

M. ARCH
(Dissertation)

**EXPLORING MURAL ART AS A CATALYST FOR INDIGENT EMPOWERMENT, URBAN
REVITALISATION AND A MEANINGFUL ARCHITECTURE:**

A proposed Community Art and Assistance Centre for the indigent in Durban, KZN

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March, 2014

“Imagine a city where graffiti [*mural art*] wasn’t illegal, a city where everybody could draw whatever they liked. Where every street was awash with a million colours and little phrases. Where standing at a bus stop was never boring. A city that felt like a party where everyone is invited, not just the estate agents and barons of big business. Imagine a city like that...”

[Banksy]

“Murals are freeing ordinary people from ways of seeing that are not their own and helping them take control of their perceptions, which is necessary to them taking charge of their own lives,”

[Barnett, 1984; 15]

“Research on the social role of Street Art, Mural Art and Graffiti has revealed that many people believe that the most important role played by art is its power to communicate. A powerful artwork potentially creates a dialogue between the artist and the audience.”

[Dewey in Mattern, 1999]

DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture, in the Graduate Programme in Architecture, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Durban, South Africa

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. I confirm that an external editor was not used. It is being submitted for the degree of Master in Architecture in the faculty of Humanities, within the School of Built Environment & Development Studies, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Durban, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

ERASMUS SIPHELELE MSELEKU

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people who have played a pivotal role in the actualisation of this dissertation and convey my sincerest thanks to:

- First & foremost, thank the Lord for his many blessings, I am truly grateful.
- Juan Ignacio Solis-Arias my dissertation supervisor - for his great faith, guidance, encouragement and patience throughout the process of writing this document.
- Stefano Vatteroni my previous employer, friend and personal mentor. I owe my vast growth within Architecture to you. You took me in under your wings and from there my journey would change for the better. Your faith and confidence in me has made me the designer I am today, I will always remember that.
- The dedicated Barry Bierman Library Staff, who have always been extremely helpful with any books, queries I needed since my 1st year of study in 2007.
- To my late father and my forever encouraging mother for the support and love you've given me with any decision I've made (except the decision to constantly party). You have made me the ambitious, friendly, enthusiastic and loving person I am today and without you none of this would be possible (true story). As well as my siblings Khetho, Xolani & Samke.
- David Field and family, along with Capita. When one speaks of 'angels on earth', without doubt you have been that for me. With your assistance you have allowed me to pursue my passion and dream and there is no greater gift. I will forever be thankful of your kind-heartedness and support.
- Barnabus, my G-squat who introduced me to the wonderful world of graffiti art, this is for both of us. A 'chom' worthy of being called my best friend. The longest friendship that has been full of ups and downs but we've stuck through each other's good and bad times.
- My top members: Barnabus, Dre, Rosh, HashBash, Dax, Mushroom Mick - You are all troopers and your constant assistance and support will forever be remembered and appreciated, like you cannot believe, seriously!
- My UKZN Archi-family that has grown and grown over the years, thank you for the memories and the amazing studio culture, architectural dialogue, 'awkward moments' and inspiration, these 5 years were beyond fresh!
- My future wife, *insert name here* followed by *insert sweet message here*
- And finally, to the special peeps in moments involving: FIFA, jiggies, bingers, "tekkie-squeeking", fist pumping, laughing out loud, and just being plain thundercats, one love.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the late Herbert Bheki Mseleku. A great father, role model and best friend who dedicated his life to providing for and protecting his family. Your strong personality, amazing work ethic, focus and determination to always pull through no matter what difficulty are admirable characteristics which I will always take with me. There isn't a day that goes by where I wish you weren't still with us but I know that you looking down over us. Thank you for moulding me into the 'man' I am today, I am and will always be proud to be your son.

ABSTRACT

Art for centuries has been a medium or a means for humans to communicate their views of the world and how we see ourselves in it. It is significant in the development of a society through the narratives we gain from the experience of observing it. However, art which aims to be a subject of the people can often neglect to truly reflect this in the manner it represents itself, or rather in which spaces it represents itself. The notion of 'art galleries' and 'art museums' strips art from connecting to the masses, giving it a sense of prestige and an elitist status, not addressing the man on the street, who himself has many narratives that require expression. This can then misinterpret the role and significance art has within society. Nevertheless, street art has become the connection between the man on the street and society who move past it on their paths to their destination. *Mural art* within the street and urban environment therefore represents the paintings one would see within a gallery. *Mural art* is especially significant in South Africa's urban streetscape, where the streets are now the platforms for mass education and cultural memory of the many diverse unheard narratives of those who occupy our cities. ***"Murals play a pivotal and vastly underestimated role in South Africa's process of reinventing itself and redefining its identity as a multi-cultural, peaceful, and democratic society"***. (Marschall. 2002)

The purpose of this research is to then take this further, it aims to explore how *mural art* can be investigated and utilised as a social mechanism to empower the indigent community of Durban, whilst simultaneously creating more vibrant urban and built environments. Three social theories are identified within the research which will be coherent in understanding the basis of the dissertation, they are; '*perception*', '*empowerment*' and '*representation*' theory. These key theories will be investigated to generate the relevant literature to review, which is a key component of the dissertation, furthermore this review will inform the relevant precedent and case studies that will be critically analysed. From these theories, a key architectural theory is identified to connect the literature and the architectural intervention that shall be proposed. This is '*critical regionalism*' and the understanding of this is pivotal in the research's aim to generate a meaningful architecture that is of the place and its people.

This dissertation will create an understanding of the indigent community and the circumstances that have led to these individuals experiencing their hardships. This shall then investigate how *mural art* can be used to empower these individuals by giving them a 'voice' and allowing them to positively contribute to the urban environment through this subject. The gathered information of this research document will then determine a relevant response and appropriate architecture for the design of a Community Art and Assistance Centre for the indigent in Durban, South Africa.

PART ONE

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH TOPIC

1.1.1 Background

South Africa has a rich history of mural art which first emerged with the ancient San tribe and the painting of various patterns on their rock shelter. The word mural is derived from the Latin word *murus* meaning “wall”. The term mural art is defined in the broader sense as a form of visual art painted or mounted onto a wall (figure 1.1), including mosaics (figure 1.2), paintings on cardboard or relief panels carved or cast in various materials (Marschall, 2002). For the purpose of this research, the focus will be narrowed to paintings executed directly on a wall. (figure 1.3) This can be often



Figure 1.1: Painted mural art by Faith47 (source: about-mark-price.com)



Figure 1.2: Mosaic Art on Moyo in Melrose Arch, Johannesburg (source: photo by author; 2009) | Figure 1.3: Artist painting mural of Mogambo of Hindu cinema. (source: grafittialbum.com)

mistaken as ‘graffiti art’ which is a similar principle and expressed on similar platform. With regards to this dissertation, these two will be both investigated and portrayed in the same definition. Mural art in recent times within South Africa has often referred to community driven and based projects often initiated by local city councils, with it being expressed in the streets in mainly our urban environments. Mural art is unlike most other art platforms, it aims to question the existing environment through what it perceives to be its own language. The work aims to communicate with people on a daily basis and often reflects social themes which are relevant for a specific time.

The significance of mural art in South Africa began with the emergence of vast community murals within urban areas which began in the early 1990’s. This would in turn bring about high visibility and popularity

for the medium. This is associated with the dramatic changes which took place in South Africa's socio-political landscape, during the country's transformation period which saw the highly repressive state move towards being one of the most liberal societies (Marschall, 2002). Murals play a pivotal and vastly underestimated role in South Africa's process of reinventing itself and redefining its identity as a multicultural, peaceful and democratic society. Mural art serves diverse purposes such as upliftment, education, job creation and skills development to cultural expression. This art form possesses qualities that represent differences in style, motivation, purpose, symbolism and meaning.

Mural art, like most forms of art, can be perceived in many different ways and its interpretation is often down to the individual. Mural art has for many years been a means of creating social discussion and often through various mediums and concepts, has led to much social commentary. Mural art crosses all cultural, racial, gender and class boundaries which makes it key in our growth as an individual. Its role in society and cultural identification over the years has changed and its involvement in our everyday lives more acknowledged. Like all other forms of art, it should have meaning and must create a specific emotional link between artist and audience, one that "affects" the viewer (Tolstoy, 1897).

1.1.2 Justification of study

Art is widely appreciated and produced all over South Africa and what makes it significant is the unique and varying expression depicted in the art work due to the diverse culture and people. However unlike most other forms of art, mural art allows itself the opportunity to enrich and uplift a greater population of people due to its easy accessibility to the general public. In many cases, mural art has been utilised as a means to brighten the most 'dingiest' and dilapidated of urban spaces by adding colour to the lifeless and dark city spaces. One can then see and understand mural art as the purest form of artistic expression and an art form that in most cases is for the people. Mural art provides a sense of place and ownership and lays claim to public space, a factor that is crucial in understanding the art of mural painting in its specific South African context where the control of space has always been contested (Marschall, 2002).

For many years, art has been a means of self-expression by individuals who use their skill to create and craft art work. Mural art has the potential to be utilised for personal healing through the concept of self-expression and empowerment. With a country that sees many people without education and therefore unemployable, art skills training can be used as a possible solution to empower those who

are without education and are impoverished by teaching them the skills to create, express themselves in such a way that can positively contribute to our society.

Mural art, much like meaningful architecture aims to address not only our visual perception but also the emotive and expressional communication to the viewer. These are both significant in portraying society through their articulation and expression. Through expression in art and architecture, we understand the context, people and society in which they lived and experienced.

1.2 DEFINITION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.2.1 Issues inferred by research

South Africa is a developing country that is going through its transformation period. 19 years as a democratic nation and it still aims to heal the wounds left by the Apartheid government. Many individuals within the country suffer more so from this than others. A large percentage of South Africans live below the poverty line and have been crippled immensely by past Apartheid laws. These would eventually prohibit them from being able to appreciate the basic human needs and life qualities that we should all share. This also stems from the high unemployment rate of 24.9% which is recorded from the 4th quarter of 2012. (www.statssa.gov.za) The ripple effect from the Apartheid government past laws sees many South Africans today who go through life without basic human needs such as food, water, shelter, clothing etc. This indigent community in our country should play a pivotal role in our daily life experiences as they too are part of this nation's development and should share its great potential. Mural art for years in South Africa has been seen as the art that gives those without a voice the means of self-expression and empowerment, it is an art of and for the people. Most mural art portrays strong visuals which often aim to create discussion and illustrate the cultural climate and political commentary of our everyday lives (Gleaton, 2012). However due to its many different aspects and possible perceptions, while mural art is well-regarded as an art form to some, it is often seen as an unwanted nuisance by others (Hughes, 2009). Therefore mural art is left to the interpretation of the individual and due to everyone's unique perception, people all understand it in their own way.

What this research will then seek to find is how mural art influences and contributes to the built environment and our urban settlements through the reformation of the indigent community. Society often perceives mural art and the indigent negatively, yet the indigent have a voice and a story to tell so this research seeks to promote this voice.

1.2.2 Aims

The research paper will seek to investigate how the representation and perception of mural art can positively contribute to the reformation and empowerment of the indigent and generate a meaningful architecture that responds to its people, context, time and cultural expression.

1.2.3 Objectives

- To explore how mural art influences the built environment.
- To understand how mural art can play a crucial role in indigent reformation through empowerment.
- To analyse the impact and effect mural art plays in societal perception.

1.3 DELINEATING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.3.1 Delimitation of Research Problem

The research primarily deals with the investigation of mural art and how this may influence cultures, society's perception and the built environment. The key research shall engage with the issue of the communication of mural art within society and how this can (a) influence and positively impact on the empowerment of the indigent and (b) this can therefore be articulated within the built environment. The information gathered will give direction to the possible solution and intervention of an appropriate architecture.

The research paper shall focus only on how mural art and its current and forever changing perception within society can influence the built form.

1.3.2 Definition of Terms

Indigent: a person who is without basic human needs nor the ability to provide such necessities as food, clothing, adequate shelter. In this paper, this shall deal with the indigent in their youth who have been abandoned or having lost a supportive family structure and seek life in the urban environment.

Empowerment: a process of transition from a state of powerlessness to a state of relative control over one's life destiny, and environment.

Revitalisation: bringing again into activity and prominence to the urban environment and spirit of place.

Meaningful: in the context of this dissertation, this is defined as having a serious, important, or useful quality or purpose that surpasses the practical primary function of the built environment or mural art

Community: a social group sharing common characteristics or interests and perceived or perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists, with regards to this dissertation, the indigent 'community'

Society: in this research refers to the collective structure between a place and its entire people from all varying racial, cultural, religious, economic backgrounds

Perception: the act or faculty of apprehending by means of the senses or of the mind; cognition; understanding

Socio-political: of, pertaining to, or signifying the combination or interaction of social and political factors that were to be revised with the new democratic government in South Africa

Graffiti: visual art painted or mounted onto a wall often in public spaces, including mosaics, that aims to express a significant message and communicate with the broader user (society)

1.3.3 Stating the assumption

Assumption can be made that mural art could have an influence on the built environment. Assumptions can be made that due to the expressiveness of mural art itself, the building should be of an appropriate typology that communicates this. With mural art being diverse and breaching all various types of people, an assumption can be made that the facilities need to create a sense of self interpretation and also create platforms for social commentary to be explored.

1.3.4 Stating key questions

1.3.4.1 Primary question

- How can mural art play a crucial role in indigent reformation and empowerment?

1.3.4.2 Secondary questions

- What is the perception of mural art within indigent community and greater public?
- How can mural art contribute to a meaningful architecture?

- How can mural art be utilised to empower and educate the impoverished and indigent?
- How can mural art play a role in connecting the indigent community back to society?

1.3.5 Hypothesis

To determine a meaningful architecture that will facilitate indigent reformation and empowerment through the acknowledgement and understanding of mural art. Mural art has the potential to contribute positively to the development of culture and society through the representation and perception by individuals and due to its exposure on a public scale.

1.4 KEY CONCEPTS AND THEORIES

“The reason for man’s living is to express. And art is his medium” – Louis Kahn

1.4.1 Introduction to key concepts

This dissertation will examine three key concepts which are critical to understanding the research topic and questions. The breakdown of these shall correspond with the theories explored later in the literature review component. These concepts are: *mural art, indigent empowerment and meaningful architecture*.

1.4.1.1 Mural Art

As discussed in the dissertation thus far, mural art is highly significant to not only South Africa but Durban’s urban streetscape and provided a sense of identity in prominent sites within the city. Even though mural art may have symbolic meaning, it is up to the individual to analyse and perceive this. Through investigation of the theory of perception, this shall seek to find means of how and why humans visually and emotionally perceive things the way they do and how this influences their understanding of mural art.

1.4.1.2 Indigent Empowerment

The indigent community are members in society who often don’t share and experience the same opportunities as everyone else. Their standard of living are restricted due to their lack of basic human needs that have been brought about due to various circumstances that will be elaborated further in the literature review. This dissertation will explore how the indigent shall break from these shackles caused

by the various situations through the investigation of the theory of empowerment. Empowering these individuals could be a means in giving them a voice that reconnects them back to society.

1.4.1.3 Meaningful Architecture

It can be argued that Architecture should serve a far greater purpose than fulfilling function and program but also be a tool that can aid in the improvement of the greater community and society as a whole. It is significant to existence of man as the built environment is the platform to which humans share and experience the majority of their life involvements. Architecture can be seen as a symbol of society, culture and the people it serves. Through the investigation of the theory of representation, critical regionalism and place theory, this shall seek to find how architecture can then be represented as 'the symbol' that signifies and connects man to its various life experiences.

1.4.2 Introduction to key social theories

This dissertation will examine three key theories which are critical to understanding the role that mural art plays in indigent reformation and architecture. These are: *perception*, *empowerment* and *representation*. These three theories are to be investigated and understood so to relate them back to the key concepts and ultimately the key questions.

1.4.2.1 Theory of Perception

Perception can be defined as “the set of psychological processes by which people recognize, organize, synthesize, and give meaning (in the brain) to the sensations received from environmental stimuli (in the sense organs)” (Sternberg, 2003: 534). Perception plays a crucial part in the psychology of human life and how we see and experience it. Perception is part of our sensory experience and it involves our recognition of environmental stimuli and how we respond in our actions to these stimuli. The perceptual process allows us to gain key information about properties and elements of our environment that are crucial to our survival as humans (McLeod, 2007). Perception involves all senses; sight, touch, hear, smell and taste experiences.

The theory of perception can play a large role in the significance and understanding of mural art and architecture. The research by various theorists has been extended to research in areas such as thinking, memory, and the nature of aesthetics. These are elements that mural art and the architectural

environment should aim to evoke within the experience of the observer. Architecture and the built form is more than merely spaces for people to occupy but should respond to and use cultural values to promote a better sense of identity with a place and the architecture must further symbolize the framework of contemporary cultures and lifestyles (Frampton, 1995). Mural art, like all art forms requires understanding that stems from ones perception of what they see. We as individuals being different will perceive it in your own way, reading a far differing narrative to the next person. This is therefore a symbol of self-interpretation by each individual. Perception of mural art therefore has the ability to communicate varying narratives to greater society, giving the artist or 'storytellers' a sense of empowerment, as they stories are heard and distributed.

1.4.2.2 Theory of empowerment

In South Africa, like many other developing nations, laws, institutions, and policies governing economic and social interactions do not afford equal opportunity and protection to a large segment of the population, who in this dissertation are categorized as the indigent. They make up the 'disadvantaged' group of a country. Majority if not all countries have laws that aim to protect and uphold the rights of the indigent, however in most cases these are far too ambiguous, cumbersome and costly for them to access (Ki-moon, 2009). In many developing countries across the globe, the poor are promised the protection and assistance of the states in which they 'reside' but constantly have to worry about the conditions of the 'slum' in which they live or about the bribes they must pay for inadequate or lack of general social services which they are entitled to receive free of charge. The way we live our lives can be defined as a 'system', in the case of the indigent community, it can be argued that this system works against them and the only means these individuals survive and counter this is through is by adapting the formal structure in which general society constructs with the use of informal structural innovation that can at times prove far more effective.

The theory of empowerment is a process that can be used to assist these individuals, giving them the support that is currently lacking in their 'system'. Empowerment as defined earlier is a process of transition from a state of powerlessness to a state of relative control over one's life destiny, and environment. Empowerment is a construct that links individual strengths and competencies, natural helping systems, and proactive behaviours to social policy and social change (Rappaport, 1981, 1984). This can then be described as a means of transformation or transition from a state of powerlessness to a state of more control over one's life, fate, and environment. Sadan defines the theory of empowerment as wanting to make a place for itself among those new social theories that are

attempting to connect the personal and the social, the individual and society, the micro and the macro (Sadan, 2009). The empowerment theory promotes the adaptation of the three dimensions which are identified in our social conditions which play a pivotal role in bringing about a change in (1) people's feelings and capacities, (2) the structure of the collective that they exist within, (3) and lastly the professional practice that gets involved in the situation. These are three variables which are to change in order for empowerment to succeed are interrelated processes that deal with several other factors. Theories of empowerment will therefore include both processes and outcomes, suggesting that actions, activities, or structures may be empowering, and that the outcome of such processes result in a level of being empowered (Swift & Levin, 1987). Empowerment is often constructed on the intentional on-going process focussed around a community-based philosophy where the idea of mutual respect is crucial, as well as a critical reflection of oneself and others, caring and participation of all those involved, with those who lack an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources" (Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989).

The theory of empowerment aims to break the circle of vicious social problems that occur amongst the disadvantaged group which are difficult to resolve. These individuals suffer and are harmed not only because they are neglected and apathetic, but because of the attention from outside communities and the lack of basic social services. On the threshold of the 21st century it is becoming clear that groups suffer from powerlessness not only because of indifference, cruelty and a shortage of resources in the impoverished parts of the world, but also because of humanly degrading social solutions in the ostensibly enlightened portions of democratic society (Sadan, 2009). Empowerment is grounded upon the knowledge of human rights based approach to development, which acknowledges that poverty results from disempowerment, exclusion and discrimination. With the main source of powerlessness being rooted in social processes in which large populations are disempowered, the theory of empowerment promotes the influential process of the oppressed human agency and the social structure within the limitations and possibilities in which this human agency exists and reacts. Thus empowerment with the concept of using art as a generator fosters development through empowering and strengthening the voices of individuals and communities, starting at the grassroots and from within.

Mural art, more so than any other genre within the visual arts practice in South Africa, expressed and reflected the joy and liberating spirit of the time during a period of transformation and a country which aims to promote its cultural expression. "The mere process of painting was a liberating act." (Chandler, 1996) The indigent, like everyone else deserve a voice and representation and this research aims to create a platform to which they can learn how to express themselves while at the same time learning

skills and being educated on key issues of South Africa, where it was and where it intends to go, allowing them to play a role in the transformation of society and culture.

1.4.2.3 Theory of Representation

The theory of representation is to use symbols or signs that stand in for or that take the place of something else. It is through representation that people organize the world and reality through the act of naming its elements (Mitchell, 1995). Many philosophers have regarded man as the “representational animal”, Aristotle for instance considered that all the various modes of representation from verbal, visual, or even as far as musical were all natural to human beings and thus this was one of the elements that distinguished man from animals, the pure ability to create and manipulate signs. (Mitchell. 1990) Plato, different to Aristotle, he was more cautious in his interpretation. He perceived literature as a representation of life but at the same time, it was these representations that created worlds of illusions leading one away from the “real things” (Hall, 1997). Plato described the theory of representation to be quite similar to that of contemporary media, it intervened between the user and the real, creating a sense of illusion that would seemingly separate its connection to the “real things”. The theory of representation often played a key role in the understanding of literature, aesthetics such as art and semiotics (signs).

Aristotle describes how humans from a young age have an instinct for representation and how we are more imitative and learn our first lessons through interpreting and imitating things. He also defines representation in three ways: **The object** (*the symbol being represented*), **the manner** (*the way the symbol is represented*) and **the means** (*the material that is used to represent it*). The most crucial aspect of representation lies in the relationship between the material and what represents it. In the history of human culture, it is noticeable that people have continued to become dissatisfied with languages ability to express reality and due to that, new modes of representation were developed. There was a need for new ways to construct reality due to the knowledge of reality being through representation and thus arose the contrasting and alternative representational modes of abstraction, realism and modernism, amongst many others.

In the era of modernity, it was Plato’s cautious perception of representation that was to create a sense of political and ideological issue awareness. Mitchell in his writings describes how it is almost impossible to disconnect or ‘divorce’ representations from culture and society that produces them.

There is a process of communication and message sending and receiving when it comes to representation which then leads to the possibility of misinterpretation.

This theory of representation can be related to both mural art and the built environment. Architecture in essence, is a symbol that communicates to the viewer's sense of that place, the period it was designed and built, and the people and the context it serves. Buildings however represent much more than practical and functional space for the immediate users, but have identity, cultural and symbolic characteristics. Within mural art, the idea that is visualised is then physically portrayed, therefore translating the representation of an idea.

1.4.3 Introduction to key architectural theories

Along with the social theories, this dissertation will examine the architectural theory of *critical regionalism*. This shall be the most paramount of the theories as this connects the three key concepts to ultimately define an appropriate intervention that responds to the hypothesis.

