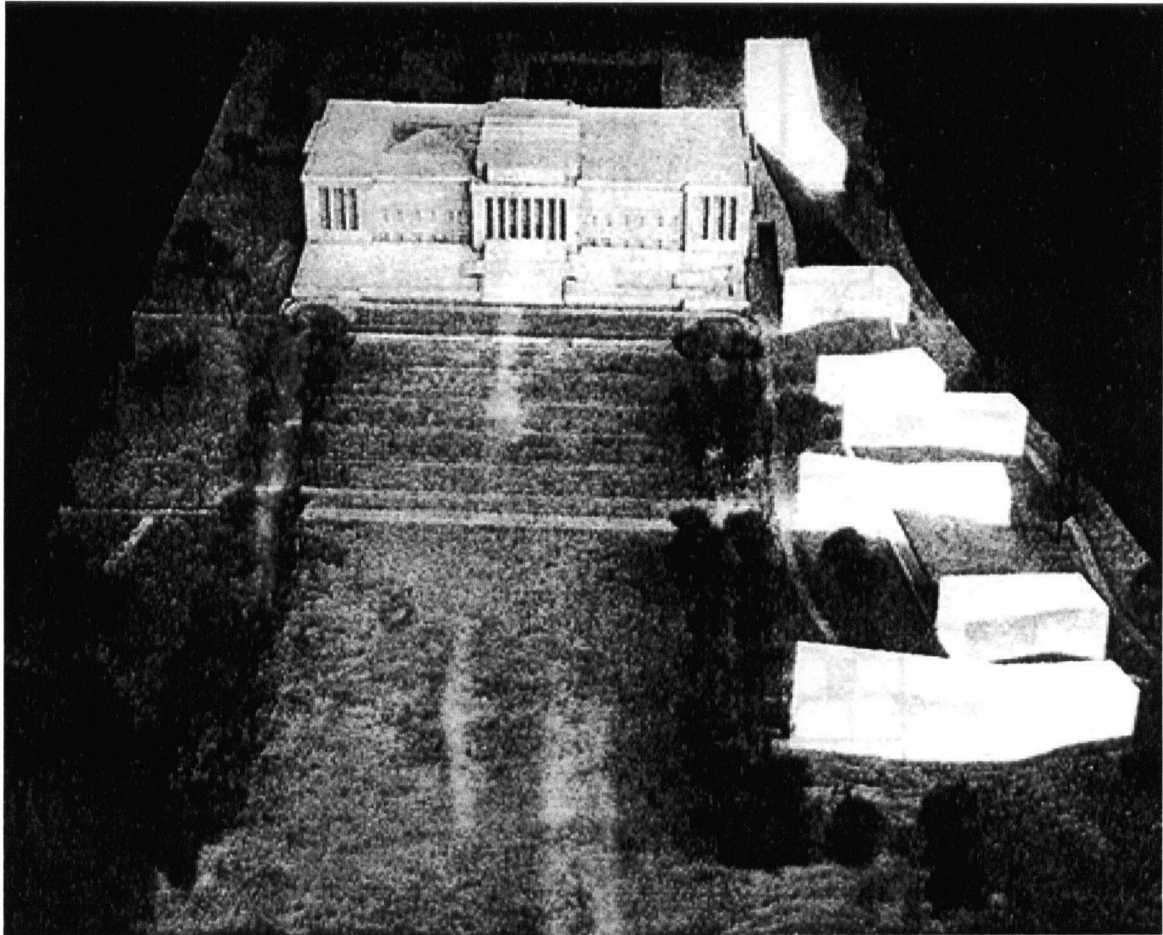


Figure 3

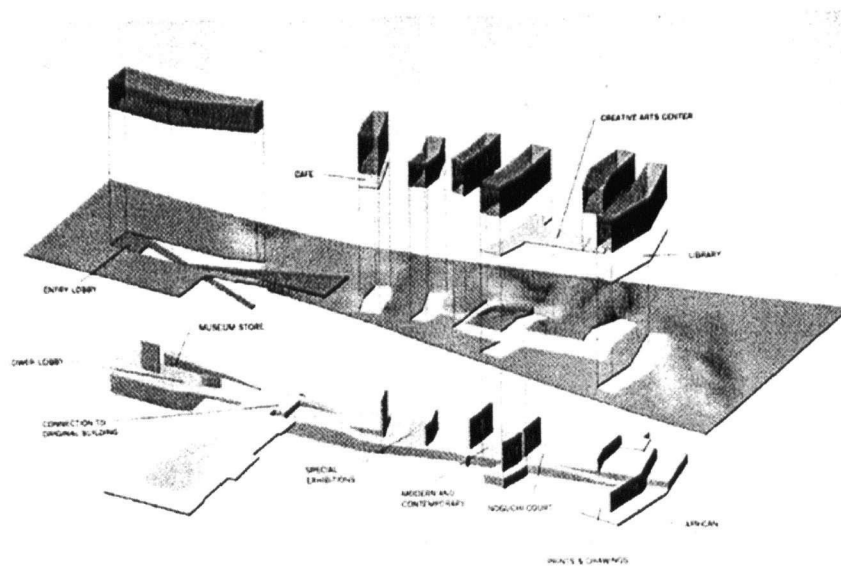


Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

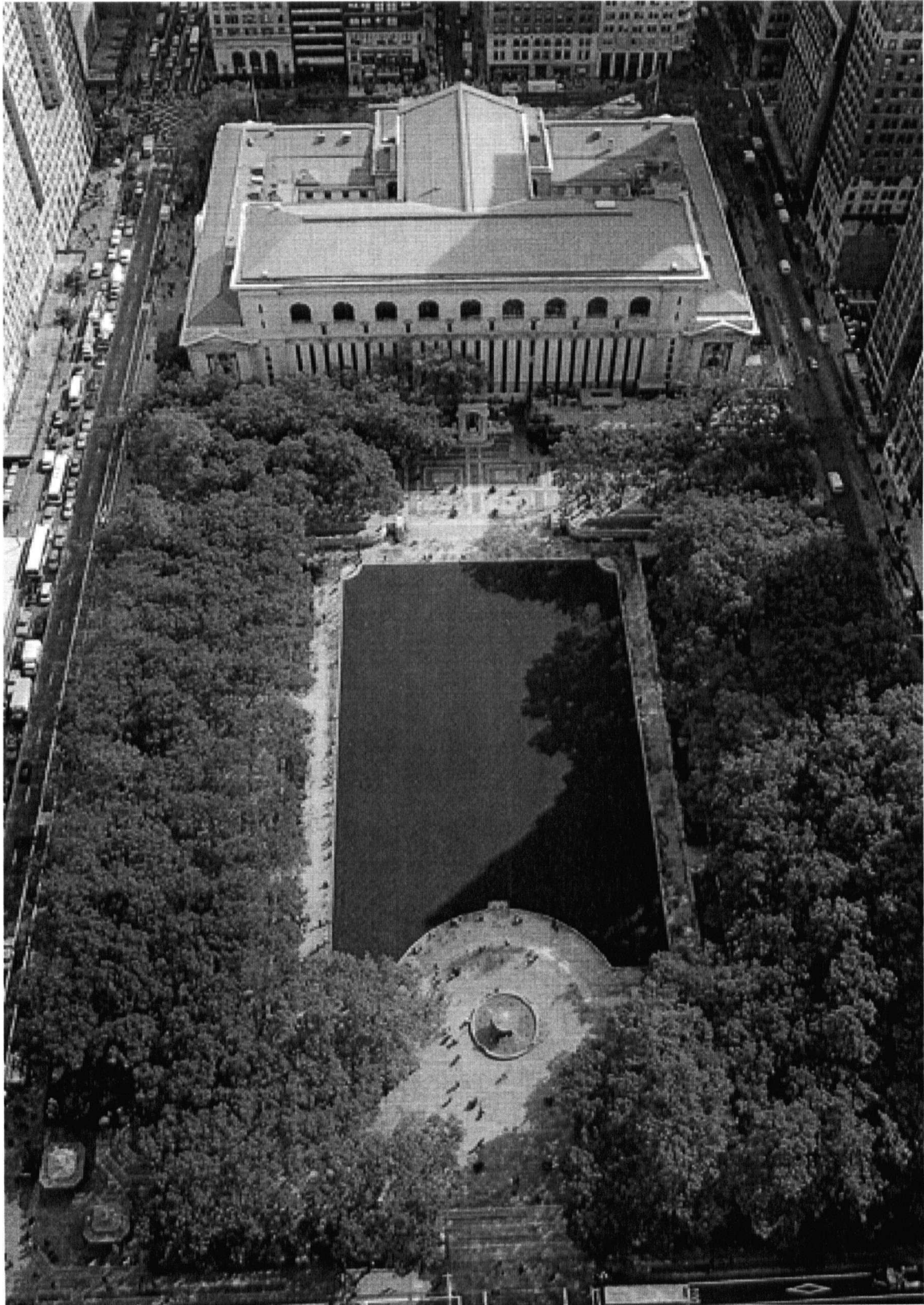


Figure 7

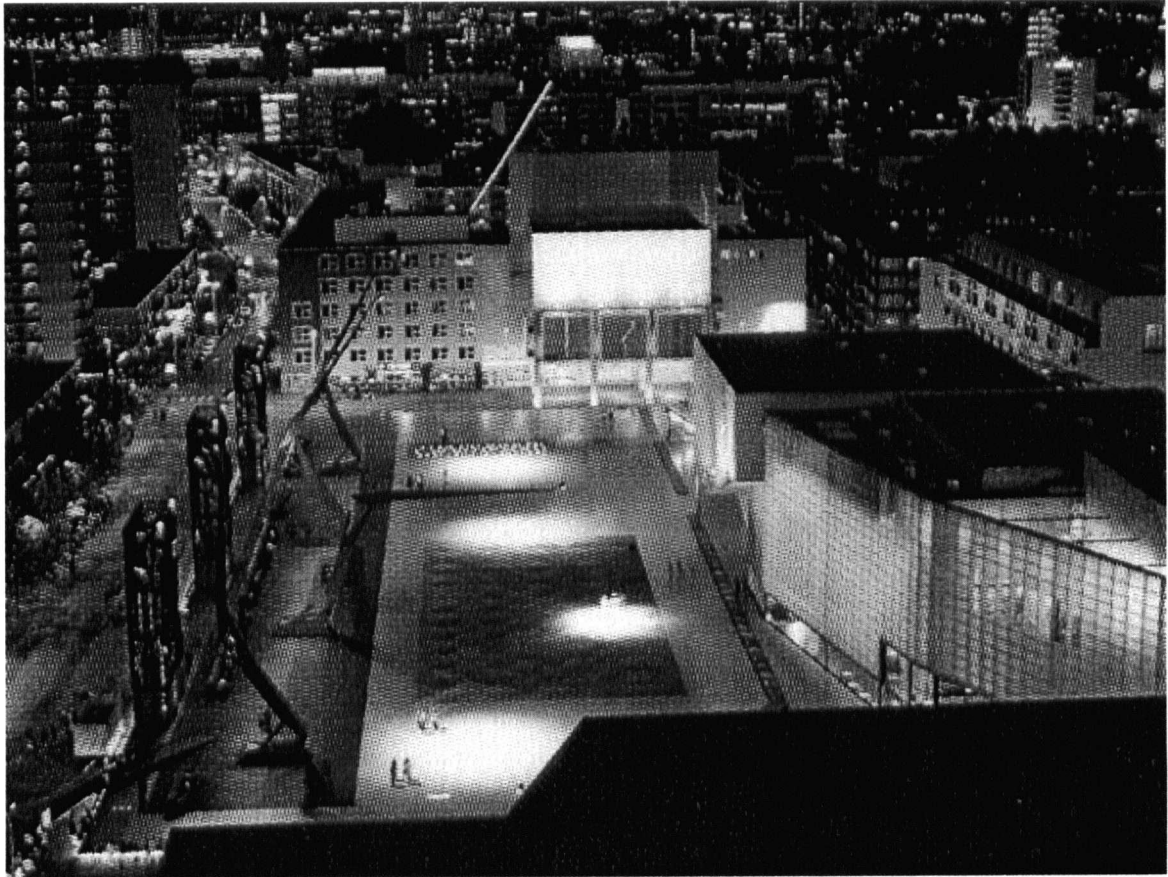


Figure 8

Shaped with grace and well crafted, the city is stage and backdrop for our daily urban drama. Yet too often we sense that the set is ill proportioned, the lighting unfocused, the play poorly written. We might leave – mayor or man on the street – if we did not suspect we were members of the cast and not just the audience. We know the shopping mall is not a village green, that the library plaza with its concrete benches is no Piazza San Marco, that Brutalist buildings are too aptly named. We know we can chum out office towers almost as effortlessly as we can fried-chicken stands, but must they look so . . . churned out? (Lipske, 15)

3.1 Process/Methodology Used

Vancouver exhibits a temporal (historical) continuity that has greatly influenced its evolution: its character manifest in the physical organization and orientation of the city. Of particular interest, and the focus of this inquiry, is the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape. In order to fully realize and understand the complexity of the site it is necessary to engage in a process of historical inquiry, and recovery of what has contributed to the form and function of the gallery and its landscape.

