

# friction in public space .07

T|i|C|k|L|e

# about TiCkLe

Tickle is Taylor Cullity Lethlean's vehicle for research, discourse, collaboration and innovation.

Tickle aims to challenge, generate, capture, disseminate and archive, through a wide range of media and sources research investigations, manifestos, exhibitions, lectures and symposiums and other such investigations and events undertaken by Tickle.

Tickle will generate a discourse that informs the practice's work and creates a dialogue between Tickle and the broader design disciplines.

Tickle is to be facilitated through a culture of staff involvement, shared discourse and formed alliances.

Tickle is to be facilitated through the identification and establishment of project / research relationships.

Tickle will speculate on the future of landscape architecture and emerging practice, and how TCL may continue to contribute meaningfully and challenge existing paradigms.

Cover image: Filming the flood scene from Metropolis, 1927 Directed by Fritz Lang



# friction in public space

an exploration of the relationship between composition and messiness in public space .07



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Auckland Waterfront - North Wharf Promenade and Silo Park Client: Waterfront Auckland Location: Auckland, New Zealand Collaboration: Wraight and Associates Above: A rich ensemble of maritime streets, parks, industry, promenades and harbour provide visitors with a diversity of experiences.

Opposite: The park now plays host to a range of public functions as passive recreation, event space, youth precinct and weekend market.







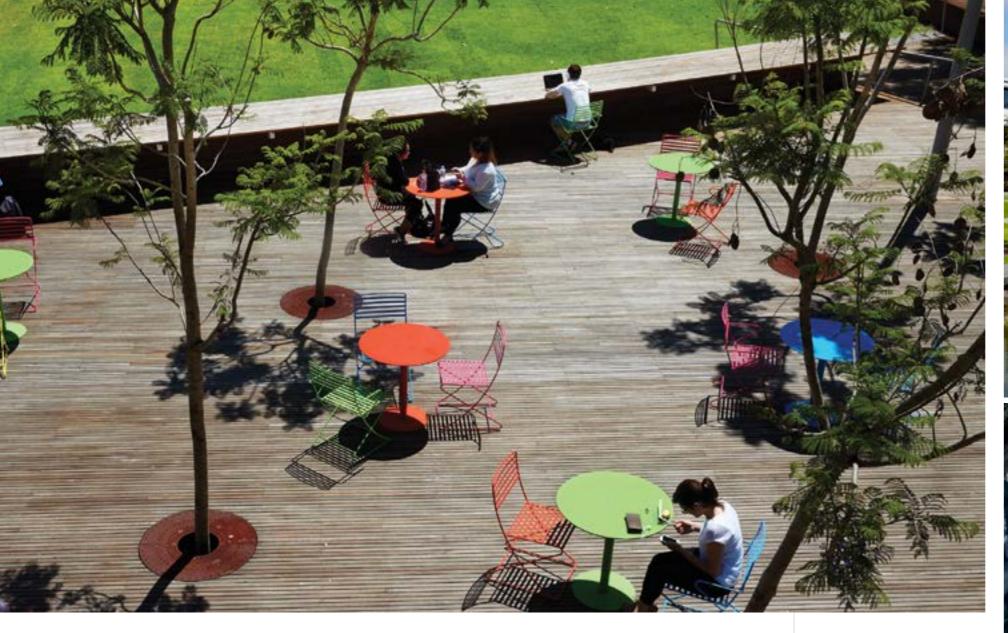






Victoria Square/Tarntanyannga master plan Client: Adelaide City Council Location: Adelaide, South Australia Collaboration: Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, David Lock, Paul Thompson and Peter Emmett

A re-envisioned urban park in the centre of the city to reassert Victoria Square as the heart of Adelaide. An arbour embraces the central area to connect the square along its north-south axis. The northern end contains an event space and ephemeral water feature.



#### Monash University 'Caulfield Campus Green'

Client: Monash University Location: Caulfield, Victoria Collaboration: Kersulting, IrwinConsult, DesignFlow, Electrolight, Agatha Gothe-Snape, Paul Thompson, WT Partnership, Glenn Waters, and Landscape & Irrigation Services. Above: The elegant deck terrace with a northerly aspect offers opportunities for passive outdoor activity, cafe tables, chairs and spill out activity from adjacent buildings.

Opposite (above): The central water spine is now a generous promenade and water feature providing a sense of arrival to the campus, while also acting as stormwater treatment and harvesting system. Opposite (below): A large integrated artwork, developed by Agatha Gothe-Snape with TCL, overlaps the sports quadrant. In addition to a variety of sports courts fun line marking denotes a personality test for students to develop a sense of self, test parameters, and help formulate an ethical, social and moral boundaries, a fundamental aspect of time spent at university.







#### Henley Square

Client: City of Charles Sturt Location: Henley Beach, South Australia Collaboration: Troppo Architects, Bluebottle, Wallbridge and Gilbert The rework of Henley Square by TCL+Troppo rediscovers the bones of the old Square, removing the obstacles of successive interventions through the 80s. We now promote engagement with the foreshore and reinforce the much-loved village character of the Square. Shade and protection are crucial elements at the seaside, and they've been carefully considered.

The beach is now backed by a big lawn, a playful plaza, a generous terrace to the beach, and an inventive 'ripple lounge' which provides extended jetty connection. Whimsical beach-showers are practical, too. Design here is measured in how it can further contribute to the celebration of beach life.

# introduction

How do we define public space visà-vis the idea of 'friction' –

between publics, between systems, between programs and processes, between past and present, between scales and qualities, between self and other, between public and private self?

How do we represent public space the friction of/between its flux and form?

How do we approach the design of public space in a way that might catalyze friction? In 2015 TCL led an Upper Pool design research studio (first year Master of Landscape Architecture) at RMIT University entitled 'Messy Compositions'. Over four months, this project framed a studio-studio collaboration exploring the relationship between composition—designed urban form—and messiness—the complexities and conflicts, tensions and instabilities, exchanges and negotiations—that define public space. This Tickle publication is a catalogue of the semester's investigations.

The catalogue is structured around key essays, student work, project images and multiple conversations, each addressing the Queen Vic Market's complex, programmatically driven car park site, which formed the studio's testing ground.

Part I of the catalogue aims to illustrate a theoretical discourse around public space, focused through the lens of 'friction.'This section begins with an essay by Jen Lynch entitled 'Messy compositions: framing the research question', which introduces public space as complex grounds for exchange and encounter and introduces TCL's position on public space through the practice's projects. The chapter also includes a transcribed in-studio conversation between Perry Lethlean and Peter Elliott, which reflects upon the questions that surround the design of public space. Part II captures a phase of the studio's experiments in the reading, recording, and representation of Melbourne's public realm in its formal and temporal qualities. This section includes essays by Jen Lynch, Perry Lethlean, and Neha Juddoo on mapping and notation. Also included in this section is an in-studio conversation between Perry Lethlean and Anton James on collaboration and public space in Melbourne versus Sydney.

Part III captures the final phase of the studio—the interpretation of the site and the translation of design concepts into schematic and design development phases—and includes selected final work by the students. Through this process, the design of messiness in public space was tested against the proposed public space redevelopment brief for the Queen Victoria Market car park at the northern edge of the Melbourne CBD.

The studio continually revisited the idea of friction throughout the semester, while simultaneously referencing the design methods and principles that define TCL's practice.



## 'messy compositions':

# framing the research question

JEN LYNCH

'... Friction between uses and users. This was intentional. Friction between uses and multiple transport modes requires the sharing of space and negotiation... Friction conveys an important message for all users...on the ground a feeling of community ownership, occupation and social exchange is palpable...'

Perry Lethlean, TCL PhD, Braided Pathways: A Practice Sustained by Difference

#### Composition

1[n.] The nature of something's ingredients or constituents; the way in which a whole or mixture is made up.

1.1 The action of putting things together; formation or construction.

2. A creative work, especially a poem or piece of music.

Messy

1. [adj.] Untidy; not arranged neatly and in order.

1.1 Generating or involving mess.

2 (Of a situation) confused and difficult to deal with.

#### RESEARCH QUESTION

As complex social, cultural and political grounds for exchange, expression, experience, encounter and event, public space and its design present an array of issues and considerations. The notion of friction is present and valued in public space discourse. Rosalyn Deutsche describes public space as 'space produced and structured by conflicts,' critical to a democratic society.<sup>1</sup> Richard Sennett describes the 'difference, discontinuity, and disorientation' involved in the experience public space as ethical forces which connect people to one another.<sup>12</sup> 'Once the unpredictable has been removed, writes Rem Koolhaas, 'instead of public life, Public Space<sup>™</sup>—a smooth consumption driven vacuum.<sup>3</sup>

In 2014, TCL was awarded the Rosa Barba prize at the International Landscape Biennale for the design of Auckland Waterfront, a project that transformed the city's quirky, partly active industrial, partly defunct post-industrial waterfront into a public space. This project was described as a space in which 'messiness'—friction, conflict, contrast, between scales, between publics, between operations, between qualities—was valued and, in turn, composed, towards negotiation, exchange and a more meaningful engagement with site. Between 2010 and 2013, the directors of TCL undertook a PhD by Publication at RMIT. In reflections on three decades of practice, Perry mused on the ways TCL's approach to the design of public space had evolved. Through discussion of three waterfront projects and concluding with the Auckland Waterfront project, he wrote on the value of friction and the tension between the 'compositional' role of the designer and the inherent 'messiness' of public space. This conclusion raised a series of questions about what it means to design a public space and the methods (research, representation, composition) involved in a 'messy'-yet-'compositional' approach.

The RMIT Upper Pool studio presented opportunity for the practice and the students to collaborate in interrogating the role of the designer, in her/his ability to 'compose' the complex processes, practices and relations of public space.





Previous spread: The design for Auckland Waterfront weaves public realm experiences around 'as found' conditions. The harbour edge, North Wharf, is now a site of negotiation, a pedestrian promenade furnished with crate seats from which to witness and experience the waterfront industry.

Left: Queen Victoria Market carpark.

TESTING GROUNDS - SITE / BRIEF / RETURN BRIEF

The expanding territory of the Queen Victoria Market (QVM) provided grounds for speculation on the composition of messiness and the value of friction in Melbourne's public realm.

The QVM master plan, undertaken by the City of Melbourne, aims to achieve the vision outlined in QVM Pty. Ltd.'s brief - the transformation of Melbourne's northwestern CBD into a 'market of markets,' an expanded and reconfigured retail precinct and public space. With \$250 million funding and the acquisition of a parcel comprising the block south of Therry Street, the final master plan was released and approved by Council in July 2015.

The studio focused on what is currently a carpark, south of the market sheds. The master plan proposes this space be transformed by 2022 from carpark into a 'high quality public space.' A sea of asphalt bounded by the geometries and proportions of the city's grid, the site is, at first glance, a tabula rasa, providing an open-ended opportunity to envision what a public space in the CBD might be. Situating the site within its historical layers, its projected futures and its context vis-à-vis Melbourne's present/recent history, however-the finetuned planning mechanisms and design principles that have defined the evolution, over the past three decades, of the City's public realm—introduces considerable complexity to the site's future. Additionally, as a program, markets represent a unique public space typology, rife with particular and complex exchanges and operations, flows and frictions, temporal and spatial qualities. As the site of Melbourne's first cemetery, the site also presents significant and unique design constraints, in terms of construction and interpretation.

For the purposes of the studio, the QVM's brief and the City of Melbourne's master plan provided a starting point. In writing a return brief, informed by research on public space and Melbourne's public realm, each student was asked to think critically and speculatively about the site—its scope, structure, organisation, and its potential future(s).

#### TCL PRACTICE / STUDIO METHODOLOGY

This studio pedagogy also translated the design methods and thematic threads that have defined TCL's practice approach:

Public space – designing for the complexities of public life

Site interpretation – a focus on the poetic response to site specific conditions

Narrative - the use of narrative as a design generator and translatory mechanism in the design process

The embodied scale – consideration of the material and tectonic assembly of spaces and their capacity to translate larger systems and stories through their aesthetic qualities

Collaboration - the acknowledgement of each project as a discourse in which many opinions, expertises and visions contribute to a complex design outcome.