1.4.3.1 Critical regionalism

“The fundamental strategy of Critical Regionalism is to mediate the impact of universal civilization with elements derived indirectly from the peculiarities of a given place. Critical Regionalism depends upon maintaining a high level of critical self-consciousness. It may find its governing inspiration in such things as the range and quality of the local light, or in the tectonic derived from a peculiar structural mode, or in the topography of a given site.” (Frampton, 2002: 82)

Architecture can be portrayed as the most physical narrative of a place and its occupants. Critical regionalism takes cognisance of this, utilising principles that allow the built form to reflect a far better connection to its place. Critical regionalism can be defined as architecture that is conscious of its surrounding and the building then respond to this. Many theorists such as Frampton and Lefebvre have written extensively on this concept but it is Zumthor who best defines this, saying, “every building is built for a specific use, in a specific place and for a specific society.” (Zumthor, 2010: 27) When in the urban environment and the building is of an urban scale, catering for a vast public interface, it can be argued that it is this notion of critical regionalism that allows the building to be stitched far better into its context. This in turn will have a building that communicate and connects far better with its varying users. With the ever impacting globalisation, it is critical regionalism that expresses true local identity.

This being backed by Lefraivre who argues that architecture should be approached using bottom-up rather than top-down. This would mean that architecture should be impacted highly by physical, social and cultural identity. This is something that an architecture catering towards a target group such as the indigent community of a city should aim to consider. Critical regionalism stems from exploring other concepts such as genius loci and various other place theories, which explores man's need to permeate places with qualities that go beyond the practical and immediate necessities (Crowe, 1995: 73). In this research, this connection between critical regionalism and place shall be key and further explored in the literature review.

1.4.4 Summary

The theoretical framework will aim to connect the key concepts with the key social theories, with the architectural theory being the main link that ties all these. This framework will aim to be an indicator for identifying an appropriate architectural typology and intervention. These are significant to the research when creating a meaningful architecture within a South African context. The conceptual and theoretical framework becomes the indicator and break down of the dissertation's literature review.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

The research findings documented will provide the foundation for the creation of a conceptually strong, effective and efficient design. All of the research, whether it be primary or secondary, was conducted in order to provide answers for the aforementioned research questions, all of which are asked in an attempt to provide a clear framework within which the proposed building will be designed.

1.5.1 Research Methods

Research and extensive analysis of varying information has been gathered in order for one to increase the understanding of the research problem and its subsequent issues. The research contained in this document is gathered systematically and the methods used in the process of collecting the research data incorporate the empirical method and qualitative research methods. These have been achieved by means of analytical and descriptive methods such as historical research, philosophical research, reviews, research synthesis, interviews, and case studies. The literature review will be considered key research as the findings from the review begin to inform the necessary precedent studies, case studies, to investigate, as well as the appropriate interview questions and questionnaires that will be carried out with relevant individuals/organizations.

Primary Sources:

Primary research shall be conducted by the author. The data gathered shall be analysed and conclusions will be formulated from this to outline the main problem statement of this dissertation. There shall be various research methods used in order to accumulate and formulate data for the analysis of the proposed architectural intervention. Due to the content of the research, the aim of the research methods is to have an equal amount of physical and virtual (email) data captured, by focused interviews, case studies and questionnaires. The primary research conducted shall form part of the quantitative data obtained by visiting the relevant case studies with questionnaires.

Focused interviews: There shall be various interviews carried out either in person or telephonically. The interviews will aim to get a better understanding of the lives of some of the indigent and their take on what initiatives could be undertaken for them to be more included in the city. These will not be carried out as formal interviews but rather casual discussions. It will be critical to gather more information on mural art in Durban so an interview with key member of the Community Mural Projects who shall be conducted. See Appendix C for typical questions to be asked.

Ilse Mikula. Community Mural Projects. Durban, South Africa

Community Mural Projects was founded around 1990 by Durban artist Terry-Anne Stevenson and Thami Jali, who was significant in initiating community mural art after his travels to London. Ilse Mikula was to join the duo shortly after the inception of the organization. This organization began during the time of political transformation within South Africa. The organization aimed to create art that spoke of the people and place, illustrating their narratives through their work. They are commonly known for highly published works such as the Human Rights Wall on the old prison site which stills remains as a historical backdrop to the International Convention Centre in Durban, the façade of the Bartel Arts Trust (BAT) Centre and Nomkhubulwana in Warwick Avenue.

Case studies: The study of buildings within the same typology or in a similar socio-political, climatic or geographic setting is crucial in order to achieve a full understanding of the requirements and necessary approach essential to provide solutions to the variety of design challenges. In order to select the appropriate buildings it is vital to outline a specific rubric of strictures. The buildings selected will be local projects that express a key consideration of context, place, time and social aspects. It is from these parameters that the selected studies will be critically analysed and compared and it is out of these findings that conclusions have been drawn. Conclusions which will inform the design of an appropriate architecture.

Case Study 01: Drill Hall (Jhb) – Michael Hart Architects

Case Study 02: Arts on Main (Maboneng Precinct, Jhb) – Daffonchio and Associates

Case Study 03: Bartel Arts Trust (BAT) Centre (Wilson's Wharf, Durban Harbour) – Architects Collaborative CC

Questionnaire: A questionnaire will be compiled as a data gathering exercise which aims to strengthen the case studies and gather information from the general public to understand their perception of both mural art and the indigent community in South Africa and how architecture can be used to address these issues. Do to the project seeking to reconnect the indigent community to society, it was pivotal to gather information from people of varying genders, race, religious and cultural backgrounds as this would allow for one to get a broader opinion on the subjects.

Appendix A: Questionnaire (general public) – Will be attached to the research document

Secondary Sources:

Along with the primary research, extensive secondary shall be conducted by the author. This is the largest component of the dissertation and the information shall be gathered by examining various media. The empirical studies gained from the above resources will form part of the literature review chapter whereby the author will construct a series of arguments for and against the problem statement. Therefore the information collected will be tested by the primary sources and data analysis. These will deal with key topics and questions, which will relate to the research problem and precedent studies. The information will be gathered by reviewing books, journal articles, and academic papers written by various authors; video / movies, television broadcasts and the World Wide Web; raw data from precedent and case studies, interviews etc. The analysis and data will be gathered to determine a construction of a conceptual and theoretical framework for an appropriate architectural intervention.

Literature review: Through the exploration of the literature review, through a general understanding and consensus of architectural environments and the perception of mural art, these two relationships will be critically analysed. This will provide an architectural understanding for both the form and facilities required.

The secondary data sources will include various published materials namely books, journal articles and internet pages. In addition non-published items, such as other theses, design and construction drawings may also be analysed.

Precedent Studies: A major section of the qualitative research conducted will investigate existing international precedent architectural projects. The appropriate aspects of the following designs will be examined through an analysis of published journals, books, photos and written descriptions.

Precedent Study 01: The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre (Texas, USA) – Overland Partners

Precedent Study 02: Logan Centre for the Arts (Chicago, USA) – Tod Williams and Billie Tsien Architects joint venture with Holabird & Root

1.6 CONCLUSION

The basis of this introductory chapter was to introduce a distinct structure on the background, motivation/ justification of the study, aims and objectives that will be addressed in the dissertation. As well as stating the assumptions, a hypothesis and key questions for the study and creating a break-down of each of the chapters. Each of these chapter break-downs includes a brief explanation of literature that will be investigated. Finally the various concepts/theories and research methods have also been defined. In the following section the review of various literature that is pertinent to the dissertation topic, concepts and theories, as well as key questions shall be investigated.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This chapter of this research shall be a review and investigation into literature pertaining to the main research topic and questions. There shall be several sources of the literature study such as various relevant dissertations, published articles in books and journals dealing with the importance of mural art in society and how this has a close connection with the built environment; with particular emphasis on local (South Africa) mural art past and current context, as well as the study areas historical development to the present day. The research of the literature aims to bridge a number of academic disciplines, from architecture and design to sociology and psychology, and will ultimately aim to inform an appropriate architectural typology and develop indicators as to relevant theories, precedents and case studies to investigate. These identified points will generate the appropriate architectural/urban design intervention in Durban.

The works of accomplished authors/theorist such as Juhani Pallasmaa, Dr Sabine Marschall, Christian Norberg-Schulz amongst other key theorist shall be investigated to give the research dissertation a stronger theoretical framework and grounding.

2.2. MURAL ART AND ITS CONNECTION TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

2.2.1 Introduction

This segment of the literature will seek to understand the perception of mural art both globally and locally through the findings of Dr Sabine Marschall. She is an Art Historian that has done extensive research into community art murals, especially the dominance in Durban's urban streetscape. Mural art in most cases is displayed on buildings and can add character to old walls with no impact on their surroundings. This chapter will explore the connection that mural art has had with the city's built environment.

2.2.2 Defining the role of mural Art

Mural art is a form of the visual arts and is expressed in the most public domain, in our streets and often in urban environments. It is a relatively cheap form of art and these murals serve a variety of purposes such as upliftment, education, skills development, job creation and cultural expression. Through the process and production of mural art, this will create a sense of ownership and place, whilst also allowing for local identity to be created through the art. Mural art in most international city centres is a phenomenon that began to initially flourish in the period of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and this

was usually as part of broader social upheavals and civil rights movements, a means to express key issues during that period. These murals were initiated by minority groups often living in desolate neighbourhoods and usually carried a message of social protest (Barnett, 1984: 55).

In South Africa, mural art became highly significant in the way community narratives were expressed and how people would understand the stories of the struggle during the former Apartheid era. Durban however, emerged as the city in which the mural art form would thrive. Mural art in Durban slowly developed in small scale before the early 1990's and was mainly through initiatives by lecturers and students from the Fine Arts Department at the school of Natal Technikon. The now thriving Mural art movement in Durban which involves the participation of a diverse, multicultural group of muralists, which is mostly a combination of academically trained artists along with self-taught and completely untrained participants, began only around 1990. This has seen a number of community art centres of various types developing and increasing in numbers dramatically over a period of about ten years since the 1990's. This was to be an attempt at providing an alternative art education programme which would be accessible to all people. This stance would also be a system of reaching out into previously disadvantaged communities (Marschall, 1999; 56).

The most significant and established mural company in Durban today is 'Community Mural Projects' (figure 2.1) which was founded around 1990 by the socially committed and academically trained artists, Terry-anne Stevenson and Ilse Mikula, and the more informally trained Durban artist Thami Jali, who initiated the idea of community mural art following a trip to London. The group was formed after Ilse Mikula partnered with Terry-Anne Stevenson and Thami Jali to do a project at a Health Care Centre in Valley of a Thousand Hills in the upper highway area of Durban. This was in a rural area and the mural art brought colour and vibrancy to a place that



Figure 2.1: Community Mural Projects painting the "Nomkhulwana" mural in Durban's Warwick Triangle (source: ilsemikula.prosite.com)

needed upliftment. The project was a success and soon thereafter they formally established the Community Mural Project. Their most recognizable and significant project which was their first project in the city would be the 'Human Rights Wall' (figure 2.2) on the former prison wall in 1992. This site today is where Durban's International Conference Centre is situated and this wall creates a reminder to our rights as individuals within this developing country.



Figure 2.2: The Human Rights Wall in Durban by Community Mural Projects painted in 1992 (source: www.msu.edu)

Murals however are not seen in the same light as other forms of visual art, these are nearly always presented as a popular, community-driven reaction against the elitist, exclusive, and academic character of the 'fine art' tradition sponsored by state institutions and the official art establishment (Marschall, 1999; 58). During the apartheid regime, the community arts movement was closely linked to the broader cultural opposition front, which therefore made itself identifiable with the wider political 'struggle' (van Robbroeck, 1991; 2). However the relationship between 'community arts' and 'state-arts' has become much more complex in more recent times in South Africa. Several art institutions across South Africa have made an effort to accommodate the needs of the previously disadvantaged and impoverished individuals by revising their policies and curricula, these then established community outreach programmes, some of which would include mural painting. Mural art slowly began receiving

attention and gaining popularity. This was reflected by the majority of newspaper articles, reviews, interviews, TV broadcasts and other forms of public response. Community murals have gained a reputable status as a means of authentic cultural self-expression in a re-defined art world (Marschall, 1999; 59).



Figure 2.3: 'Darfur is dying' mural in Johannesburg was painted by a collaboration of "graffiti" artist from across South Africa for the Gift of the Givers organisation (source: raakwys.file.wordpress.com)

Mural art can be perceived as a catalytic approach which initiates social or even political change by creating public awareness (figure 2.3), providing a social critique, asserting a community's identity, fostering team spirit, and sometimes encouraging action (Marschall, 1999; 60). When the organisation and concept of a mural art project is well implemented, these have the potential to positively transform an environment. This then allows those who inhabit the space an opportunity to reclaim that environment and thus establish an identity with it. One of the main positives regarding mural art and its involvement in impoverished communities, is that it gives individuals a sense of purpose, people are able to channel their energy into the right direction and abstain from violence and 'counterproductive activities' that arise from living in poverty stricken environments. "Murals are freeing ordinary people from ways of seeing that are not their own and helping them take control of their perceptions, which is necessary to their taking charge of their own lives," enthusiastically claimed by Barnett (1984; 15).

Mural art can be a catalyst for empowering individuals, it has the potential to provide some of the artists with the opportunity of improving their skills, learn new artistic techniques, expand their scope of experience as an artist and learn about the various organisational issues that mural painting entails. All this which give them the understanding of how to one day co-ordinate their own project if they wish to. Community mural art is often funded by one or several sponsoring organisations or businesses, which then can be seen as potentially providing economical empowering to the artist as these will provide employment and financial remuneration to the participating artists. Long-term economic empowerment can be achieved by artists who have been successful in initiating and co-ordinating their own mural projects, creating jobs for themselves and others. Mural artists may also benefit through participation in

mural painting by having the opportunity for self-expression and personal growth. The concept behind Community Mural Projects is to create an opportunity for individuals, some of whom have experience in painting and others who haven't, who paint pictures of their hopes and dreams and just to have free expression (Smart, 1997; 65).

Most visual art is perceived as being elitist and belonging only in white washed walls of art galleries. Mural art is often large, in public spaces where it receives more exposure and in most cases is displayed for years. Therefore it can be argued that mural paintings hold far greater weight than well refined oil paintings displayed in art galleries. Mural art however can be seen as opposing the preconceived notion of art and aims to bring art to the streets which allows for a much wider audience to experience its quality and in most cases get the 'audience' themselves to participate in its making. The creation of a broader awareness of art among people who have never had much exposure to it is one of the most important aspects of mural painting (Smart, 1997; 69). How people see and respond to murals goes down to specific variables. These variables will most likely depend firstly on where the mural is located which will then determine who the predominant target audience is. Secondly and perhaps more importantly, what is being represented and how it is represented by the mural.

2.2.3 Application of the theory of perception in mural art

Although most mural art is purely pictures and images, it often challenges the dominant society or presents detoured elements in a way that challenges a viewers' perception of life (Saydak, 2011). Perception as defined earlier in the introductory chapter is the processes in which we as humans translate and understand sensory impressions into a comprehensible and unified view of the world around us. Perception then allows this translation to be further interpreted by the individual, using various processes such as recollection of past experiences to connect what they see to them (Gregory, 1970). This is how we then understand how objects or situations can have a 'negative' or 'positive' perception. Norberg-Schulz believes that above all, it is an individual's attitude that greatly affects their perception. He argues that our attitude is determined by the situation we are experiencing, further saying, "*Perception is anything but a passive reception or impressions, if our attitude changes, then so does our experience.*" (Norberg-Schulz. 1965) This is critical in this research, as both mural art and the indigent community are often perceived in a negative manner, there is a need to create possibilities in which society's attitude can be altered on these subjects, thus allowing these to play a positive role in the development of society.

The segment explores three theories that affect the understanding of perception within mural art and how this further influences the built environment;

In the '**Gestalt theory of visual perception**', one can understand how mural art can be influenced or derived from the basis of the theory in which we comprehend objects that we see as a well-organised whole, instead of the separate components. Mural art comprises of several layers and parts that together express the singular message the work aims to communicate to the observer. This can be seen in the collage piece by Kobra on a high-rise building in Brasilia which consists of many parts that together make the face of famous Architect, Oscar Niemeyer (figure 2.4).

In '**Gregory's top-down theory of 1970**', the concept of his theory is based on the influence prior knowledge and previous life experiences have on how we are to perceive objects. Mural art itself is often a depiction of previous events or scenarios that will connect specific observers to this. This concept then further enhances the idea of mural art being utilised to capture and evoke ones memory. The '**Nomkhubulwana**' mural (figure 2.5) in Durban's buzzing Warwick Triangle precinct is a mural depicting the Zulu Goddess '**Nomkhubulwana**' embracing the people. The lower portion of the mural being smaller scenes of people selling fruit and merchandise, this allows those in the precinct to relate to this as they experience this activity in the precinct.



Figure 2.4: Mural collage of Oscar Niemeyer in Brasilia which was to honour the architect for his great contribution to the development of the state. (source: www.archdaily.com)



Figure 2.5: 'Nomkhubulwana' mural which is one of the most recognizable murals in Durban (source: [author, 2013](#))

In 'Gibson's bottom-up theory of 1966', he opposes Gregory's top-down theory, arguing that we already have significant information in the current environment that we are experiencing to know what is around us. Therefore perception is based on the 'what you see is what you get' notion. He argues that our surroundings hold more weight in perceiving objects than that of past experiences. Mural



Figure 2.6: "Our word is our weapon" which was in Langa, Cape Town and done by local artist Faith47 (source: artwallbreakers.com)

art can have a similar effect, its depiction can be direct and easy to interpret, with the idea of it making more sense to the masses. The simpler the piece, the more people it can reach out to. The work of Faith47 often has this approach, it is bold and depicts messages that aim to connect to viewers without any prior knowledge of the matter, as seen in her piece "Our word is our weapon" (figure 2.6).

By understanding the connection the theory of perception has with mural art, one can begin to establish how this will then further influence the built form. Perception is key to the development of society as this is often what causes the vast differences between people of varying communities and 'classes'. Mural art can be used to educate and change the perception of those who observe it, giving it great significance to man.

2.2.4 The integration of art in the built environment and its relevance to SA

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe once described Architecture as "frozen music". (Goethe. 1829) Through this profound statement, South African architect and writer Norman Eaton elaborated on this to give a better understanding and connection between art and architecture. For architecture to create a visual and emotional connection to its observer, it requires the "orchestration" of the combination of both function and beauty. (Eaton. 1960; 16) Another key component in the success of this "music" (architecture) is the understanding and inclusion of the arts which gives it the purpose of ultimate expression. Art and architecture therefore must become one inseparable entity. Some concerns Eaton reflects upon is how architecture often neglects its association with the different expressions of the arts within the architectural object, these then become disconnected self-contained add-ons that have no

reference to the structure itself, merely ornamental. Eaton believes that the relationship of the arts to architecture must be one of mutual sympathy, understanding and endeavour in which each contributes in its way to a main central theme (Eaton, 1960; 18).

The connection between mural art and architecture however can be witnessed throughout early civilisations. Humans have often had an instinctual desire to decorate their shelters as in the case of traditional Ndebele dwellings (figure 2.7). The significance of art in architecture is expressed in several ways. It can visually describe the function of the building; it can imbue a space with a spiritual quality; it can visually enlarge a space by creating an illusion; it can confer status; it can demonstrate wealth; it can convert a



Figure 2.7: A typical traditional Ndebele dwelling with vibrant mural art symbolic of the tribe painted on the homestead (source: quiltingbycelia.blogspot.com)

neutral space into one suited for a particular ritual; it can ascertain claims about a building's owner or users; it can establish links between cultures or attempt to recover values of the past; in short: art plays a vital role in shaping a building's identity (Marschall, 1999). Art and architecture have always been closely linked, as early as Art Nouveau movement between 1890-1914, the Arts and Craft movement between 1860-1910, as well as the Bauhaus movement initiated by modernists Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier. The the fundamental basis of Bauhaus movement was through the unity of the arts and that by celebrating the harmonious relationship between these various forms of art, this could positively contribute to society.

“The unity of the arts is not an abstract principle repeatedly flogged by the universities and a few aesthetes; it is a very real aspect of the battle to create a designed environment. If we are to play a significant role, as architects, in the exciting work of bringing into being the good life, we cannot remain removed from the mainstream of design. The pre-occupation of architects with their own field is stunting development; this insularity will result in isolation from current techniques and ultimately from current problems” (Lipman, 1961; 29).

Architecture and arts such as sculpture and painting were once closely related to one another, this was evident in the European Gothic, Baroque and Renaissance period. It is only in recent times that the

connection between these has been neglected (Woods, 2009). This can be due to the development of various other relationships that architecture has established with the field of science and technology, which divorced it from its artistic elements of expression, poetic, spiritual and humanising qualities and brought in new systems and concepts of functionality, programme and rationalism (Marschall, 1999). Even though these are fundamental elements in architecture, these should not allow for the negligence of the arts. Art adds layer and qualities that enhance the observer's experience of the architecture. Fassler describes how architecture that is "imaginative" always positively elevates man's experience to new heights and public buildings that have this sense of expression give pleasure to the masses (Fassler, 1955: 32). Dubow further goes on to say that we cannot ignore nor deny art's place in architecture, it lends the elements of humanisation, scale-giving and is psychologically benevolent factor (Dubow, 1966: 12/13).



Figure 2.8: Bartel Arts Trust Centre situated near Durban's harbour by Architects Collaborative (source: photo taken by author. 2013)

Mural art in South Africa has played a significant role in describing the lost stories of the past and the stories of transformation as we move into a bright future. Durban especially has seen a vast amount of mural art in its city's surfaces and several community-based architectural projects. A local example where the fusion of art and architecture was explored is the Bartel Arts Trust Centre (figure 2.8), commonly known as the BAT Centre. This constitutes a prime example of how art can soften and

humanise a building and even, to a certain degree, transform the surrounding environment. (Marschall, 1999) It is most recognisable for its mural art façade which was painted by local trained and untrained artist. Being situated in an industrial harbour, the building becomes an iconic point of reference that adds colour to an inhospitable environment. The art work reflect the function of the building as an art centre but also integrate the work being produced within the studios with the architecture, thus eroding the boundary between architectural decoration and art on display, educational and entertainment values (Marschall, 1999).



Figure 2.9: The 'Graffiti Mural Project' in Boynton Beach, America where they have sessions encouraging youth participation, connecting the people of the city through the exploration of mural art (source: www.boyntonbeach.org)

Mural art can be seen as a way of connecting the city (figure 2.9), an alternative way of communication, with pride taken in the recognition gained in this alternative community (Ferrell, 1993; Halsey and Young, 2006). The end product and realisation is often successful when the architect and artist work hand in hand from the conceptual development phase of the project. This allows a close understanding of how the fusion of art and architecture can be achieved in a homogenous manner. South Africa over recent years has put large emphasis on the participatory approach which allows for engagement across all social groups and aims to create a sense of empowerment. People within the community become active producers of the building rather than passive consumers and the process of engagement may contribute to public responsibility and the prevention of vandalism (Marschall, 1999).

In the new South Africa, there has been an extensive reinforcement art and art training to be made more easily accessible and the advancement of cultural self-expression have high priority. Interested individuals from the surrounding community could be given the opportunity of getting involved and collaborating with the architect on the artistic embellishment of the new prospective projects. Due to the vast local narratives, this gives the artwork the scope for broader themes and thus becoming a focal point of shared memories or aspirations.

2.2.4 Summary

It is evident that mural art plays a significant role in South Africa's history as a means of expressing the narratives of the past. One can see the significance of mural art in the way it provides local community the sense of ownership and identity. These art works are often highly respected and one can note that in Durban, most walls with mural paintings on them stay clear of vandalism or defacement for many years after the completion of the work. South Africa being a country going through its period transformation, mural art can be utilised to make a valuable contribution to building communities. Through the 'theory of perception', it is evident how mural art can begin to adapt the way in which people start to visualise themselves in the world.