Christophe Girot's notions of "trace concepts" serve as an excellent model for landscape inquiry and design (Girot, 60). Trace concepts "cluster around issues of memory: marking, impressing, and founding . . . [allowing the designer to] acquire the understanding of a place that will enable them to act wisely and knowledgeably" (Girot, 60). This intuitive and experiential approach to landscape inquiry follows a sequential order and logic in its methodology and process. "Landing, grounding, finding, and founding each focus on particular gradients of discovery . . . and resolution" (Girot, 60). This process allows for the synthesis and analysis of elements and truths of the site, discerning which are of potential significance for eventual intervention on, and design of the site. The design process resembles that of an archaeological dig for the artifacts of the place – physical, ephemeral or hidden - that contribute to its current physical and symbolic form. "This inclusive approach enables a designer to blend direct physical experience and intuition with local research . . . carefully and knowledgeably assess[ing] what really needs to be recovered (anew) from the relentless erosion of time" (Girot, 60).

This particular process of design is phenomenological in its process and method of inquiry and analysis. A particular location is imbued with a distinct and exclusive character as a result of a compilation of parts. These parts are revealed through the processes that Girot describes. Rather than attempting to gather profuse amounts of unrelated "scientific" site data, phenomenological analysis, and the experiential acts of landing, finding, founding, and grounding, attempt to uncover and reveal the particularities of a place – observation of the landscape as a whole as greater than the sum of its parts.

The serendipitous and phenomenological experiences of informed, yet open-minded observation play a substantial part in the analysis and subsequent generation of design strategies and ideas. Landscape however, composed of a significant number of systems and processes, is often compartmentalized in its analysis and survey. Site analysis, an important part throughout the design process, must not be separated in this way. By synthesizing observations, ideas are spawned. These ideas are what inform creative, exciting places that are human-centred. Such modes of design process are not finality in all design work. However, if we are to expand the possibilities for landscape constructs, it is necessary that we engage in modes of design process – ones that leave more than portion to the potentially unexplained, but experienced.

In this project, the metaphor of theatre is exploited as a means of informing the design process; understanding the processes of the site and the city, and to extend the notions of theatre into physical expression. The scenographic qualities of both film and live theatre, as expressed temporally and in some sequence, are employed as a design process tool. In much the same way we experience film and theatre, the VAG landscape is expressed here, in a method (choreographed PowerPoint slide show with musical score) that provokes thought and imagination, as well as communicates design possibilities for the study site. The information conveyed is experienced and reinterpreted slightly different each time it is viewed. This choreographed view of landscape is chosen as it accounts for the complexities and dimensions of time and space, as well as invoking memory and response. As James Corner and others suggest, "techniques of representation are central to any critical act in design . . . [and] innovations in image projection are necessary for the virtual to be both conceived and actualized" (8). Attempting to communicate and illustrate my

observations and analysis of the study site results from this attempt to be explore media representation and design generation in this thesis.

3.2 Site Observations:Analysis:REpresentation

To illuminate the complexities of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape in a holistic manner, efforts were concentrated on a careful observation of the site. These observations were conducted over the course of this thesis project, approximately during the months of August 2001 through April 2002. Included in this recurrent observation were:

1. natural phenomena of light and sound
2. spatial quality and character
3. use patterns and physical traces
4. contextual urban development
5. social, political, and physical history
6. plan view visual qualities from the surrounding infrastructure
7. an extensive image library of the site, its surroundings, and its details (at varying times of day and year)

3.2.1.The Vancouver Art Gallery and Robson Square as an Urban Construct

The VAG in Vancouver (Figure 9)

At the larger scale, the Vancouver Art Gallery Square and Robson Square geographically and topographically represent the central primary public space – a linear epicenter at the heart of the city. Its physical dimension (area) and form (linear) accord it a primacy in the hierarchy of civic spaces within Vancouver's core. Further, the 'Three-Block Project' as it has often been referred to, more recently Robson Square, has long been one of the primary venues for public demonstrations, protests, and civic events. These events tend to occur on the front (north) or rear (south) steps of the VAG. It is interesting to note that City Hall - its intended function and status as civic space – has more often been succeeded by the Art Gallery as a centre for public dialogue.

Scenes on Georgia Street (Figure 10)

There are many elements that make the VAG square an important public space. Of primary importance is the square's relationship to Georgia Street, arguably Vancouver's primary ceremonial and processional route, making it a natural place for people to gather, to be seen, and to be heard. Second, the attachment it has to the Art Gallery, a signifier of public voice, suggests that a more intimate connection be established between the functions of interior and exterior space.

Despite its relative scale to the curtain of skyscrapers that surround it, the former courthouse, now the Vancouver Art Gallery cloaked in classical form, remains one of the most imposing buildings in Vancouver. It symbolizes a period of maturity and expansion that established Vancouver as a true commercial center. In fact, "Rattenbury's Courthouse . . . still stands at the center of things, its external appearance belying the changes that have occurred within" (Rosenberg, 6).

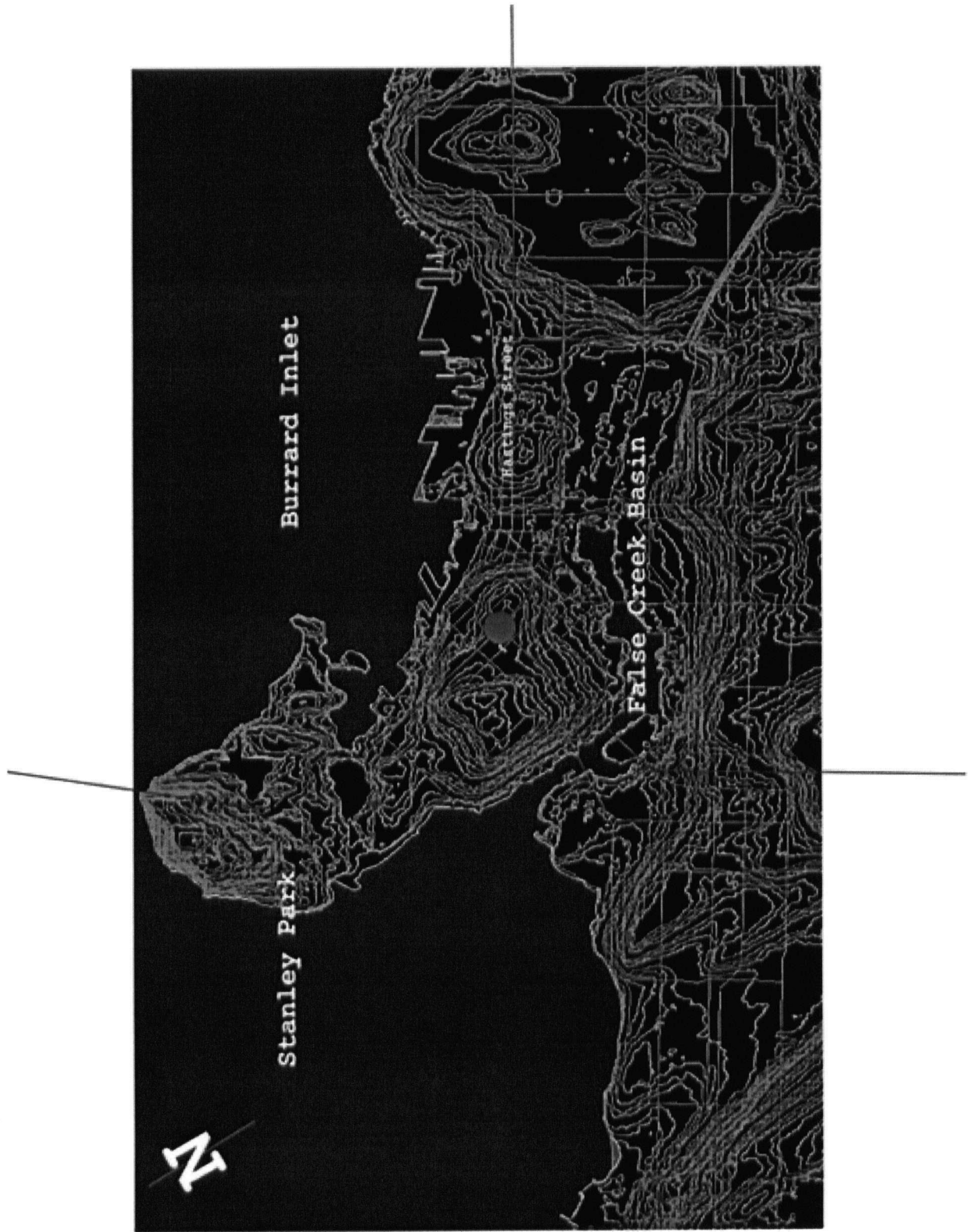


Figure 9 The VAG in Vancouver

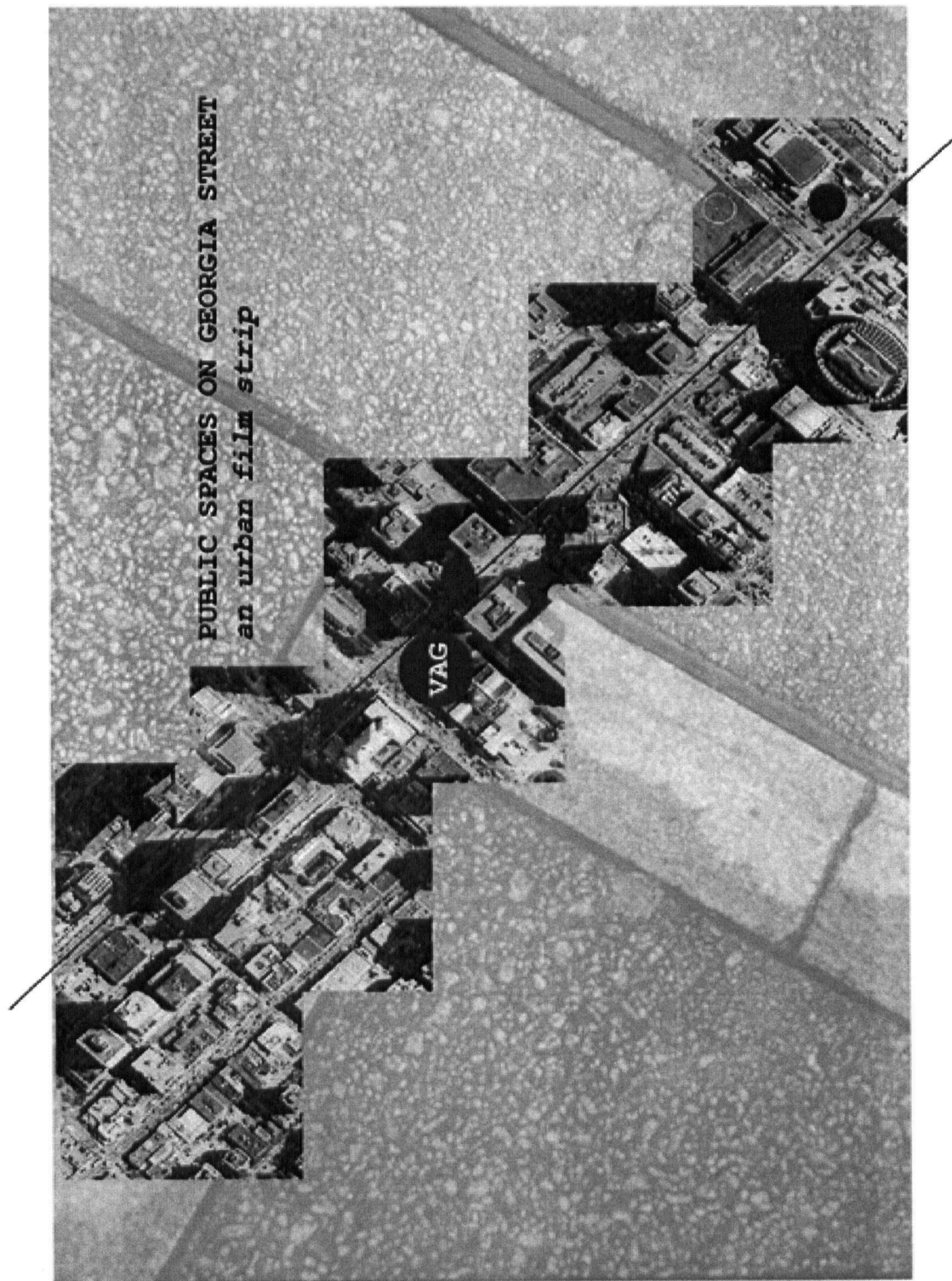


Figure 10 Scenes on Georgia Street

3.2.2.Policies and Studies

After the Thomas Hooper extension to the Courthouse was completed in 1912, "the site of the Courthouse had been discussed as the location for a civic center for Vancouver, perhaps surrounded by a city hall, a library, art museum and auditorium" (Rosenberg, 32). The Edward VII fountain was "placed at the center of the original plaza on Georgia Street . . . and for many years, until it rotted, the tallest flagpole in the Empire was the boast of the Old Courthouse Square" (Rosenberg, 32). In 1966, the lawn was given over to the current fountain that rests in the center of the plaza. This disproportionately large fountain was a gift, from the province to Vancouver, that "apart from the symmetry of its design, the fountain [takes] no account of the building it fronts" (Rosenberg, 32). It is suggested that the intentions and motives of this gift were ulterior and subversive. The Socred government during this time, led by W.A.C. Bennett, intended the fountain, carefully placed at the center, to deter public gathering in front of the Courthouse. Today the fountain stands as an additional obstruction to the direct access, and occupation of the square.