# the new civic [extract]

**KEVIN TAYLOR** 

#### INTRODUCTION

Research into civic design for Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga unearthed a body of investigation termed 'The New Civic'. This describes an experience of public space in which exchange, interaction and acceptance of diversity and difference are the defining characteristics. These are places defined by the experiences they facilitate, as much as their spatial form.<sup>1</sup>

The New Civic privileges story-telling and memory over official histories, seeking a multi-layered starting point for design thinking. The everyday interaction is as, or more important than, the spectacle. Interaction with others and a diversity of publics is favoured over fragmentation of personal experience and the privatisation of space.

American urban sociologist, Richard Sennett, in discussing the potential benefits of interaction, exchange and diversity in public spaces, encourages places which facilitate '... an engagement with difference, an acceptance of impermanence and chance.'<sup>2</sup> To Sennett, such places provide the full benefit of modern urban life by turning people outward and offering them '... in the presence of difference ... the possibility to step outside themselves'.<sup>3</sup>

Relating this approach directly to landscape architecture and urban design, Hajer and

Reijndorp in their book In Search of the New Public Domain, define public domain as those places where an exchange takes place rather than a meeting. Such places '...facilitate cultural mobility; places where people can have new experiences, where a change of perspective is possible<sup>(4</sup> They describe public domain as places with multiple and incongruent meanings, where a shift in perspective through the experience of otherness is possible. Such spaces have overlapping social realms and contested borders, as described by Sennett in his phrase 'The social centre is at the physical edge.<sup>15</sup>

De Certeau, in his book The Practice of Everyday Life, describes the opposing forces which shape our experience of urban spaces. Institutions commission and control such spaces and adopt 'strategies' that seek to normalise and homogenise behaviour, while citizens employ 'tactics' to subvert this predictable band of experiences to create their own spontaneous journey.<sup>6</sup>

Boyer, de Certeau, Sennett and Hajer and Reijndorp are all calling for a public domain in which individuals experience the intense reality of the city through personal interaction with others. Along with philosophers such as Paul Virilio, who has written on the cultural and sociological implications of digital technologies, they are responding to the trend throughout the 20th and early 21st Centuries of rapid urbanisation thrusting more and more people into close proximity with 'strangers'.

Notions of ideal public spaces based on the old squares of Europe are not necessarily relevant in new cities and their suburbs. This is especially true in societies where traditions such as the passeggiata do not exist and public space is not experienced as a place of regular social interaction. This situation is further exacerbated by the now ubiquitous mobile phone which encourages communication beyond the present place. While this communication can assist in spontaneously bringing people together in ways previously not possible, it can also result in greater isolation from the immediate presence of the person or tree immediately alongside us.

The experience of the New Civic is therefore an affirmation of the existence and worth of the 'public' in all its dimensions. It is an attempt to redefine public behaviour and, by implication, public space in response to contemporary tendencies towards individualism and social isolation.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS IN THE SQUARE AND

Right: North Terrace, Adelaide. A reinvigorated interpretation of the former Prince Henry Garden. Linear forms of planting create repetitive and seasonal patterns along the terrace.





#### TERRACE

'The everyday interaction is as, or more important than the spectacle'

Kevin Taylor, TCL PhD, Braided Pathways: A Practice Sustained by Difference In reflecting on the outcomes of the North Terrace project, Lee describes it as '...a design intervention that respectfully reinterprets the conditions that have framed the cultural development of Adelaide.<sup>17</sup> The use of the phrase 'respectfully reinterprets' hints at some of the limitations of the outcome when considered in the light of de Certeau's discussion of institutional strategies and individual tactics in public spaces. In North Terrace, the balance is in favour of institutional or overall site planning strategies which limit the program of the site and constrain individual actions.

The unrelenting use of two layers of patterns, the dual paths and central space, and the striped north-south ordering of the central space have combined to limit spatial variety and more importantly create thin inflexible edge treatments. These treatments limit the likelihood of ... discovering something unexpected to the eye ...,<sup>18</sup> one of Sennett's prerequisites for a street 'full of life'. On street character, Sennett states that 'time begins to do the work of giving place character when the places are not used as they were meant to be,<sup>9</sup> and that such places have 'weak borders', which are able to be inhabited and manipulated. In North Terrace, the behaviours are largely

predictable and expected, and so the likelihood of ... confrontation with otherness, a change of perspective, an exchange,<sup>110</sup> hallmarks of public domain as defined by Hajer and Reijndorp, are unlikely.

Ware in her examination of Victoria Square/ Tarndanyangga describes the attempt to balance overall structure with an open program at a more detailed level:

'By spatially juxtaposing various publics and their needs rather than trying to ameliorate or placate their differences, the design enables a productive friction between users and the numerous roles required of this civic realm.'<sup>11</sup>

Ron Jones also refers to TCL's ability to pull the scene and the action together so that the observer and the observed occupy the same location. He is here referring to the urban lounge at Victoria Square where the promenade steps up to become a venue for resting, thereby placing promenading and sitting/socialising in the same space.<sup>12</sup>

The Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga design reflects a conscious effort to privilege the everyday tactics of the individual over institutional planning and programming strategies.

Devices used to achieve this include:



- The creation of multiple edges which house a wide range of potential activities.
- Thick edges which become places of habitation while maintaining their connection to the building, promenade or path of which they are a part.
- The creation of layers of places each of which is a source of activity e.g. the subspaces within the Garden, i.e. Mullabakka, The Bio Retention Garden and The Productive Garden.
- The proposal to include empowered gardeners and cultural hosts etc. throughout the Garden to facilitate interaction.
- The creation of multiple spaces capable of housing a diverse program from community spectacles to everyday activities.
- A focus on the experiences which occur

within places equally with the physical design of spaces.

Acknowledgement of the legitimacy of everyday collective experience and memory of place in balance with the civic history and symbolism of the Square.

#### SUMMARY

In summary, the tactics of the everyday are supported within a strong and unifying physical form. The structure of the perimeter roads and the arbours responds to the formal symmetry of the history of the Square, while the open mosaic field embedded within and around this symmetry responds to the tactics of surprise, friction, difference and exchange. Thus, the Square attempts to be selfregenerating, building an ongoing field of experiences, dialogues and memories that will create an evolving contemporary civic more powerful than the static civic residues flowing from the Square's 19th Century and early 20th Century history.

This essay is an extract from the PhD undertaken by Perry Lethlean, Kate Cullity and Kevin Taylor titled 'Braided Pathways: A Practice Sustained by Difference.'

Above (left): Plan of North Terrace, Adelaide.

Above: Plan of Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga, Adelaide.

At the outset of the course, a studio discourse around public space was developed through the critical reading, diagramming and discussion of writings by philosophers, social and political theorists, art historians, and designers from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries





# defining public space vis-à-vis friction

'...Space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, temporialize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities... space is a practiced place.'

Michel de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life, p. 117

# friction in public space theory

JEN LYNCH

The outset of the studio was theoretically focused – readings representing various lenses/approaches/historical moments/ backgrounds/biases, by philosophers, social and political theorists, art historians and designers from the twentieth and twentyfirst centuries, generated a theoretical framework and shared vocabulary with which to approach public space and its design. While diverse, these writings were interpreted through the common lens of 'friction' - identifying why friction might be productive, ethical, revelatory.

Theoretical texts were organized under several themes – public space and consumption, public space and landscape urbanism, 'in-between' public spaces, etc. During the following week, each student wrote a short critical essay – summarizing the authors' key thesis/set of claims and situating the author's writings historically, and addressing the implications of this theory for the design of public space. Additionally, each student created a lexicon of key terms and collected key quotes. Finally, the texts' key ideas were translated into a series of pithy, punchy, black and white diagrams.

The diagrams, quotes and terms were broken down as 2' x 3' pieces of paper and 'mapped' on the studio wall. While organization of these pieces began chronologically, as subthemes began to interrelate, hierarchies began to appear and further break down. Additional terms were recorded as the discussion played out. Strings linked connections and evolutions of ideas across time. Ultimately, the following key tensions seemed critical to public space discourse:

Public vs. private

Self vs. other (negotiation, empathy)

Designed/authorial vs. un-designed/emergent/ democratic

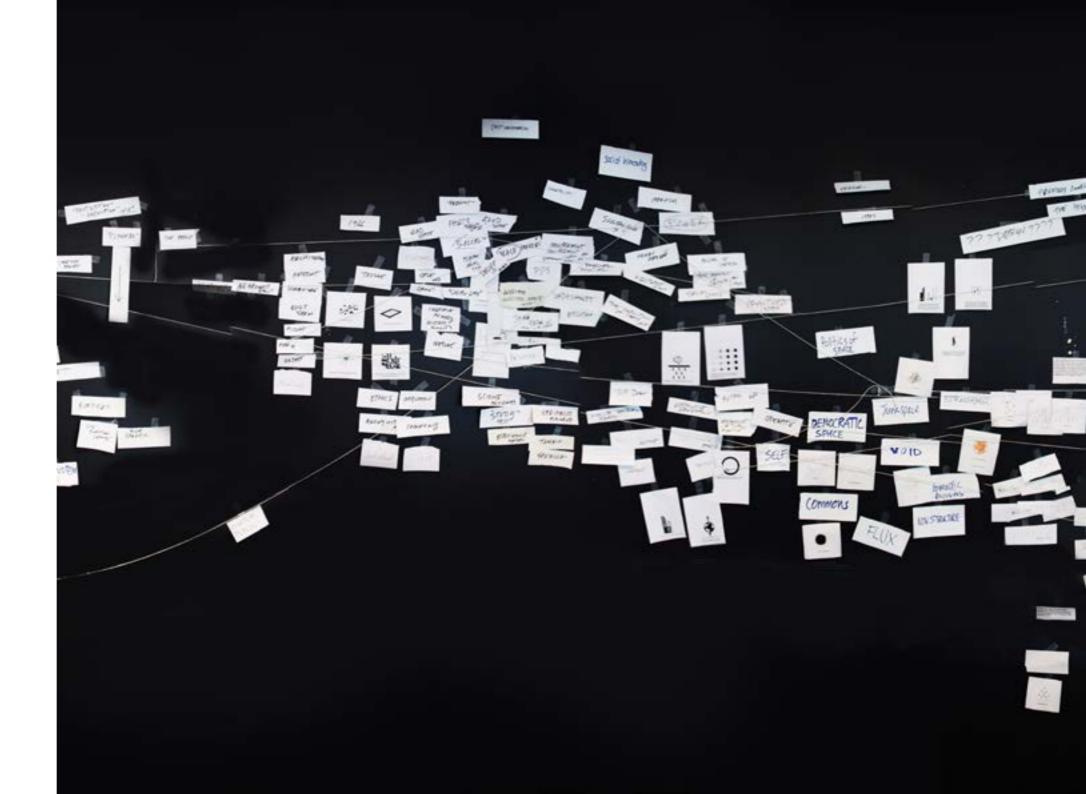
Freedom vs. control

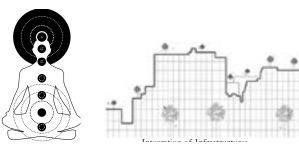
Citizen vs. consumer

Planning/regulation vs. the market

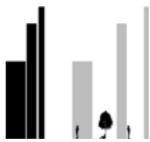
Spectacle/passivity vs. appropriation

Right: Studio exercise physically linking key terms, concepts, and diagrams from public space readings.