2.3. SOCIAL EXCLUSIVITY AND THE NEED FOR INCLUSIVE BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

2.3.1 Introduction

This segment of the literature review aims to identify and get a clear understanding of who are the 'indigent' that have been referred to in this research paper and the circumstances that have led them to being in such conditions. This will be through various global and local journal articles from Catherine Cross and John R Seager of the Human Sciences Research Council who did a four year study of the indigent in South Africa. It will also look at the research done by Columbia University and New York Psychiatric Institute on the stigma of the indigent community. Through the basic understanding of the key issue of the indigent, the research will then begin to seek possible solutions through readings from emeritus professor of Psychology at University of Illinois, Julian Rappaport whose main focus is on community psychology and empowerment as well as Sabine Marschall who investigates how architecture and art may become a tool for empowerment.

2.3.2 Defining the indigent & circumstances that lead to indigence

Even after 19 years of democracy, a nation filled with promise and aspirations as it experiences its transformation period, somehow sees a very large percentage of its population still being heavily crippled by the grievances of the old Apartheid regime. Even though opportunities for personal growth and wealth have increased, sadly this is for a small percentage of its citizens. Many whom live in a state of poverty and the possibilities of changing their situation are highly improbable. These individuals have become the indigent citizens within our cities who have a disconnection with society and often found themselves heavily stigmatized. These individuals lack the basic human necessities such as adequate shelter, clothing, food and running water. The result of this then finds many indigent

individuals seeking shelter in the city (figure 2.10) where such necessities can be located. To design and cater for the needs of the indigent, one must firstly understand the circumstances that have led to them experiencing such hardship and hostile conditions.



Figure 2.10: Photo of indigent individuals sleeping outside a building on Sydney Road, Umbilo in Durban during the middle of the day (source: author, 2012)

The country has aimed to alleviate the issue of lack of housing by introducing several policies that focus on providing housing for all its civilians. However even though this has been more successful in bringing those from impoverished locations into settled society, it has somehow failed to alleviate the severe issue of indigence and homeless people living on the streets (Cross; Seager, 2010: 143). After several civil societies' well planned initiatives to try providing housing, be it in shelters, transitional housing or conventional subsidised housing to the indigent, the issue of homelessness still persists and is evident in many urban environments in South Africa. Due to the failure of this, the attention has now been turned toward resolving the issue at its inception by seeking preventive approaches. This aims to intervene before children or adults find themselves on the streets. However, public spending has, to some extent, been frustrated by the elusiveness of the problem, its unknown scale, its uncertain

determinants, and the lack of clearly identified public-sector measures that can be expected to help with street homelessness (Cross; Seager, JR. 2010: 144).

South Africa however, through its social safety net, provides for more support to those experiencing indigence than other more advanced democracies such as the United States of America (Huth; Wright, 1997). It has become rather difficult to calculate and measure the impact of social spending for prevention or remediation of indigence and street homelessness but it can be argued that it is not far reaching enough to alleviate the vast amount of people on the street. Many questions have been asked on how this is possible as with the support structure in place, it can be assumed that the situation could be resolved. This can be seen as the key issue raised by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). They question one of two things, firstly, why well-targeted social programmes do not appear to work for the indigent. Secondly, with many impoverished people living in either low cost housing developments or self-constructed shack areas, why have the street homeless population decided against life shack areas or what are commonly known as 'squatter camps'? (Figure 2.11)



Figure 2.11: Photo of an informal settlement or as commonly known a 'squatter camp' in Mamelodi, South Africa (source: www.mameloditrust.org.uk)

Within the study it was recognised that one of the reasons for homelessness is the unavailability of affordable adequate housing and another issue that often subsidised housing is located in outskirts areas which lack social services, infrastructure and livelihood. Results from the HSRC study suggest that substantially more than affordable housing, or even housing with social grants, is needed to provide the way out of homelessness: Access to livelihoods is critical, and access to city centres is likely to be the crucial issue here. (Cross; Seager, 2010: 146) Wolch and Dear's investigations (1993) drew attention to critical spatial factors such as urban redevelopment models that displaced the low-income inner-city population to the outside of the city, away from workplaces and beyond easy reach of livelihoods, as well as unemployment as key issues that led to large scale indigence. However, the

displacement model that aimed to remove the poor from the central city zone would inevitably fail in the long run. Citizens of the shack population nor the street homeless themselves could not afford to be disconnected from urban environments in which they found a living. The common trait that the indigent share was described as the ‘culture of resistance’ (Wagner, 1997) which referred to the return of the indigent back to the place they were once removed. The issue of youthful indigence can be tracked back to past experiences, those who experience impoverishment from an early age will tend to follow a precarious lifestyle. This is based on shared youth-generational identity and connections, which sees them living in temporary accommodation and this could be the lifestyle that probably carries a high risk of homelessness in itself (Cross; Seager, 2010: 147).

Table 1: Homeless respondents’ main reasons for leaving original home

Street-homeless respondents’ reasons for first leaving home prior to street homeless condition	Number of replies	Percentage of respondents mentioning
Employment factors (job search, employment, retrenchment, dismissal, income shortfall, other economic factors)	661	53
Family factors (deaths, disputes, marriage, divorce, family relationships, family influence, other changes in family situation)	665	53
Aspirational factors (seeking better life, independence, excitement, other life-improvement factors)	210	17
Shelter and housing (lack of housing, eviction or forced removal, other housing factors)	128	10
Abuse or violence (abuse, mistreatment, injury, other personal suffering)	111	9
Total	1775	

Multiple response distribution, percentage of respondents replying ‘yes’: number of replies may exceed total number of respondents.

*Table 1: Survey investigating reasons for homeless respondents initially leaving original home (source: **Development Southern Africa Volume 27**)*

The table above (*table 1*) illustrates how it is often individuals search for employment or livelihoods, along with changing family situations that could put added pressure on the respondents or leave them marginalised within the household. Thus could be the main perceived reasons why the street homeless initially leave their family homes and start on the migration paths that eventually led to the streets. From this survey, the research discovers three common paths into street homelessness. The first being the loss of a respondent’s prior economic position, the second being the inability to secure an initial

foothold in the economy and lastly being the displaced youth and children without alternative shelter options.

It can be concluded that even though there are vast amount of indigent and homeless people in South Africa, most of these individuals have access to basic shack housing. These however are of very poor quality and the key issue that is often missing is the combination of available housing and reliable livelihoods within easy reach. The indigent have become disconnected from their initial infrastructural networks. They lack the ability to approach government, suffer learned helplessness and friendlessness, often ashamed of their situation, vulnerable to exploitation, ill-health and injury, and living in fear as they drift in toward the economic centres of the country (Cross; Seager, 2010: 153). The housing provided by the government for the alleviation of severe indigence and homeless shall continue to be ignored by these individuals until the programme has seriously been rethought regarding the location of subsidised housing developments in relation to street livelihoods. A new option or strategy that the government has looked into as its focus is the possibility of providing rental options by redeveloping existing, often dilapidated buildings within the city centre. This would most likely hold out more promise for those already street homeless than for independent house ownership (Cross; Seager, 2010: 153).

2.3.3 Stigmatizing of the indigent community

The indigent and homeless individuals within of our cities are often looked down upon and disconnected from society. There appears to be a high sense of stigmatization against these individuals and it is often through perception that people understand and collect information that leads them to stigmatize these individuals. Goffman defines stigma as an attribute that can be socially defined as deeply discrediting, it is a defamation of one's identity and disqualifying one from full social acceptance (Goffman, 1963). Consequently stigma will then involve both extreme negative perceptions and social rejection of the individual it is directed towards.

There are various reasons why people stigmatize certain individuals. The indigent and impoverished are often stigmatized largely because of two reinforcing psychological processes. One being the socio-political roots and the other being the cognitive and perceptual basis, this stigmatizing is usually in the manner in which people tend to blame the indigent for being in that situation (Phelan; Link, 1997). If people view those who are indigent as having been responsible for bringing those shortcomings upon themselves, then the responsibility is shifted from the stratification system to the individual, thus the stigmatising of these individuals can be legitimised. It can be argued that, for this very reason, that the indigent would therefore be stigmatised far more so than that of general "poor people" due to such

theories of ideology that lead to the homeless being blamed more harshly because there is even more inequality to be justified (Phelan, 1997: 324). These theories link homelessness to three critical dimensions of stigma as opposed to the general poor individuals.

The most effective dimension is that homeless people often live in exposed public spaces therefore making them highly visible, becoming somewhat disruptive than other forms of poverty (*figure 2.12*). Secondly, the homeless have little access to basic human infrastructure so have great difficulty cleaning and grooming themselves and this can be portrayed to most as being unappealing and unapproachable (*figure 2.13*). Lastly, homelessness has for many years been associated with conditions such as mental illness and possible substance abuse (Phelan, 1997: 325). Even though the perception of the homeless by general public is often not positive, the empathy expressed by the public is surprisingly high. The mentally ill are themselves often highly stigmatised and there are a variety



Figure 2.12: Image of an indigent individual sleeping in public whilst people move past him, often without acknowledgement. (source: www.ksoo.com)



Figure 2.13: Image of an indigent individual smoking and without the means to clean and groom themselves.

(source: thehippychickandfreakyjesus.blogspot.com)

of negative responses such as social distancing, mistrust and perceptions of dangerousness, worthlessness, dirtiness, and a lack of intelligence (Phelan, 1997: 326).

The stigma society has over the indigent can be seen as also another crippling effect in helping these people progress from their current situation and further reconnect with the society that one can claim, has turned its back on them. In order for this to happen, it will take far more than just political

engagement to alleviate homelessness and give these individual a far greater sense of purpose. The built environment and mural art have the opportunity to assist these individuals in reclaiming their absence within our society. Engagement by these individuals in both these can start to see a development of the indigent and their contribution to society acknowledged, thus aiming to decrease the negative stigma attached to this group of people.

2.3.4 Indigent reformation through theory of empowerment

The indigent community have been disregarded by society, not acknowledging them as individuals who can have a positive contribution to our daily lives and experiences. The theory of empowerment aims to be the catalyst in improving the condition of these individuals by empowering them through the exploration of mural art. Sadan describes empowerment as an effect that symbolizes energy which exists in abundance but is not taken by force but it expresses an on-going social process, not a one-time occurrence (Sadan, 2009). McClelland has suggested that in order for people to take power, they need to gain information about themselves and their environment and be willing to identify and work with others for change (McClelland, 1975). For the empowerment of the indigent to occur, there needs to be a connection between the micro (individual) and the macro (community) level. At the micro level, empowerment will increase their control of their lives and release them from a state of powerlessness. At the macro level, these individuals then become part of a community, this then allows the individual to identify himself within a larger group, making vital connections and achieving far better control of his environment. The concept of community is a component that plays a significant role in structuring the person you are as an individual. Through the theory of empowerment, the concept of 'community' shall be explored on how this framework and structure of a group defines the individual and can give them a great sense of empowerment through the collective participation. Wallerstein defines the connection between the macro and micro within the empowerment theory as a social-action process that promotes participation of people, organizations, and communities. Their goal is to of increase individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice (Wallerstein, 1992). Communities consider organisations such as churches, schools, social groups, political parties etc. and the idea that these are successful through the connections each member has with one another. The individual can positively contributing to the whole, empowering the community, thus empowering the individual in the process. The theory of empowerment will explore the art of social change and the role the communities have in bettering ones social condition.

As there has been several references made of the term "community" previously in the literature review, it is essential to investigate the relationship between the community and the individual. This shall be

through the understanding of the role and influence narratives of a community may have on individual lives. Narratives are powerful regardless of their form and that they are powerful, in part, because they cut across levels of analysis, linking individual experience and social process (Rappaport, 1998: 225). Narratives have the potential to create memory, meaning and identity among individuals, even though they are a representation of a social and cultural broader context. These individuals who partake in rituals, performances, activities, and symbols in language, in art, and in behavioural routines are the generators for creating the social context. At the community level, empowerment refers to collective action to improve the quality of life in a community and to the connections among community organizations.

Rappaport makes the assumption that all communities have narratives that define their character and are unique to them. These furthermore have a great influence and connection to the members within that community. The influence of social context and individual identity is reciprocal, particularly with respect to local culture (Geertz, 1973). This then tells us that people themselves receive and create their own narratives and the basis of this is dependent on the extent that they have economic and social capital. We as humans contain our own individual personality, identity, and sense of self which is quite independent of the changing social and historical contexts that we experience (Rappaport, 1998: 227). Communities can be defined as resources; these in themselves have the ability to distribute resources such as individual narratives amongst its members within that community. Communities can then be valued for their opportunities that they provide for the individuals, creating a safe and supportive environment. This allows these individuals to share and reflect their narratives with one another. In doing so this then encompasses the core concept of empowerment, where they will build beliefs in skill in knowledge, identity, collective efficacy and then can consider the positives steps forward as a collective (Crotty, 1998; Hyung Hur 2006; Ife, 1997; Schaurhofer & Peschl, 2005; Wallerstein, 2006). We as humans contain our own individual personality, identity, and sense of self which is quite independent of the changing social and historical contexts that we experience. Community narratives can then be seen as a reflection or rather a representation of an individual and a collective identity. This representation could then have possible emotional and behavioural implications on both the community and its members.

“Art is the keeper of a society’s memory” (Rappaport, 1998: 229). As the dissertation has revealed in previous chapters, the role of art is highly significant in portraying one’s views of the world and the manner in which they see themselves in it. Self-expression is a key element of an individual’s life and experience, allowing an individual to use varying ways of communication to portray their narratives. Gideon (1954) perceived art as a critical part of society’s expression. In his views, artist were seen in

the same light as inventors or scientific discoverers, as they all reflect on how man relates to the world. What makes the role of an artist more significant is that it connects with the emotional expression of oneself. This allows the observers of the art work to connect with the artist on a more personal level, a look into the artist's own soul. According to Barnett (1970) this can be achieved by considering art as a process in which the work of art, the artist and the public are considered as three intersecting elements. Art can play a crucial role in community narratives. Various Art forms such as performance, visual, ritual act as a remembrance function for the collective, these depictions of art often highlight the important stories of a society. Memories within the narratives therefore create a shared history and provide resources for personal identity stories. Pictures can "index" a story that is well known; that is, a picture can efficiently remind people of stories preserved in memory (Salzer, 1997; Schank, 1990; Thomas & Rappaport, 1996; Wyer, 1995). Despite our individualistic culture, the experience of collective identity is unavoidable. The ability for these individuals and communities to express their narratives through the various arts, gives it great significance to their lives and in a sense, empowers them as individual and as a collective community. This therefore contributes positively towards society, allowing communities to express their collective experiences through art and implant this in the many memories of a place, creating another layer to the already existing narratives.

Social change can be achieved if collectively we assist in helping people discover, create, and make available to each other alternative narratives. In this research the focus is on mural art (*figure 2.14*) which has often had a connection with marginalised communities. Making a mark on urban cityscapes was noted as especially important for marginalised groups such as young homeless people (Rowe & Hutton, 2012). Luna argues that 'graffiti (mural art) contains profound social psychological and cultural information worthy of serious attention' and when reading and interpreting graffiti of homeless youth, it is a representation of their feelings about homelessness, safety, abuse and a general frustration at the way they are ignored in society (Luna, 1987: 73).



Figure 2.14: Image of a vibrant mural which was part of the 'Graffiti Mural Project' initiative by the Boynton Beach community (source: www.boynton-beach.org)

As empowerment is one of the key issues for this research, the connection between narratives as a resource for empowerment is crucial. Day refers to the word ‘*empowerment*’ in a different sense, he sees community participation through consensus design which aims to engage all individuals involved, in this way it “*unfolds ones potential*” (Day, 2003). Empowerment is an intentional, on-going process, centred in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources (Rappaport, 1998: 230). Narratives are therefore resources for personal and social stability and change. A key aspect of self-growth is through understanding one self and your connection to society. These narratives give you sense of being and your role in the bigger part of the whole. Day argues for this, saying that when individuals feel they are part of the process, this increases our cultural, individual and community worth, changing not only our perception of self but others of you (Day, 2003: 12). These narratives are psychologically and politically powerful thus engaging in the process of empowering for three reasons; they create memory, they create meaning and emotion and lastly they create identity. In 1986 Markus and Nurius spoke about the concept of the “*possible selves*” which referred to internal sense of “*who I am*”, not just now, but who I will be and this concept was influenced by storytelling. Stories mimic the way we actually experience the world, as sequential, woven interrelationships experienced in real time. Stories about our people, our community, and our settings are particularly powerful vehicles to influence our possible selves, as ultimately our behaviour is propelled by these internalized and appropriated images (Rappaport, 1998: 238). Mural art in essence is the art of storytelling; the murals depict narratives that illustrate and communicate ideas and issues that connect to the observer, allowing their perception of it to then be interpreted into their own understanding of what it represents.

After Julian Rappaport’s visit to South Africa, he was impressed by the strong sense of community and its representation. He had witnessed how people had created community gardens which were decorated with man-made sculptures and this reflected positively on the individuals and the community. Many people in South Africa had collaborated with artists to create ‘resistance art.’ (figure 2.15) This art depicted the narratives that aimed to express their communities, the reflection of dehumanizing and cruel oppression that was

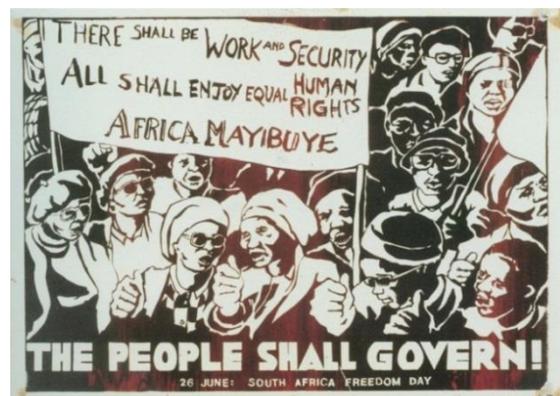


Figure 2.15: Image of resistance art depicting the message ‘the people shall govern’. (source: new.smtvip.net)

experienced by the people. The visions of these people are verbal as well as visual, social and political as well as aesthetic. The fundamental responsibility of art is that of narration and its main objective is to create a dialogue between the refined and intensified forms of emotion and the everyday events, doings and sufferings that constitute the experiences of all individuals or communities. In this way, art ensures that it remains contextually linked and relevant to both society at large and to each individual that comes into contact with the work. These visions need documentation in a social and community psychology concerned with the art of social change, as much as their crafted works need documentation in the art world. (Rappaport. 1998; 244) For the creation of new visions that would be catalyst for social change, those with the access and ability of storytelling such as artist, writers, documenters of social reality have a vital role to play. Architects and architecture have the responsibility to address the issues of the narratives and buildings themselves have the ability to be a narrative that communicates to the observer.

Empowerment pursues for a position as a natural process that is anchored in human nature and in social relations: more control over one's life and one's environment is an important component in the life of every human being, and citizens who are in control of their lives and participate in decision-making with regard to their future and their environment make an significant contribution to democratic society as a whole (Sadan, 2009).

2.3.5 Architecture as empowerment

Architecture holds great significance within the urban environment and society, it does not only serve the people within the physical structure but those who move around it and connect with it visually on a daily basis for decades to come. This is why architects have social responsibilities, they shape how people experience and understand a city. South Africa as a young democratic nation which is going through its transformation period, still finds itself trying to resolve major issues of segregation and social exclusion which it inherited from its previous Apartheid government. Architecture today can play an active role in redressing the situation by being a catalyst for empowerment through the process of 'community participation' (Marschall, 1998: 103). Day refers to this process as 'consensus design' which to him favours the community far greater than the work of many social architects. This method does not aim to empower but rather unfold the potential of these individuals who take part. He believes that the in order to shape socially inclusive environments, this process can only be made possible through the active engagement of all those involved (Day, 2003).

Community participation can be defined as “people involving themselves, to a greater or lesser degree, in organisations indirectly or directly concerned with the decision-making about, and implementation of, development” (Roodt, 1996: 312). Community participation in South Africa is often defined in the fields of development and housing. This however starts with the individual. The concept of transforming the individual and their consciousness aims to lead them into the process of self-actualisation and empowerment. Jonathan Cook (1995) described ‘empowerment’ as the crucial factor that makes development sustainable, it “implies a shift of control towards the people who actually do the core work” (Farouk, 1996:104). The key fundamentals of community participation in architecture (*figure 2.16*) is for everyone, from those who are part of the skilled labour force (architects, engineers, contractors etc.) to engage and work hand in hand with those who will occupy the built form, the end user and thus transferring skills and knowledge which will positively contribute to human capacity.



Figure 2.16: community members building up a brick wall at the Seven Fountain Primary School in Shayamoya township in Kokstad, Eastern Cape by East Coast Architects (**source: www.designinaba.com**)

There are many benefits of utilising community participation within the development process. For many years, the impoverished communities within South Africa have been aided by the government. This included being provided public facilities such as schools, clinics, sports facilities, community centres

etc., this was referred to as the *'technocratic caretaker model'* (Harms, 1972: 105). However, even with these facilities being built for the communities, the biggest challenge was that these communities were not at all involved with the process and thus failed to connect with these "government hand-outs" and have a sense of ownership (Marschall, 1998: 105). These facilities would therefore become neglected as in most cases they did not suit the needs of the users and would be prone to vandalism. There is a close connection or link that humans need with the buildings they occupy and the space they share with others. The easier that the community can identify and connect with the building, the more likely it shall be utilised and appreciated. Through community participation, architecture itself transforms from being merely structures with designed spaces but also a means to draw people from the community to get involved (*figure 2.17*). By allowing individuals to gain much needed self-confidence and a sense of personal achievement, the building alleviates drab surroundings, lethargy and desperation of its end-users (Marschall, 1998: 105). This is further emphasized through Day's process of consensus design when he states, *"places we have shaped ourselves, we feel responsible for."* (Day. 2003; 12)

Carin Smuts from Cape Town based architectural firm CS Studio, who have done several community based projects around South Africa says that she finds that building a connection with your end user is key. She sees the community participation process as a way for everyone involved to have a harmonious relationship which will in turn benefit the project for years to come. She further says, *"In order to get a public facility there (in the township) you're dealing with people who've had*



Figure 2.17: community members applying handcrafted art at the Seven Fountain Primary School by East Coast Architects (source: www.creatingschools.org)

Apartheid education, you're dealing with people who haven't finished school, you're dealing with people who've been locked up for three or four years ... So, it's more the process and the changes in people's lives than the buildings themselves." Community participation shifts the emphasis of architecture in its definition of a shelter that houses a specific function, to it being a process and a vehicle of empowerment for the local people. These people gain skills and are educated on certain forms of design and construction that they are involved in. The most immediate manner in which the building can become a vehicle of empowerment is through generating employment. Hiring local contractors and

labour provides an opportunity for training by engaging un-skilled local labour trained on site, and supports the local economy by utilising locally available technology (Marschall. 1998; 107).

Architects are not only creators of the built environment and the key functions that these possess but also hold a key social responsibility that could assist in the bettering and development of society. The participatory approach demands a redefinition of the role of the architect as a facilitator, as a professional who accepts a social responsibility, the architect not as “*grand designer, but rather as guide and helper in a broad community framework*” (Hardman and Varghese, 1997: 18). The aim of empowerment is then to develop and build on individuals amongst disadvantaged communities so that their overall living conditions improve and they take control of their lives and therefore the provision of training must be visualized and systematically strategized in an efficient and thorough manner.

The indigent and impoverished are often excluded from general society. They do not often share the same freedom and self-control that they require to feel part of the greater whole. Community participation aims to make a contribution by instilling confidence, knowledge of skills and a sense of self-worth to individuals who are involved in the process. The beauty of community participation is that it only requires a few individuals who are highly motivated, confident and equipped with specific knowledge or skills to set a dynamic process of development and upliftment in motion (Marschall, 1998: 120). These individuals need to have leadership qualities and be respected as key members of the community, so to blur the lines between the professional role and that of the community. When this is approached and done in a well-constructed manner, this is an indication on how architecture can be utilised as a tool for empowerment and societal development.