The city, as stated in the 'Georgia Street-Second Century' Study has acknowledged the "Old Courthouse Square [as a] Heritage Public Square [that] should be developed into a special City place". They further add that the "Provincially owned public square fronting Georgia Street . . . is the most important open space in the downtown" (Georgia Street Public Realm Advisory Committee, 7), and suggest a development plan be prepared for the entire block. Why is it, then, that no such plan has been prepared? This "principal activity node" remains in isolation and underutilized.

A study conducted by Aitken Wreglesworth Associates (1994) for the Vancouver Art Gallery also posits arguments for and against the closing of the Georgia Street Doors. In this study - completed as part of an appraisal for modification of the front entrance if the doors were to be reopened - the architects suggest that the Georgia Street Plaza still remains one of the city's most important public spaces. Further, "to remove the ostensible function from the façade of the principal building seriously erodes the essence of the place" (Aitken Wreglesworth Associates, 1). The identification of the building's entrance is also problematic for visitors new to the City and the Gallery. In fact, not only is the architectural typology of the building denied in the current illusory entrance, "the architect's intentions [Rattenbury] and the former pattern of use of the building" (Aitken Wreglesworth Associates, 1) is also denied.

If the public space fronting the Vancouver Art Gallery is to become a vibrant and democratic public space, there also needs to be a leniency and spontaneity given over to the public. This space is "available for rallies and public demonstrations" states the City of Vancouver's Engineering Services (www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/engsvcs/projects/events/vag). Further, "application is made to the City for these areas and insurance is required as well . . . Approval is granted by the Art Gallery and the City of Vancouver . . . In addition, the gallery does not permit amplified music at events and will not allow posters to be attached to the building". With such a litigious set of rules and regulations regarding one of the city's "primary public spaces", how are we to enrich and enliven this place to better serve the community and its voices? That one must gain approval for public demonstration limits the freedom of expression to that of regulatory and selective institutions.

A recently commissioned intervention at the Vancouver Art Gallery entitled 'Four Boats Stranded: Red and Yellow, Black and White', includes four coloured boats, each occupying one corner of the building's roof. The four sculptures are the response of a local Chinese artist to doubts of white (Caucasian) benevolence. His response is provoked by a plaque (see photo at left), north of the Georgia Plaza's fountain, that "celebrates a somewhat exclusionary notion of the founding nationalities of British Columbia: English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh" (Milroy, V9). It's ironic that such a high profile public urban space retains elements that are celebratory of exclusion.

There has been a recognized need for, and subsequent acceptance of the revitalization of the Robson Square complex and surrounding landscape. With expansion concerns of the Vancouver Art Gallery, and the occupation of the former Robson Square Conference Centre by the University of British Columbia, city and design staff believe these to be "desirable use[s] in this location and is consistent with the original public purposes of the Robson Square development" (www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/010626/A5). Further, "staff believes that the use is compatible with the adjacent Vancouver Art Gallery". However, the institutional domination of a space that was originally intended as a social and cultural hub is questionable. A City Design Panel posited further concerns. The Panel "had serious concerns about the amount of retail being proposed and its potential impact on the civic nature of the space . . . Of particular concern were the two retail buildings on Howe Street which were thought to be a major impingement on the public realm" (www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/010626/A5). The external changes to the plaza space are very limited. These changes "consist of new glazed canopies over the two street-level entries on the east and west sides of

the Art Gallery Annex . . . Also, new signage proposals are included that have been reviewed for compatibility with the existing architecture" (www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/010626/A5). Such changes are certainly needed, but again the focus of concern has been re-directed from a public space that better serves some of the suggested potentials for museum/gallery expansion, and acts as a symbolic 'center stage' for a deprived urban life – the Georgia Plaza.

3.3 Design Issues

3.3.1. Legibility (Figures 11 and 12)

Currently, there are two entrances to the art gallery, both of which are lost to the overwhelming presence of both the north and south Grand stairs. The illegibility and seemingly deceptive qualities of the current entrances elicit a sense of confusion and abandonment. Use of the Grand stairs now occurs only in their sporadic occupation by public demonstrators. Renovated in 1983 as the new home of the Vancouver Art Gallery, the closure of the doors fronting Georgia Street ensured the eventual downgrading of the adjacent square.

3.3.2. Architectural Imposition

Public urban space was internalized in the construction of the new Law Courts, to be designed by Arthur Erickson. Instead of remaining a function of city form, Vancouver's potential for a prime public space was absorbed into the architectural form of a modernist artifact. In the schematics submitted to the City, by Erickson's office, he proclaimed: "the public space is the interstitial space between courtrooms" (qtd. In Rosenberg, 44). Though his intentions may have been revolutionary and progressive, they did little to enrich the landscape of the three blocks that were to receive Vancouver's citizenry, failing to provide them a democratic space for civic dialogue and demonstration. The post-Bauhausian methods of construction, celebrated by Arthur Erickson in the design of the new Law Courts, in addition to the integration of gardens into the structures, has further moved to fragment and isolate the very space it was intended to democratize.

3.3.3. The Edges

The Art Gallery stands in relative isolation at the center of the block. Its edges are weak and ill defined. The eastern edge is particularly weak and inhospitable, providing no spatial or visual buffer between the Gallery and the busy traffic of Howe Street. A lengthy swath of grass bounding this edge also seems to be of little functional use given the overwhelming amount of shade cast by the adjacent Eaton's and Toronto Dominion Tower, in addition to the large amounts of rainfall that Vancouver receives throughout the year. The western edge of the Gallery enjoys a scattered and inconsistent tree canopy, and lacks the experiential grandeur exemplified by the allee of London Plain Trees that bound the new Law Courts further south on Hornby Street. This lack of continuity, in addition to the mid-block pullout on Hornby Street between Robson and Georgia, detracts from any pleasing spatial qualities that may have been achieved, and/or contributed to the successful staging and composition of the Gallery. Robson Street retains a healthy public street life, in part due to the upscale tourist retail activity that has emerged over a number of years. However, the space surrounding the Gallery, to the south, is interrupted by sub-surface access to Robson Square, inhibiting activity that would more likely occur at street level. The steps leading to the second floor Gallery café are a functional addition, however, that may help to mitigate some of the deleterious effects of the stairs that lead underground. Finally, the plaza fronting the Gallery is separated from Georgia Street by the fountain, parted steps, irregular planting, and an inadequate sidewalk width. For such a vital and potentially vibrant connection between street life and its adjacent public gathering space, the Art Gallery square underachieves its potential. Connections between our urban spaces are necessary and beneficial to the vibrancy of civic life desired.

Traces that exist within the site indicate obvious public uses that are not addressed in its current configuration and design. Pedestrian pathways are deeply etched in the soft surfaces of the front lawn and those at the western edge of the site on Hornby Street. Worn patches at the bases of the cedar trees framing the original Gallery entrance also indicate uses that were certainly unanticipated or neglected.

3.3.4. Streets and Traffic

The Vancouver Art Gallery is surrounded on all four sides by major transportation routes. Of particular importance are Georgia Street, the primary carrier of traffic through Downtown Vancouver, and Howe Street that serves as an arterial feeder to traffic heading southbound. This does not preclude that its function as a primary public urban space is threatened. Heavy traffic flows, the dissection of Howe Street with underground access ramps, and exposed pedestrian

routes along the edges create an inhospitable environment to inhabit. A necessary issue to address in any enhancement of this core area involves the creation of a more comfortable and safe pedestrian realm.

There are a multitude of other elements that contribute to the underutilization of the space; many noted herein. The pedestrian edges of the block upon which the Gallery sits, however, do nothing to enrich the relationship between the public spaces of the square with that of the street. It is such non-communication between urban forms that detracts from the function and experiential quality of the entire space. The Eaton's Centre and Toronto Dominion Tower are both overwhelming in their architectural façade and scale. The inhumane edges that have been created do little to address the Georgia Plaza across Howe Street. In order to ensure the success of this public space it is necessary to create an environment, which, to the pedestrian, is experientially rich. As a public space, it is the pedestrian that is a priority. This means ensuring the efficient movement of vehicular traffic in a manner that is both non-threatening and non-dominant.

3.3.5. Spatial Compromise in the Urban Fabric (Figure 13)

The Georgia Plaza holds a particular volume within the city's fabric. This volume is manifest in its relationship to the buildings that front and surround it. The NE corner of the site however is compromised by the distanced vertical enclosure of the Pacific Centre atrium entrance. This corner as a place has been displaced.

3.3.6. Seating (Figure 14)

Perhaps more undesirable than unusable, the coloured areas represented here indicate areas that are rendered impractical. Patches of grass, neglected flowerbeds, and dark and damp edges contribute to the lack of potential use these areas might otherwise have – SEATING. As a central public space, the existing plaza remains fragmented and non-contextual.

3.3.7. Vancouver Art Gallery Expansion (Figure 15)

The Vancouver Art Gallery is in need of more space. They are currently short on both storage and exhibition space. In addition, attempts are being made to commission art works for outdoor public display. This poses unique opportunities for design that would serve to respond to this client's needs, as well as to provide a unique destination that would bring people to the plaza. The existing vault space beneath the plaza offers possibilities for further expansion underground.

3.3.8. Shadow (Figure 16)

One of the problems regarding the functioning of the Georgia Plaza is that it is in shade a large period of the time. It's location, on the north side of the gallery, as well as the imposing height of the surrounding buildings ensures that darkness prevails. The shade cast across the square, and the oppressive darkness in colour that each building reflects imposes upon the comforts one may feel in the adjacent square. Shadow studies of the plaza were mapped in order to better understand the implications of these natural phenomena.

The design issues listed above, and the figures shown herein are a small sample of the drawings and computer generated images that were composed for a 'Deep Analysis' presentation. The analysis included social, structural, visual, observational, historical, and experiential investigation of the site. 'Deep Analysis' was presented to the design community in PowerPoint format; slide transitions timed to the sounds of urban music. The choice of presentation format was in response to the metaphorical connections between site process and function, and theatre. The unspoken film of image, word, and music is meant to illustrate the nature of how the VAG landscape is experienced. Figures 7-26 are slides from the 'Deep Analysis' presentation conducted on the 18 January 2002.