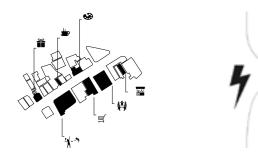




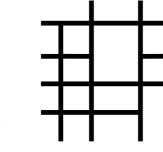










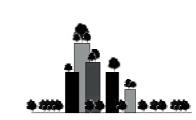
















abstract space	supermodernity	non-places	placemaking	permanence	space of flows	
communitarianism	maiden	tactic	alternative hedonism	citizenship	globalization	
metastasis	indeterminacy	consumption	sustainability	terra fluxus	pop-up	a



Diagrams: left to right across spread from top. Student contributors listed on p. 84)

[1] Consumerism as compensatory for various forms of existential loss, whether or meaning, security or identity; [2] Integrations of infrastructures; [3] Junkspace; [4] Buildings should create a public architecture of intimacy, one that brings people together in an experience of confidence and trust; [5] Supermodernity produces nonplaces; [6] Common people trying to use tactics to break systems and institutions to get benefits; [7] Consumption is shaped by laws and institutions; [8] Equitable distribution of places in which to live, be social and make culture; [9] Designed urban form and governance of flows must be flexible and adaptable; [10] The damage of climate change; [11] Connection to spaces; [12] Abstract spaces oppresses physical space; [13] Decline of suburban economies is due to flight of the capital into the centre; [14] Media allows disembodied experiences and a breakdown of public and private space; [15] Monuments as catalysts for urban development; [16] Canopy cover; [17] Figure-ground texture represents the relationship between objects and space; [18] Terrain vague.

tactical urban

## spatial justice

civil society

DIY urbanism

axiomatic

favela chic

# a conversation on the design of public space: collaboration and the evolution of Melbourne's CBD

PETER ELLIOTT AND PERRY LETHLEAN

PL: I thought what would be an interesting observation to start with is the master planning for Melbourne University we've done lately, because we realised that even though it sort of looks like a public space; it isn't. We were wondering at the time why? When you go into Melbourne Uni, it feels different. Contrasting with RMIT, I think, because that reads as more of an extension of the city and a public setting, and the boundaries are more blurred. We came up with the idea of a 'culture of permission.' You go into Melbourne Uni, you don't feel as though you can go crazy or play sport, it's as if you need the permission of some higher authority to do something in that space. Therefore, it's sort of a hybrid space for me.

PE: It lacks spontaneity. The sort of clues that make an energetic public space.

PL: There is also a defined boundary between outside of Melbourne Uni and within. You feel like you're in a different condition. I feel like part of public space in any city is how it stitches into the DNA of that place. I think Melbourne Uni is different from the DNA of its greater setting. It feels a little bit special or conservative.

PE: I think cultural perception plays a huge part in the way people read public space. Italy is a classic example. Everyone loves all those beautiful squares and they just don't work here. For a very good reason, because people just don't use space in the same way Italians do. It is probably about scale as well, because the thing about RMIT is that it never had a sense that it was a cohesive campus. It already started from the fact that it was part of the city. Whereas Melbourne Uni's always sort of pumped this idea that it is a cohesive campus; it's got a perceptual boundary, and people sort of believe it.

There's an enormous amount of what I call intrinsic subtlety in public space. The reading of public space is something that is just learnt from years of observation. The flâneur is someone who wanders the streets and space and just observes places and what they do. It's a bit of an old lefty kind of idea but most of the really piss-poor designs that you see being perpetrated by other landscapers or architects are often seriously over-designed and seriously misreading the way people use space or how they might use space; 90% of the space already exists. This is not about constructing some new things. It's about plugging into previous generations and all the dross and good things and bad things that accumulate in time. I have a particular way of working which we call the 'forensic editorial surgeon' type approach, where you cut out more stuff than you put back in.

PL: There is this sort of typology of spaces at RMIT; the yard, the lane, the street and the court. There's a common language or typology of public space that's connecting into a city language and that has informed the work. Was that something you were conscious of while you were designing it, or is it something in retrospect? PE: They go hand in hand. You know how it is, like you sort of re-write what your core concept is and redo the drawings, but essentially they came from somewhere, and that somewhere was a realisation early on at RMIT. We found 10-15 different interesting urban conditions that were already there. And so our view was what we're trying not to do here is make a single, cohesive, uniform campus. What we're doing is building upon those serendipitous characteristics that we found. Then, built upon that, a rich scene suddenly develops itself. There's a really interesting essay by Robert Nelson, which looks at the history of the street, the yard, the lane, the courtvard— these are all the components that make up urban fabric, and they're sort of not normally talked about in that manner. It's the old kit of parts thing— if you understand how they work, what their relative scales are and how they all work together. The other big thing about RMIT, dare I say, is it's not about landscape.

PL: So you say.

PE: I do.

PL: And why do you say that Peter? There's a lot of landscape there.

PE: Because it's about the spatial experience of the city, and sometimes I've seen this critiquing landscape work, there's a lack of connection to the built fabric that the space belongs to. When I say a forecourt, like the forecourt to the library on

Swanston Street, that public space belongs to the library. It is a forecourt in the true sense, in that it has many functions, but its role as a space belongs to that building. If the library wasn't there, that space would not work — that's the test. Therefore it's not an architectural thing; it's not a landscape thing. That's why our collaboration works so well, because we come from different disciplines and yet the overlap between an architectural perception and a landscape perception or an urban space perception, they're all the components, not one alone. That's why it's very important that the idea of breadth, of understanding and breadth of discipline applies to urban fabric. You can't see it from a landscape point of view because it's not about soft or hard landscape. I know you guys get obsessed, but we don't draw like that.

PL: That's why we've got a better discipline.

PE: Not really on the ground plane. I don't really care if it's got a curly pattern or a straight pattern or what it is. A'Beckett Urban Square is a very good example, because it's a space type that's missing in the city; we didn't do much. We did almost nothing. What you're doing is creating the stage or the dramatic setting which people then use.

PL: There's one thing I'm struggling with, but I like the struggle, and that is this question of coming to a space that, as you say, is already there, and in a way you're editing it and revealing it and enhancing its core qualities. But then there's another question about 'How is it used? What will its function or its program be? What are the other layers that might invite a way of using it?' And it's not very often a very conscious brief from a client or anything.

PE: In fact, I can tell you, that RMIT, 20 years next year I've been working on that campus, I have never had a letter or an instruction or a brief. Nothing. It is all completely how you manage the client; how you communicate what things might be. In fact it's worse than what we're suggesting, in the sense that you've got nothing. Basically what you have to do, as the designer, as the deliverer, is tell the story, convince them of what it might be, and...

PL: And have you — and this is my own personal evolution, is I've become much more conscious of that decision-making or the prompting or the invitation of use. That's the struggle for me, I love the look of a design and my instinct is, 'How can it be a powerfully visual experience?' But now I'm actually thinking about, well, 'How can it be experienced?'

PE: You can do both. You can have a beautiful looking design but there's more to it than that, and this comes from my own experience of the fact that I didn't get to design RMIT. It's a very different game from start with a fresh site, even like a vacant carpark at the top end of town. One precedent is Joseph Plecnik, who is a kind of hero of mine in a way he manipulates '[RMIT's] been bastardized - doesn't matter. We're not there fixing things up so they're perfect. They're there to tell a story, the whole thing, every wall, every space tells a story. And that story is connected to the prior histories of a place'



public space as a journey. Things don't exist in isolation; they exist in relationship to each other. There are clues that make you think, 'Maybe I can go there.' And if you've been to cities where you start feeling anxious because something tells you that that space is not safe, I'm not welcome. Part of this is giving enough clues that I can go there. You're constantly connecting and seeing this little game, this little visual game that goes on. Plecnik was a master at it, he used visual cues, but you don't know that if you go there. This is all a part of the total urban fabric, it's not about the ground plane, it's about this total idea of three-dimensional urban space. You can't disconnect them.

PL: I'm sort of interested in your architectural practice. Do you see that as different from the way you think, because the way you describe that little conversation about the choreography and cues of public space, is, in a way, a traditional townscape-y kind of way of describing it, whereas your practice, architecturally, is a very modernist-derived practice, and, in a way you could see them as separate.

PE: I think they're so different. Sometimes when I look at the way you guys work, it's so easy, you just roll it out, compared to the complexities of architecture. They are different worlds; a lot of the foundation work of the practice was the urban space thing I've described just with buildings. Just stripping off the front of the building or creating a new doorway or adding on a new fire stair. They're guite modest things and I learnt a way of working through hundreds of little modest acts, rather than some grand idea. I think that there's a place for the grand idea. All the freeway work is a grand idea. You need a big strong idea and you need a hundred little ones as well, because that's how public space becomes intrinsically interesting to people, because they have that level of complexity.

PL: This idea of the big idea or the issue

about how one city is different to another or one culture is different to another. I think the North Terrace example is a good one. What was interesting was walking the site very simply and the observation of that place, we came across this little section in front of old government house, which had a path against a wall, a little park space next to that, and then another path, and we thought 'That actually is the bones of something here.' That is of this place that is remnant of this terrace, we extruded that for kilometres. So, in a way, we didn't import an idea to Adelaide, actually. The DNA revealed itself.

PE: It's about finding a way to see what's intrinsically in a place, the bones, and then, out of that, make judgements. That's the point in the end, the skilful designers do see those things, and when they're closely connected to the history of a place, they have more resonance. For me, that's why RMIT is interesting. The thing's been bastardized - doesn't matter. We're not there fixing things up so they're perfect. They're there to tell a story, the whole thing, every wall, every space tells a story. That story is connected to the prior histories of a place. I think the public generally understand it, they understand it from an intrinsic point of view but they mightn't be able to verbalise it. But that's part of the role of a designer, is to find that right narrative.

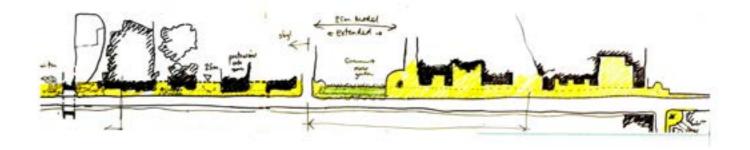
Student: I also had a question. How you two work collaboratively?

PL: I think we do have a common way of thinking, so it's easy for us. We're not trying to bring a landscape agenda or an architecture agenda. We've actually got a similar public space agenda. What I'm finding interesting is that Peter's probably the only one I've come across who is actually open for me to comment upon his architecture, and Peter is totally honest about commenting on my landscape. There's no ego; part of it is a respect. PE: Open yourself up to it. I think it's partly just because of the way we work, sort of pretty loose, really. We're pretty focused. We've just sort of found each other, like you do, and work happily and enjoy what we do. That's just naturally self-fulfilling in a way. But there are very few other people I know who work like that. It's not a normal thing, because it's just the world you guys inhabit and it's just because everyone's out [there to] get themselves noticed. It's a different world.

PL: [For us] it's the best idea. What's interesting is we'll think, 'Bloody hell, that was a great idea!' And we'll both agree to it and then five minutes later. 'That was shocking! We can do better than that!' It moves around. Until we both actually think, 'That's the idea.' The idea's the winner, whoever comes up with it.

Left: RMIT A'Beckett Urban Square, a collaborative project between TCL and Peter Elliott Architecture + Urban Design



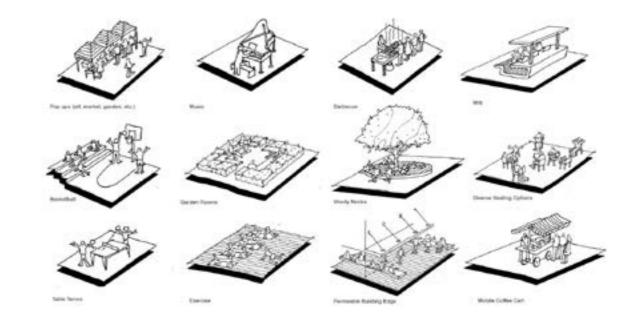












(Previous spread) North Terrace Redevelopment Client: Adelaide City Council Location: North Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia Collaboration: Peter Elliott Architecture + Urban Design, Paul Carter, James Hayter and Hossein Valamanesh

(Opposite)

RMIT University Lawn Precinct (Urban Spaces Project - Stage 03) Client: RMIT University Location: Melbourne, Victoria Collaboration: Peter Elliott Architecture + Urban Design Previous page (left): A view along North Terrace (Adelaide) showing the generous inner and outer paths and the repetitive rhythm of seating, paving, planting and forecourts.