2.3.6 Summary

“We must create settings that promote empowering communal and personal stories and listen more carefully to the voices telling those stories.” (Perkins. 1995; 577)

Through the analysis of this segment of the literature review, one begins to understand the struggle of the indigent and their reason as to why some have opted for this lifestyle as opposed to that imposed on them by governmental policies. What was critical finding was the role of creating a sense of ‘organised’ community for these individuals, the concept of making them feel as individuals who are part of a collective whole where their personal stories are shared within this. Architecture and mural art can play a pivotal role in providing a platform to which these created communities can have a sense of ownership and the occupants, in case the indigent, can portray their narratives. This platform can express the representation in which this dissertation aims to portray this community, giving them a

sense of dignity and place. Mural art and architecture will therefore aim to facilitate the change required to create a sense of the indigent redefining themselves within current our society.

2.4 SEMIOTICS AS A GENERATOR FOR CREATING MEANINGFUL ARCHITECTURE

2.4.1 Introduction

This segment of the literature review aims to investigate and understand what is required to create a meaningful architecture that is purposeful and addresses key issues of its surrounding and community. Semiology shall be the key theoretical underpinning of this segment of the literature review. It will investigate various literature, with the key study area being based on semiotician, philosopher and literary critic Umberto Eco, whose work shall address how architecture can be represented as a means of mass communication. Semiology in architecture refers to 'meaning'. In order to understand meaning in the built environment, a semiological approach is required to understand the mechanics of meaning and perception. Through this literature, these investigations shall help understand how architecture in its entirety should encompass and react to several issues for it to serve a greater purpose to society.

2.4.2 Meaningful architecture through the theory of representation

To understand the relationship between art and built form, issues of sign and meaning need to be addressed. Architecture and the built environment is the platform that we often connect with one another, sharing our narratives and day to day activities, this then holds our collective memories that we share. The built environment is the art that illustrates and depicts the people, place and period, being a '*symbol*' and vision of the society it serves. There is a spirit of a particular age, different to any other, to which architecture can and does give expression, which in essence embodies cultural movements (Snodgrass; Coyne, 2006: 4). This then requires the great significance of '*meaning*' as it plays such a pivotal role in how we experience and live our lives. By investigating semiotics, which is the principle of signs and symbols, the theory of representation shall explore how architecture can become more than a building driven by programme and function. Oliver (1977) argues that all phenomena that man experiences is portrayed through the form of messages and signs and these are ready to be interpreted by the observer. When we interpret objects, we then position them within a set of relationships, the position of these then constitutes the basis of signs and systems of signification, which Snodgrass sees as the beginnings of a dialogue of interpretation and language (Snodgrass, A & Coyne, R. 2006; 9). Barthes distinguishes that everything around us that has significance can be considered a sign (cited in Oliver. 1977). The theory of representation therefore enhances the concept of the sign, allowing us to understand an object through the sign it represents. An example of this is

how buildings such as churches (*figure 2.18*), synagogues, mosque (*figure 2.19*) etc. represent a symbol that relate man to religion, these environments become signs for religious culture and life. A meaningful architecture can then be expressed through the theory of representation, where the architecture is expressed as a symbol and sign that represents its users, its society and the progression of this. This is further enhanced through understanding Architecture's connection with semiotics, which is concerned with meaning; how representation, in the broad sense (language, images, and objects) generates meanings or the processes by which we comprehend or attribute meaning (Curtin. 2007; 51).



Figure 2.18 (left): is the interior of Tadao Ando's Church of Light in Osaka, Japan (source: www.archdaily.com) figure 2.19 (right) is the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi (source: www.iesve.com), both representing a symbolic representation of religion.

Semiology refers to the study of signs and their meanings. (Counsell & Wolf. 2001) It has been best associated to the works of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, French historian Michael Foucault, and Italian semiotician Umberto Eco. Semiotics when translated into architecture, elaborates the basic principles of 'Structuralism', which define that buildings are not simply physical supports but artefacts and events with meaning. Architecture's primary purpose is to provide habitable spaces for various functions which are intended for the occupants of the building. However it has many other purposes that it should aim to address in its totality. Baird (1998) argues that semiotics incorporates the fundamental sociological insight that human experience is simultaneously collective and individual - it's the collection of meaning through the built form which encourages individual human embodied experience that is given significance through cultural orientation (Baird cited in Hays, 1998: 38-43).

Like art, the concept of expression is a crucial component and this expression aims to communicate the idea of the artist and designer. These buildings that are designed aren't only experienced internally but are objects within a greater landscape and people move past and experience these on a day to day

basis. Semiotics can be utilised as a way for architecture to reflect another key purpose and role, that of representation and communication. “*Semiotics is concerned with meaning; how representation, in the broad sense (language, images, and objects) generates meanings or the processes by which we comprehend or attribute meaning*” (Curtin, 2007: 53). Architecture can create a canvas for mural art (figure 2.20) and these should be utilised as a mechanism for mass communication. Umberto Eco has written several books and articles on semiotics and its connection to how people perceive and understand their daily routines through signs and symbols. He then begins to draw the possible connection of semiotics and how it can influence Architecture in creating far greater environments through this concept of communication.

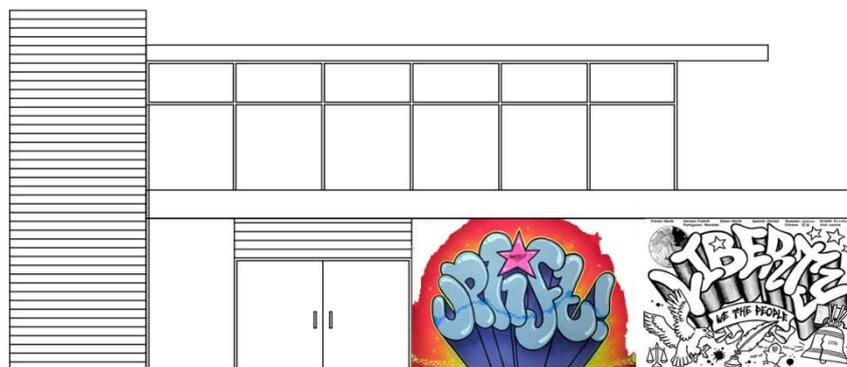


Figure 2.20: Illustration of the built environment as a canvas for mural art, becoming a platform for communication (source: illustration by author; 2013)

Before we can make the connection between architecture and signs or symbols, the understanding of meaning and how we perceive and interpret images is crucial. David Leatherbarrow believes that true meaning has become detached from architecture due to the current tendency to separate identity and function, therefore detaching the interaction between the building, the user, and its environment. It is through Leatherbarrow’s view that most contemporary architecture reflects a system of production or represents superficial styles from history and abroad (Leatherbarrow, 2005). However Charles Jencks explored and understood the concept of ‘meaning’ in architecture in a different manner, stating how meaning cannot be encapsulated in as one thing or word that is common to all; it has numerous interpretations. It is “*multivalent*” (Jencks, Kropf, 1997). He refers to ‘the triangle’ which is the composition of three key and complex elements that are fundamental in making up Semiology: “*a percept, a concept and a representation*” (Jencks, Kropf, 1997). This can then be further related back to both architecture and mural art, the observer first interacts with the objects, they view and perceive it, conceptualise the object through interpretation then document it through words when describing the experience. His summation of the semiology triangle (figure 2.21 – next page) is that there are simple relations between language, thought and reality (Jencks, Kropf, 1997).

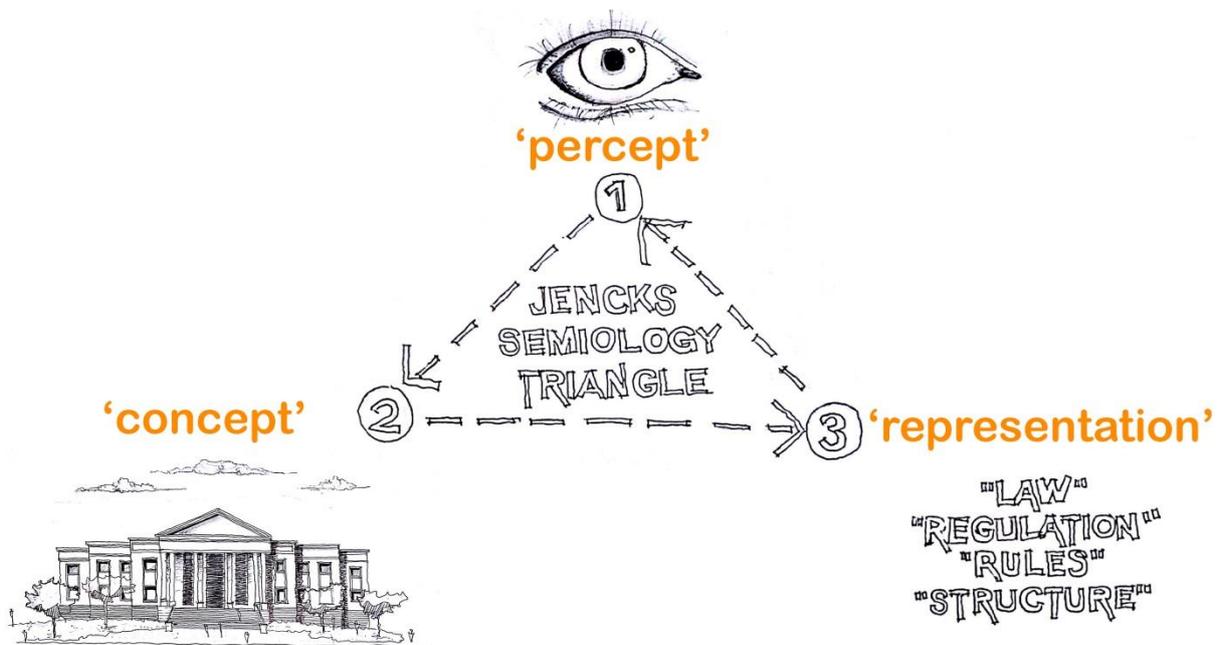


Figure 2.21: Illustration of Jenck’s Semiology triangle which shows how the ‘percept’ being our view of objects reads the ‘concept’ which is a courthouse and this is then understood through our ‘representation’ of what we see (source: illustration by author; 2013)

The role of Architecture in our society is highly significant as it is where we share majority of our life experiences with one another. Eco distinguishes in his connection between semiotics and architecture by emphasising that when designing what is truly perceived as ‘architecture’, architects should design structures for “*variable primary functions and open secondary functions*” (Eco, 1997: 173). He defines the primary function as architecture being a functional object and the secondary function being architecture as a symbolic object.

“If semiotics, beyond being the science of recognized systems of signs, is really to be a science studying all cultural phenomena as if they were systems of signs—on the hypothesis that all cultural phenomena are, in reality, systems of signs, or that culture can be understood as communication—then one of the fields in which it will undoubtedly find itself most challenged is that of architecture.” (Eco, 1997: 174)

Semiotics shows how the relationship between the sign and the ‘something else’ results from what our society has taught us (Curtin, 2007: 51), the ‘something else’ in this situation being architecture. Our perception or reading of the objects around us is often influenced by past experiences or how we as humans are socially conditioned. Central to semiotic analysis, in this respect, is the recognition of how visual and material culture is coded; the social conventions which link signs with meanings (Curtin, 2007: 61). Architecture becomes a challenge due to the reason that most architecture is designed purely from a functional perspective and not to communicate. He further establishes that for semiotics

to create keys of cultural phenomena within architecture, the core function of it needs to be perceived from a semiotic perspective. By doing so this allows for possibilities of understanding and defining these functions better, perhaps discovering other types of functionality which could also be significant in the overall experience of the Architecture. This concept of duo-functionality can then be translated as architectural denotation and connotation. Architectural denotation can be defined as the object, being the architecture having potential communicative capacity; this is referred to as a 'sign vehicle' of the conventionally denoted meaning, which is the core function and purpose of architecture. Then there is the architectural connotation which is the meaning behind the denotation and what arises from this (figure 2.22).

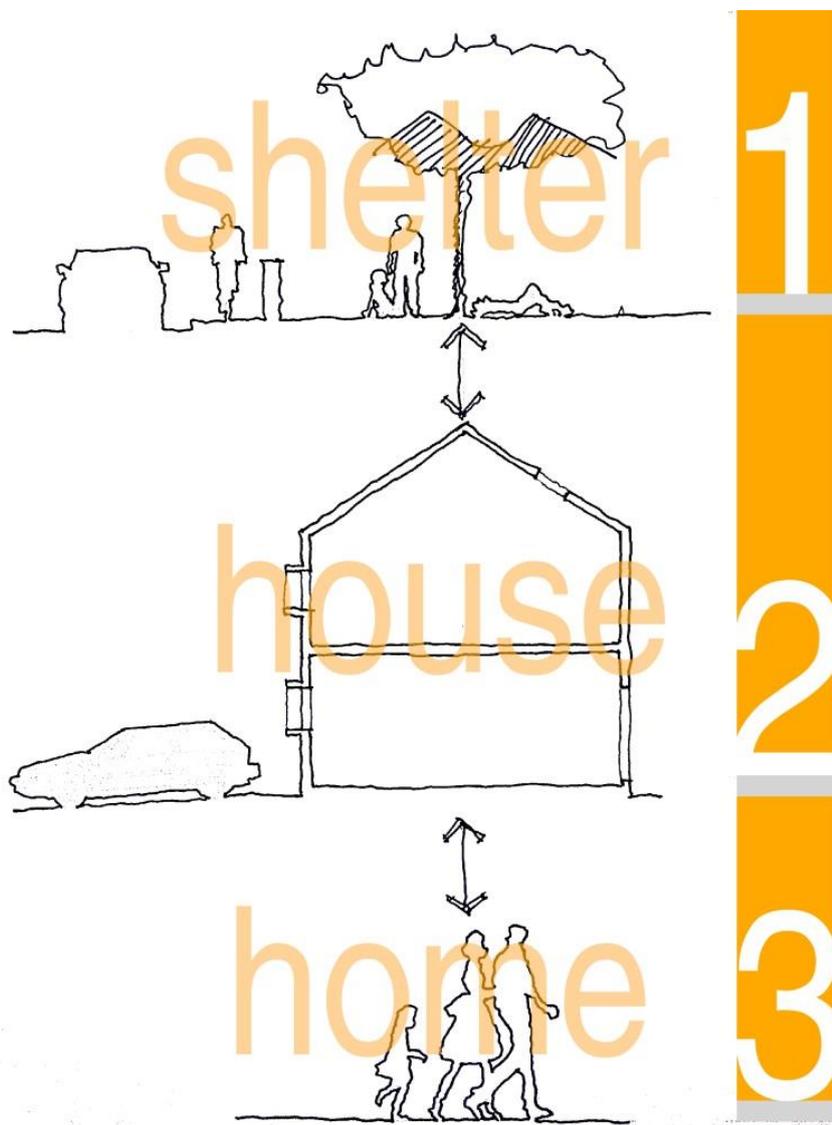


Figure 2.22: (1) Through nature, man can find the fundamental concept of shelter, a 'tree' which provides protection from varying weather conditions. Then (2) man adopts this concept into physical built form which is in the form of a 'house' then this is interpreted in the architectural connotation(3) as a place of safety, home, family. (source: illustration by author; 2013)

Architecture that has been designed with equal attention to form, function and aesthetic, conjures up a multivalent interpretation that unfolds deeper layers of meaning, justification and depth (Jencks; Kropf, 1997). A building within the South African landscape that illustrates this is the Apartheid Museum (figure 2.23 & 2.24) in Johannesburg which is a representation of the struggles of our past and how these are not forgotten but further enhance the aim we have as South Africans to move forward together as a united nation. The built form is the denotation and the exhibitions displayed in the building that allow observers to reflect upon our history create a richer meaning, giving the connotation that connects us further with the built environment. Architecture when designed from a semiotic point of view can define new meaning and perceptions the observers have with the function of the building. Semiotics gives architecture further meaning and opportunities for self-interpretation by the variety of users who occupy the building.

2.4.3 Summary

If architecture is to serve a single purpose and that is to be functional space, then one can argue that there is not much meaning to it. However Eco's argument for an architectural response driven by semiotics begins to express how architecture can have a personal connection to its users. It becomes a dialogue to which society as a whole gives meaning back to architecture, as opposed to architecture determining its role and as an imposition for society. This ideology relates back to the concept of mural



Figure 2.23: The Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg by Mashabane Rose & Associates JV with GAPP Urban Design is symbolic of South Africa's past and its progression forward (source: photo by author; 2009)



Figure 2.24: The 6 towering pillars at the entrance of the museum that remind observers of the goal of the new democratic South Africa with the core principles embellished on them of 'Democracy, Reconciliation, Diversity, Responsibility, Respect and Freedom' (source: photo by author; 2009)

art which in essence has a semiotic characteristic as well. Mural art functions firstly as a piece of art that has its intention on visual stimulation but also has the function to communicate to the observer a certain meaning and message the artist wishes to portray. This relates back to the notion of the narrative, the idea that in life stories need to be told for the development of individuals, community and society as a whole. This begins to unpack the connection between the concept of empowerment and architecture through the basis of communication as the tool that connects people to art, architecture and society. In essence, it becomes clear how *critical regionalism* which is concerned with issues of the context, landscape and materiality can be the pivotal architectural theory where these factors allow architecture to be responsive and adhere to the already existing narratives of a place. *Critical regionalism* shall be explored in the next segment and illustrate how this creates an understanding of places due to varying key factors implemented in the built environment. This dissertation shall aim to utilise semiotics as a tool to create an architecture that illustrates and communicates the cultural expression of its occupants and the city as a whole, through a semiotic point of view it shall aim to signify empowerment of the indigent community.

2.5 CONNECTING MAN TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

“I believe architecture today needs to reflect on the tasks and possibilities which are inherently its own. Architecture is not a vehicle or a symbol for things that do not belong to its essence. In a society that celebrates the inessential, architecture can put up a resistance, counteract the waste of human’s forms and meanings, and speak with its own sensuous language.” – Peter Zumthor

2.5.1 Introduction

This dissertation thus far has explored the key concepts of mural art and indigent empowerment. Through the engagement of these, this component of the literature review shall investigate how a meaningful architecture can be formulated through creating communal environments where narratives can be expressed by the users. This allows the architecture itself to portray a message and be expressive of the users and the context to which it is part of. This relates to the theory of *critical regionalism*, which was introduced during a period of post-modernism, a style one could argue was more of an imposition and iconic expression of the architect than that responding to its occupant and surrounding. *Critical regionalism* therefore aimed to take into consideration the value of the identity of a physical, social, and cultural situation. The indigent community do not have a physical or emotional connection to the place they occupy, this segment shall therefore explore how architecture through a consideration of place, local identity and bodily experience, can become crucial in connecting the indigent community to the built environment, empowering them and giving them a sense of ownership.

2.5.2 An architecture of place

In understanding *critical regionalism*, it is evident that a meaningful architecture needs to understand and encompass the place and environment it exist within, this then creates a better connection with the people of the place. Architecture for years has been significant in creating a sense of identity for time and place. This is seen in traditional European cities such as Zurich which has maintained its historical characteristics, giving significance to the city's past. (figure 2.25) Perception of place is often related with its 'physical determinism', where entities such as the environment, dimensions, colours, materials and shapes (figure 2.26) were seen as having direct effects on behaviour. (Franck, 1984).

It is an important component required for new observers of a place to understand the context of past and present users and the connection the built environment of that time had with society, culture and people. Architecture in essence is not isolated from its surrounding but should communicate with its context, acknowledging what is around it and relate to this. When one speaks of place in architecture, it is impossible not to make reference to *genius loci* which is the 'spirit of place'. This is a Roman concept which according to Roman belief, every individual has its genius which is a guardian spirit and this spirit will therefore give life to people who in turn give life to place. Therefore it is key to understanding people's involvement in creating place. This concept can be referred to as the art of place. This is the particular art that can be said to be hierarchical by its totality, by means of parts of its structure, collective in its implementation and historic in its content. (Schulz. 2000; 221)



Figure 2.25: View of the vernacular architecture in the city of Zurich, Switzerland that has defined the sense of place through the built environment. (source: commons.wikimedia.org)



Figure 2.26: The cobbled streets, traditional use of materials, fenestration treatment and proportion, scale of buildings gives significance to place identity (source: commons.wikimedia.org)

In creating and forming the concept of the art of place, both permanence and change needs to be implied. Dovey defines place as being identifiable with what does not change (*figure 2.27*); key aspects such as their 'sense of place', 'character' or 'identity' remain relatively stable. (Dovey, 2009; 3) Place has often been referred to as space in some context, however Dovey sees the key characteristics that differentiate the two being the intensity that connects sociality to spatiality in our everyday life.



Figure 2.27: The city of Lisbon in Portugal, which has maintained its recognizable characteristics of white-washed walls and terracotta roofs over the years (source: celtictours.blogspot.com)



Figure 2.28: Panoramic view of Trafalgar Square in London, England which has a significant history with the people of the place, where many personal memories have been made and a place of social interaction (source: en.wikipedia.org)

What is most significant about place is how it is a representation of personal memories (*figure 2.28*) and even though we are individuals with our own identity, places are located in the socio-historical environment of intergroup-relations. This will then represent social memories for a larger population. (Hauge, 2007) Lynch (1960) makes a connection to this in relation to the model of a city, arguing that the city as an object itself harnesses the ideals of 'sense of place' which naturally enhances the collective human activity within this environment and promotes the deposit of memory trace. However one needs to understand that place cannot be perceived as a singular entity but rather a series of processes of imagination, intention, potentiality, living, bordering, remembrance, and of dying, it is multi-layered. (Dovey, Downton & Missingham. 1985) Several theorist over the years have had their own definitions of place. Barthes (1973), place is a form of mythology; for Foucault (1979) a form of constructed subjectivity; for Derrida (1974) a text. Dovey further describes place as being a dynamic ensemble of people and environment that is at once material and experiential, spatial and social (Dovey, 2009: 7).

Place can be seen as being fundamental in how we as individuals stabilize our identity in the world. Place is significant in distinguishing identity. Identity can be described as the distinguishing character or personality of an individual. Self is a concept often used in a more abstract and global context, whereas identity is linked to specific aspects of self-definition (Deaux, 1992). There are many combined factors that shape identity such as genetic, social, and cultural as well as the built environment that surrounds us. Our connection with place not only strengthens the 'sense of place' but that attachment allows us to identify ourselves with these places, be it at macro or micro scale. (Giuliani, 2003) The concept of place attachment can be defined as the feelings we develop towards places that are highly familiar to us, ie, places we belong to (Altman & Low, 1992; Gifford, 2002). This is best seen in our very own city in the Warwick Triangle precinct (*figure 2.29 & 2.30*), which has been associated with its thriving informal trade sector and as a public transport hub which sees many local vendors who utilise this place and draws in thousands of people on a daily basis.



Figure 2.29 (left): Pedestrian bridge that leads off the Muthi Market designed by Design Workshop:SA (**source: author, 2013**) and figure 2.30 (right) is the English Morning Market, one of Warwick's most recognizable and significant trading structures (**source: <http://www.aet.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/II-Picture-by-Dennis-Gilbert.jpg>**)

Once we connect and relate to a place, it is embedded in us and we begin to mould around the characteristics of the place. Breakwell argues that places are pivotal sources of identity elements, further stating that aspects of identity derived from places we belong to arise because places have symbols that have meaning and significance to us (Breakwell, 1983). Place can be related to identity in two different ways. 'Place identification' is the first way and this refers to an individual's expressed connection and identification with a specific place. This defines place in the social category which is then subject to social identification within social identity theory. (Twigger-Ross. C & Uzzell, D. 1996: 206) The understanding of identity and it's the connection is crucial as the indigent and homeless community, unlike most people who have homes in neighbourhoods where they've shared vast memories, do not have a sense or connection to a specific place as they move to wherever is suitable

for them at that time, their identity is therefore lost due to the lack of place connection. When designing facilities for individuals such as the indigent, the greatest task is how they then relate to the 'sense of place' you as the designer create and how beneficial this can be in giving them a sense of identity and place.