Figure 11 Current Gallery Entrance



Figure 12 Original Gallery Entrance

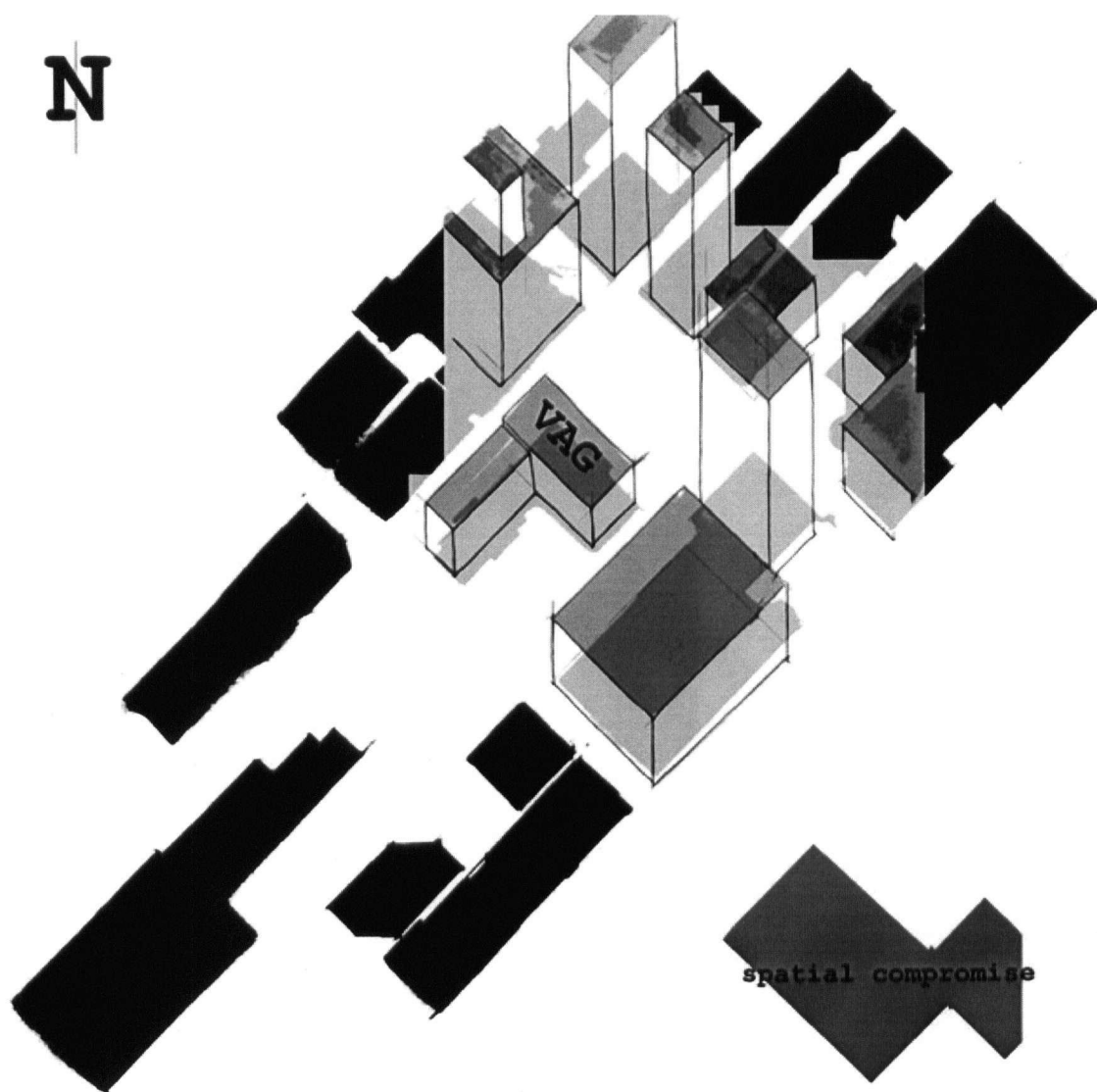


Figure 13 Spatial Compromise in the Urban Fabric

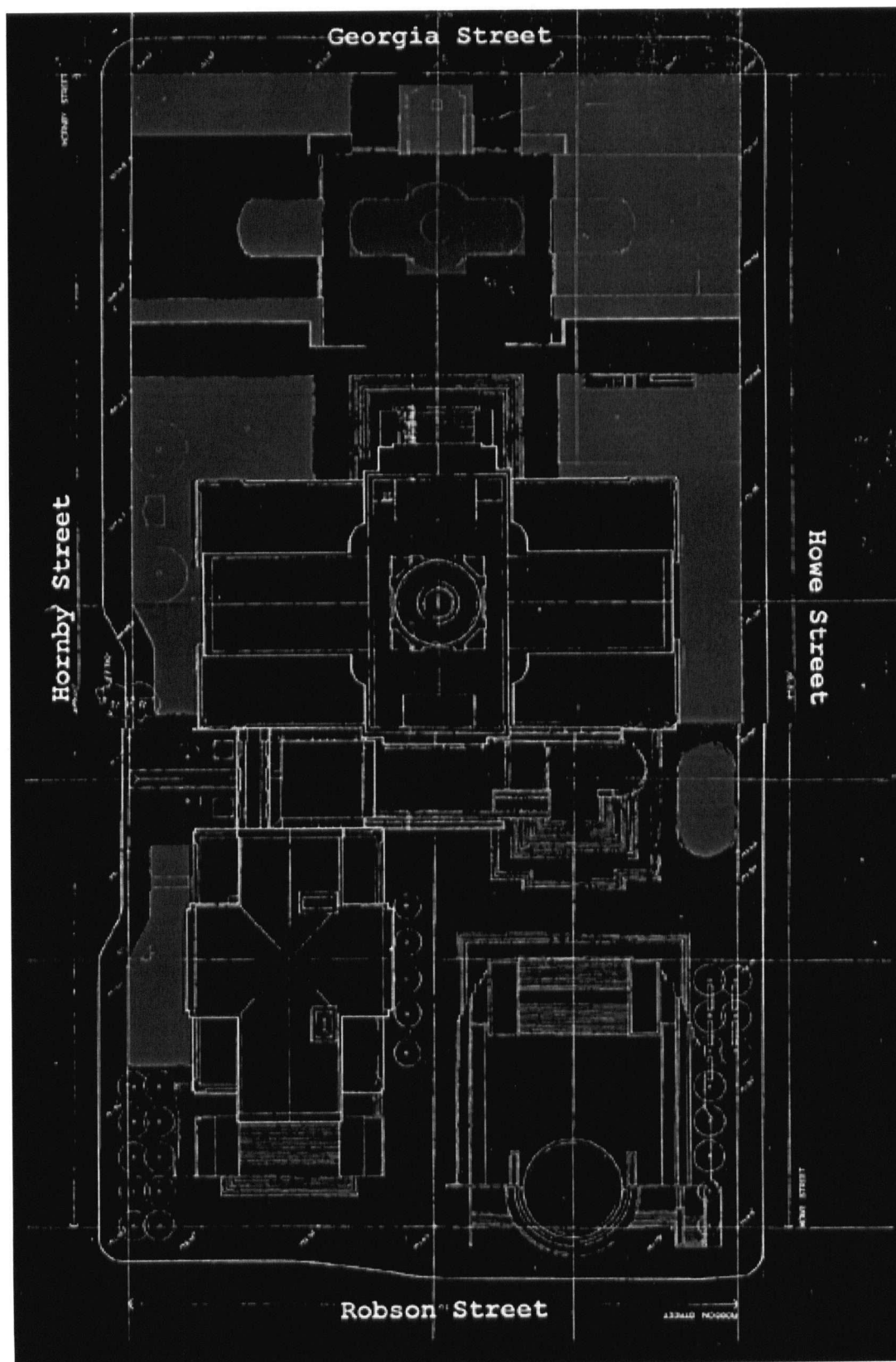


Figure 14 Undesirable Centres and Wholes

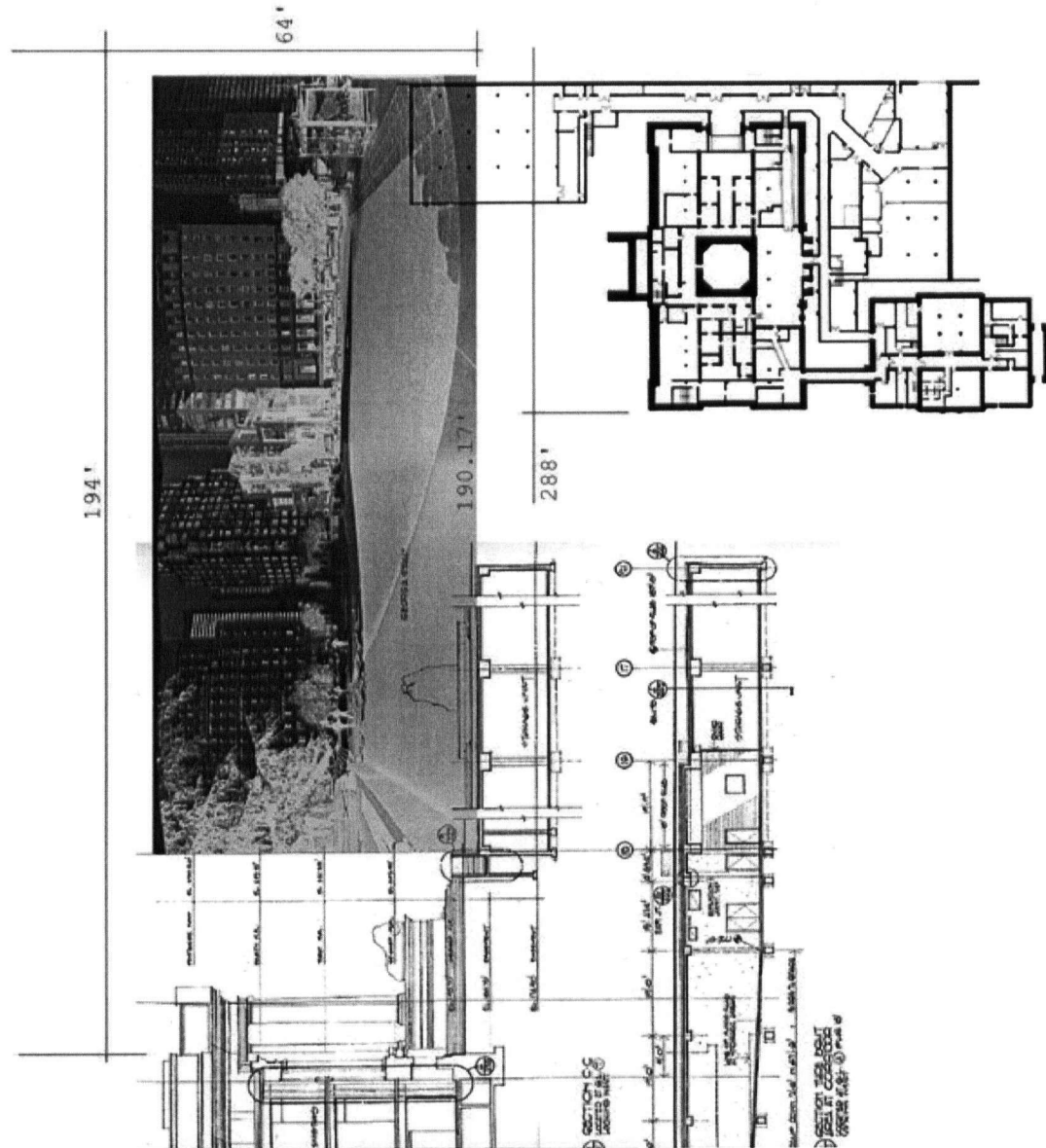


Figure 15 Above:Below

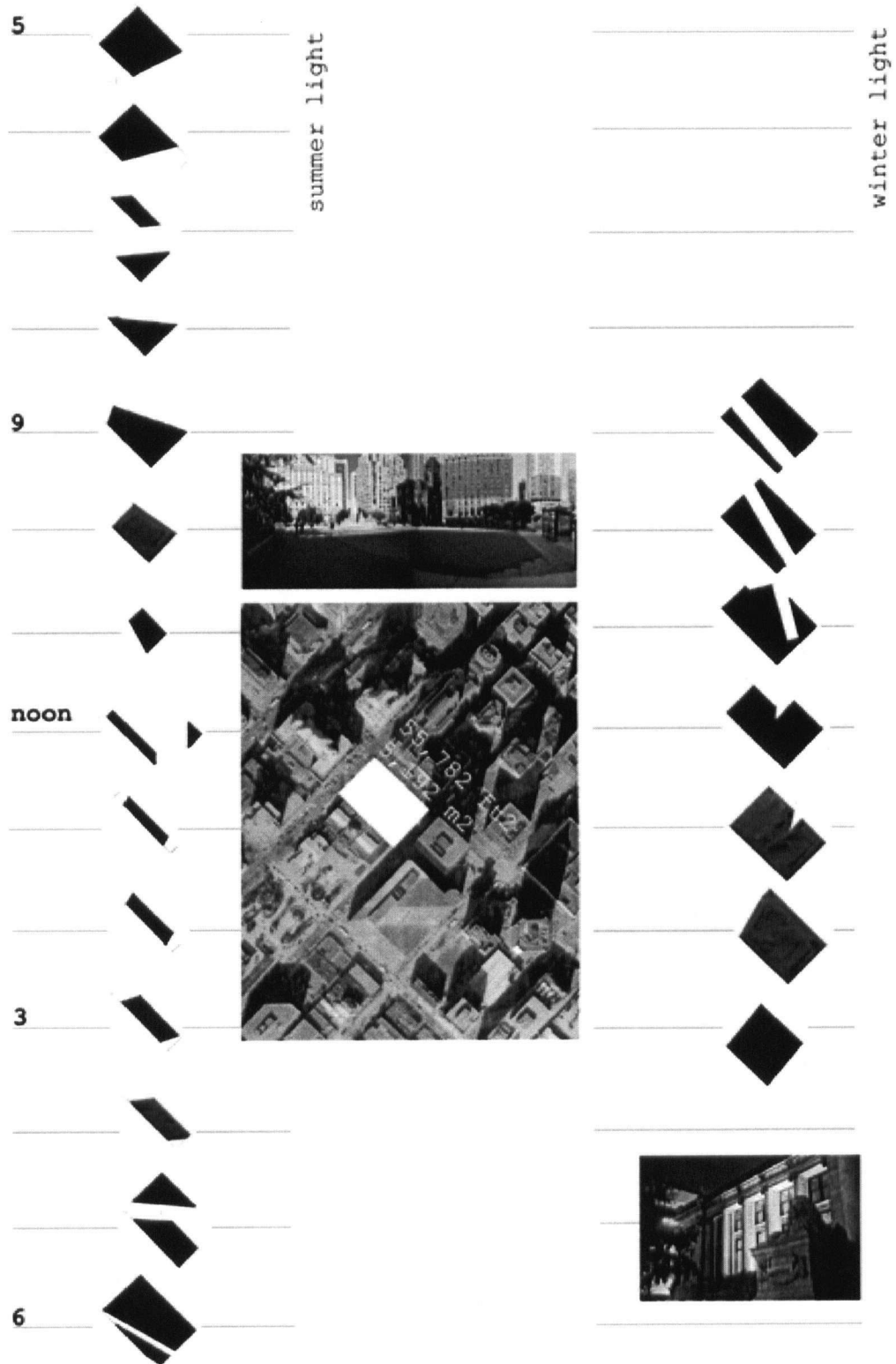


Figure 16 Shadow Map

Chapter IV DESIGN FRAMEWORK

4.1 Public Urban Space as Urban Theatre

Urban landscapes, like architecture, are the accurate and wonderful play of masses brought together in light. Our eyes are meant to see forms in light. It is the correct combination of light and shade that ultimately reveal these forms.