Previous page (right top): A collaborative drawing from a design session with Peter Elliot, setting up testing the terrace and building interaction.

Previous spread (right bottom): During the Adelaide International Festival of Art 2012 images were projected onto each of the historic buildings along the North Terrace.

Left: RMIT University Lawn Precinct, by Peter Elliott Architecture + Urban Design and TCL.

Above: Sketch of '100 Small Projects,' Melbourne University, by Peter Elliott Architecture + Urban Design and TCL. A series of experiments in the reading, recording and representation of the city's formal qualities and the temporal/spatial dynamics of its public realm (mapping and notation)

# part II representing friction in the public realm



'As both analogue and abstraction, the surface of the map functions like an operating table, a staging ground or a theatre of operations upon which the mapper collects, combines, connects, marks, masks, relates and generally explores. These surfaces are massive collection, sorting and transfer sites, great fields upon which real material conditions are isolated, indexed and placed within an assortment of relational structures.'

James Corner, The Agency of Mapping, p. 215

# mapping friction in public space

JEN LYNCH

The studio's work and discussions were theory- and research-focused. The findings uncovered through collective reading and research exercises formed a 'field' - a broad collection of information that define a territory, both our site and the series of issues that frame our inquiries.

In the second part of the studio, focus shifted from the gathering of information and critical lenses towards representational experiments: mapping and notation.

James Corner writes about the revelatory, imaginative and instrumental nature of mapping, as a practice that makes the invisible visible, revealing and drawing out relationships within a site and catalyzing its potential futures.

Focusing on Corner's metaphor of the map as 'operating table'- the deciphering/ drawing out of connections and relationships within the field established - extant, invisible, unrealized, imagined.

#### **OPERATIONS**

Corner defines the three key operations of mapping as follows:

'First, the creation of a field, the setting of rules and the establishment of a system; second, the extraction, isolation or "deterritorialization" of parts and data; and third, the plotting, the drawing-out, the setting-up of relationships, or the "re-

territorialization" of the parts. At each stage, choices and judgements are made, with the construing and constructing of the map alternating between processes of accumulation, disassembly and reassembly.'1

The studio used the following method to inform mapping exercises:

Field/fieldwork: Sifting through the hundreds of ideas, moments, facts, terms, sound bites, artefacts, etc. that comprise the studio's research discourse defined the first field - the broad sense of site and research inquiries that we all share. Through studio discussions, preliminary orders/patterns/ traiectories within this information were sensed and deciphered.

Extracts: Drawing from this research, material was selectively 'de-territorialized' - parts/data were privileged and further interrogated through mapping.

Plotting: 'Plotting entails an active and creative interpretation of the map to reveal, construct and engender latent sets of possibility. Plotting is not simply the indiscriminate listing and inventorying of conditions, as in a tracing, a table or a chart, but rather a strategic and imaginative drawing-out of relational structures. To plot is to track, to trace, to set in-relation, to find and to found. In this sense, plotting produces a "re-territorialization" of sites.<sup>12</sup>

Employing Corner's metaphor of the operating table, experiments in the relationships between extracts within more narrowly defined fields were undertaken to represent the site.

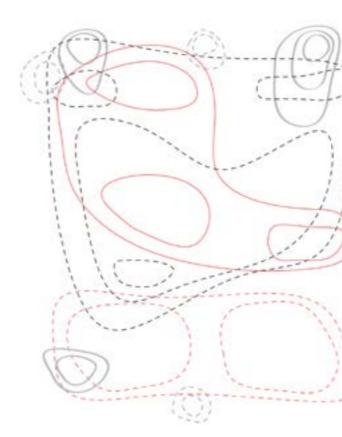
Right: Smell mapping at the Queen Victoria Market

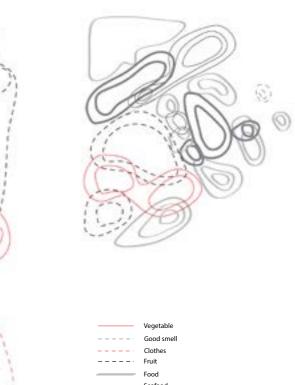
by Jun Tan, analyzing the clashing and spreading of

smells across the site.

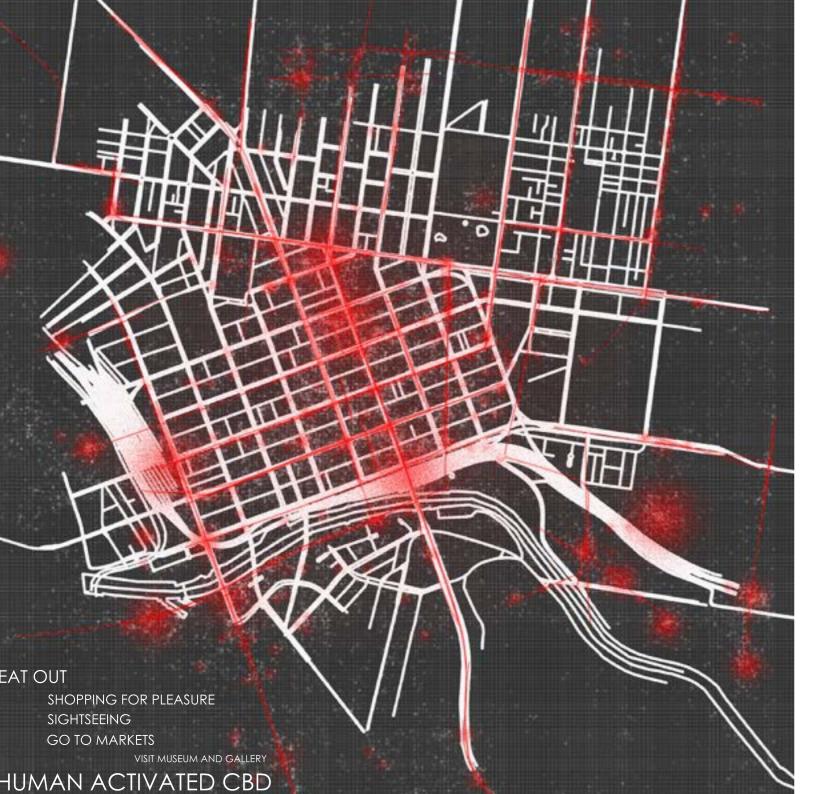
'The process of mapping reveals hidden truths, and fosters creative imaginings. The hinge is the distinctive urban condition on Wynyard point, it represents a shift between urban and waterfront uses, is a mark of historic development, and a response to local tidal conditions. Spatially the hinge needed to be retained as a disjunction between two grid conditions.'

Perry Lethlean, TCL PhD, Braided Pathways: A Practice Sustained by Difference



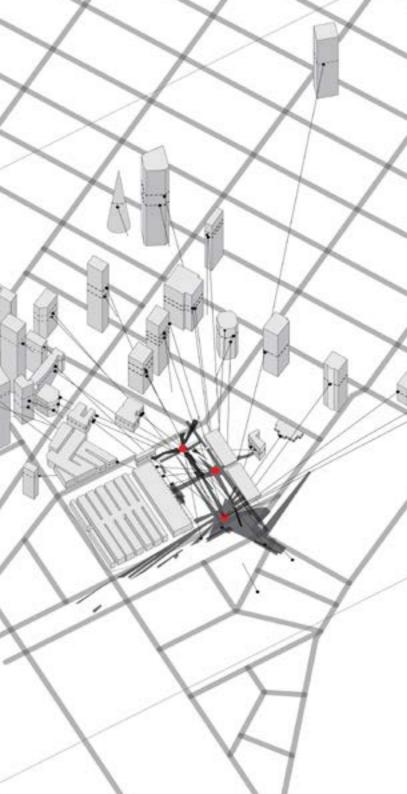


Moa



#### Opposite: Activity or 'Hot Spot' mapping of Melbourne CBD by Canna Zhao.

Right: Axonometric mapping by Katya Hamaniuk and Martina Mohenska, exploring the view of the Melbourne City skyline from the site.



# mapping and urban morphology

PERRY LETHLEAN

How would you define/describe mapping and its role in your design process? And what has influenced your technique - the work of other designers, work with mentors/ collaborators, theoretical writings, etc.?

I'm interested in the generative powers of mappings, particularly as a basis of knowledge and importantly as a potential generator of design propositions. The process informs how the particular project can be informed by, and connects to a morphology or structure of the city. This latent condition, often hidden, is used to establish the basic design armatures of the setting.

The work of Mario Gandelsonas is particularly influential.<sup>1</sup> The diagrams of Gandelsonas are obvious in their simplicity, yet are derived from a rigorous analytical base. He explores various ways of illustrating urban relationships that are not performative or experiential, but structural. He reveals the hidden order of cities, their unique structures that organise the arrangement of buildings, streets, and infrastructure. The maps reveal the influences of sequential development and urban ideas, and the intersection between these orders.

differ from traditional map-making or plan drawing? (Would you describe mapping as descriptive, a formal/morphological inventory, revelatory – ex. making the invisible visible - synthetic, archaeological, analytical, critical, creative, exploratory, etc?)

My education in landscape architecture involved a lot of landscape analysis, typically ecologically based mappings of soils, trees, drainage geology and materials. This analysis was confined to an understanding of environmental systems. Using this knowledge to generate designs in urban spheres potentially limits the ability to engage the design to the more dominant paradigms of infrastructure, street and built form. In urban contexts where ecologies are essentially erased, and/or relegated to a sideshow, the dominant system to inform the structure of public realms is the latent morphologies of the city.

Extending the idea of mapping, as a means of learning and speculation, to an understanding of the urban fabric and the role of public space in its structure allows one to engage in a larger dialogue of the city built form and its public spaces.

Unlike Gandelsonas, or say Corner, our mapping never ends in a beautiful diagram, it's an unfolding messy discovery, via analytical and speculative mapping and part design proposition. Plans, photos, writings,

sometimes poetry, painting, are often mined unscrupulously for an insight into place. We are often searching for an immutable logic, a hidden order, the thing that will make it a place that builds upon a specific understanding of this site.

What precedents (cartographic/designdisciplinary or drawn from other disciplines) inform your mapping techniques?

Gandelsonas' work resonated with my landscape sensibilities. Typically crude landscape analysis techniques, such as blunt mappings of circulation, vector lines and street patterns were, through him transformed into sophisticated revelatory urban diagrams. The graphic distillation of hidden patterns or exaggerating the apparent gave me an insight into how I might creatively respond to sites in the design of new city spaces. The 'as found' is given new meaning by Gandelsonas. His work reveals the latent condition at a larger urban scale. It is analytical and speculative, it is analytical and speculative and, it gives urban design a foundation.

Opposite: Sketch for Auckland Waterfront by Perry Lethlean.

# 'The layering of multi programming of public space is one tool to achieve new ways to shape public space as vital settings for social exchange between many communities, demographics and ages.

Perry Lethlean, TCL PhD, Braided Pathways: A Practice Sustained by Difference



How does your understanding of 'mapping'

'The layering of multi programming of public space is one tool to achieve new ways to shape public space as vital settings for social exchange between many communities, demographics and ages.'

Perry Lethlean, TCL PhD, Braided Pathways: A Practice Sustained by Difference

They are graphic distillations, and sometimes graphic exaggerations. His methodology, sometimes whittles away superfluous textures, or edits extraneous information and/or amplifying the contrasts to reveal an urban structure, pattern or intersection that is both blatant yet revelatory.

What is, however, exasperating and challenging about this work, is that to date, it has not informed, to my knowledge, a physical urban design or architectural outcome. This beautiful evocation of the spatial language of cities, is not informing any subsequent spatial design. It is a convincing depiction of the structure of cities, a revelation, yet nothing seemed to emerge in terms of a design proposition. Can you talk us through one or two project examples and describe how mapping played out/what insights or design ideas emerged in that context?