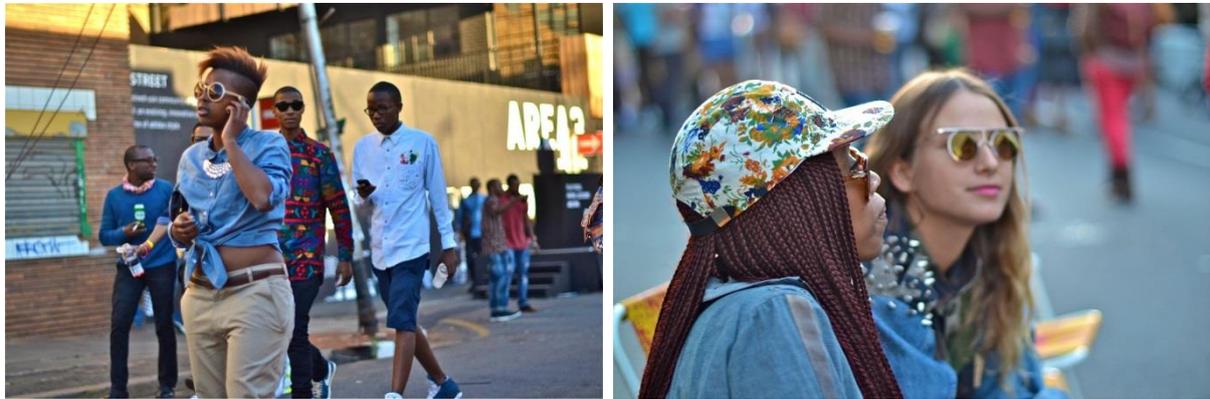


Figure 2.31 & 2.32: Images taken from the newly regenerated Maboneng Precinct in Eastern Johannesburg CBD which has become an "art district" drawing an alternative art community, often referred to as "hipsters" (source: anthonybila.tumblr.com)

Critical regionalism can therefore express a sense of representation. Representation is pivotal in understanding place, place itself is represented and describes how local essence can be achieved through representation of identity within place. Communities represent local essence (figure 2.31 & 2.32), one can identify the sense of place through its joint people ie. the community. Day describes how place much like community, is formed by the past and both being past-formed are threatened by change. (Day. 2003; 27) The built environment is often the most noticeable change in a place. There are many variables that are dependent on the art of place, the built environment is one of the crucial aspects which influences and manipulates ones understanding of this. It is through the built environment and form that the common moments of use express themselves in adequate times and place, concretising and representing a precise way of life. (Schulz. 2000; 225)

This then relates to the place-identity theory which is defined as a person's assimilation of place with a larger concept of self and further elaborated as a "*potpourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about specific physical settings, as well as types of settings*" (Proshansky, Fabian & Kaminoff, 1983: 60). People adapt to what they see and understand to represent that specific place, memory and past experience come in to play in this situation. The concept of place-identity begins when we are children and our perception barrier is at its most sensitive so we take in all we experience. A child learns to see her or himself as distinct from, but related to, the physical environment (Hauge, 2007). So if one understands an environment that they have grown up for years in and then

change occurs, this can have quite an impact on the individual. Due to the vast life experiences we share within the built environment, the connection of this with place is significant, therefore architecture in essence creates place and has a large influence on our identity.



Figure 2.33: Photo taken from the main street front facing the informal settlement at the Red Location Museum in Port Elizabeth by Noero Wolff Architects. (source: www.phaidon.com)

Place and identity have a strong relation with one another, place is influenced by people who gain identity through the place. It is crucial for the understanding of these two factors for the research of this dissertation as these both are affected by perception and representation. The perception of place is influenced by the environment, the people and their connection to that place. It can easily be noticed when communities have a strong connection to their environment, maintenance and overall quality of space is generally positive. The people and architecture are then the representation and symbol of this place, such as the Red Location Museum (figure 2.33) in Port Elizabeth by Noero Wolff Architects which is indicative of the symbol of an architecture of place that represents the people of the place. The project is situated in the first 'black township' in Port Elizabeth and the museum is located within the existing informal settlement, surrounded by the 'shacks'. The project responds to this by communicating the same language as its surrounding, using materials and textures of the "shack architecture" and creating connections with the sense of place, in doing so, giving the community a strong relationship

with the structure. Architecture has many determinants that would justify it to be meaningful. Making a clear connection to a place and understanding its 'sense of place' allows it to further enhance this thus improving the quality for the occupants of the place. This in turn will have a positive effect on these individuals (community as a whole). Architecture of place connects people to elements such as memory which is highly significant in personal growth, moving forward through connecting and understanding your past. The indigent community are rare in the fact that they are not of one particular place, they are moving from one place to another, wherever it is beneficial to acquire certain necessities and therefore their identity has been lost.

Critical regionalism when connected to the theory of representation can begin to explore how the consideration of both a semiotic point of view when designing, as well as the understanding of place and identity can generate a meaningful architecture that speaks and represents its people. This then gives the users a better relationship with the built environment, a relationship where architecture can be the symbol of the place. Representation is fundamental to ones experience of the world around them, through this we make connections far beyond the point of 'what you see is what you get'. *Critical regionalism* therefore connects all these key attributes and concepts of semiotics, place, and identity, giving a richer meaning to the symbol that is represented to the observer.

2.4.3 Architecture and the senses

"*Critical regionalism* seeks to compliment our normative visual experience by readdressing the tactile range of human perceptions. In doing so, it endeavours to balance the priority accorded to the image and to counter the Western tendency to interpret the environment in exclusively perspectival terms" (Frampton, cited in Foster, 1983: 29).

How we perceive and understand objects around us is often highly dependent on the visual sense. *Eyes of the skin* by Pallasmaa investigates through his own experiences how we as a humans have neglected many of the other key senses when experiencing and understanding what is around us. Lawson (2001) agrees with this notion and argues that it is not sufficient to merely see architecture, humans need to experience it in its entirety. In order to fully comprehend the multisensory dimension, Lawson argues, that architects need to be consciously sensitised to space and how the body becomes aware of sensual qualities (Lawson, 2001: 42). Architecture itself over the years has focussed its emphasis on the visual experience of the observer, which even though the aesthetic qualities of Architecture are crucial, several other elements need to be addressed and implemented to make it successful. Pallasmaa states, "*Life-enhancing architecture has to address all the senses simultaneously and fuse our image of self with our experience the world. The essential mental task of*

architecture is accommodation and integration” (Pallasmaa, 2005: 11). The ability to create an atmosphere which interacts with the senses and articulates a sense of self in an environment conducive to healing and educating is what the architectural intervention shall aim to achieve. Architecture, like art, should relate, mediate and project a sense of expression and meaning. Pallasmaa believes that the ultimate meaning in a building extends past its aspect as an architectural object, but reconnects our consciousness back to the world and our acceptance of self. Significant architecture makes us experience ourselves as complete embodied and spiritual beings. In fact, this is the great function of all meaningful art (Pallasmaa, 2005: 11).

Meaningful architecture, as Pallasmaa describes is one that evokes all senses but also communicates with its occupants on several layers. Zumthor states that the qualities of the built form should evoke sensations that affect the user on a psychological, emotional and physical level (Zumthor, 2010: 11). *Critical regionalism* addresses the people and context, giving the sense of place and understanding of its surrounding. An example where this is evident is the design of South Africa’s Constitutional Court (figure 2.34) by Design Workshop:SA and Urban Solutions. This as Pallasmaa describes, aims to project a sense of expression and meaning. It sits respectfully in its context, honouring its surrounding whilst maintaining its identity as a civic building of importance. The use of recycled materials from the old prison that once existed on site expresses the notion of an architecture responding to time. The building’s robustness responds to its surrounding, being situated in Hillbrow, a district within Johannesburg CBD with a ‘brutal’ and robust architectural language.



Figure 2.34: The Constitutional Court of South Africa in Hillbrow, JHB designed by Design Workshop SA and Urban Solution. (Source: www.sitesofconsciences.org)

Pallasmaa breaks down his analysis into all the different senses and how they contribute to the greater experience, understanding of space, our surrounding and the built environment. He discusses how the

visual sense is often the most focussed of our senses when we experience what is around us. Plato regarded vision as humanity's greatest gift, and during the renaissance the invention of perspective representation made the eye the centre of the perceptual world (Pallasmaa, 2005: 16). When experiencing life, the dominance of the visual sense and the suppression of the other senses often leads us towards detachment, isolation and exteriority. This then promoted ocularcentric based designs seen during postmodernity within architecture, which critical regionalism would aim to rethink this approach. Lawson (2001) argues that we subconsciously integrate the experience of all our senses without conscious analysis, but that architects need to be consciously aware of the body, its movements and sensations in order to extend the built form into the dimension of human subjectivity (Lawson, 2001: 43). The major issue in the current industrial mass production of visual imagery is that it has a tendency to separate vision from emotional involvement and identification, this then gives imagery a mesmerising flow without focus or participation from the observer, seen in most contemporary works that have become iconography and merely a visual object (figure 2.35). The observer becomes detached from an incarnate relation with the environment through the suppression of the other senses, in particular by means of technological extensions of the eye, and the proliferation of images (Pallasmaa, 2005: 27).



Figure 2.35: Zaha Hadid's Dubai Performing Art Centre is an example of an architecture focussed on the visual sense. Building does not respond well with its occupants and has very little connection to the user. (Source: www.nytimes.com)

However important the visual sense is in our perception of space and what is around us, the other senses carry as much significance to understanding the concept of the space. This concept is clearly demonstrated by Bloomer (1976) who argues that the visually impaired are not unable to experience or embody space; instead they use their heightened gustatory, aural, tactile, and olfactory interpretation of space as an opportunity to communicate with the human body (Bloomer, 1976: 13). This may be critical in the understanding of how the architectural intervention that will be generated from this study aims to

contribute to a building that connects to the occupants and thus the idea of integrating all senses in their experience is vital.

Architecture like various other art forms aims to express and relates itself to man's being (our body) in the world. According to Norberg-Schulz (1971), we dwell in architecture and architecture dwells in us. He believes that if architects take the position of designing from the ideology that the body is located at the centre of the perceptual world, it will open up an architecture which naturally stimulates all the senses (Norberg-Schulz, 1971: 15). Pallasmaa sees the task of art and architecture as a means or system that reconstructs the experience of an undifferentiated 'interior' world, where the observer is not merely a spectator but positively engages and becomes unified with it. Contemporary architecture and cities have developed a rather inhumane sensitivity and this can be understood as the result of the negligence of the body and the senses, and an imbalance in our sensory systems. (Pallasmaa 2005; 16) Architects such as Tadao Ando design with the body in mind, what is described in Japanese culture as 'shintai'. Ando (1988) describes the concept of shintai as the dynamic relationship between the body and world by stating:

"The body articulates the world. At the same time, the body is articulated by the world. When "I" perceive the concrete to be something cold and hard, "I" recognize the body as something warm and soft. In this way the body in its dynamic relationship with the world becomes the Shintai. It is only the Shintai in this sense that builds or understands architecture. The Shintai is a sentient being that responds to the world" (Ando, 1988 cited in Foggen, 2006: 3).

According to Temple (2006), Ando achieves 'physical intensity' by matter of creating constructs of space, materials and light that transforms the users experience by sensitizing their consciousness to an authentic engagement in the immediacy of their sensory experience (Temple, 2006: 256). This is through the connection of nature and the built form that Ando expresses the concept of 'shintai'. We experience ourselves in architecture, and architecture exists through our embodied experience; meaning that architecture and our bodies supplement and define each other. The haptic qualities of space are therefore created within Ando's work through his conceptualisation of an architecture of the body (figure 2.36). This spatial quality expresses his consideration of designing of



Figure 2.36: The Hyogo Chapel in Kobe, Japan by Tadao Ando (Source: www.quotesque.net)

the body; with the space and proportions being of human scale as well as expressing how concrete can appear delicate through the use of light, which often plays a significant role in his architecture.

Sense of place and understanding of surrounding is crucial in the success of the architectural object in its entirety. However this is another factor that contemporary architecture has neglected over recent years. This exclusion of important considerations was at the risk of separating architecture from the experience of life and society. In Robert Venturi's book 'Complexity and Contradictions in Architecture' he further endorses Pallasmaa's statement, "*An architectural work is great precisely because of the oppositional and contradictory intentions and allusions it succeeds in fusing together. A tension between conscious intentions and unconscious drives is necessary for a work in order to open up the emotional participation of the observer*" (Pallasmaa, 2005: 28). Venturi strongly believes that for architecture to be rich and have meaning, it needs to advocate a sense of complexity and contradiction as architecture itself is a very dynamic and complex art. Venturi believed that with all the issues that architects have to face becoming more complex, the solution should express and react to this. This was the architectural responses that *critical regionalism* as a 'style' would aim to express in its work. How we as humans perceive, understand and experience the built environment has most commonly been investigated through the gestalt laws of visual perception.

When one experiences architecture, one of the initial visual elements the observer will have with the building will be with the materials and surfaces, much like with art where the medium at which the artist uses is our first point of interest that attracts our eye. Jencks (1997) strongly disagrees with these notions of ocular favouritism by arguing that architecture cannot solely be experienced as a visual entity as the built form is concerned with the physical articulation of space; the sensory void contained and generated by buildings being as important and material a part of its existence as the substance of its fabric (Jencks, 1997: 97). In architecture, the choice of material is significant on how we read and understand it. Materials also aid in how the building will blend with its surrounding. Pallasmaa investigates the difference between natural and machine-made materials. He states, "*The machine-made materials of today – scale less sheets of glass, enamelled metals and synthetic plastics – tend to present their unyielding surfaces to the eye without conveying their material essence or age. Buildings of this technological age usually deliberately aim at ageless perfection, and they do not incorporate the dimension of time, or the unavoidable and mentally significant processes of aging*" (Pallasmaa, 2005: 32). He feels that natural materials will often connect easier with the observer due to previous experience and these express their age and history, as well as the story of their origins and their history of human use. Natural masonry materials such as brick or stone, and even concrete give architecture a sense of solidity and strength and permanence, this firmly asserts the building on its site. This can be

seen in the Cam Framis Museum in Barcelona (*figure 2.37*). However other processed materials have been manufactured to express similar effects of ageing and weathering such as Cor-teen steel (*figure 2.38*) and copper cladding, both machine-made materials commonly used in recent times.



Figure 2.37 (left): Rigour and solidity of concrete used in the Cam Framis Museum in Barcelona, Spain by Jordi Badia expresses a bold architecture and permanence on its site & figure 2.38 (right): The Cor-teen steel cladding used at the School of Art & Art History at the University of Iowa by Steven Holl Architects will weather and express the element of time (Source: www.archdaily.com)

Architects have a daunting task and responsibility to which they have to fulfil, they shape how people experience their surroundings and their day to day routines. Architecture as Pallasmaa promotes throughout the book is an art within itself and contributes extensively to the existence of man and the world. Architecture reflects, materialises and eternalises ideas and images of ideal life. In its way of representing and structuring action and power, societal and cultural order, interaction and separation, identity and memory, architecture is engaged with fundamental existential questions (Pallasmaa, 2005: 71). Art and architecture is a representation of ones thoughts and idea's realized in the physical form. How the observer experiences and perceives this is up to their understanding of the situation and how they read it. Consequently, architecture is communication from the body of the architect directly to the body of the person who encounters the work, perhaps centuries later (Pallasmaa, 2005: 67).

2.4.4 Summary

“It is the task of the architect to create buildings possessing meaning and memories which enhance the character of their surroundings” (Trancik, 1986: 114).

To define what a meaningful architecture is becomes paradoxical, as all architecture in one form or another should be 'meaningful'. However through this segment of the chapter, it is evident that there are many factors that in essence give architecture meaning. Architecture is the most public art, in most

cases it is accessible by all. In this case, it should aim to create the same significance as art when the observer connects with the work. There are layers of interpretation and meaning that the work must possess to be a successful piece of art. Perception is pivotal in determining how the observer connects with this and from that makes an analysis to which defines the perception of what they experience. Architecture should be experienced in the same respect. It should aim to evoke a variety of perceptions from different users, people from different backgrounds and life experiences should have their own separate and unique connection with the building, it is merely not a 'one-liner' or 'one size fits all' approach.

Through the investigation of various literature, the findings revealed that the major issue with experiencing architecture, like one experiencing art, is that most art is ocular-centric, it focuses highly on the sense of sight and often neglects all the other senses. Since the era of modernism which has had a great influence on contemporary architecture of today, this movement focused primarily on architecture as an object, a piece of art and neglected what was around it. Architecture is of the body and should evoke all senses through the experience of this. Through 'reading' architecture, we then can develop our perceptions further and begin to connect with the building on a more personal level. Pallasmaa states;

"Significant architecture makes us experience ourselves as complete embodied and spiritual beings. In fact, this is the great function of all meaningful art." (Pallasmaa, 2005)

Through exploring the connection between semiotics and the built form, it revealed how architecture that aims to represent and communicate more than just being a functional object becomes far more significant. An architecture that has several layers allows the observer to experience it closely and not only through function. Semiology becomes significant to the research as the proposed building is to cater for the indigent community, a community that has been disconnected from society. The objective of an architecture that serves these individuals should be a representation of this community and aim to change the often negative perceptions society has of them. Architecture therefore becomes a platform for communication, that of the voices of its occupants and having the opportunity to educate and uplift.

Through investigating *critical regionalism* and its significance to creating a meaningful architecture that is conscious and responsive to several key factors, the literature explored the concept of place. Through place, memories are created by making connections with elements within the place. The built environment is pivotal in creating place as this is the most physical representation that can be experienced thus making it easier to make the connection with the place. Places and architecture hold

large responsibilities in moulding individuals and allowing these individuals to connect themselves back to their community and the world. This can be related back to the theory of perception as one understands place through perception. This perception therefore allows them to analyse it thoroughly through the perception of the built environment. For architecture to be successful it needs to consider the art and spirit of place, this is not an isolated entity but holds far greater influence on the people and place. Critical regionalism becomes significant to the research and topic as this is overriding theory that expresses all three key concepts and merges them to define an appropriate architectural response to the main research question. Through critical regionalism, the indigent can connect with the building and have platforms for narratives to be expressed within the architecture, empowering this community through an architecture of the people.

2.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter of the dissertation reviewed literature from a various authors whose writings would be utilised to achieve an understanding of main research topic and questions. Throughout this chapter, the research aimed to give a broader break down of the relevance to the topic by exploring its three key concepts of *'mural art'*, *'indigent empowerment'* and *'meaningful architecture'*. It was through these three concepts that the dissertation's key social theories of *'perception'*, *'empowerment'*, and *'representation'* were investigated. This then led to an architectural engagement and unifying these concepts and theories, by investigating *'critical regionalism'*.

The findings aimed to make the connection between the key concept and theories that would address how through the understanding of the significance of mural art, this can be utilised to create platforms which allow for reformation of the indigent through the empowerment of this community. Through the connection between *'theory of perception'* and *mural art*, the findings illustrated how what is expressed within the art work can begin to alter the way we see ourselves and the environment that we live in. Perception engages man with the universe through varying elements of experience, mural art then becomes the act or catalyst that engages man with narratives of the place and people within it, allowing for one to understand and perceive these subjects through the art work.

The findings then related and connected the *'theory of perception'* with that of the *'theory of empowerment'*, illustrating how through mural art, this can be utilised as a tool that can empower the indigent community by allowing them to contribute to the livelihood of the urban streetscape, as well as having the opportunity to be heard and acknowledged by those who experience the work which is an the expression of themselves. The literature review explored the significance that community

development and participation have in the empowering of these individuals. Community allows an individual to connect with others from similar backgrounds, sharing experiences and creating new community narratives.

These theories then are critical in the understanding and the interpretation of the *'theory of representation'* within a meaningful architecture. Architecture and how it is represented in itself has a similar role as that of mural art, both creating a sense of understanding and identity of a place. Through analysing semiotics, one begins to understand the significance of architecture as a platform that connects and represents the people. When mural art is fused with the built environment, this can create environments that are more expressive and educate those who move past and occupy these buildings. These could then regenerate unwelcoming and derelict areas within our urban landscape.

The investigation of *'critical regionalism'* was then explored and utilised as a mechanism that would unify all the three key subject matters. This was by finding the main commonalities that mural art, the indigent and architecture share, the most significant being their engagement with place and how these create and can adapt place environment. Consideration of place becomes significant when designing in urban environments where the essence of the people, surroundings, historical and cultural identity should be captured. *Critical regionalism* utilises these factors to create architecture of true meaning that strengthens the 'sense of place', as well as have a strong connection between man and the built environment. It also focuses on the principles of designing for the bodily experience, which Pallasmaa's 'Eyes of the skin' investigates how architecture can be designed for the entire human experience, capturing all the senses to make an architecture that has layers of interpretation, as well as physical and emotional experience.

There are many considerations that need to be addressed when designing environments for the indigent, implementation of these will allow for an architecture that is appropriate for the users as well as become 'meaningful' architecture through the functional purpose of a built environment that aims to harness a lost community within our society. Eco expressed how true architecture has a far greater purpose and role than to be merely functional, but it is to communicate and symbolise for a significant second function, that represents not only the users but the place. These considerations were to be taken into account so to generate relevant precedent and case studies in the chapters to follow.

CHAPTER THREE
PRECEDENT STUDIES

3.1 CHAPTER OUTLINE

This chapter of this research shall be a review and investigation into precedent studies of existing buildings which shall be used as guides in generating an appropriate intervention. The rationale for the wide spectrum of building typologies was to cover different aspects of the proposed building, by analysing specialist buildings. For this dissertation, a qualitative example and several international examples have been chosen for a far greater understanding of the diverse functionality of the proposed intervention. The precedent studies that have been chosen each focus on distinctly separate areas.

In this chapter, the precedent studies will be critically analysed through the understanding of various components such as the response to 'place', social implications of the design, the representation of the built form as a symbol, as well as the fundamental functionality of the programme and how the users are to be considered in this. By evaluating the different precedent examples, conclusions shall be drawn and these will play a crucial role in informing the development of the proposed building typology of the dissertation.

3.2 THE BRIDGE HOMELESS ASSISTANCE CENTRE (*figure 3.1*)

Architects: **Overland Partners**

Location: **Dallas, Texas, USA**

Project area: **7 000 sqm.**

Project year: **2008**



Figure 3.1: The exterior view from the street of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre (source: www.archdaily.com)

3.2.1 Project background

During the first decade of the 21st century, Dallas was to go through what was considered by several community leaders as a severe homelessness crisis. Approximately 6 000 people in Dallas were categorized as indigent and of those, an estimated 1 000 were classified as chronically indigent, which meant that the person had a disabling condition and were also continuously or repeatedly without shelter. Like in most cases, the indigent of Dallas would gather in public places such as parks, in and around public buildings and mostly the streets of downtown Dallas. During this time, a large amount of crimes were recorded in the downtown precinct, the indigent were often the offenders but they were not severe or harming crimes, mainly theft. This enraged downtown Dallas business owners who felt

annoyed at always having to clean up after the homeless, as well as losing many customers out of fear of the rising presence of homeless people. Indigence had developed to a far greater issue to the community than it needed to be, not only was the issue dwindling the possibilities of economic growth due to its interference with local businesses but it also became costly for the city as dealing with the indigent through the police, in jail, in mental health facilities, in the emergency room, and in emergency shelters was proving to be far more costly than providing housing for this indigent community.