Theatrical productions rely on the exacting interplay between light and darkness to convey emotion and meaning. Jane Amidon describes the importance of both aesthetic and ambient qualities of the designed landscape:

A site that communicates in the languages of light, colour and texture brings the human impulse closer to the natural context, whether the designer chooses to capture ambient effects or to introduce new terms . . . What stimulates the eye, the mind and the imagination is sensory information, often gathered subliminally as the conscious brain confronts the complexities of form, placement and dimension in its attempt to comprehend functional parameters . . . Instinctual reactions are invoked by light, colour and texture (12).

It is the activation of our emotional being and experiences within the urban landscape that are particularly important to design for. Oppressive rationality and conservative functionality create generic landscapes that do little to engage the mind, body, or the spirit. Our sensory perception is an active process that requires new and often irrational stimulation. The skillful and purposeful incorporation of "colours with which we identify feelings, tactile materials, aromas and distinguishing sounds capture the visitor's attention from the moment the space is discovered" (Amidon, 12). In addition, it arrests our perception, and forces an awareness of the present. This awareness generates both an appreciation for the past, and anticipation for the future. Combined, we become more familiar with, and increasingly aware of the rhythms, patterns, and cycles of daily human life – 'real time'. The collective accumulation and identification with such landscape spaces ultimately contributes to the imbuing of place with civic function and cultural meaning. These meanings are conveyed, like traditional art forms, through mediums of landscape, and the forum of public theatre.

The design for the Georgia Plaza is an open, flexible stage. Vancouver has, and continues to experience constant change, stimulation, and growth. Our public spaces will ultimately turn in upon themselves from the outward-focused public realm of today – the seawall edge. In order to avoid the generic repetition of tableaux of nature within the city, it is important to emphasize geometry and civic activity in the forms of this space. As the primary public space within the city, the layout of the stage should be both simple and flexible, as well as emotionally and perceptually engaging – a careful balance of moving people through the space, and yet giving them pause.

4.2 The VAG Landscape as Centre Stage

4.2.1. The Saviour of Stage(d) Design and Designed Landscape – Backdrop, Setting, and Lighting

Why could we not achieve spatial volume in landscape with light, sound, and image? For example, enclosure, where "space becomes a place where something happens, a temporary territorial event much more akin to a depoliticised TAZ [temporary autonomous zone], the space of the battle being where the battle takes place" (Greene, qtd. In Holding, 7). The landscape at the Vancouver Art Gallery has, historically, been a stage set for the actions of its citizenry. Such displays of social behaviour are explained in Eric Holding's descriptions regarding the powerful social interactions that occur between the audience and the performers in a rock show. He states, "this is not like the passive relationship experienced at a traditional theatrical performance or classical symphony, but one in which the audience [the individuals] as a collective body [the community] takes an active role, becoming emotionally and physically involved in what Holding defines as a 'tribal event'" (10). The Art Gallery Square is in need of a space in which the above dynamics can, again, be expressed; creating a presentation space that "intensifies the experience of the crowd" (Holding, 10).

In Mark Fisher's book 'Stage Architecture', the spaces he creates "communicate with the audience by using powerful visual signifiers and symbolic codes and occupy an elusive territory somewhere between representational image and tectonic form, utilizing the strategies of both for maximum effect" (Holding, 11). The Art Gallery is itself an example of a cultural signifier. Such symbols, and the meanings that are signified within exist throughout landscape, both designed and 'natural'. The Vancouver Art Gallery landscape holds immense potential as a setting for cultural performances and displays, an opportunity to use the real space of the city, and operate outside the usual confines of a gallery. Extending the functions of museum space into the landscape transforms the fabric of the city into an event. Holding argues that "some urban design solutions which have been introduced into places such as London, New York, Tokyo, Osaka and Las Vegas owe more to rock sets than traditional urban forms. In effect, what appears to be taking place is the

theatricalisation of the city" (Holding, 49). Gallery settings and processes may very well serve a similar purpose in the theatrical transformation of this urban space.

The former Law Courts, now the Vancouver Art Gallery, have provided a stunning and imposing backdrop to the activities and events that have historically occurred there. Contrastingly, the architectural scenery surrounding this urban stage has seen many changes, or curtain calls. Buildings have been torn down and rebuilt, often dwarfing their predecessors in scale. In fact, these urban props have become increasingly large, framing and enclosing the Gallery's open space, further reinforcing its position at Vancouver's center. In theatrical stage design, "scenery contributes to dramatic production by creating an atmospheric background for the play . . . in order to produce psychological, emotional, and aesthetic effects upon the group mind of the audience" (Helvenston, 3). The audience is Vancouver's citizenry. The scenery is orchestrated around the neo-classical architecture of Rattenbury's Law Courts building built in 1907. Harold Helvenston defines the "contributions of scenery that go to make the atmospheric background of a play [as] locale, time, mood, and aesthetic effect" (4). Locale, he suggests, "in the strict sense of place, is gained by the use of typical forms, colours, and characteristics of the place represented" (Helvenston, 4). The locale represented in this situation is suggestive through the use of vernacular materials (granite), forms, and symbols; in this case strongly imbued with a meaning that is critically regional.

Lighting is suggestive of both mood and aesthetic effect, in addition to both function and preference, in the creation of designed landscapes. The glowing windows of the Gallery itself are impressive at night. However, the surrounding landscape is poorly lit and thus limits the activity that may potentially occur there. This darkness spans the entire circumference of the property. Darkness is also apparent during segments of the day when the surrounding buildings limit the amount of direct natural light falling upon the square. If the public is to feel comfortable in occupying this space at all hours of the day, as is desirable in "achiev[ing] the most expressive results in theatrical scenic production" (Helvenston, 39), it is important that such issues be addressed in the design solution. In fact, as Helvenston suggests, "one should demand virtuosity in the lighting of a setting" (39). Helvenston further explains that the creative stage designer is skilled in "the conception and use of light as an intensifying agent to drama" (16). The design and use of light informs the design, combining urban design with programmatic functions.

Chapter V A DESIGN PROPOSAL

The design for the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape suggests more than simple aesthetic reconfigurations and renovations to the plaza itself. Each aspect of the design attempts to provide options for as many types of civic functions and activities as possible. Part of what creates a great city space is the infusion of life into it. Art, artistic expression and art form all contribute to the symbolic content of the public realm. This design attempts to respond to the ideas and theories developed for each landscape-analog type. However, the design concept and outcomes are more consciously informed by, and derived from the notions of the public *landscape as theatre*. While maintaining a conscious recognition of site phenomena, character, and history, the design focuses on providing an example of how this central urban stage might better serve the city as a public.

5.1 Design Brief

A useful program should identify workable examples as precedent (recall of previous forms/stereotypes/past examples – the associations of which carry symbolic functions), as well as, character of paths, views to maintain or obstruct, mix of visible activity, and legibility of the completed environment.

$$\text{Pattern(s) of Activity} + \text{Pattern(s) of Circulation} = \text{Supporting Pattern(s) of Form}$$

5.1.1. Program Objectives

1. Provide a full-time, city employed program coordinator for outdoor cultural programming. This person, or persons should work in collaboration with the many theatre groups and organizations throughout the city to encourage diversity in talent and types of performance.
2. Everyday Programs should include the licensing and hiring of food vendors, temporary newspaper stands, and performers.
3. Schedule regular live concerts, VSO lunchtime summer performances, and other theatrical events such as reading series, and outdoor movie screenings.
4. Better facilitate and promote the use of this space for public protest and demonstration.

5. Accommodate specific Civic Celebrations such as the Vancouver Sun Run, First Night New Year's, and Canada Day. These events would warrant the temporary closure of the surrounding streets.
6. Establish tighter programmatic connections between the VAG and: the hotels (Midsummer Night's Dream Ball held on the plaza), the banks – TD and HSBC – (temporary and rotational exhibit of artworks of a certain niche, that are held by the VAG).
7. Ensure adequate flexible seating throughout the space by hosting "buy-a-chair" fundraising events.

5.1.2. Accommodate Multiple Functions in Space Design

1. Civic Space and Public Gatherings
 - a. To provide opportunities for all forms of cultural expression in the Art Gallery Plaza. This involves leaving much of the space open, as well as providing choice in the location, and size of various public events (variety in sizing, orientation, and spatial support of the sub-stage spaces – flexibility in the various celebrations of civic life: staging, rigging, framing).
 - b. To create a center of civic pride and identity: a space that is identifiable in its visible material and infrastructure investment, and its appeal as a functional public space for human occupation.
 - c. To accommodate a variety of programmatic functions – large public events, performances, ceremonies, demonstrations, and celebrations. In addition, the redesign should reinforce and communicate the symbolic importance of this public place. Georgia Street is an established parade route already, and a relationship to the Art Gallery's open space should be reinforced and better established. In order to allow for the flexibility of these various functions, the space beyond the property lines of the Vancouver Art Gallery needs to be acknowledged and reinforced. This involves the bold manipulation of street grades and surface treatment, extending the legal space of the square to the experiential space of the immediate city.
 - d. To better adapt the open space to the needs of the local employment population in order to enrich and enliven the space, including after weekday office hours and on weekends (seating and food).
 - e. Provide adequate space for temporary displays and sculpture installations.

5.1.3. Increase Accessibility

1. Pedestrian Circulation
 - a. The VAG Square should be better integrated with the street environment to enhance pedestrian circulation and reinforce connections to adjacent areas (elevated and embellished crosswalks, free movement amongst a sparse tree planting and a relatively flat public stage).

5.1.4. Enhance Identity

1. Legibility
 - a. To enhance the edge conditions of the site, thus establishing its centeredness locally and contextually, as well as supporting its relationship to the street (extension of the existing allee that lines Hornby Street).
2. Lighting
 - a. To enhance the square's architectural presence felt at night so that it may show off, and stand up to its surroundings – "even the empty expanse of the square need not sink into obscurity when evening comes" (Brummel, 61).
3. Gateway/Views
 - a. To suggest further enhancement to the urban plan of Vancouver, through design of the Georgia Plaza, by contributing to the rhythmic interrelationships among all public spaces that have a sense of connection to the street.
 - b. The space should enhance views of, and support connections to adjacent historic structures and buildings.

- c. The 'backdrop' of surrounding development, current and future, should serve to enhance the aesthetic quality of the open space.
- 4. Symbolic Content/Re-presentation
 - a. Establish a relationship between the interior of the gallery – its functions and spatial experiences - and the exterior gallery landscape. Extending the functions of the gallery/museum space into the landscape will add a further layer to the programmatic and experiential potentials of the square (staging, rigging, framing – the creation of a variety of gallery/theatre spaces that ROTATE in their necessitated use and occupation).

5.1.5. Encourage the Integration and Celebration of all citizens

- 1. Use art events to bring diverse citizens of Vancouver together.
- 2. Use art events and exhibits to promote cultural exchange.
- 3. Design space for ceremonies and celebrations relevant to Vancouver's diverse population.

5.1.6. Related Off-Site Improvements

- 1. The Pacific Centre entrance way could be altered in such a way that the visual connection between it and Georgia Plaza is strengthened. The existing façade of the Eaton's building along Howe Street, separating the entrance plaza from the street, interrupts pedestrian flow and discourages pedestrian activity. This blank façade should be opened to elicit public 'window shopping' and lingering.
- 2. The street level façade of the Toronto Dominion tower must be permeated. Alternative uses, more suitable to evening/nighttime activities, as well as visual access will provide a more hospitable edge, encouraging pedestrian lingering, and an input of activity to the immediate area.
- 3. Future programming of on-site activities should take into consideration, or include, incorporating the adjacent alleyway. Existing and future architectural changes to buildings that back onto this laneway might consider opening late night venues and/or cabaret entrances.
- 4. Options for transportation infrastructure alterations to the Pacific Centre vehicle entrance/exit ramps are absolutely necessary to remove the extreme physical and psychological barriers they present.