#### The urban design and landscape architecture at Wynyard Point was informed in part by a process of analytical mappings.

Just as cities have their distinct urban DNA built up over time, so too do waterfronts have their own unique grain and constructed morphologies. Waterfronts comprising formal edge lines, tabular topography contrasting with deep shelves, incisions, grooves and cuts are all distinctions. Each basin orientates and is spatially different, dependent in part on their way of dealing with turning movements, city relationship, tidal issues or wave surge. Each waterfront reveals an extreme contrast in scales between the infrastructure of the wharves and the apparent minutia of the utilitarian architecture servicing the workers and wharf functions.

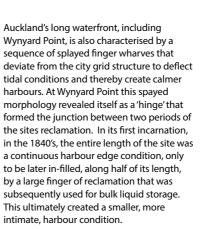
These are also places of exchange between land and sea and the passage of ships,

trade, workers and immigrants that connect cities and the global economy. The tracery of this movement is subtle but remains long after the ships have left.

We viewed these patterns of flow that generated grain, marks and movement systems as the flow paths and morphology of the waterfront's future.

At Auckland our analysis operated at two scales, a macro understanding of the role of this site in Auckland's city structure, in the manner of Gandelsonis; and a more microscopic appraisal of site conditions and qualities.

A broader urban mapping revealed that although Wynyard Point is arranged in a traditional grid structure, a more idiosyncratic morphology underpinned its distinctiveness. The site, now isolated from Auckland's CBD, was once connected to the central city via a long haulage coal rail line that despite being partially buried and built over, could once again be used to connect this site back to its City.



The process of mapping reveals hidden

urban and waterfront uses, is a mark of

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hinge is the distinctive urban condition on

Wynyard point, it represents a shift between

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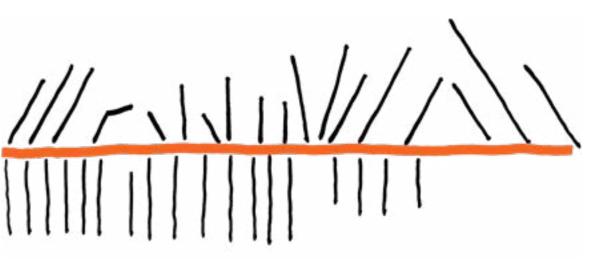
be retained as a disjunction between two grid

conditions but we suspected it could be more

physically evident and programmatically

relevant. We chanced upon the idea

of a functioning gantry that would be a centrepiece of the new park and an evocative response to the industrial language of the site and aligned to reinforce the urban morphology of the hinge. It is designed to be a visual folly, play structure, lookout, arbour and event infrastructure. It also forms the infrastructure for a proposed working dock. This facility is proposed to be used for the final 'fit out' of large super yachts located adjacent to a future working dock.



Above: Diagram of Auckland Waterfront Wynyard Point splayed finger wharves by TCL.

## representing the invisible

NEHA JUDDOO

'If drawings cease being object-driven, then landscape architecture has the opportunity to challenge the limits of the current conventions by designing with the less discernible, yet relevant, systems of site.'

Neha Juddoo

How would you define/describe mapping and its role in your design process? And what has influenced your technique - the work of other designers, work with mentors/ collaborators, theoretical writings, etc.?

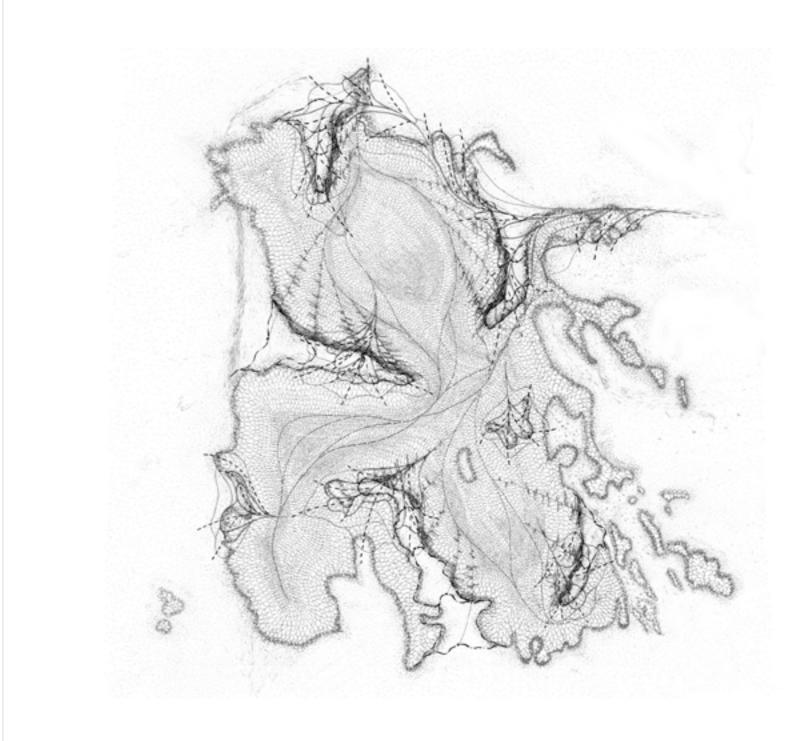
Drawing is an act of investigation. It allows us designers to bridge the gap from research to design. One could argue that research is design; through the process of investigating a site – we develop a very specific set of tools through which to perceive space. Our perception of site informs directly the way we design. That understanding is usually reflected through the way we represent space; it becomes the lens through which we operate as landscape architects. My approach has been developed primarily through a research studio I participated in at RMIT which was based around Lake Eyre. Other influences involve the work of various artists such as Francis Bacon, Paul Cézanne, Étienne-Jules Marey and many more.

How does your understanding of 'mapping' differ from traditional map-making or plan drawing? (Would you describe mapping as descriptive, a formal/morphological inventory, revelatory – ex. making the invisible visible - synthetic, archaeological, analytical, critical, creative, exploratory, etc?) Conventional methods of representation have established the object as tracing due to the dominance of the built form. We represent a reality only established through the precedence of photography. I believe mapping need not be a static representation of an idea; it has the ability to evolve and reveal over time. The entangled process I usually undergo is backed up by a series of rules and constraints that will help push and question what exactly it is I am mapping and how it performs.

My approach aims to explore the possibilities of representing through a different lens; rendering the invisible visible. If drawings cease being object-driven, then landscape architecture has the opportunity to challenge the limits of the current conventions by designing with the less discernible, yet relevant, systems of site. Site can be understood as a spectrum of environmental systems that range from visible to the less visible. The revelatory approach to mapping allows the process to explore a series of unknowns about the site that may contribute to the design process.

Opposite: Plan of bird trajectors with breeding and feeding zones as part of 'Hotel Pelicano' by Neha Juddoo and Ben Cooke.

Next spread: Sequential section exploring the sediment build-up over time at Lake Eyre.



'However, after multiple iterations the drawings shifted from being less for the viewer and more for the drawer. Drawing was now being used more as a tool to generate knowledge rather than create a basic formal understanding of the space.'

Neha Juddoo

The Drawing Machine is my approach to mapping. It is essentially a generative thinking tool that involves setting up parameters for the construction of a drawing, which will then enable the construction of a formal intervention. The former relates to the perceptions of site and the components through which site is drawn and the latter refers to the application of these components for the generation of form.

What precedents (cartographic/designdisciplinary or drawn from other disciplines) inform your mapping techniques?

Within The Drawing Machine a reference point will enable the drawing process through the agent of a drawing technique. To me, this is usually manifested through the exploration of various references such as artists, scientific representations, diagrams and many more. The methodology used to represent within each piece of work is evaluated in terms of how they perform and what they achieve. Whether it be a series of etching, points, straight lines, etc., I categorise them into a spectrum of intensities and meanings. The work of Paul Cézanne resonated most with my practice. The evolution of Cézanne's work progressed from a depiction of a moving subject to a mechanical understanding of how the performance occurs. His representation technique changed drastically with this change in perception.

Can you talk us through one or two project examples and describe how mapping played out/what insights or design ideas emerged in that context?

#### Hotel Pelicano was a proposal developed in the 'Friction Design studio' I undertook in early 2012.

The site is vast and does not expose any fixed boundaries; this was the biggest constraint when drawing the site, because it meant we could not fall into the traditional way of representing what is in the space. Rather, this pushed the research to investigate invisible components that constitute the lake such as; wind, temperature and humidity. By rendering these ephemeral qualities visible, the drawing reveals another way of perceiving the site: through assemblages of phenomenological components. Earlier drawings were attempting to draw the site, however through various iterations the drawings transformed into a perception and revelation of Lake Eyre. The use of quantitative data created guides that the drawing would emerge from. By combining the quantitative (measurement) with the qualitative (drawing techniques) the drawing depicted specific conditions.

Initially the research began with the investigation of bird paths and flight routes; the aim was to use the drawing to understand the different trajectories that lead to Lake Evre. The focus shifted towards the migration of the Australian Pelicans as a dominant part of Lake Eyre's landscape. The iteration of the plan drawing aimed to create an understanding of how pelicans migrate to site in relation to the ground plane. The process of iterative drawing forced us to guestion what exactly we wanted to unravel as well as how we wanted to portray that (drawing techniques). The way in which this was done was to constantly redraw and reflect on what each drawing communicated (to us, as well as the viewer). However, after multiple iterations the drawings shifted from being less for the viewer and more for the drawer. Drawing was now being used more as a tool to generate knowledge rather than

create a basic formal understanding of the space. This allowed us to create an argument through the drawing as well as inform potential design proposals.

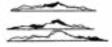
The drawing techniques used were representative of the design proposal – in as much that the design is subtle and is not imposing on the existing systems, but rather works within them. Usually, landscape architecture manipulates various tools in order to create a proposal. However these tools are mostly infrastructure based. 'Friction Studio' has provided a new way of perceiving site; which is through the investigation of less visible assemblages that also have an effect on design. The drawings therefore need to be used to generate specific representations for design, rather than of the design.

What are the roles of mapping in design conceptualisation vs. presentation to a client or public – where is this technique most useful and appropriate? How are initial outcomes translated, for instance?

Firstly, what is design conceptualisation? The process of understanding and perceiving site to generate a responsive outcome. It is a series of site investigations that reveal information about site that become a catalyst to generating form or programme. Generally, this process occurs for the designer.

Presentation to a client: is the logic of the site investigations formulated into a perception of the site.

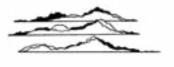
Design conceptualisation is representation for design, whereas presentation to a client is the representation of design. The 'for' is the understanding and perception of site to generate an outcome. It is the designer's tools to establish a method to approach site – determining the problem. Determining the issues also reveal the opportunities for design; they are a series of elements through which we perceive and design space.

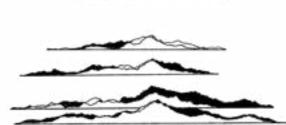


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# notation: describing and composing the spatial and temporal dynamics of the public realm

JEN LYNCH

#### Notation

[n.] A series or system of written symbols used to represent numbers, amounts, or elements in something such as music or mathematics.

#### Score

[n.] A written representation of a musical composition showing all the vocal and instrumental parts arranged one below the other.

While mapping provides a technique for deciphering and drawing out the connections and relationships—extant, imagined, invisible, unrealized—within the 'field' that defined the studio's site and research discourse, notation provides a graphic technique for recording, describing and composing the spatial and temporal dynamics of the public realm.

Notation has been used to convey gestures of the body in space (Laban), describe architecture as event(s) (Tschumi), chart out cinematic sequences (Eisenstein), portray the complex interrelationships of ecosystems and their change over time (Mathur and Da Cunha), express the sensory qualities of highway sequences (Appleyard, Lynch and Meyer) and facilitate collaborative design process (Halprin).

While diverse, commonalities amongst these notational forms are the following:

Components - Each identifies a series of components (whether they be individuals/ bodies, body parts, environmental factors, spatial qualities or components, etc.) and develops a method for symbolically representing this component, describing its variation (in quality, quantity, direction, context, presence/absence, intensity, type, etc.) over time. Diachronic - Each is linear and describes movement/progression through both time and space.