In 2003 the city would begin to strategize comprehensive methods to eradicate the issue of indigence within ten year process. The proposal would aim to increase funds for indigent programs, expand the capacity of assistance centres, and increase the supply of permanent housing for the homeless. At the core of the proposal was to create a new 24-hour indigent assistance centre to provide daytime and night-time shelter which would have access to a full continuum of care and services to help the indigent individuals on the road back to housing. The next steps in the process were finding the ideal site and begin conceptualising the project design which would be crucial. Voters had approved a \$3 million bond referendum which would be used towards funding the project, however this wouldn't be enough to cover both the site and building cost so an additional public bond referendum to build the facility was required. Public and political support would be important. Other crucial factors were where the facility would be located and how it would be represented as an architectural and urban symbol would help shape public opinion on what was now known as "The Bridge." The project had its fair amount of sceptics, public and political figures opposed the idea of having an indigent centre as such a prominent civic structure within Dallas' downtown precinct but eventually in January of 2006, construction of the proposal began.

3.2.2 Justification of the precedent study

Dallas, like Durban, suffered from a high and increasing population of indigent individuals within its city centre and surrounding areas. Through the *'theory of perception'* The Bridge Centre then aimed to rethink the way that the city and society distinguishes these individuals by creating a facility that would not only house the indigent community, but afford them the opportunity to learn and be educated through the various programmes and skills training facilities offered at The Bridge, taking them away from the hardship these individuals once experienced that led to them utilising the city centre and public places of high exposure. By relocating these individuals into the facility, it was noted how petty crimes within the city decreased, as well as interference many store owners in the downtown area suffered from the indigent individuals who would deter potential customers. Without the high negative exposure

of the indigent, this would then strip the negative stigma and perception that people within downtown Dallas had of the indigent community. The *'theory of empowerment'* is pivotal in the aims of the project to improve the living conditions of these individuals and further aim to have them learn how to sustain themselves so that they can at a later stage sustain themselves once the programme has rehabilitated them. The building houses many functions that will allow for the empowering of these individuals. This then filters into the *'theory of representation'*, in the way this facility becomes symbolic of the users that occupy it, giving them an opportunity to redefine their life after the shortcomings they have suffered. Through representation, the project symbolises how architecture can be utilised to dignify and empower people, allowing for a changing perception of the indigent community.

3.2.3 Urban context and locality



Figure 3.2: Aerial view of the site location of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre and its proximity to the city centre (source: www.brunerfoundation.org)

The site was imperative in the success of drawing investors and support from the public, local authority and possible businesses which would aid in the funding of the project. The site chosen was in the warehouse district of downtown Dallas (figure 3.2), located near important points of reference such as the town's main Farmer's Market and 3 blocks from the Dallas City Hall were most of the indigent people would congregate.

“The Bridge” complex occupies an entire city block which is about 3.4 acres of land. The block adjacent to it was left vacant to accommodate another part of the complex but has been left underdeveloped so not to interfere with the possibilities of its future use as a public thoroughfare.

The building comprises of six blocks which are mainly dense toward the north and east of the site so to leave possibilities for future expansion and minimize its impact on its surroundings. The facades are built up to the sidewalk creating a clear urban edge consistent with neighbouring buildings such as the printing plant, a vacant warehouse, the Farmer’s Market and a public school situated a block away. Besides those facilities, the warehouse district is dominated by surface parking lots and city streets that connect outlying areas to the CBD via the Interstate Highway which sits behind The Bridge. This area use to be an economical and commercial hub prior to broader trends of suburbanization and de-industrialization. The area slowly became a hotspot for Dallas’ ever growing indigent population after the employment base depleted, the supporting retail stores closed down and many building structures were left vacant and started to become dilapidated.

The task force and project sponsors involved in realising The Bridge had emphasized the importance of the site, the need for it to be within close proximity to Dallas’ City Hall expressed their approach towards the indigent community, not merely adopting the “out of sight, out of mind” mentality. The choice for this location expresses a public ambivalence toward the indigent and reflects a compromise between keeping the indigent somewhat out of view and ensuring they are connected to a network of public spaces, transportation facilities, pedestrian paths, and amenities such as the planned “Emerald Necklace” of city centre parks. By approaching the project in this manner showed how they wished for the perception of the indigent to change through an architectural landmark that represented a new symbol for the city and those who are to occupy it. The selection of this site was a win-win for both those who occupied the building and the city; it balanced an impulse to show compassion for the indigent whilst still maintaining the ability to protect private and public investments in downtown Dallas precinct.

3.2.3 Project objectives

The Bridge was to implement a strategy aimed at the elimination of chronic indigence in Dallas by providing “housing first” and by connecting the indigent to a continuum of support services to assist their transition back to permanent housing. Due to the many issues the city had had with the vast increase of the indigent community , the building and project objectives would be to reduce the financial and operational strain of chronic indigence on police, jails, hospitals, and other social services,

conserving scarce resources for the newly-indigent. This in turn would then reduce the negative impacts on people experiencing indigence living on the street, such as crimes of need, panhandling, inappropriate use of public facilities, and congregating in public spaces. The locality of the project was key, therefore careful consideration was to be made so that the facility in a way that does not isolate or stigmatize the indigence, but instead connects them to transportation, green space, and public facilities as well as to shelter and services in a safe, caring, respectful, and dignified refuge. Lastly, the shelter facility was to project a positive image to both the indigent and the general public and expresses the community's compassionate attitude toward the plight of the indigent.

The Bridge was conceptualised as a project that would address all the needs of the indigent community within one location. It would serve as a core central node that housed a network of services which were designed to assist in getting these individuals under adequate shelter (*figure 3.3*), help them with employment, provide supportive services and give them a sense of having a “normal life” which expresses how it would also use the notion of empowerment of these individuals as a mechanism for rehabilitation. The representation of this building was one of significance to its user and the greater community, it would aim to eradicate the chronic indigence situation in Dallas and by doing so, allow for people's perception of the indigent to change once they are not seen as polluting the city's environment and being issues to businesses within the business district. The facilities would provide for the needs of individuals who suffer from indigence who are unemployed, mentally ill, addicted, abused in domestic settings and otherwise troubled. These objectives for The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre fall under the same aims and objectives of the proposed intervention of this research. The implementation of this shall be crucial to understanding the requirements of doing a building typology such as this.

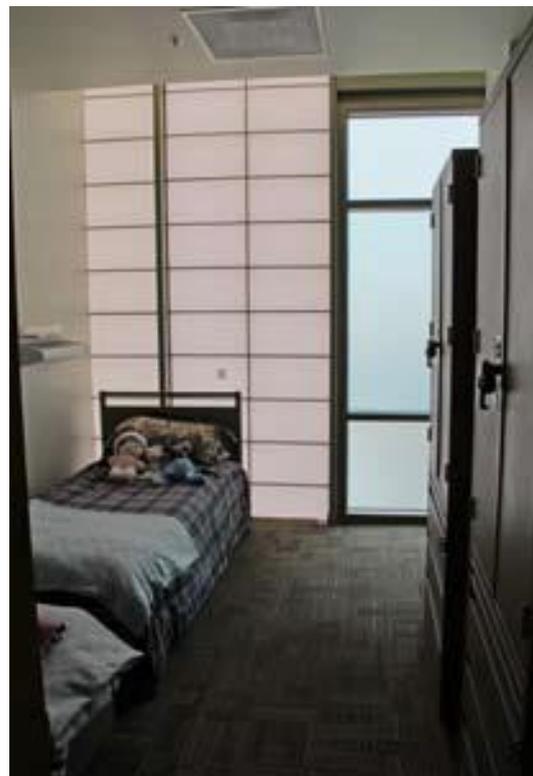


Figure 3.3: A dorm room in The Bridge (**source:** www.brunerfoundation.org)

3.2.4 Programme and Planning

The main design planning principle of The Bridge is the use of a central core which is a well landscaped courtyard to which all six buildings on site reflect and open up to whilst these still maintain a connection with the outer boundaries ie. the street. The various buildings numbered in (figure 3.4) are as follows:

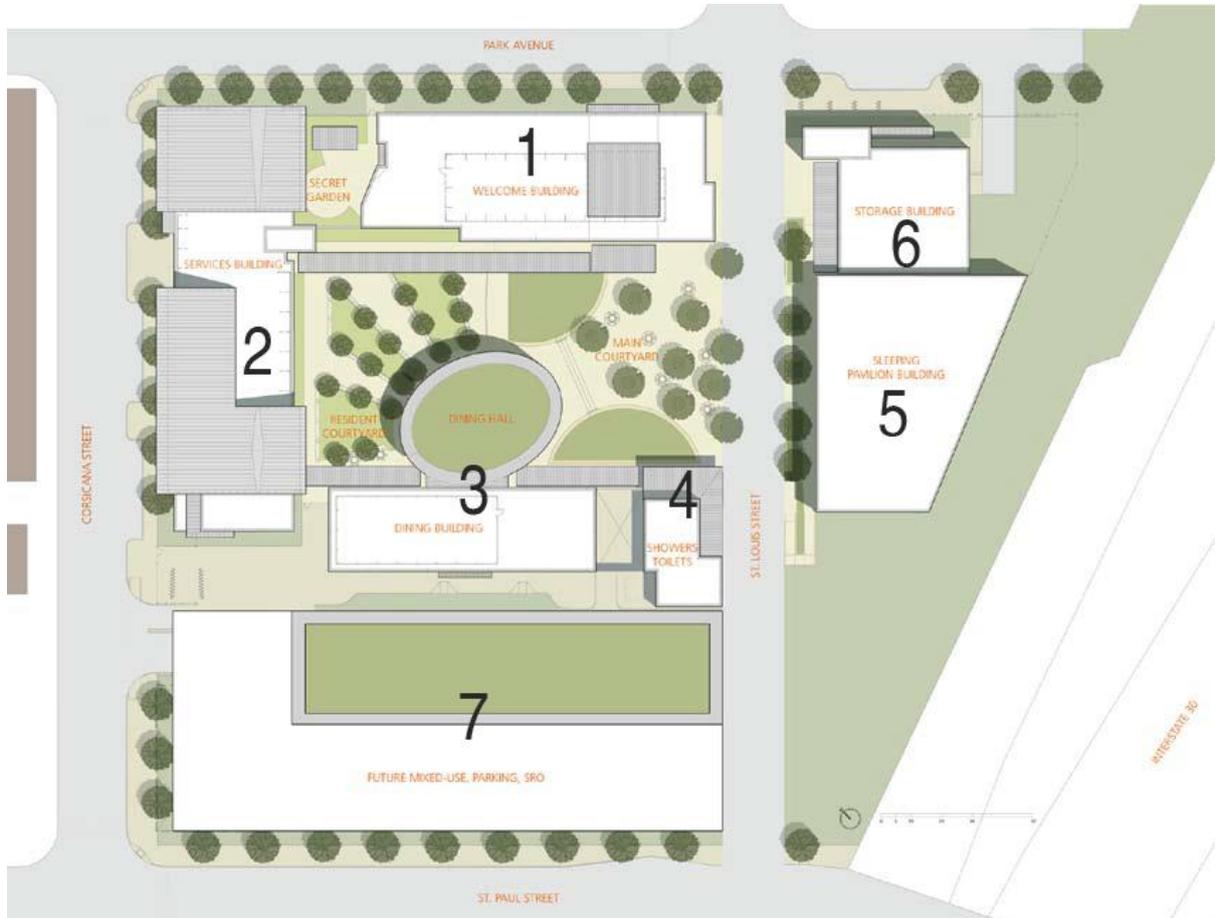


Figure 3.4: Site plan of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre with the six buildings around the central interior courtyard (source: www.brunerfoundation.org)



Figure 3.5: Reading booths in library of the welcome building for learning purposes (source: www.archdaily.com)

The Welcome Building (no.1 in figure 3.4) houses the most public facilities within the Bridge centre. This building adjoins the Entry Courtyard on the northeast side of the complex and includes laundry facilities, post office, day-care, a barber shop, library (figure 3.5), and classrooms. It's also the place where guests meet with intake staff – The Bridge has a “conciierge” – to consider their next step in a transition process.



Figure 3.6: The facility for job placement and housing assistance within the services building (source: www.brunerfoundation.org)

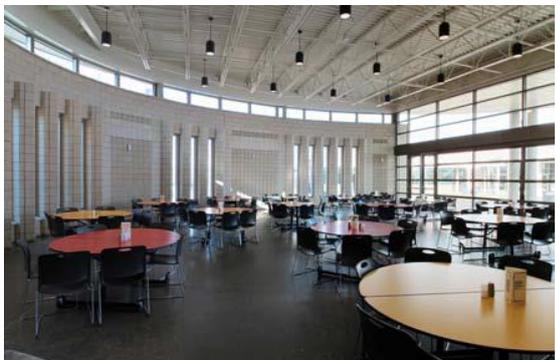


Figure 3.7: The dining hall where meals are served (source: www.brunerfoundation.org)

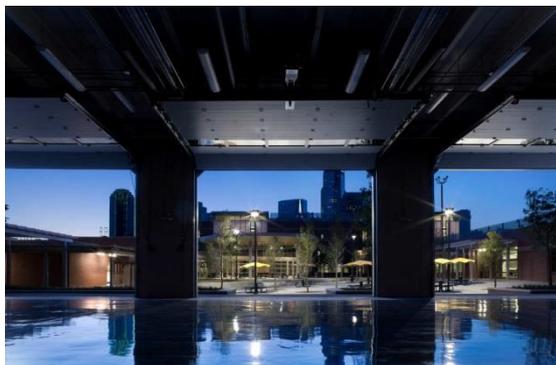


Figure 3.8: The open plan sleeping pavilion (source: www.brunerfoundation.org)

'The Services Building (no.2 in figure 3.4)' includes first floor space for medical clinics, health screening, counselling, and training; second floor space for supportive services such as legal aid, travellers' aid, job placement (figure 3.6), housing assistance, work-live housing, and administration; and third floor space for longer-term residents; a men's dorm, a women's dorm, and rooms for special needs guests such as the transgendered, convalescing, or elderly.

'The Dining Pavilion and Kitchen (no.3 in figure 3.4)' (figure 3.7) occupies a central location in the complex, creating the social hub of the complex, and providing three meals a day prepared by the Stew pot, a long-time Presbyterian Church charity in Dallas. They relocated their meal service from their main site when The Bridge opened round the clock service. The Bridge Centre also houses 'Outdoor Restrooms and Showers (no.4 in figure 3.4)' offers the opportunity for all guests of The Bridge, regardless of how long they stay, to take care of their basic personal needs in an accessible location. The Sleeping Pavilion (no.5 in figure 3.4)' is an adaptively reused warehouse building (figure 3.8) on the southwest side of the complex providing emergency shelter for about 300 people who sleep on mats. The garage-style

doors of the building are left open for residents who feel more comfortable sleeping outdoors, as many long-term people experiencing homelessness do. 'The Storage Building (no.6 in figure 3.4)' provides space for guests to keep their possessions safely while visiting The Bridge. It also includes a kennel for dogs – incorporated in the complex in acknowledgement that many people experiencing homelessness have canine companions that travel with them. 'Future mixed-use building (no.7 in figure 3.4)' is currently a vacant plot used for parking.



First Floor Plan

Figure 3.9: First floor plan of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre illustrating the six buildings and their connection with the central courtyard (source: www.archdaily.com)



Second Floor Plan

Figure 3.10: Second floor plan of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre illustrating the north-west facing services blocks with the work-live units and administration block (source: www.archdaily.com)

3.2.5 Design rationale

The design of The Bridge complex was to be simple and effective for both the occupants of the building, be it the guest or staff to understand and move around freely. The core idea was then to create a campus and ensemble of buildings that centered around a spacious and well landscaped central courtyard (*figure 3.10*). The courtyards are an integral part of the design. The visitor's first experience upon entering through the gate is not a door but rather an entry courtyard. The second courtyard becomes the outdoor eating and 'chilling' space of the dining pavilion. A third being a private courtyard for the residents only and lastly a "secret garden" which is a small courtyard reserved for individuals who may have children under the age of eighteen who also suffer from indigence. The design of the project was to make key considerations to the programme as the building had different users of varying function use to how it was to be broken down was significant to how visitors and the indigent occupants utilize the facility. With The Bridge being an indigent shelter aiming to redefine such a typology, the programme needed to adhere to the complex service delivery model and the diverse needs of the occupants of The Bridge. What was key was the understanding of the circulation and multiple pathways the guests would have to take throughout the facility and accessibility to the services, this was to be carefully considered in the layering system of the project.



Figure 3.11: An internal view of the main courtyard space with the guest occupying it (source: www.archdaily.com)

3.2.6 Summary

The implementation of the '*theory of perception*' in The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre stems from as far back as the inception of the project, where there was a clear vision by the organizations involved in the project to recognize the indigent community and through the proposed facility, allow them, in essence to redefine themselves and their role in society, Durban, like Dallas suffers from a vast amount of indigent individuals seen mainly in the public areas of the city such as Farewell Square opposite the City Hall, in public parks and roaming the city streets. Even amongst a swarmed and vibrant city centre, these individuals are often not acknowledged by those passing by. Through the often negative *perception* of these individuals, this has resulted in the lack of care and acknowledgement of these individuals who share the same need for respect and dignity, The Bridge therefore aims to change the *perception* of the indigent by providing them with a facility that they can be proud of and represents them as individuals with pride and dignity.

The '*theory of empowerment*' is one expressed highly within the 'campus concept' by the architect, this building had to serve functions that would give these individuals a sense of dignity and empowerment, as well as providing shelter. This also expresses the idea of this facility being open yet protected. The courtyards were visualized as being spaces where communities within The Bridge could grow and develop. The building was to provide for platforms and services for the indigent that would assist them in getting their lives back on track, empowering them through skills training and facilities that would harness their learning. By the facility implementing the '*theory of empowerment*' and assisting these individuals to improve their lives, this encompasses an architecture that is meaningful.

Through the '*theory of representation*', the Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre becomes symbol of a new outlook towards the indigent community of Dallas, one that serves to empower these individuals and aid them in recovering from their once crippled situation and once more being given an opportunity to be part of the greater community. The building is bold and located in an area of close proximity to the main business district, as well as the Dallas' city hall, expressing the importance of the indigent who occupy the facility. Through the 'representation' of a dignified and more transparent architectural model for the homeless, this aims to create a varying perception of this community, one that communicates their significance and need for acknowledgement by the greater community.

The building is situated in an industrial area, within close proximity to Dallas' city centre. Through '*critical regionalism*', the proposal has taken cognizance of its place, creating a facility for the indigent

that is bold and robust, with its hard edges and scale responding to the characteristics of its place. The materials and aesthetics of the project have been influenced by the surrounding buildings, using materials that are robust and hardwearing such as the red brick common to the warehouses nearby. Steel and polycarbonate sheeting panels have been also utilized which reflect the 'machine-made' driven industries that are common to the area. This building becomes the beacon of light for both the occupants and the area, reflecting a positive change for both its user and place. The massing of the building expresses its durability and presence, a building built for permanence. Through a conscious approach, this building becomes a place of empowerment for its occupants.

The ideals and concepts that have been investigated and achieved in the design of The Bridge Homeless Assistance Centre are successful in making the final product what it has become. This precedent shall be relevant in several components of the proposed intervention such as the concept of creating a variety of platforms for communities to develop, the idea of refurbishing existing buildings which have significance to the area therefore keeping the connection to its context, the use of durable materials (*figure 3.12*) and giving the occupants a sense of ownership through public art within the building are amongst the key considerations that will be crucial in the success of the proposal.



Figure 3.12 The Bridge Homeless and Assistance Centre that is dominant and shows durability through its robust material choices (source: www.brunerfoundation.org)

The design and organizational framework of The Bridge is a project that aims to give the indigent community of Dallas a new sense of life, where their dignity is restored and can create new friendships and communities. The Bridge is not merely a shelter where it houses these individuals but also a platform for empowering them through skills training and providing facilities for learning. The building illustrates how an architecture that serves to assist individuals such as the homeless can assist improvement of its surrounding and people's perception of these individuals, thus giving the project great significance and meaning.

3.3 LOGAN CENTRE FOR THE ARTS – UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO (*figure 3.13*)

Architects: **Tod Williams and Billie Tsien Architects (New York)**

Location: **Chicago, Illinois**

Client: **The University of Chicago**

Building Area: **17 100 sq.m**

Building Footprint: **4 650 sq.m**



Figure 3.13: The aerial top view of the Logan Centre for the Arts in its context of the University of Chicago premises. (source: www.archdaily.com)

3.3.1 Project background

In the early 1890's, a one mile long green space was laid out by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux which would split the University of Chicago's Hyde Park campus into two separate halves, one half that had the neo-Gothic spires and quadrangles to the northern side and the other southern half comprising of a large number of modernist buildings. The University of Chicago has recently been going through the process of expanding its facilities and filling in the gap on the south side of the midway of this large block. Recent expansion has seen new educational buildings, residence halls, parking facilities, a seminary and a chiller plant. However the most significant of the new development on the University of Chicago one block wide zone is the new Logan Centre for the Arts.

The prestigious project was to be part of a 2006 internationally invited design competition. Many of the more internationally acclaimed design firms were involved and amongst the finalist were: Thom Mayne's firm Morphosis from Santa Monica, Daniel Libeskind's office in New York, Hans Hollien of Vienna, 1993 Pritzker Prize winner Fumihiko Maki and Associates from Tokyo but it was to be a smaller firm from New York called Tod Williams and Billie Tsien Architects (TWBTA) who collaborated with Holabird & Root, a Chicago based firm that would take the honours and be commissioned to design the new art centre.

3.3.2 Justification of the precedent study



Figure 3.14: A sculpture studio and classroom in the Logan Centre for the Arts (source: www.archdaily.com)

The Logan Centre for the Arts is a facility that aims to promote and harness students who have a passion with the arts disciplines, given them the opportunity to explore and learn various skills through the various programmes. Through the *'theory of empowerment'* within the proposal of A Community Art and

Assistance Centre for the indigent in Durban, one of the key components and processes of empowering will be the education and art skills training that will be offered at the facility. This component of art education and skills training is highly expressed within the Logan Centre for the Arts, providing art facilities such as studios (figure 3.14), workshops, classrooms and exhibition spaces. These various facilities will be adopted into the proposal, allowing the indigent community to learn and express themselves, thus empowering them in the process. Through the *'theory of representation'* this building has become iconic and a symbol of the arts discipline with the University premises as well as the city of Chicago, illustrating the significance and appreciation for the art and its role in society. The proposal seeks to be a symbol of the arts in Durban, expressing and representing its diverse cultures and people.

3.3.3 Urban context and locality



Figure 3.15: The aerial top view of the University of Chicago campus with the iconic Chicago city skyline in the backdrop and expansive green spaces. (source: www.archdaily.com)

With a project is set in a university with vast history and has seen a variety of different architectural styles being adapted to the campus buildings, as well as the greater context of the State of Illinois and in particular the City of Chicago. This city has always had a reputation for some of the finest architecture in the United States, therefore *critical regionalism* would be significant in this building successful stitching to this rich environment. What was key for the architects was how they would relate the new proposal to the fine architecture of the University of Chicago Campus, more specifically the historic city centre. There were two significant contextual connections that had to be made to truly encompass a sense of place. The first being how this was to relate to Chicago (*figure 3.15*) which is highly recognised for its towering city skyline comprising of several well-known high rise buildings as well as the historic gothic buildings on campus with spires, so an exploration into elements of strong verticality had to be explored and secondly the strong modernism movement that saw Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie style being a significant part of the Illinois landscape, with the world renowned Robie house being situated on the University of Chicago's premises. What is also significant within the context is that even though there is a high concentration of built form, there is a great consideration of

green spaces both in the surrounding suburbs and the university itself thus this needed to be considered when designing upon such a heavily vegetated location.