5.2 Design Narrative

5.2.1. Conceptual Overview

THE DESIGN focuses on a unification/democratization of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape.
 THE STAGE responds to the current needs of Vancouver's citizenry, and remains flexible for future changes in demand and use.
 THE SURFACE provides a monochromatic tableau that comes alive with its use and occupation.
 THE PLACE is a signifier of architectural development that serves as a powerful gateway marker of our central urban space.
 THE NEW VAG LANDSCAPE is a sign that shapes a centre and a space.

5.2.2. Landscape as Theatre

In *landscape as theatre*, the form of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape is transformed to improve civic functioning and circulation. The space immediately in front of the gallery is both defined as a place and extended as a public space. Experientially the plaza reads as one large space that reaches beyond the legal confines of the gallery property to the edges of its immediate surroundings. However, upon further investigation it becomes evident that there are a number of smaller, more intimate spaces to occupy. In this design, the architectural structure of the VAG serves as the primary ordering principle of the site, and its relationship to the city. The materiality of the gallery – rough and refined - is superimposed and re-presented upon the surface of the plaza and its surroundings. The architectural dimensions of the gallery are literally carried into the landscape, supporting the creation of sub-spaces that offer places of convergence and pause. These opportunities for triangulation are imperative to the social functioning of the city and its public spaces. Existing conditions of the site – the underground structure - also inform the design's formal qualities of space, reinforcing the historical importance of the place, and contributing to the designed landscapes overall form (Figure 17).

The concept of theatre is articulated in this design by using materials, structures, and the framing of spaces that allow urbanites to respond, finding their way around and appropriating the new landscape as one's own. Existing and historical spatial qualities and characteristics of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape inform these design moves and choices. Emptiness versus over design of the space is emphasized. The spaces remain simple and sparse but unified, supporting many different activities. The notion of theatre is further heightened by the raising of the plaza surface at the corner of Georgia and Hornby Streets, as well as the entire block surrounding the Vancouver Art Gallery is raised to incorporate a 75mm curb height. Raising the corner flattens the plaza, elevates its presence in the landscape, provides secondary seating edges, and enhances the drainage of the site. Raising the entire block strengthens the space as a whole, acknowledging this space as central to the urban layout of downtown Vancouver.

Articulation of spaces with rhythms of light and shadow, as well as the sunlight at work on forms and surfaces, aid in the architectural presence of the space within the city, giving it a unique spatial quality. The design further accentuates the temporal nature of the landscape, and the effect of change and surprise one experiences each time they interact with the phenomena of this urban theatre.

Above:Below Axonometric (Figure 18)

The symbology of process and function of the underground is manifest on the plaza above ground. The existing structure of the current gallery vault sets the rhythm and spatial arrangement of the expansion below, and the arrangement of the stage above. This connection is a reciprocal one however. Integration of lighting, both natural and artificial, with the architectural form, enhances and reinforces comprehension and understanding of the place as multi-layered. This underground network is an inherent reality of the site and should be celebrated and revealed in a way that is both functional and engaging.

The expansion of the underground provides programmatic opportunities for both the gallery and the city. While serving to provide a unique museum experience underground, the stage that is created above provides an artistic space for the expression of all types of art and culture. Public display of commissioned art works enriches the experience of the place and signifies this center of the city as a cultural and public precinct for celebration. As the arts scene in Vancouver continues to grow, art that reflects the diversity within the city gets expressed in this unique environment, elevating voices that don't get heard on larger stages. Ultimately, the landscape becomes more tightly knit into the fabric of the city and the community.

The walls of the underground space are echoed in the framing of the plaza with an aggressive street tree-planting regime. The trees help to create a more enjoyable pedestrian experience, at the same time framing the edges of the stage, providing a transition between street and plaza, and reinforcing the psychological edges of the site. As temporal cues to the ephemeral changes in landscape, the red maples that line both Hornby and Howe Streets stand as exquisite curtains that dignify this cultural epicenter. Where the edge in the urban fabric is broken, the landscape takes its cues from the existing vault below, and a new center is created at the corner of Georgia and Howe Streets. The stage at this corner stands out, in its dark contrast of colour and revealing of infrastructure, to bound this space and mediate the spatial compromise that currently contributes to the detracting of experience from the place.

"Outdoor use of certain interior features like stairs and halls was an essential charm of ancient and medieval city building" (Sitte, 71). The original grand entrance stairs were the original stage settings that the theatre once sought to imitate in backdrops. They are, perhaps, the one piece of urban design that warrants acknowledgment in this landscape, and remain one of the most distinguished and functional features of our city. The Georgia Street entrance to the gallery should be reopened, enhancing the legibility of the site, at the same time providing a crucial link between what are essentially two distinctly separate landscapes of the VAG; what might be considered a 'summer side' and a 'winter side'. This transition helps to unify the three blocks that include Robson Square and Georgia Plaza. Once again, the plaza will be restored to its original function as Vancouver's front door. In reconfiguring the Georgia Street entrance, it is important to make better programmatic use of the portico space. This volumetric space would provide a unique bandstand for the staging of musical shows and performances. The acoustics of the space would serve to naturally amplify sound to the surrounding audience that may now more freely orient themselves, uninhibited, front and center.

Detail Plan and Section (Figure 19)

The surface fabric is articulated here to better illustrate the expansion of the space to include the streets, intersections, and alleyway. Laying this exquisite carpet to its true edges reinforces the notion that this space is linked with the

surrounding urban fabric, but retains a reverence that sets it apart. As one moves along Georgia Street they are met with the heightened presence of the landscape in comparison to the surrounding cityscape. The raised corner is a visual signifier of this gap in the built fabric of the city. Shallow curbs and bollard edges create an almost seamless transition between street and pedestrian realm. The central characters of this landscape become the people; vehicles become secondary stage props. The language, or scenery of the plaza is further echoed in the design of the streets and the articulation of the intersections.

The grand "vault" entrance pictured here in section serves as a significant vertical marker in this landscape. This 11metre wide by 7 metres tall granite faced wall stands as a visual icon to the underworld; an axis-mundi that creates a sense of place that extends beyond the surface, transforming a realistic world of decoration into a theatrical world of metaphor. Its accompanying 2metre wide wall reinforces this connection. Adjoining the walls are light aluminum structures that serve to provide shelter for the entrances, as well as a visible place for the site keeper(s) to operate from. The perforated aluminum that houses both the stairs and the elevator entrances transforms the space particularly at night. The glow from inside is nothing short of mystical. Humans become silhouetted shadow puppets as they move through, up, down, and around these elements. The rise and fall of the elevator is captured from the eastern side by a carefully placed slit in the wall. As one gazes upon this enigmatic emergence of machinery and human life, the metaphorical reference to an axis-mundi transforms this space to place.

Detail Plan and Section (Figure 20)

A dark granite stage forms a center at the northeast corner of the site. The contrast in colour to the rest of the landscape is in response to the overwhelming predominance of shadow on this area of the site. The darkness echoes the void that is beneath also, punctuated only by a large aluminum grate that provides an outlet for the steam produced by the gallery. This fun piece of urban design fosters triangulation and reveals the mechanical processes of the gallery. Surges in the system create a misty scene that serves as an ephemeral reminder, and temporal signifier of the passage of time. This scene is further enhanced in response to changes in both climate and barometric pressure.

Lighting rigs form a vertical edge to this corner and provides lighting that responds to human movement through the site at night. Motion sensors attached to these light masts can be manipulated as performances, such as dance theatre, dictate. When not being used for performances or other programs, the space becomes animated by the audience; actors that inadvertently participate in the theatrical qualities of the space. These patterns are constantly changing, resulting in a place that retains an element of surprise every time one engages it.

The benches that complement the rhythm of the light masts, and continue seriality created by the planter allee, add a seating edge to this space; an opposing reflection to the edge created on the opposite side of the plaza. They serve as illuminated pylons, whose architectural form is reinforced by the fiber optic lighting within. The 1 metre wide benches provide sufficient space for back-to-back seating, or for podiums upon which one may stand to address a crowd. The rubber surface repeats itself in the banding that occurs on the ground in the intersections, as well as the bases of the planters, where they acts as bumpers to the pedestrian traffic that abounds. A material that is traditionally associated with vehicles and the street is re-presented in a context and form that are simultaneously unsettling, yet comforting.

Portal benches serve to identify to the public the need for the planters along this edge of Howe Street. While providing further opportunities for rest, these benches, when not lit at night, provide windows to the underground. Like ants in their tunnels, movement beneath is viewed from above, acknowledging the thinness of the surface, and justifying its thickening. Vertical elements along Howe Street, primarily in the form of trees, are necessary to reduce the scale of the street and provide an experiential space within for pedestrian movement. The architectural canopy also helps to reduce the imposing scale of the street, and serves to enhance the vehicular entrance to the Pacific Centre underground.

Detail Plan and Section (Figure 21)

Late winter and spring are celebrated around and on the Great Lawn and Levitating Pavilion. Currently, the stairs to Robson Square are underutilized and remove pedestrian activity from street level where it is most essential. Thus, to improve the quality of this space on the south side of the Vancouver Art Gallery, the hole has been covered with a formal lawn space to a level just below street grade. This serves to provide an anchor for the corner of Robson and Howe Streets, creating another center within the greater whole. Concrete stairs and granite planters edge the lawn, and a pavilion provides a pivotal point of focus for both passersby and lunchtime dwellers. These small interventions provide large opportunities for the possibility of using this space for events. Furthermore, Japanese Cherry trees

provide a colourful frame for the space, celebrating the arrival of spring. The lawn, under-planted with iris bulbs also animates the space each winter. Together, these elements celebrate the changing of seasons in a temporal rotation that echoes the transitions between scenes in a play and exhibits in a museum.

The Levitating Pavilion provides an unobtrusive modern structure to the landscape, providing shelter for street vendors and performers, as well as serving as a stage for larger organized performances. At night the structure takes on an almost UFO-like quality, appearing to hover just above the ground. During the day the structural pole keeps 'real time', manifesting its shadow upon the ground according to the rhythms and passage of the sun.

North Section:Elevations (Figure 22)

The section at top of page illustrates the substantial curtain that is created to frame the plaza and create a highly visible and legible living edge in an otherwise built roadside façade that is Georgia Street. The continuity of this façade is maintained but given reverence by the seasonal changes of colour, and the gradual revealing of the space as leaves fall. On axis with the main entrance to the gallery, fastigiated beech trees provide a bold splash of fall colour, maintaining a visual connection between the plaza and the alley across the street. A sense of symmetry and balance is also achieved through the extension of street trees along both Hornby and Howe Streets.

On the plaza, podiums that extend the display functions of the gallery out into the plaza also frame the gallery. The dark granite faced podiums continue the language used throughout the design, accentuating their presence, and modifying the rhythm created by the planters along Howe Street.

Connections between the theatrical occurrences on the plaza and those beneath are illustrated in the bottom image. Runoff from the fountain, and drainage of the plaza is concentrated in the center of the sunken stage. This natural process is revealed in the gallery below by a clear drainage pipe that pierces the ceiling and connects the surface to the underground. Glass block that lines the edges of the 'vault stage' provide beams of light to penetrate the spaces of the gallery and the bar & grill. As day passes, those beneath subconsciously respond to the patterns and rhythms above; the rhythm of the daily and seasonal passage of light and the rhythms evoked by architectural detail.

East Section:Elevations (Figure 23)

The grand entrance walls illustrated in these sections helps to soften the imposing architectural monoliths that surround the plaza. Scaling elements to fit not only with pedestrian occupation of the space, but also with the surrounding urban fabric ensures a fit that is truly pedestrian friendly, and welcoming. In addition, the gap between the two walls is on axis with the Hotel Vancouver entrance on Hornby Street, referencing the spaces context, and serving as an entryway for actors that may emerge from the underground to occupy stage right.

Sunken slightly from the rest of the plaza, the edges created around the tribute fountain stage provide places to sit and converge. Presently, the fountain at the center of the square inhibits deterring gathering along its edge and further obstructs the connections between the plaza and its surroundings. Smaller performances are likely suited for this modified amphitheatre-like space. The fountain emerges seamlessly from the ground. As a part of the surface, the fountain provides a sculptural element that can be turned off to accommodate multiple uses. In summer, it provides a welcome element that elicits engagement and interaction.

The lighting masts are seen in the bottom image as extensions of the underground infrastructure. However, these columns provide experiential, not structural support for the activities of the surface. This rhythmic pattern is further reinforced by in-ground directional cues – light boxes – that facilitate movement and legibility throughout the plaza, and connect it to its surroundings.