Synchronic - Each develops a layered set of sequences, revealing interrelationships between variables as they progress through parallel temporal/spatial frameworks.

Systematic - Holistically, each forms a system, in that it is relation and enclosed, like a language.

Over the course of a week, each student recorded and described, through graphic notation, a series of interrelationships that play out across time and in space to comprise the public activity of a site in the CBD.

Choice of site was completely openended—indoor or outdoor or both, busy or quiet or varied. Programmatically specific (a gallery, the market, a tram stop) or open for multiple uses. Prescriptive in its movements/temporalities (a church service, a march, a busker's performance, the ebb and flow of passengers in a train station) or spontaneous (shifting crowds/uses of a park). The only requirement was that it involve an edge, where one condition meets another, provoking a condition of friction.

Students were asked to:

Closely observe change within this

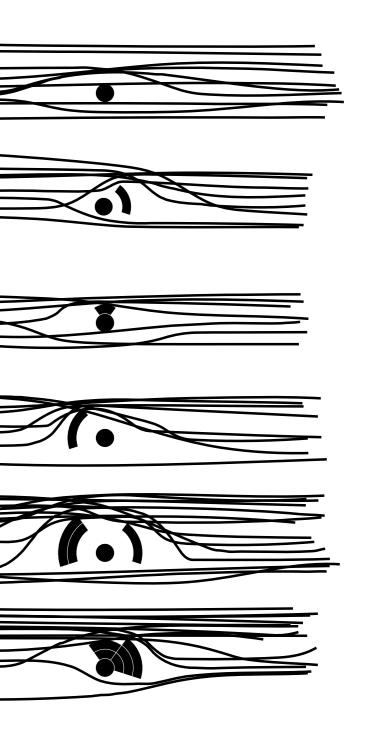
environment and across this threshold: Change in sound/temperature/light, modulation in direction and speed of movements/flows, shifts in quantities of people/bodies, in qualities of interaction/ events/avoidances, presences/absences.

Identify which variables to describe and develop a graphic system to describe variation within these variables. This is your vocabulary/alphabet/repertoire of 'notes.'

Think about the way the notation might be organized. Ex. moving along the edge via transect and recording change that occurs along the course of this line, moving along a datum, whether it be vertical (such as a painting on a gallery wall, a shopfront window, etc.) or horizontal (a surface, for instance, across which transactions or exchanges occur, like a card table or countertop, which might delineate player and opponent, customer and salesperson, etc.). These factors will determine the organization of your notational bars (linear,

Right: Notational system created by Robert Egerton. A food stall in Swanston street was used to show the way people move fluidlyaround others in a public space, and how a silent negotiation can occur in restricted space.

Following page: Student notation pin-up.





#### curvilinear, circular, etc.).

Think about role - passive observer? Or will the actions, words, artefacts and/or gestures you introduce to the environment at a particular moment factor into this portrait?

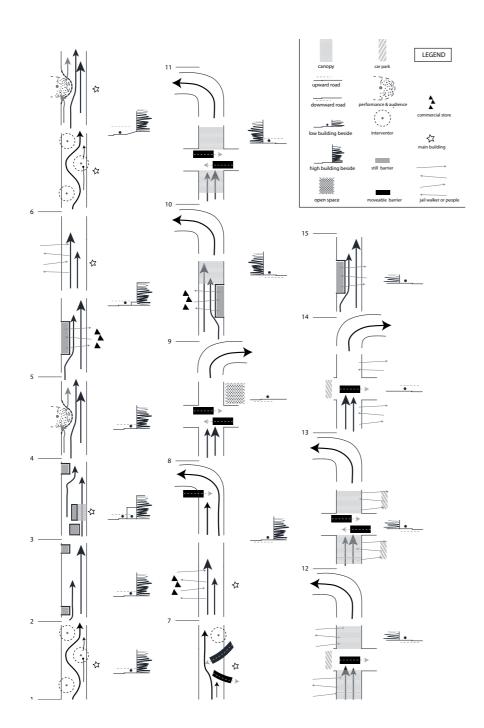
The work depicted a range of phenomena, fieldwork types and graphic techniques. Some notation represented a point in space through time (i.e. a crêpe stand and the effects on pedestrian flows and aggregations around it, or a busy intersection, and the choreography of five modes of transportation via coloured light). Others represented movement through space (i.e. the cues that guide a stroll through the city). Some represented carefully the social qualities of a space (i.e. the exchange of glances and body language that provide subtle clues towards negotiation in a carpark, or the rise and fall of collective effervescence during a church ceremony, through collective changes in orientation of the body and variation in qualities of light and sound). Importantly, each developed ways of describing space as phenomena (social, environmental) that change in relation to each other over time, focusing the representation and attention on friction and flux vs. form.

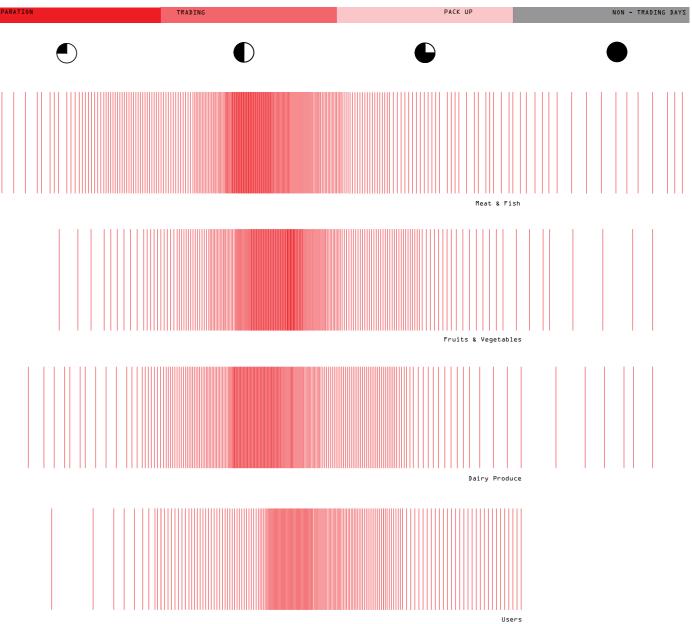
Right: Notational system created by Jun Tan, illustrating how human movement flow is influenced by other external factors. The route of notation is from Flinders Station to Queen Victoria Market via Swanston Street.

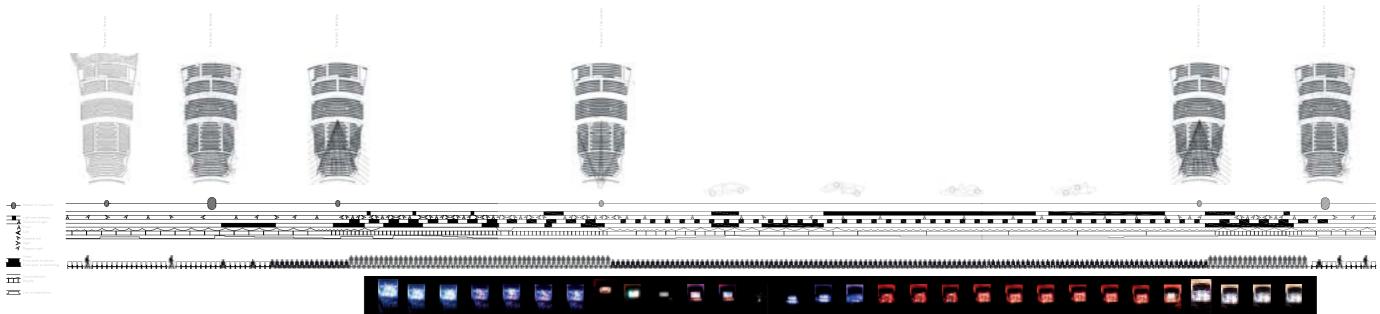
Opposite: Notational drawing by Pei Qin Tan exploring activity levels at Queen Victoria Market.

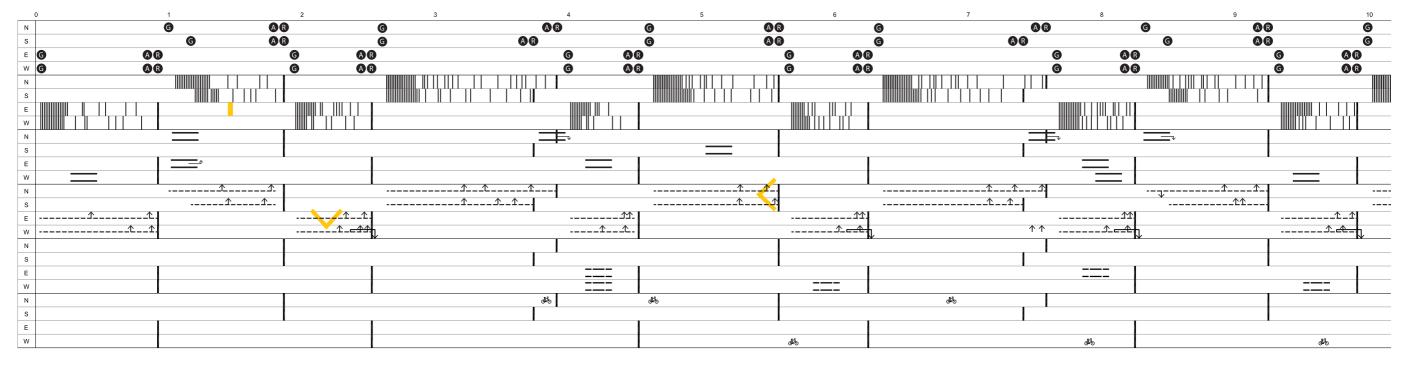
Following page (top): Collins Street and Spencer Street intersection score by Luke Shelton.

Following page (bottom): Notational analysis on the Hillsong Church Service by Melvin Chan.









# a conversation on the design of public space: collaboration and public space in Melbourne vs. Sydney

ANTON JAMES AND PERRY LETHLEAN

PL: Anton is unique in the landscape architecture world, in a way, because of the other layer of artistry that he brings to his projects. Five years ago you wouldn't talk about your art practice. Landscape architecture was a little bit of a separate thing, it's very revealing through his PhD process, that art practice is certainly embedded into the way he thinks and designs and draws and the outcomes of his projects.

AJ: I mean I've sort of become a bit suspicious of that artwork, because it is sort of seen as a panacea for all ills. You know, 'if you're an artist you solve all problems,' and 'all we need is public art and everything will be alright. I'm still a bit reluctant to use it in reference to myself. But I've acknowledged what I do through the PhD and see it now as central. I'm not engaging with the Dutch landscape tradition of painting and the idea of representation of landscape on a two-dimensional surface and all those issues of colour and depth that occur in painting. Part of the PhD had brought me back to thinking about painting not as being separate but as being a tool for investigating design ideas.

I tend to use my sketchbook as a way to try and force ideas. Narrative isn't something that I'm interested in, in terms of building a strong narrative or telling a story. In a way my PhD revealed this idea about a mood and a sense of the space and the scale, and then finding a language that enters into a dialogue with the site. You can put all sorts of things into a site but I am very responsive, in a way, trying to pick up on things that are on a site, and I love crumbling concrete, I love stuff that's a bit untidy. How do you introduce design into something without killing that quality of the site? A lot of the drawings are about finding the language and scale that has enough of a difference to have a dialogue with the site but remains independent and doesn't get subsumed by the site.

It's probably also worth mentioning a project that we collaborated on for the University of New South Wales where they wanted a 'Green,' you know a cliché university green with nothing in it, and we said, 'We're not going to do that, you've got one of those over here.' And we tried to give them a garden, to give them a really beautiful Sydney garden...

PL: The Vice-Chancellor said 'We don't do gardens here.'We failed in about 30 seconds of going in there.