3.3.4 Project objectives

The key objective that was envisioned by the university for the new Logan Centre for the Arts was for the architects to create a building that would not only house various art disciplines but design a place where arts overlap and friendships are formed (figure 3.16), where the



Figure 3.16: Relief spaces where students can connect on their breaks whilst overlooking the beautiful city (source: www.archdaily.com)

exhilarating and the unimaginable happen. This in essence would create empowerment of the students through the community like structure that is created with the varying art disciplines representing a different 'community', and together they would empower one another through constant engagement they have with each other, creating bonds and working harmoniously to improve. The buildings aimed to create a sense of multiple unpacking of several layers were the observer would explore and discover it over time. The architects aimed to have a close relationship between art and education. The "mixing bowl" concept was to be adapted to culture and learning. When the new director of the centre Bill Machel (2012) was asked why there was a need for mixing of the disciplines he replied, "The University of Chicago is known for its ability to support individual disciplines but then do really interesting work at the intersection of those disciplines. It's at the heart of our college...and it permeates the artistic work here as well. This is really an opportunity for us to do something distinctive and unique - that we're not just bringing (various) arts under one roof but designing a building to help them interact and mix in new ways."

The architects were well aware of the quality of buildings in both the state and the city, so for them to be satisfied with the project, they knew the building needed to be rigorously conceived and built. The new building would have to feel worthy to be situated among the great work that has come before but not to compete with these buildings. "Our work needed to relate but have its own power and voice, its

own integrity.” said Billie Tsein. This building was to be of great significance to the city and the occupants. Through theory of representation, the building was to be symbolic of not only for the art discipline within the building but the city as well.

3.3.5 Programme and Planning

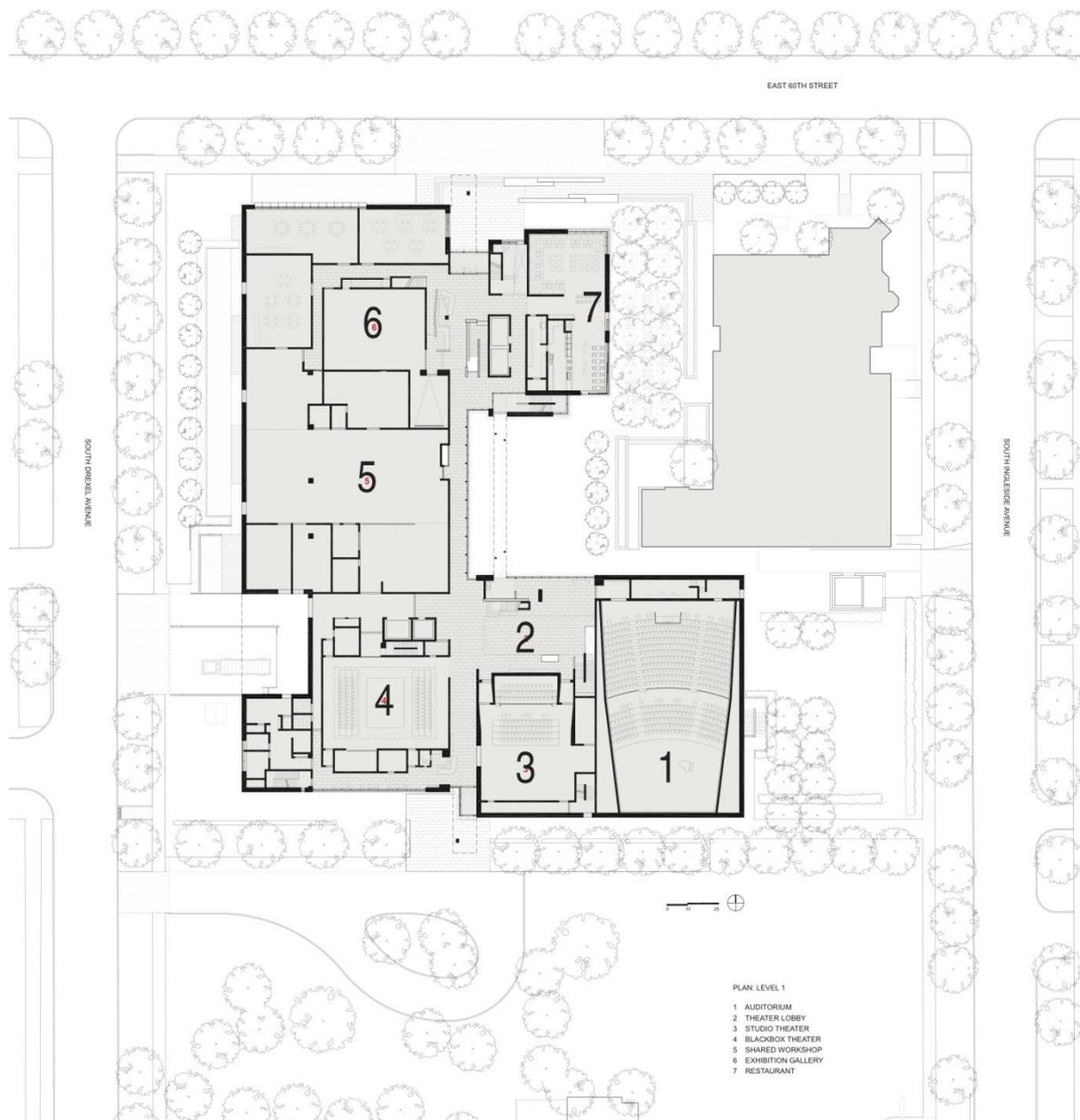


Figure 3.17: The site & ground of the Logan Centre for the Arts at University of Chicago - 1. Auditorium | 2. Theatre Lobby | 3. Studio Theatre | 4. Blackbox Theatre | 5. Shared workshop | 6. Exhibition Gallery | 7. Restaurant (source: www.archdaily.com)

The building is of simple geometry and comprises of 3 rectilinear forms that have varying functions (figure 3.17 – plan; page before). The two dominant forms are what the architects describe as “the warehouse” which is a two-storey base with a saw tooth clerestory roof, this has an industrial style feel to it as visual artist often find this appealing. This houses the art student’s workshops, exhibition gallery and some studio facilities students. The spaces are for artists who often have varying ideas, perceptions and imagination process so it aimed to provide for adaptability by utilising movable partitions to accommodate whatever space or experience was desired (figure 3.18). The second and most dominant form of the Logan Centre for the arts is the eleven storey tower referred to by the architects as “the castle” and houses the academic sobriety of the university’s 1920s college-Gothic style, signalling the importance of arts at an institution better known for economics and sciences. . The 170-foot tower (figure 3.19) houses a performance penthouse, screening room, rooftop deck, classrooms, rehearsal rooms, and performance labs, while the podium features studio space, music practice rooms, workshops, a café, a digital media center, production and editing labs, two theaters, and a 474-seat performance hall. Within the tower, there are distributions of various art disciplines and functions such as dance studios, music practice rooms and

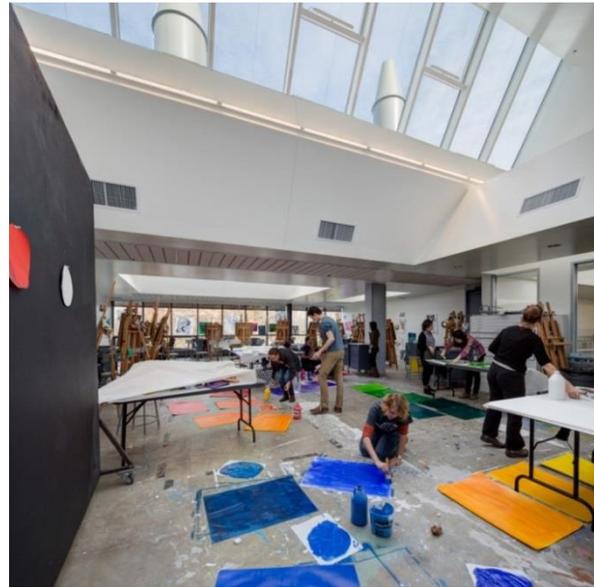


Figure 3.18: The workshop and studio space with clerestory allowing for expansive natural light (source: www.archdaily.com)



Figure 3.19: The tower next to the northern entrance (source: www.archdaily.com)

classrooms so that it promotes people from different disciplines to acknowledge and interact with one another.

There are two entrances on the north and south side of the building. The northern entrance of the facility opens to a linear hallway that runs the entire length of the building to the southern entrance with the variety of functions anchored of this main spine. Along the hallways, disciplines huddle in their enclaves in a layout that allows sociability.

3.3.6 Design Rationale



Figure 3.20: Longitudinal section of the Logan Centre for the Arts at University of Chicago - 1. Auditorium | 2. Courtyard | 3. Restaurant | 4. Film Screening Room | 5. Theatre Performance Rehearsal Room | 6. Dance Performance Rehearsal Room | 7. Performance Penthouse (source: www.archdaily.com – edited by author; 2013)

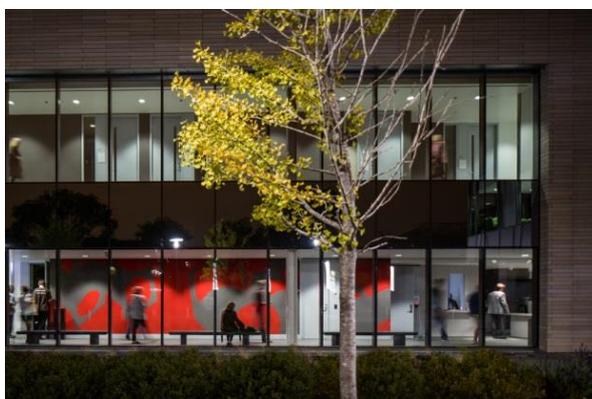


Figure 3.21: Outside the BlackBox Theatre (source: www.archdaily.com)

The Logan Centre is broken up into 3 segments, 2 low lying buildings which house more public functions and the tower which is layered with private spaces for students and performers (figure 3.20). These share a common courtyard space which connects these spaces. The main entrance for the public lies on the southern side of the building which houses the main auditorium and the theatres (figure 3.21) and on the northern entrance is



Figure 3.22: Performance Penthouse on the top floor of the tower (source: www.archdaily.com)

the entrance to the tower which houses the rehearsal rooms (figure 3.22) for both dance and theatre.

With the new project situated within a university that has a rich history and architectural reference from the existing buildings, the architects aimed to communicate this language throughout and for the building

to be of its context, respecting it and not trying to create contrast and often contradiction. This illustrated the significance of place to the designers, which through the *'theory of representation'* is a key component in defining a meaningful architecture. The use of locally sourced materials such as the stone tiles which are predominant throughout the entire were crucial in keeping to its vernacular aesthetics. The architects raised construction materials to a high art through careful selection and detailing of materials that bring a building to life.

3.3.6 Summary

Within the research, the *'theory of empowerment'* explores how the indigent community can be reformed and experiences a much more fulfilling life to the impoverished and unfortunate conditions they currently live through. The Logan Centre of the Arts implements the idea of empowering by creating a facility that aims to strengthen and connect the various art disciplines through the overlapping of various functions and creating spaces for people from all disciplines to share. What will be key in the proposal of the Community Art and Assistance Centre is the empowering of the indigent through providing them with facilities where they'll be able to receive art education and skills training. The Logan Centre provides such facilities where students learn to express themselves as well as connecting with other art disciplines within the building. This speaks of creating communities within the building which allows for empowerment of the individuals through the joint experiences that they share amongst each other. This is a principle that shall be adopted into the proposal, creating an art community that shall empower the individuals through the coming together of all individuals involved. The state of the art facilities allow the users to make the most of their working experience and learning

opportunity within the spaces. The building gives significance to the Arts, thus acknowledging the importance Art has in not only the university or academic world, but in society as a whole. There are a variety of exceptional platforms for the artist to display their work, be it performance or visual art, empowering the students by giving them the stage to have their work exposed for everyone to see.

Through the *'theory of representation'* and as a building that can be portrayed as an architecture of *critical regionalism*, the Logan Centre for the Arts has become a landmark and symbol for the university in its quality of design aesthetics. It makes clear references to the modernism of the existing buildings on campus and making connections to Chicago's identity with the tower mimicking the notorious high rises of Chicago's CBD. This illustrates how the centre used 'place' as one of the key design generators so that the building would represent the culture and identity of the city. This can be therefore said to reflect a meaningful architecture as it encompasses a great understanding of its surrounding, its use of materials which are sourced locally and evident in surrounding buildings, intricate detailing and play of volumes for sound quality purposes expresses its multi-sensory appeal. The representation of this bold and exciting building that stands as an icon on campus shows how the architects aim to give the individuals a sense of empowerment and acknowledgment. This new building shall signify the importance of art in a broader sense and not only within the confines of the university, it aims to draw in residents of bedraggled south Chicago neighbourhoods who have historically felt ignored. So in a sense, this is not only a facility for the university but also an urban regenerator. The *'theory of representation'* is expressed through what the building embodies for the occupants of the facility. These factors shall be explored within the proposal of a Community Art and Assistance Centre, with the building aiming to be a positive and dignified representation of the occupants of the building, which will be the indigent community.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter of the dissertation investigated precedents which were relevant to the theories of the previous chapter. Through the critical analysis of these three precedents, the information gathered revealed several other overlapping issues which are relevant and shall be dealt with in the dissertation.

The study investigated the various aspects through the *'theory of perception'* that are required to create an architecture that is critical to understanding how we are to perceive the indigent community within our city. The findings illustrated that through creating environments that harness this community and by removing them from highly exposed spaces within the city, society's perception of them changes due to not experiencing what is deemed as negative aspects of these individuals that occur on a daily basis when they are in the city such as petty crimes, littering and interference of local businesses.

This would lead to investigating the *'theory of empowerment'* which would explore how empowering the indigent community could change society's often negative perception of them and also lead to the improvement of their lives and of society as a whole. The findings illustrated that for any transformation to occur for the indigent, there was a need to provide facilities that would create platforms for empowering through skills training and education. This is key to the research as the proposal aims to empower the indigent community through the exploration of mural art.

Lastly the precedent investigated the *'theory of representation'* and *'critical regionalism'* to explore how a *meaningful architecture* could be formulated. What was significant was the way in which architecture becomes symbolic and a representative of the occupants within it. It is key for the built environment to have a physical and emotive link with its users and the findings illustrated how understanding 'place' was important in creating a connection between the built environment, the occupants and the place it is located. The precedent studies investigated how architecture could be used as a tool to express a vision of change and dignity, one that embodied the true essence of a meaningful architecture.

The investigated precedent studies will be used to generate a brief for the design of community art and assistance centre for the indigent. The case studies that shall follow in the next chapter will continue this pursuit, gaining valuable insight into the functional requirements of the proposed building typology.

CHAPTER FOUR
CASE STUDIES

4.1 CHAPTER OUTLINE

There are several key components that need to be understood to be able to generate a facility for indigent empowerment through mural art that has a variety of functions and layers. The key concepts of *mural art*, *indigent empowerment* and *meaningful architecture* were to be dealt with within this component of the dissertation. This chapter of this research shall be a review and investigation into local case studies of existing buildings and precincts which shall be used as guides in generating an appropriate intervention. These three studies all address a strong application of critical regionalism, responding to their sense of place and user groups. Primary data was collected through a series of interviews and questionnaires with the architect, staff members and individuals visiting the case studies. These discussions yielded vital data regarding the functioning of the buildings and either their successful or unsuccessful configurations. Further information was obtained by the analysis of the building's design.

In this chapter, the case studies will be critically analysed through the understanding of various components. By evaluating the different case studies, conclusions shall be drawn and these will play a crucial role in informing the development of the proposed building typology of the dissertation.

4.2 The Drill Hall (figure 4.1)

Architects: **Michael Hart Architects**

Client: **City of Johannesburg**

Location: **Johannesburg, RSA**

Function: **Multi-functional program (to be broken down later)**

Project year completion: **Originally 1904 (refurbished 2004)**

Project cost (refurbishment): **R 10 million**



Figure 4.1: The public square of the Drill Hall where the children come play soccer, skateboard and other social activities (source: photo taken by author; 2013)

“Heritage sites like The Drill Hall try to capture the essence of our new spirit of democracy, telling stories that have not been told before.” - Johanna Mahvunga (2005)

4.2.1 Background

The Drill Hall was constructed in 1904 as a military base on the ruins of a “native” prison, this was to mark Britain’s victory in the Anglo-Boer war. This facility was to become the headquarters of the Transvaal Volunteers, these were South African soldiers who assisted and fought beside the British in the Anglo-Boer war. The Drill Hall is mostly known for its connection with the Treason Trial (*figure 4.2 & 4.3*) where 156 activist who opposed the then Apartheid government, with our former president Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu being some of the accused and charged with high treason. The trial was held at the Drill Hall in its early stages between 1956 and 1957 until it had to be moved to Pretoria for security purposes.

With the rapid political change that occurred in South Africa around the early 1990’s, this significant change was reflected with the functionality of the Drill Hall. The Group Areas Act was scrapped in 1991 and this was closely followed by the Land Act. With the restrictions that were placed upon these groups of people being removed, many of the people would now flock to the city centre of Johannesburg to find employment and a possibility for a better life. However urban sprawl meant that many businesses were relocating out of the city and many buildings were left abandoned and were to be inhabited by vagrants. By 1992, the SANDF, an organisation who occupied the Drill Hall had vacated the building and soon after, homeless people were to move into the building.



Figure 4.2: Photo taken during the treason trial (*source: news.uk.msn.com*)



Figure 4.3: Photo taken of the women protestors holding up signs saying, “WE STAND BY OUR LEADERS”, these words are seen today in bold on building on the Twist Street facing facade (*source: www.hausderkunste.de*)

By 2001, around 350 families had made the Drill Hall their home in makeshift shacks inside the hall. They would survive these conditions without any running water, lights, proper sewerage and sanitation. There would be 2 devastating events that would occur, the first being a fire that broke out and destroyed the East Wing of the Drill Hall (figure 4.4). Johannesburg city council proposed demolition but there was strong opposition against this idea due to the history of the building, a new proposal was to the redevelop the site. However another tragic incident was to occur, in April 2002 another fire struck, destroying the entire central hall, leaving just the skeleton. After this, Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) proposed a massive R10 million refurbishment which was commissioned to Johannesburg based firm Michael Hart Architects.



Figure 4.4: Photo taken after the second fire in 2002 that gutted the entire central hall (source: www.joburg-archive.com)

4.2.2 Justification of the case study

The Drill Hall is significant to not only the city of Johannesburg but the new democratic South Africa as a whole. It is in essence a representation of a country that has gone through many struggles but will always pull through no matter what. This is made clear with the words, “WE STAND BY OUR LEADERS” being expressed on the Twist Street facing façade (figure 4.5) which has high foot and vehicle traffic on a daily basis. After two catastrophic fires, the building still stands firm on its site which is symbolic of the fight many activist had to conquer,



Figure 4.5: Photo taken from the busy Twist Street where the words “WE STAND BY OUR LEADERS” are in bold to remind us of the significant treason trial that took place here (source: **photo taken by author; 2013**)

even after being put down. The building today with its past and current functions communicates the ideals of an architecture of empowerment and representation, two key theories that will be elaborated further on in this case study.

4.2.3 Location



Figure 4.6 Aerial photo of the locality of the Drill Hall in the middle of the hustle and bustle of downtown Johannesburg (source: google maps)

The Drill Hall is located on the corner of Twist and Plein Street (figure 4.6), on the eastern side of the Johannesburg CBD. It is situated within a district that sees high vehicle and pedestrian movement on a daily basis. It is situated near three major point of references it the CBD; Joubert Park, Johannesburg Art Gallery (J.A.G) and Jack Mincer Taxi Rank, as well as near two main roads; Bree and Noord Street.

4.2.4 Analysis of design



Figure 4.7: Aerial photo of the Drill Hall addressing both the busy Twist Street as well as the new public square (source: www.gauteng.net)

When the redevelopment was proposed of the Drill Hall after the second fire, there was to be a major shift in the function and overall purpose of this building within its district. What makes this significant is how the architect has made the best of the existing structure remained from the fire and consequent demolition (figure 4.7). Through the consideration of maintaining the existing structure of the Drill

Hall and its recognizable elements, this building becomes a representation of a place of memorialisation which aims to promote the ideals of the freedom charter and the democracy that was fought and stood up for in the Treason Trial of 1956.



Figure 4.8 (left): The unrecognizable entrance of the Drill Hall premises from Twist Street and figure 4.9 (right) is the view looking towards Twist Street from inside the premises in a dark walkway that leads into the Drill Hall. (source: photo taken by author; 2013)

As one arrives at the site of the Drill Hall from Twist Street, there is confusion as to how and where one enters the site (figure 4.8), there is no clearly defined entrance with any signage, one simply has to walk down a path (figure 4.9) that that would be a rather pleasant buffer from the busyness of its

surrounding if it were populated with more people and had a sense of security. This then contradicts the idea of this building being one that serves and welcomes the public.

Eventually one moves into what becomes more identifiable as the Drill Hall. Where the large hall that housed the Treason Trial once existed, the architect took this as an opportunity to give the city of Johannesburg a chance to breathe by creating a much needed open public square (figure 4.11) amongst high density and busy city streets. However, this public square is not easily visible from the streets, it almost becomes a space that one only finds accidentally when exploring deeper into the Drill Hall premises. More so this is enclosed by steel gates and pillars (figure 4.10) that once held up the roof of the hall. These pillars have the names of the 156 activist of the Treason Trial, as well as the wrought iron gates in-between sketch the windows that once surrounded the hall, again acting as a reminder of its history. Again entering into the Drill Hall site is confusing as you have to walk towards the end of the pathway to a small side gate which one is not aware of until stumbling upon this.



Figure 4.10: Photo taken inside the public square with it enclosed by steel gates. (source: photo taken by author; 2013)



Figure 4.11: Photo taken inside the public square as you enter the side gate into the Drill Hall site (source: photo taken by author; 2013)

When the architect proposed the redeveloping of this site, there was a major consideration for both the space's history, as well as the current environment, that of a somewhat impoverished inner city neighbourhood. The representation of the Drill Hall was to be significant to the present therefore it had to rethink its occupants and functionality. A new program was to be developed that was to be community driven and aim to connect the drill hall back to the city.