Stage Props and Details (Figure 24)

The surface of the plaza creates local rhythms of movement that reflect use patterns and imply directional cues and references to context. In-ground lighting boxes provide a visual link across the front of the plaza and are echoed also used at the stop lines in the intersections. These lighting elements lead one to the entrance to the underground and reinforce the rhythmic interpretation of the underground through the allee along Howe Street. Magnetic covers reveal not only the locking mechanisms for access to the bulbs, but also electrical outlets that may be used to power equipment used for events throughout the plaza. Access is made easily by their repetition across the plaza.

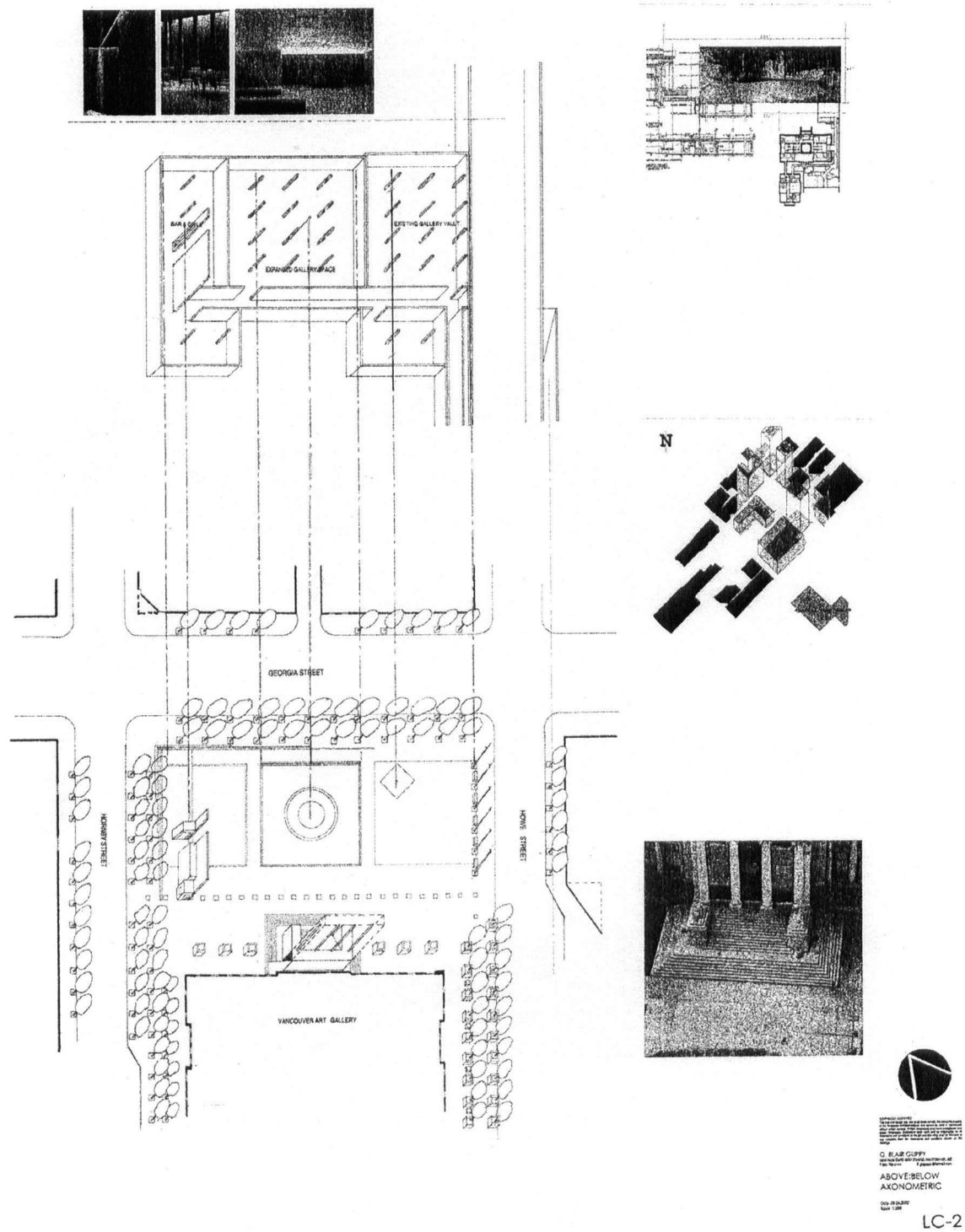
A transition occurs in the paving along the edge of the grand entrance walls. The granite sets are substituted with a stainless steel band, incorporating a trench drain, and lighting grill that houses up-lighting specifically for illuminating the walls on demand. This banding of steel reflects the dimensions of, and is in alignment with the pendulum that swings in the atrium of the HSBC directly across Georgia Street. This pendulum remains as a piece of public art that once measured the fiscal activities of the province. The steel band that traversed the plaza acknowledges this measurement, and remains as a visual connection between the two spaces, exterior and interior.

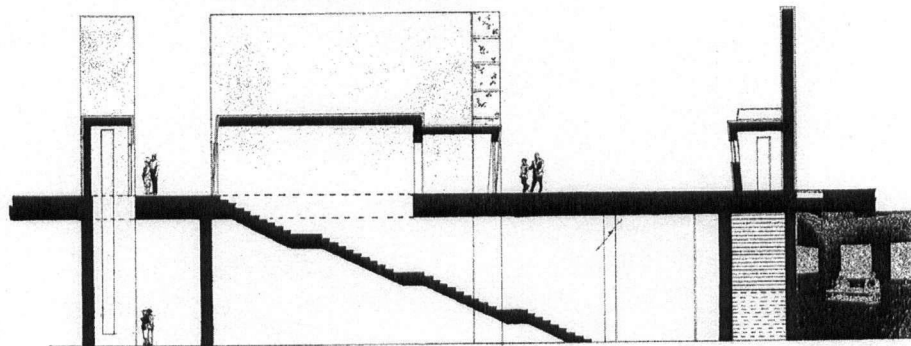
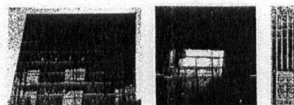
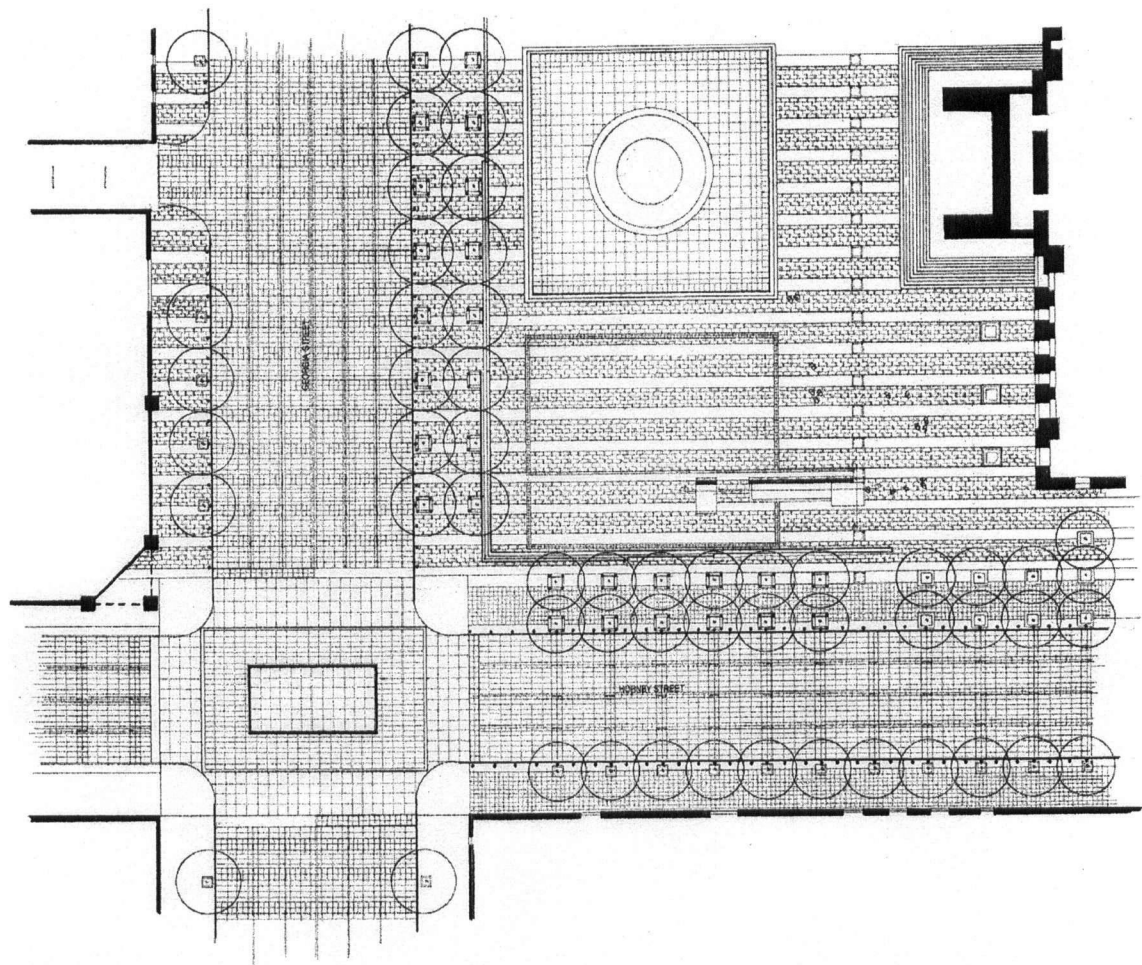
The ambient lighting of the plaza edges and the streets are incorporated in the design of the tree grates, unique to the Georgia Plaza and the Vancouver Art Gallery. The lighting is designed to respond to the seasonal fluctuations of time, as well as scenographic changes in performance. As night falls, the lights respond, slowly revealing the spatial forms of the site, and animating the life within and around it. During large performances, these lights can be shut off and the site manager/site keeper can take control. The ability to influence the ambient lighting of the plaza is further manifest in the programming of the gallery windows. These can also be adjusted or altered to accommodate, and enhance theatrical events and celebrations. During summer periods, blue banners may fill the windows, using the psychological effects of colour to acclimatize the space. Celebrations such as Christmas or Canada Day may see the façade of the gallery dressed in red. A solemn black backdrop may be reserved for days of national mourning or civic mourning.

Stage Props and Details (Figure 25)

Citizens are celebrated around the Tribute Fountain and upon the Display Podiums. Presently, there is little that speaks of this place as being a truly public urban space. The narratives that once existed have been given token acknowledgement. At that, this acknowledgement has been selective and exclusionary. A fiber optic band of lighting that surrounds the edge of the stage frames the Tribute Fountain. This reinforces this stage as being a significant center to the space. Reference is made to the previous fountain in the reuse of the coloured tiles, forming a mosaic band, bounded by a perforated aluminum disc and a copper outer band. These materials, and the dimensions of the fountain are drawn from the great rotunda that rests atop the Vancouver Art Gallery. Integrated into the copper band amongst the water jet nozzles are removable segments that are engraved, acknowledging those who have contributed to the arts community in the province. The fountain itself is a sculptural element, a modern day giochi d'acqua, that transforms itself according to the rhythms and patterns of the wind and volumes of visitors to the gallery. The height of the jets responds to fluctuations in wind that are registered by sensors atop the lighting masts on the eastern edge of the plaza. Stronger winds reduce the height of the spray to limit misting.

The Chair Storage Display Podiums celebrate cultural diversity in our city. Once a year representatives from various ethnic communities are asked to design and present a welcome mat for exhibit at the gallery. These mats are to be displayed as artifacts that create activity in front of the gallery. These 'display cases' serve to archive the 500-600 chairs that help to animate the space throughout the day, and provide additional seating during performances. The site keeper in order to gather and distribute the chairs as efficiently and easily as possible uses modified camera dollies that conveniently fit inside these podiums. Throughout the remainder of the year, the podiums are pedestals to a variety of artworks that would be commissioned by the Vancouver Art Gallery and the City.