AJ: The point about that was, again, that we didn't accept the void of the brief, and we felt that it could be richer and more diverse and that maybe the European model doesn't work culturally here. The architects are very romantic about the European model, but we don't all get dressed up at seven o'clock in our finest clothes and go walking to meet the people that live in the other flats around us. There is a different mindset about how we use public space.

PL: How much does the project evolve in your practice from an initial idea to how it's realised is it true to its initial conception? Or does it go on a morphing, looping journey?

AJ: Well the title of my PhD was 'A Looping Journey' and that came out because I realised that in my drawings I tend to head off in one direction and then I decide that's not really working... Come back, pick up some other thread and do that again. You can probably keep doing it, because that's the thing about it, there's no right answer. The design method that I tend to use is the 'What if?' You know, you can just keep asking questions: 'What if you did it like this?"'What if you did it like that?' until you arrive at a point where the solution falls out. You're not working in a vacuum, there are technical constraints, there are client requirements, there are budgets, there's all this other stuff that feeds into those loops and they tend to knock certain options out. With Parramatta we've got a train station that's going to spew out 5,000 people an hour and some cross-site links that you just can't ignore, so they started to push the direction in a certain way, so it's not like a painting. When I say there's no right answer, I do like to arrive at an underlying structure that's kind of clear.

Increasingly on these bigger projects, the urban basics have a strong connectivity to

the urban fabric and the urban structure. After that, whether it's blue or its pink or if it's brown— if the functioning of it can work properly, then you've set the parameters to then add those other layers. I suppose in something like this I'd be really interested in how it sits with the city and its relationship around its edges.

PL: I went to a conference in Copenhagen a while back, and it was called the 'As Found,' it was run by Lisa Diedrich, and it was all these really micro, little lovely projects, that were okay in and of themselves, and I came away thinking, well unless it's well connected, and it's safe, and it's legible, and it's activated and there's a reason to go there, then it won't last a week— there are sort of two layers, there is a bigger city conversation that the city needs to have.

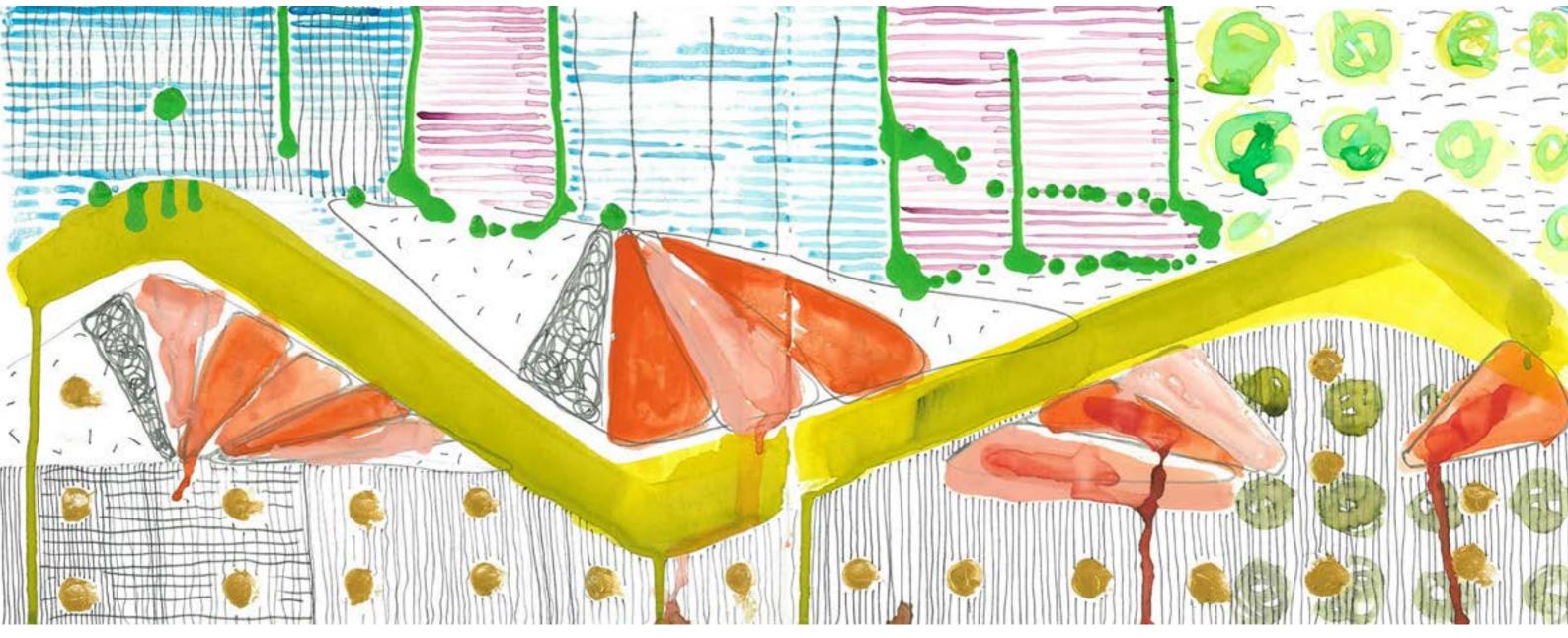
AJ: That's my criticism of all the pop-up stuff, you know, it's all fine, but it's the sort of flowers in the vase. The structure, and where the buildings sit, and all that stuff, that's going to be around for a hundred years. If you go in and put a couple of pot plants and a few pallets painted red then they're gone in a month. But the infrastructure and that structural stuff, you're stuck with for a long time, so it's really important. A lot of this stuff's not rocket science, you know, it's just thinking it out clearly, it's not being too smart. It's just some simple stuff which tends to get forgotten. The tricks can come in

#### afterwards.

PL: One of the things that this studio is looking at is the idea of friction, which can mean multi-programming a space and adjacencies and how something that might be typically zoned separately in the past, back in the '60s or something, is now actually making the place richer, because of the juxtaposition of things.

AJ: It also imbues a sort of a civility. I don't know if any of you have been to Amsterdam, but some of these places where you do have that friction, you do force people to confront one another, people have to interact and negotiate. It actually opens communication. Whereas I find in Australia and the US, it's probably the same, you're in your tin can driving down the freeway and the windows are done up, you don't have to talk to anybody, you just put the indicator on, you beep... There's an isolation that breaks down that social interaction and I think those cities where you force that friction it actually makes it much more civil. People don't insist on their right, they actually negotiate it. It's the same in Indonesia, you know, you're driving in Indonesia, everybody's everywhere, and it's a negotiation always.

I'm interested in this idea of Australian public space requirements or what informs Australian public spaces as a model versus European. It seems like there is a different set of requirements in 'There's an isolation that breaks down that social interaction and I think those cities where you force that friction it actually makes it much more civil. People don't insist on their right, they actually negotiate it.'



Above: Drawing for Parramatta Square by Anton James.

Following page: Parramatta Square concept design by JMD Design, TCL, Tonkin Zulaikha Greer, and Gehl Architects. '...You balance this desire to design and control and overprescribe, versus allowing stuff to just take its own life and develop a patina, is a trick. How do you do enough, but not too much?'

Australia. The interesting thing is where it's going, not trying to define what it is. The interesting thing with Parramatta is that it's incredibly multicultural. We've just completed this small section next to the Parramatta Square called Centennial Square and we were asked to make a space that could cater for all sorts of stuff, we stripped out all the crap that was in there and conglomerated over years and it's just a simple paved space with existing trees around it and a water feature.

PL: Pretty European. And that's fantastic. But it's interesting, the council think its empty, 'There's nothing there!'

AJ: They're coming around apparently.

PL: It's interesting to see the Indian community... you'll go down there and there will be thirty men in a group on chairs, because there's always moveable furniture, and thirty women in a group over here, and so how the cultural groups use these spaces is also very different and that is very different to a space that would happen in corporate uptown Sydney where it's all just bankers in suits.

Student: How do you address designing for such diversity?

AJ: Well, yeah.

PL: Yeah, good answer [laughs]. I think part of the secret is in the Centennial Square example, and it's been a very difficult sell for many years, and the idea of moveable, flexible furniture, is a fantastic thing, I've been to that square now five times or so and it's used differently every time I'm there. It's because you can move the furniture anywhere you want and you can socialise with whoever you want and you can have a little group, you can have a massive group. You can move it into the sun, you can move it into the shade and it just allows that flexibility of a variety of people during a variety of times of the day to use it in any way they want.

AJ: But I think the climate is a thing as well. For a long time I did a lot of work with a French architect, and it's amazing how he would design these boxes with no eaves, no shadowing. And you realise in Paris, when it's hot and sunny, it's alright to be in the sun. And I think this is one of the messages we keep saying in Parramatta as well — you can't just have a space that's totally uniform because you can't be in the same spot in summer as in winter, it just doesn't work. It's too hot. To build the richness and the flexibility in the space is hopefully how you cater for that change of use but also the different cultural uses. It's a hard one, how do you pre-empt what could happen when you don't know what's going to happen? Without doing the Auckland thing, where you just end up with nothing. Maybe the answer is that I don't have the answer until I spend a lot of time working through it.

- PL: Bloody looping around.
- AJ: Exactly, I've got to loop 'round. I mean

Perry is brilliant at very clear strategic thinking, the diagrams, and we each have our different ways of operating, and I think that part of the process is arriving at a point where you have a method that works for your brain, and your understanding of space and landscapes, to allow you to get in and test the project. Also it's time, it's the 10,000 hours.

PL: The other thing that we mentioned last week with Peter... Anton is different, but, I think, it was the conversation we had last time about who has the design idea? Well, it's the same with Anton. The design idea is itself and we're just trying to find it, and what I value with Anton is that he comes at it from a completely different way. I don't understand it, but I value it, because I know he will test it. I'm a linear guy, and I know that, Anton will just challenge, challenge, and I just have to go on that journey. That's fine. If you're free to go on the journey, and that the design idea is actually the thing you're searching for, then the ego should just go to a side.

AJ: I suppose the other thing I realised in this PhD is I'm fairly process-driven, in a way, I like the journey. Once something's built, if somebody wants to change it that's fine, I don't want anybody to necessarily have a prescribed way of how they have to use it. If they invent something with it, fantastic. I think, for me, there's still the surprise of the un-designed, and I mentioned I have just been in Berlin and seeing all these spaces that really have not much design in them, they are a very simple structure, people are doing their own stuff, and how you balance this desire to design and control and over-prescribe, versus allowing stuff to just take its own life and develop a patina, is a trick. How do you do enough, but not too much?

PL: Good place to end I think.



Interpreting the site and its brief, situating the return brief within the studio's theoretical discourse and site research, translating and negotiating positions on the site towards compositional proposals that might catalyse it

# part III designing for friction



'...Friction between uses and users. This was intentional. Friction between uses and multiple transport modes requires the sharing of space and negotiation... We were advocating that interruptions of flow, pauses in the path, a bit of grease and grime and the slowing down of the journey caused by friction between modes, differentiate working waterfronts from our cities and is ultimately more interesting. Friction conveys an important message for all users...on the ground where a feeling of

community ownership, occupation and social exchange on the waterfront is palpable... What became evident was that the design of the public experience was much more than the wharf and promenade. It was a holistic and multilayered experience, comprising activity off land, activities inside buildings and maintaining viable industries. The actual physical 'design' is hardly evident.'