GRAND "VAULT" SECTION:ELEVATION
NORTH SOUTH
1:50

SITE KEEPER'S KIOSK AND
STAIR SECTION



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DETAIL PLAN AND
SECTION
West Plaza & Grand "Vault"
Entrance
Date: 10/10/04
Scale: As printed

LD-1

Figure 19 Detail Plan and Section, West Plaza and Grand "Vault" Entrance LD-1



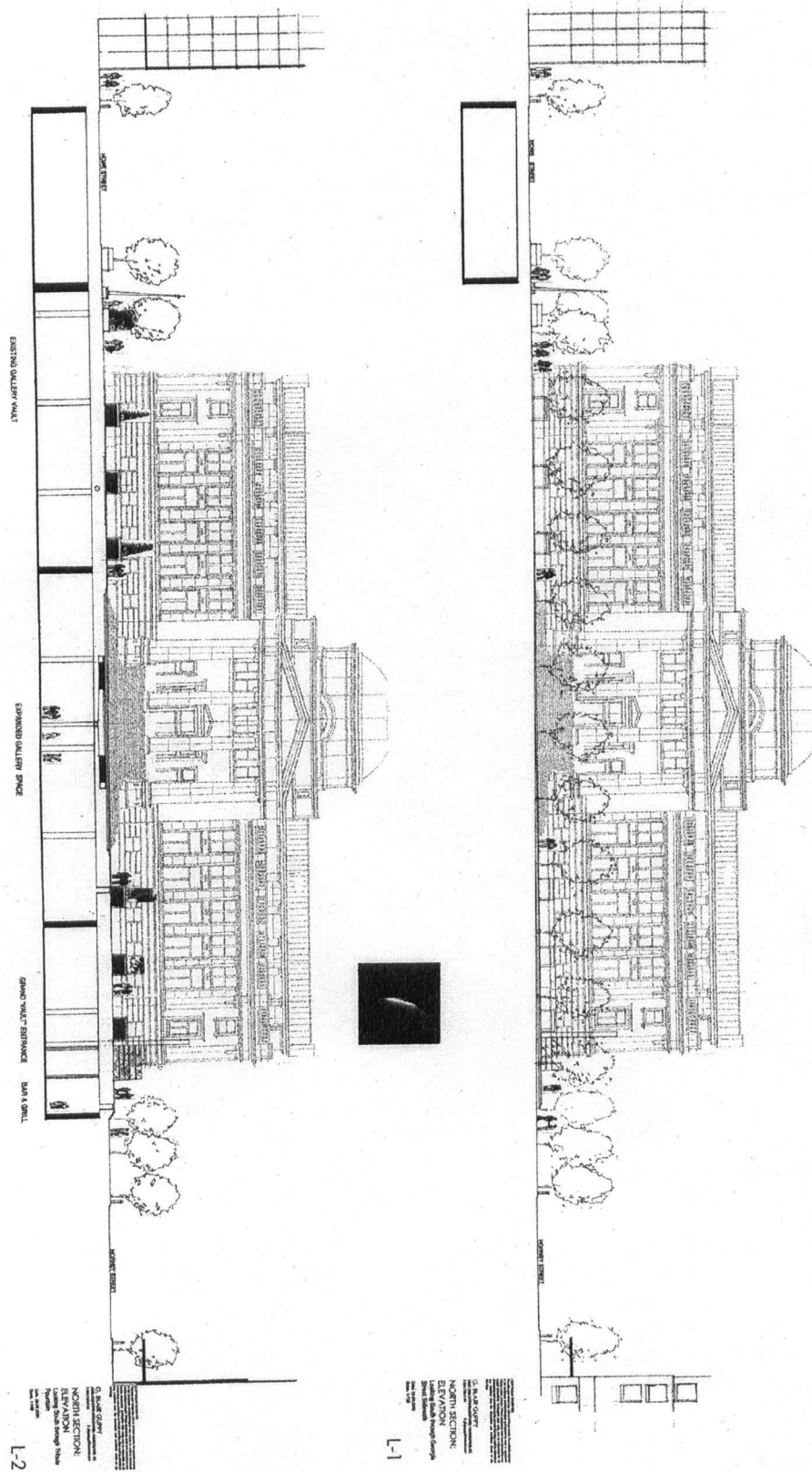


Figure 22 North Section:Elevation, L-1, L-2

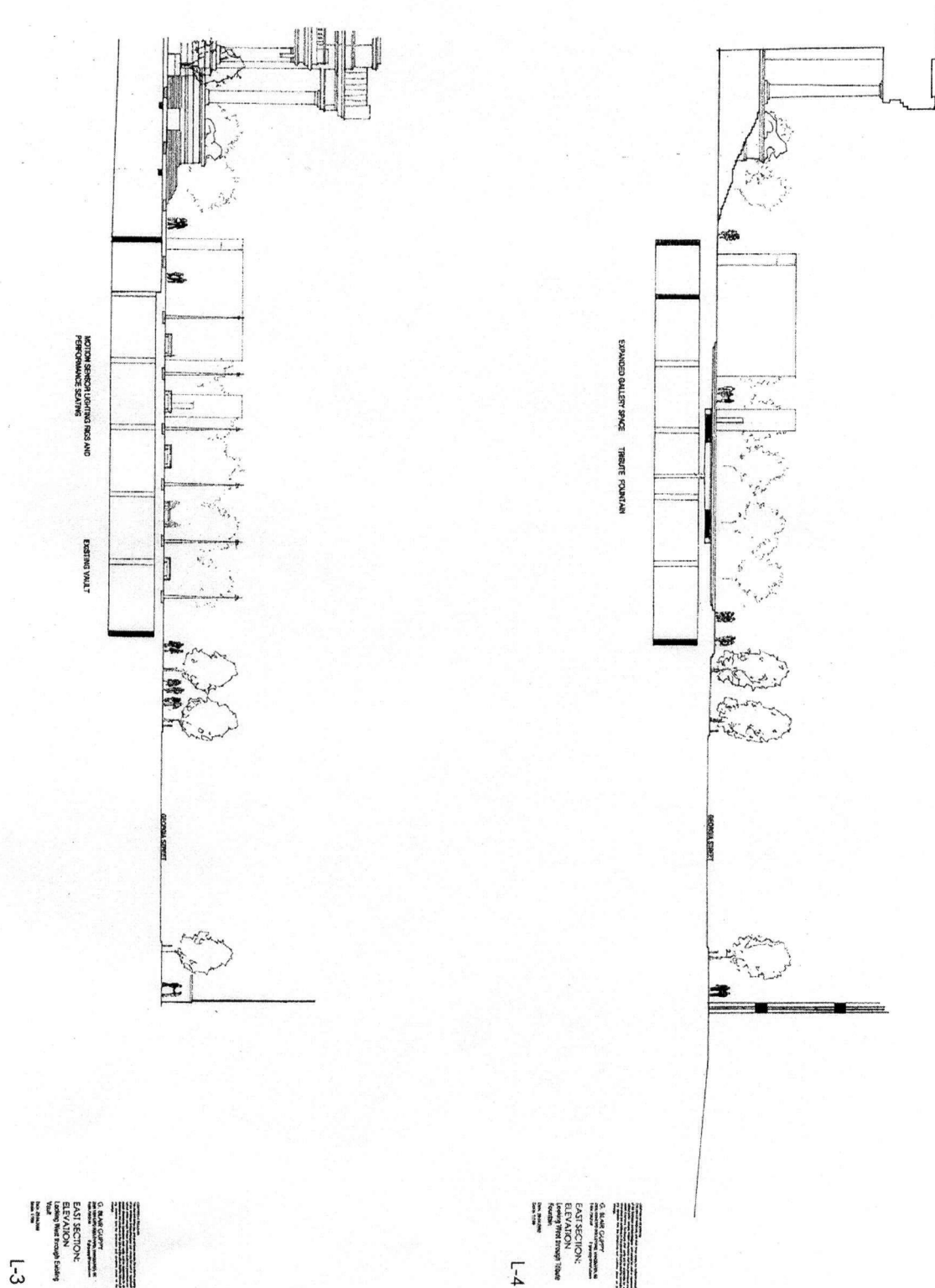


Figure 23 East Section:Elevations, L-3, L-4

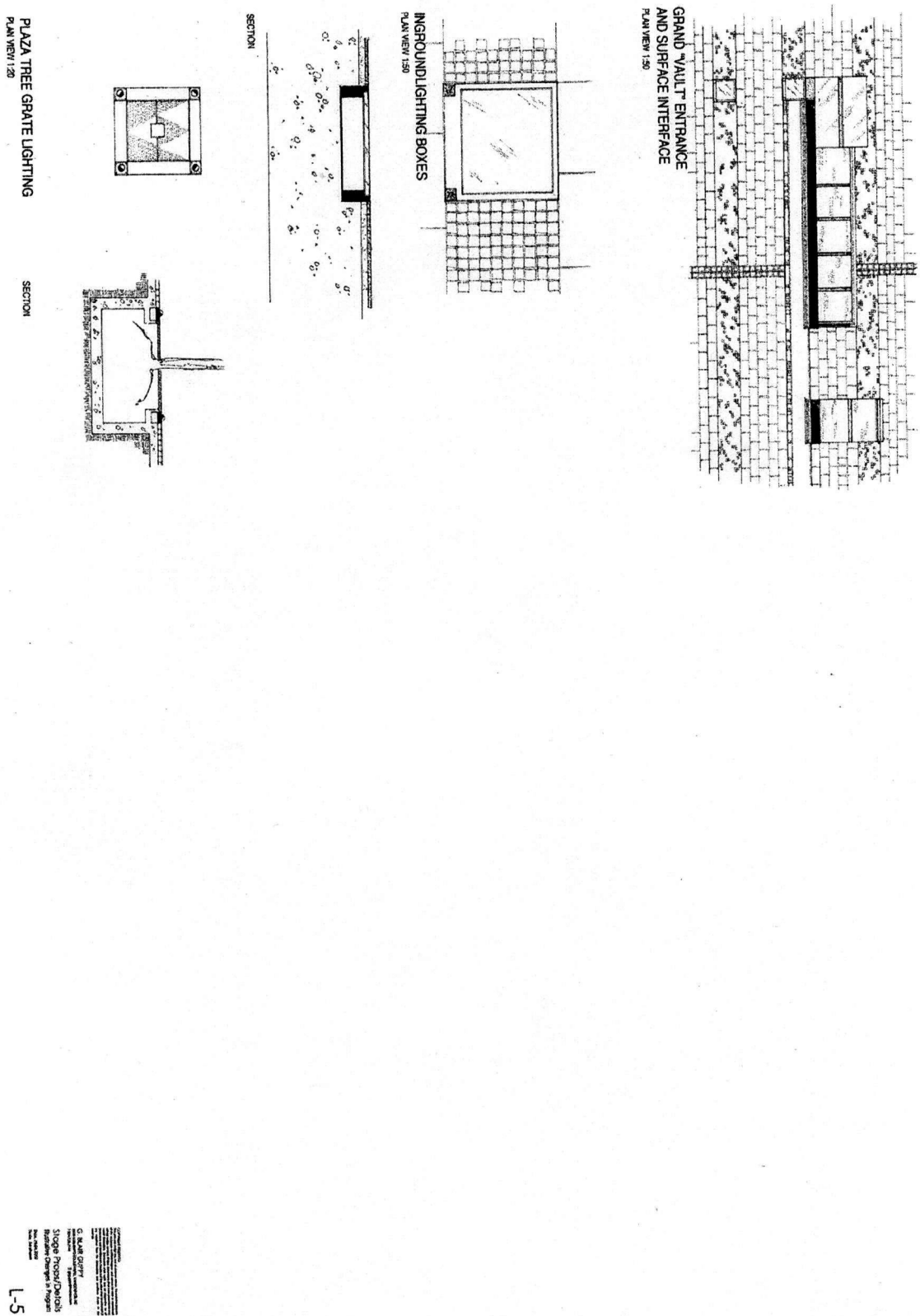


Figure 24 Stage Props/Details, L-5

CHAPTER VI FINALE

6.1 Summary of Design Implications

It is often questioned how much of a monetary return of investment in the arts is warranted. Whether there is a large return or not, the biggest return is in the quality of life. All cities require public spaces that exemplify quality and permanence in their design and construction. Like live theatre, great urban spaces are so different from sitting at home watching TV, or perhaps going to a movie. They truly connect people. Considering artistic contributions to the design and planning of the city's public landscape spaces will ensure the harmonious integration of landscape with human experience.

Although this thesis has not concerned itself with the cost of suggested design interventions, it is certain that significant investment in such a central urban space is warranted and even encouraged. Images of cities are trans-global, spreading the visual word of place. There is no doubt that Vancouver is known for its setting within a city. However, as a city within a city, Vancouver's urban public spaces leave much to be desired.

The final design of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape is not dependent upon, but would be significantly improved by the proposed and suggested alterations to the surrounding urban landscape.

6.2 Conclusion

The proposed museum-landscape analogs presented herein are intended to establish connections between site and function. They also attempt to facilitate the exploration of methods that integrate art and artistic expression with landscape architecture. Ultimately the landscapes created will be better understood, and more frequently occupied. A central public space such as that of the Vancouver Art Gallery landscape is a worthy recipient of such enrichment.

Art and art forms, as expressions of civic identity and culture have the potential to embody place-making abilities. It is the successful integration of these art forms into public spaces, through both programming and design intervention that ultimately imbue the landscape with narrative and meaning. *Landscape as Theatre* is recognized as the most appropriate conceptual approach to the VAG landscape. The experience of the perceiver is a necessary component in the survival and perpetuation of urban landscape spaces. Design that creates a stage for our perceptions of the world to be enhanced and heightened contributes to the vibrancy and cultural richness of the landscape as a whole. Certainly, landscapes are the primary location of human experience. Thus, it is imperative that in designing and planning the public realm, the utmost thought be given to ensuring that the most engaging design response is achieved.

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