Perry Lethlean, TCL PhD, Braided Pathways: A Practice Sustained by Difference, p.316

# student work: testing frictions

JEN LYNCH

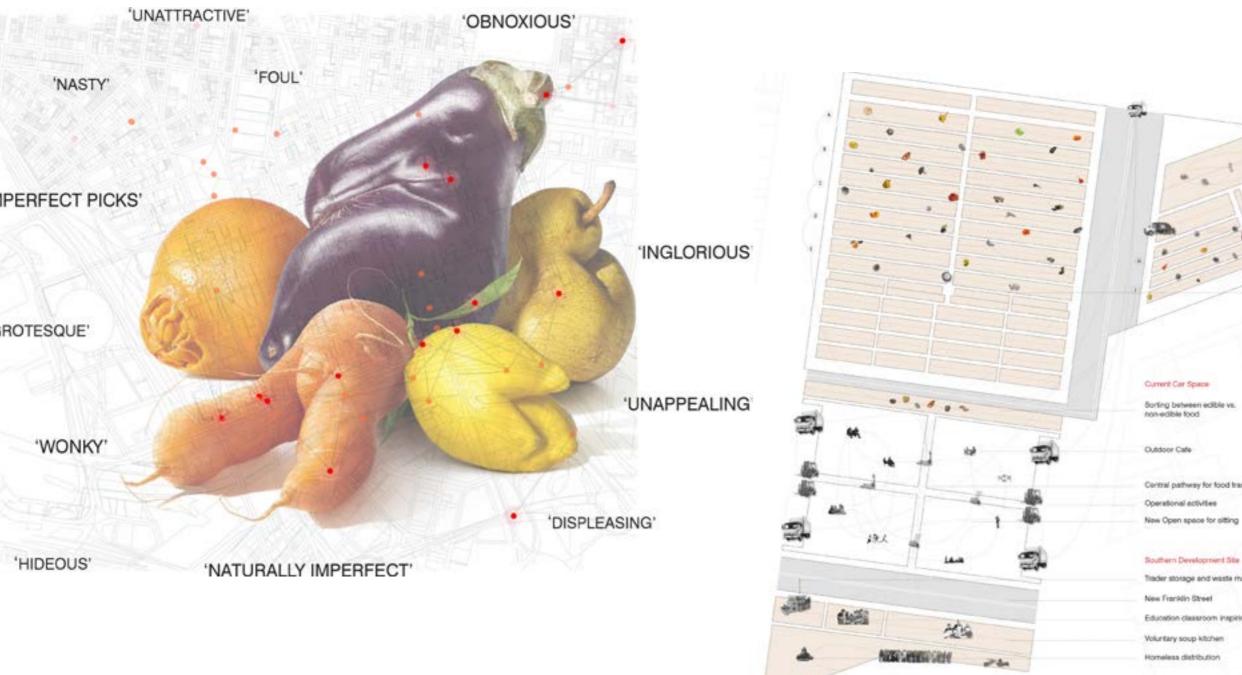
#### INTRODUCTION

The studio's ultimate design proposals represented a broad range of approaches, which resonated with discussions from the studio's outset, around the enduring 'frictions' that define public space: the friction between self and other; the friction between past and present; the friction between public and private; the friction between design/control and informal/ emergent space; friction between programs; the friction between public life and consumption; the implications of spaces without friction.

'Weaving network,' (this spread) a proposal by Jun Tan and Canna Zhao, took Rem Koolhaas' notion of frictionless, 'smooth' public space to logical extremes, generating a dystopic 'weave' of levels and pedestrian and operational flows.



Section 2



'The odd one,' a proposal by Chad Akyol and Melvin Chan, focused on framing encounters between diverse publics through an expanded set of market-related programs centred on 'ugly food.' By hybridizing market operations around the transformation of food with public space, the proposal revealed and contributed to networks of food access, transformation and distribution at multiple scales. The play on 'ugliness' introduced novel aesthetics and activities often kept 'back of house' to the site and brought them to the forefront of the project.

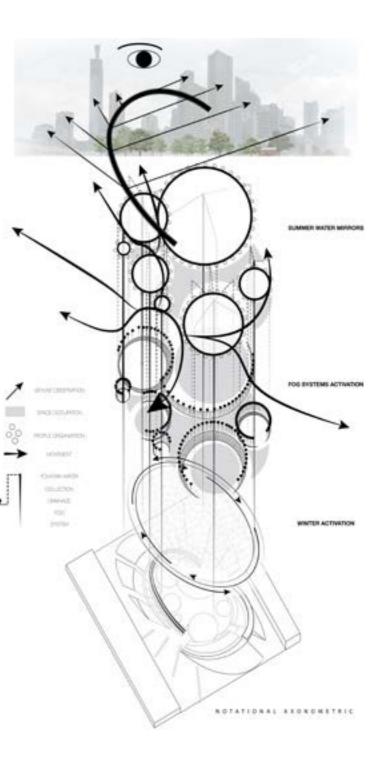
Introducing lighting performances in night

Central pathway for food transportation

Trader storage and waste management facilities

Education classroom inspiring health and love of lood

'Projecting grounds,' a proposal by Katya Hamaniuk and Martina Mohenska, reimagined the site as an observatory. By framing perception of the site's ground plane and the city's skyline along a picturesque path, the tension between past and present that defines the site's 'in-between' qualities was exaggerated.



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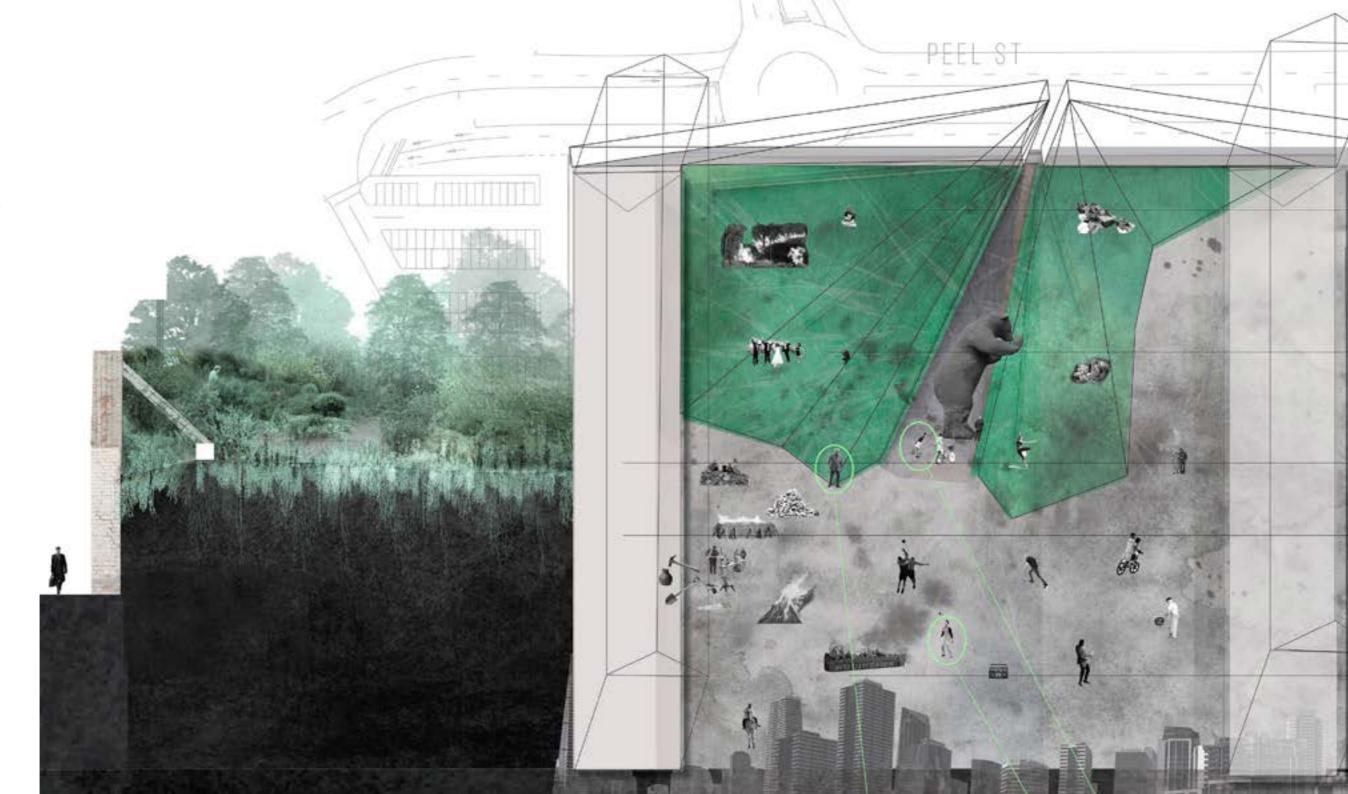
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'An other public space,' a proposal by Justine Carey and Holly McNaught, focused on the site's heterotopic/'other' qualities, as a place which is on yet off the grid. Through explorations of topographic form, edge condition, site qualities, maintenance and program, they interrogated the gap that might be composed between formal and informal space.







'Stitch up,' a proposal by Rob Egerton and Luke Shelton, examined and reimagined the city's streets as a public space type, questioning the design principles that have shaped the CBD's street and lanes over time and proposing a hybridization of street and market.

## endnotes

'messy compositions': framing the research question - Jen Lynch

<sup>1</sup> Deutsche, R 1999, Evictions: art and spatial politics, MIT Press, London, UK, p. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> Sennett, R 1991, The conscience of the eye: the design and social life of cities, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, NY.

<sup>3</sup> Koolhaas, R 2002, 'Junkspace', October, vol. Spring 2002, no. 100, pp. 175-190, p. 186.

#### the new civic [extract] - Kevin Taylor

<sup>1</sup> Emmett, P & Telfer, K 2011, The curated square in Victoria Square/ Tarndanyangga urban regeneration project design development report, unpublished.

<sup>2</sup> Emmett, P & Telfer, K 2011, The curated square in Victoria Square/ Tarndanyangga urban regeneration project design development report, unpublished, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Sennett, R 1990, The conscience of the eye: the design and social life of cities, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY., p. 202.

<sup>4</sup>Hajer, M & Reijndorp, A 2001, In search of new public domain, NAi Publishers, Rotterdam, Netherlands, p.13.

<sup>5</sup>Sennett, R 1990, The conscience of the eye: the design and social life of cities, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, p. 197.

<sup>6</sup>de Certeau, M 1984, The practice of everyday life, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, p. 96.

<sup>7</sup>Lee, G 2006, 'North Terrace,' Architecture Australia, vol. 95, no.2.

<sup>8</sup> Sennett, R 1990, The conscience of the eye: the design and social life of cities, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY., p. 157.

<sup>9</sup>Sennett, R 1990, The conscience of the eye: the design and social life of cities, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, NY, p. 196.

<sup>10</sup>Hajer, M & Reijndorp, A 2001, In search of new public domain, NAi Publishers, Rotterdam, Netherlands, p.129.

<sup>11</sup>Ware, S 2010, Making Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga, unpublished, p.1.

<sup>12</sup> Jones, R 2014, Truth itself is constructed: public space as public art, unpublished.

mapping friction in public space- Jen Lynch <sup>1</sup> Corner, J 1999, 'The agency of mapping: speculation, critique and invention' in D Cosgrove (ed), Mappings, Reaktion Books, London, UK, pp. 213-252, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> Corner, J 1999, 'The agency of mapping: speculation, critique and invention' in D Cosgrove (ed), Mappings, Reaktion Books, London, UK, pp. 213-252, p. 230.

mapping and urban morphology- Perry Lethlean

<sup>1</sup> Gandelsonas, M 1991, The urban text, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA.

# image credits

Auckland Waterfront - North Wharf Promenade and Silo Park: LWF p.6, Jonny Davis p.7 (top), Jon Baxter & Paul Mackenzie p.7 (bottom left and middle), Jon Baxter & Paul Mackenzie (bottom right), Simon Devitt p.17.

Victoria Square/Tarntanyannga: John Gollings p.8 (top, bottom left, bottom middle) p.8 (bottom right), Kate Cullity p.9.

Monash University 'Caulfield Campus Green': Andrew Lloyd p.10, Andrew Lloyd p.11 (top), John Gollings p.11 (bottom).

Henley Square: Sam Noonan p.12, TCL p.13.

Queen Victoria Market: Justine Carey p.18.

North Terrace: Grant Hancock p.21, John Gollings p.36, Andy Rasheed p.37.

RMIT: Ash Keating p.34 Dianna Snape p.38 (top), Lucas Dean p.38 (bottom left & right).

# student contributors

RMIT upper pool studio 2015 'messy compositions'

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