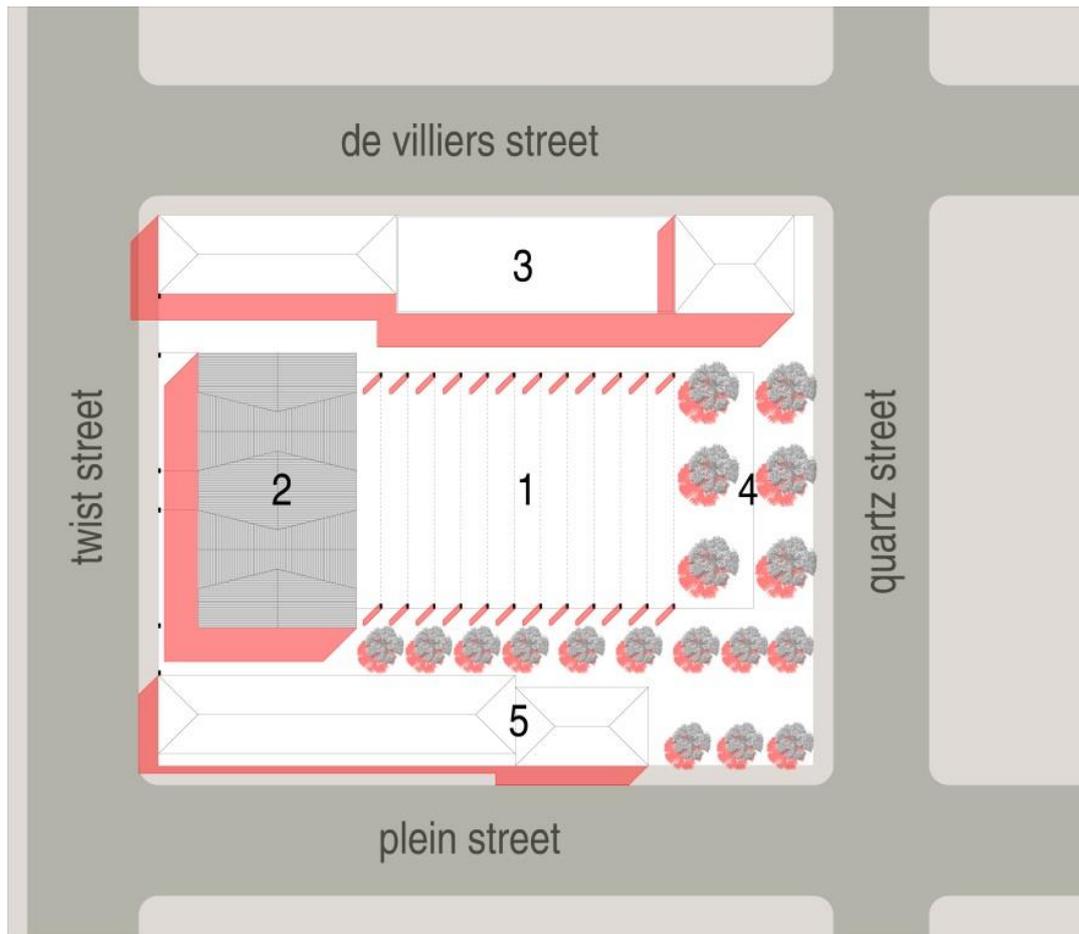


Figure 4.12: Sketch Site plan of the Drill Hall precinct:

1. Public square | 2. Western wing | 3. Northern wing | 4. Exterior Art display area | 5. Southern wing (**source: author's representation**)

1. Public Square

The paved square has become the point of escape in is a very busy district within Johannesburg's downtown precinct. What use to be the hall in which the treason trial took place is now an open space for functions such as military parades and public events. In the two visits to the Drill Hall, this was a space where young children came to play soccer and skateboard (figure 4.13). This square is also becomes the procession leading up to the west wing.



Figure 4.13: Photo of the public square facing the northern wing with 2 skateboarders (**source: photo taken by author; 2013**)

2. Western wing

The west wing of the Drill Hall sits firmly on its site, it represents a building that has great significance to the context of its surrounding and it's more private internal space once within the Drill Hall precinct. The building is entered through the public square (*figure 4.15*) which acts as a procession and gives the building more grandeur as one leads into it. Once one enters the building, a small foyer creates a sense of pause, at this moment the observer has three options; moving down a long central with cellular offices feeding off it (*figure 4.16*), taking an industrial steel staircase (*figure 4.14*) that leads to the next floor which houses an open plan exhibition area (*figure 4.17*) with display boards capturing photographs and diagrams of the original structure, or being directed straight through to a door that leads to the outside area facing Twist Street (*figure 4.18*).



Figure 4.14: Photo of the industrial steel staircase as one enters the west wing (source: photo taken by author; 2013)



Figure 4.15, 4.16, 4.17, 4.18 (from left to right): Photos of the west wing from the public square, interior view of the offices on ground floor, open plan gallery space on upper floor and the outside area that connects with the main road (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

The interior spaces lack sufficient day lighting and it feels dingy and unused. The offices have not been occupied for several years and it's reflected with the quality of the interior space. If this is to be a facility utilised for public use, a great consideration needs to be made in the understanding of functions and where they lie within a building. With ones knowledge of program and the privacy gradient, it would be far more successful for the exhibition space to be on ground floor level and the offices upstairs, which

would make the public interface easily accessible and have a greater connection with the square and Twist Street.

3. Northern wing

The Northern wing was not affected by either of the two fires. There has been no severe refurbishment on the exterior of this wing. What is interesting is the contrast one experiences from their engagement with the exterior and interior of the building. From outside, the building looks somewhat rundown and lacking general maintenance or care but as they enter the facility, they are met with neatly designed interior studios and art workshop (figure 4.19, 4.20 & 4.21) areas with pleasant white washed walls giving a grand sense of lighting. These spaces are very pleasurable for the activities that happen within them. What is also ideal is the building's orientation, which gives the opportunity for surveillance of the public square and a pleasant connection with its openness. The major aspect of this wing was the function it would serve to the community within the area. It was to house several community organisations which aimed to provide a nurturing environment, social welfare, cultural development and empowerment for disadvantaged individuals of the inner-city. Initially up until 2008 it housed the Johannesburg Community Chest which was an organisation that provided life skills training for disadvantaged people and the Joubert Park Project which was a collective of creative artists who aimed to promote the arts and culture



Figure 4.19: The art workshop at Keleketla Library that offers classes to impoverished children from the inner city (source: photo taken by author; 2013)



Figure 4.20: Photos of the dance studios at Keleketla with timber floors and whitewashed walls giving the space light (source: www.newsmuseum.org)



Figure 4.21: The studios at Keleketla Library being used as classrooms for visiting schools and educators (source: meagainjudge.wordpress.com)

development. These premises are now run by the Keleketla Library which is an inter-disciplinary, independent library and media arts project established to create access to literature and the use of arts and media strategies as alternative education models and tools. Much like the previous organisations that occupied the space, Keleketla aims to create a sense of empowerment to previously disadvantaged members of the community through the medium of arts and cultural education.

4. Exterior Art display area

This sits in between Quartz Street and the public square, it forms a type of artistic buffer between the busy back road and the more subdued internal experience of the square. The artwork displayed (figure 4.22) is significant to the history of the site and aims to be once again a reminder of what was one there.



Figure 4.22: The art display area that sits behind the square on the eastern side of the site (source: photo taken by author; 2013)

5. Southern wing

The Southern wing is almost a separate entity within the Drill Hall precinct. It is not accessed from the same entrance point as the other facilities but rather off Plein Street. However it still was to reflect the same ideals as the entire Drill Hall project. This building (figure 4.23) houses the Johannesburg Child Welfare Society which aims to provide skills training to girls who are at risk street children, sex workers etc. This will be through special programmes that aim to develop their



Figure 4.23: The southern wing is nestled behind a buffer of trees which soften its boundaries (source: photo taken by author; 2013)

entrepreneurial knowledge. These facilities aim to empower these girls and provide them a hair salon, sewing machines and amenities for cooking lessons. However, once again the issue of this building is clarity of its entrance or any relevant guide or signage to indicate where this may be. It is single story building and thus less imposing on the pedestrians who move past it on a daily basis. This too wasn't

too affected by the fires so it has maintained its stark appearance with a similar language to the entire development.

4.2.5 Other observations

With the two visits, one being on a public holiday and the other two weeks later on a working day, the Drill Hall lacked any real atmosphere and activity, with the most being the children who I witnessed sneak in through the wrought iron gate so they could skateboard in the public square. The building in both cases seemed abandoned and without any acknowledgment from people who moved passed it swiftly. When asked the director of the Keleketla Library Mr Rangoato Hlasane about the state of the development, he was honest in saying that the other organisations that once occupied these premises had relocated due to poor management, saying that the architect as usual got the project, imposed his vision and once paid, turned their back on the project, neglecting it and not returning to investigate how it has turned out. The programme at Keleketla Library however was not affected by this, numbers were rising and plenty events and functions were attended at their facility.

On the first visit to the Drill Hall, even though it was in downtown Johannesburg which is highly polluted with rubbish, ones perception of this building was that the experience would be entirely different but was stunned to see how dirty and hostile the conditions were. The place reeked of urine and there was rubbish all over the ground (*figure 4.24*), however on my second visit weeks later, this same space was clean and well maintained as if it was two different places. Other noticeable features was the vast graffiti that was evident on majority of the Drill Hall buildings, mostly 'bombing' (*figure 4.25*), although



Figure 4.24: The dirty and unpleasant entrance pathway that leads to the public square (source: photos taken by author; 2013)



Figure 4.25: Wall that has been 'bombed' by many graffiti artist (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

what was interesting to see was the tag of well recognized and highly rated graffiti artist “TAPZ” whose murals give many derelict areas around Johannesburg and Durban, had also left his mark. One of the most memorable and unique elements was a set of steps on the exterior that led onto a platform, on these steps were shoes and plants arranged on this, it became an adaptable and organic art installation (*figure 4.26*). This becomes a pocket park/garden within the facility that shows the communal experience between the occupants.



Figure 4.26: Steps leading onto a platform with several shoes and maintained plants (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

4.2.6 Summary

The implementation of the ‘*theory of perception*’ in Drill Hall stems from the objectives of the refurbishment of the building, where the JDA had recognized the large population of indigent people that had occupied the building previously as well as in the Joubert Park. The aim of the new development was then to allow these individuals, in essence to redefine themselves and their role in society by creating a facility and programmes that enhance community growth and involvement in projects and initiatives within the city, thus changing the perception society has for this community. Within the case study, the concept of mural art is not explored through the theory of perception, merely how the building serves to be a catalyst in changing the way in which society views the indigent community within the inner city of Johannesburg. However It was noted that there was graffiti ‘tagging’ on several walls of the building on the exterior, perhaps an indication that this building was seen as a potential canvas to display the memories and historical significance of this site and its current user through mural art application.

“Redevelopment of heritage sites into mixed use sites enables people to see history as a living thing.” – Sue Krige, Drill Hall historian (2005)

The Drill Hall has had a chequered past, adapting its functions and user groups over the many years since its construction. It has maintained its strong history over the years with its historical narrative being told through the representation of the structure today. The ‘*theory of empowerment*’ is one expressed highly within the Drill Hall. The functions that have adopted by this building signify it as a

building that aims to serve and empower the indigent community of Johannesburg's inner city district. This is mainly through affording these individuals the opportunity to obtain skills training that pertain to art and cultural growth. This then aims to reconnect these individuals back with the city through their engagement with variety of art events aimed to generate public awareness of art through these inner city projects. The Drill Hall can be expressed as a building that represents meaningful architecture, not only is it a building of function but has several layers to this such as being a symbol of the past as well as a platform that aims to empower those who need to gain a voice. The building was to provide for platforms and services for the indigent that would assist them in getting their lives back on track, empowering them through skills training and facilities that would harness their learning. By the facility implementing the *'theory of empowerment'* and assisting these individuals to improve their lives, this encompasses an architecture that is meaningful.

Through the *'theory of representation'*, the new programme and function of the Drill Hall becomes symbol of a new outlook towards the indigent community of inner-city Johannesburg. The use of an existing building with great historical significance expresses the importance of the indigent community who occupy the facility. This building aims to be a platform that allows the city of Johannesburg and the indigent community to connect with the varying arts and culture programmes offered at the facility. This building not only becomes this functions, but symbolic of change for the indigent community who shall occupy this. This becomes a place of relief and nurturing, an environment where they can build up their self-esteem and make friends. This is more than just a roof over their heads, this is their home and can create their own narratives and spirit of place within this. The open courtyard becomes a gathering space, welcoming the city to share experiences with the indigent community.

This building sits quietly as a small urban project in a somewhat busy and noisy part of the city. It is honest to its surroundings and uses materials existing in the area, allowing it to blend within its context. The project embodies the spirit of place, capturing the stories of the site by maintaining much of the existing structure, as well as providing a nurturing environment which illustrates this as a meaningful architecture that aims to serve the indigent. By utilising an existing historical building, this further connects the building's new function with its place. The Drill Hall has become a building that assists in empowering these individuals and aids them in recovering from their once crippled situation and once more being given an opportunity to be part of the greater community by participating in various events, city initiatives and community development programmes.

However the Drill Hall has several significant issues that would ultimately lead to its down fall and fall further into dilapidation. The building itself may sit proudly on its site with it being easily identifiable amongst its surrounding, nonetheless for a building that proposes to be for the people, it appears to be rather unwelcoming and the lack of a well-defined entrance into the site adds to this notion. The building has a poor connection with Twist Street (figure 4.27)



Figure 4.27: View from Twist Street with the Drill Hall sitting behind a fence with no connection at ground level with the street (source: photo taken by author; 2013)

which is a busy road in which for it to draw people, it requires openness, as well as a strong visual and physical connection with its boundaries. Its most public space is the square which acts as a courtyard space that gives the buildings breathing space and a place for congregation. This is however hidden from the street and access to it appears prohibited once inside as it is enclosed by wrought iron gates.

The general condition of the building shows deterioration and a lack of maintenance. This could be due to the lack of use and management of the facility, as well as those who often occupy it not feeling the sense of respect and ownership for the structure. There are signs of vandalism all over the building, this often occurs when a building is deemed a target, either due to large scale visibility of the public so the artist can get their name out or this being seen as a place one can get credibility for tagging in, mainly places considered dangerous and hard to get in. The building has several damaged windows which seem like they've been in that state for some time. The building lacks the spirit and essence expected when one hears the vision of the JDA and the architect of this proposal. All these issues are key in allowing for a successful public building. The overall ideology and vision for the Drill Hall is what shall be taken from this case study. A building for the indigent should aim to be a representation of empowerment to these individuals, as well as aiming to change the perception of society on this community through the expression of a dignified and forward thinking built environment.

4.3 MABONENG PRECINCT

Architects: **Daffonchio and Associates**

Location: **Johannesburg, RSA**

Client: **Propertuity**

Project Year: **2008**



Figure 4.28: Photo taken as one enters the Maboneng Precinct which is a drastic and refreshing change from its rather harsh surrounding (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

4.3.1 Background

Johannesburg is one of the most recognized cities across the globe. It is South Africa's biggest city centre and significant for its role as a thriving economical backbone to many businesses. Johannesburg has a dynamic buzz that is unmatched in any other city, large populations of people move through the city by foot and vehicle daily, which aids in the success of many small and big businesses. The city recently has begun to develop connections with its outlying cities such as Sandton, Rosebank, Midrand areas and the newly developed Gau-Train system was key in making these links. This need to move from the city to these destinations occurred as the Stock Exchange and many businesses have moved out of the city centre towards the new Sandton CBD due to the slow dilapidation of the city CBD. The city has slowly become dingy, crime-ridden and derelict, a place where people don't wish to be. This

crucial issues have seen large scope for urban regeneration projects across the city that aimed to transform this area of the city that have suffered from urban decay and crime which has led to people neglecting and fearing moving in and through this urban spaces.

The most successful recent urban regeneration project was to occur in the eastern side of Johannesburg city and from a most unlikely source. Such projects are often headed up by large property development companies with big financing and years of experience to take on such a project. Not the Maboneng Precinct (figure 4.29). After young entrepreneur Jonathan Liebmann had



Figure 4.29: Photo taken on the balcony at Arts on Main looking out to the Maboneng Precinct (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

returned from his gap year abroad, he had one vision and that was to create an urban environment and lifestyle similar to that of which he'd experience whilst travelling. His primary objective for the regeneration was to create a city centre driven by creative energy for Johannesburg's urban artists.

Maboneng was to be a fitting name for the district as the Sotho word when translated means "place of light". The way in which he envisioned the project was to imagine how the district would be if people's negative perception towards downtown Johannesburg changed, if the issue of crime was addressed and if a critical mass could be achieved to create a sense of a community, these were the drivers and then the intervention would have to create this scenario. He was to approach acclaimed sustainable architectural and urban design firm based in Johannesburg, Daffonchio and Associates. The main aim and objective was to transform a section of downtown Johannesburg which was industrial space into an creative art and culture district which was to draw people through the concept of 'live-work-play' environment. The district was to house artist studios, art galleries and a range of shops, restaurants and coffee bars that are fuelling an inner-city lifestyle, with entrepreneurship and creativity at its core. Through *critical regionalism*, even though the developer and architect wanted to create a new environment that promotes a different urban life, the characteristic of the industrial precinct was to be maintained but enhanced, creating a new more public layer within the current place structure.

4.3.2 Justification of case study

The approach to the Maboneng Precinct is significant to this research as the main driving force behind the urban regeneration is to create an art haven where urban artist and those who appreciate the arts can find a unique experience in the heart of the city where they can 'work-play-live', in a pleasant environment with other like-minded people. The use of mural art across the precinct is a major component of the design proposal, not only to beautify the space but create a sense of identity and reflecting the cultural past and present of our society. Mural artist (*figure 4.30 & 4.31*) from across Johannesburg have been commissioned to use the walls as canvases to express their skills and vision, which is what the precinct does, creates platforms for artist to express their visions.



Figure 4.30: Photo taken of mural art done by Falco on an old mixed use building in the Maboneng precinct (**source: i-art-joburg.com**)



Figure 4.31: Photo taken outside the Arts on Main complex. This is where vehicles park when the place holds its popular Market on Main on Sundays (**source: photos taken by author; 2013**)

Urban regeneration projects are essential in countries such as South Africa where urban sprawl has played a pivotal role in decentralising people from the cities, thus creating neglected space that is left to decay particularly in our urban environment. These slowly get further dilapidated and become negative environments where issues such as crime arise and indigent people see these as places to dwell. These once prominent areas lose value and appreciation and the perception of space is changed.

Society changes and our physical environment changes but the spirit of place does not, only the condition.

4.3.3 Location



Figure 4.32: Aerial map of Maboneng Precinct (highlighted) amongst the greater urban fabric of the east side of Johannesburg CBD (source: google maps –edited by author)

1. Arts on Main | 2. Revolution House | 3. Fox Street Studios | 4. The Main XChange | 5. Main Street Life | 6. 12 Decades Hotel | 7. Museum of African Design | 8. Artisan Res

The Maboneng Precinct is located in downtown eastern Johannesburg city. It is situated amongst large scale industrial district with the precinct itself once an industrial space. The precinct breathes new life into what was an area that was considered a no-go zone within the city with dilapidated industrial warehouse being the generic model. The representation of the above figure best illustrates the Maboneng Precinct, in an area with no life and attraction, this urban regeneration has brought light and colour to a somewhat gloomy image, hence again the appropriateness of the Maboneng - “Place of light”.

4.3.4 Analysis of design (Arts on Main)

The idea of Maboneng Precinct was initially through the conceptualisation of the first major building that was bought and refurbished in the precinct, Arts on Main. The Arts on Main development truly represents the ideals and execution Propertuity and Enrico Daffonchio aimed to achieve with the

precinct as a whole. The building was initially an old industrial warehouse (*figure 4.33*) which was converted into a multi-functional building that was to house a unique blend of studio, commercial and retail space that acts as a hub for artists. World-renowned South African artist and icon William Kentridge was one of the first tenants to buy and occupy one of the spaces at Arts on Main. The building comprises of advertising agencies, private studios for young artist to work and live, large art gallery and exhibition spaces, retail spaces occupied by an art book store and local fashion design brand 'Love Jozi' (*figure 4.34*), as well as organisations such as the Goodman Gallery (*figure 4.35*) and Goethe Institut. There is also the Canteen which is a highly praised restaurant set in the gravel courtyard which services the occupants of the building on a daily basis and thrives when events occur, such as the Market on Main on Sundays.



Figure 4.33: The industrial like Arts on Main building with the steel external fire escape used for circulation (source: author; 2013)



Figure 4.34 (left): Merchandise at the 'Love Jozi' store | Figure 4.35 (right): inside the Goodman Gallery (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

The role of the architect was not to reinvent a new image but rather represent the structure in a sense that it maintained the characteristic of its past and create an environment that was sensitive to the

occupants and visitors of the building. This can be seen in the courtyard where the low lying lemon trees dominate the open space and contrast the harsh industrial feel of the building (*figure 4.36*). The aesthetic of the building is rustic and has largely maintained its historic industrial feel with it consisting of brick, concrete coloured walls and steel. This rustic and non-refined aesthetic has always been appealing to artist and this was no exception. This development had a clear and distinct target market, it was to focus on creative people and this was due to the developers experience overseas where he realised that artists were the best catalysts for change, as he claimed them, “they are the perfect first adopters”. Artists were to be the foundation of the Maboneng precinct community so it was crucial for the Arts on Main project to be the initial draw card.

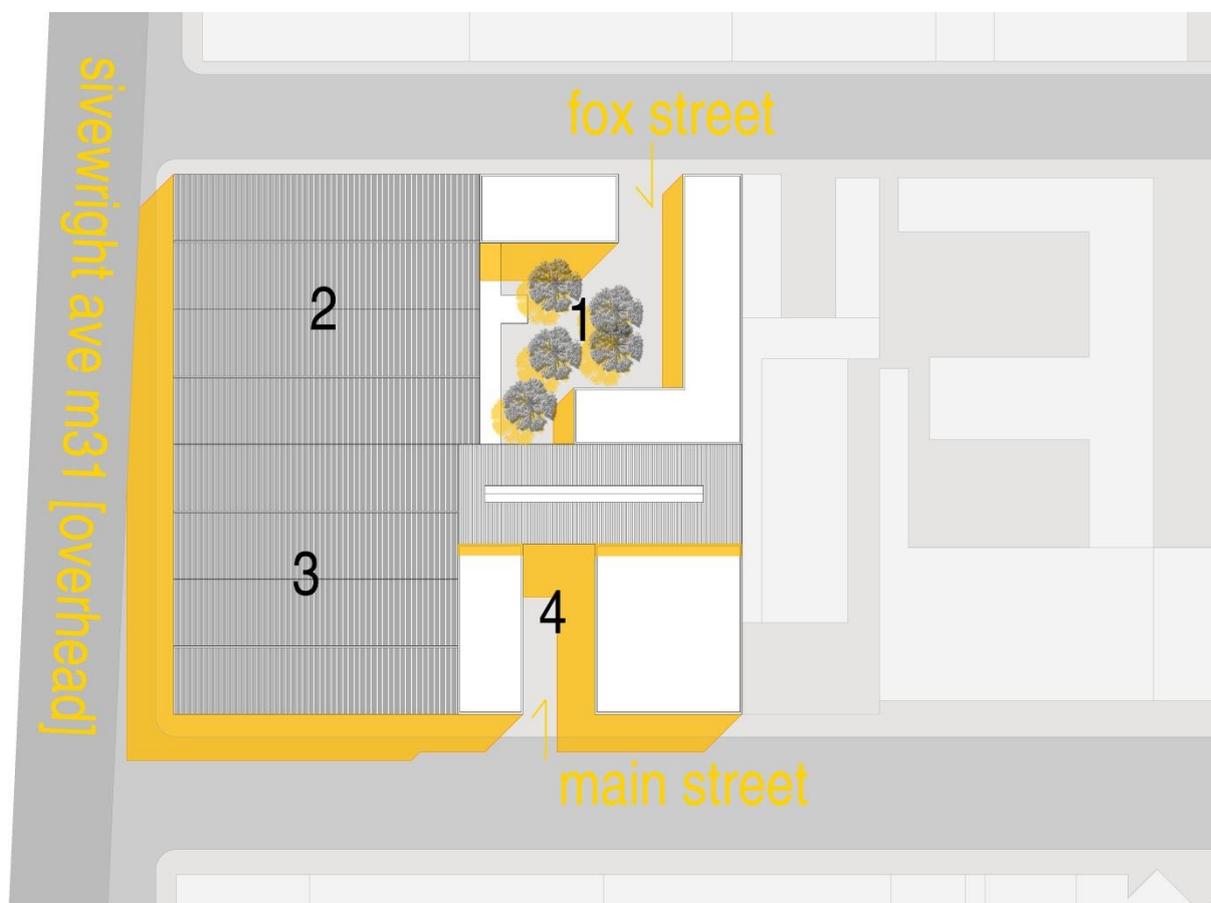


Figure 4.36: Sketch site plan of Arts on Main (source: author's representation)

1. Gravel courtyard | 2. Retail and studio spaces | 3. Gallery and exhibition spaces | 4. Goethe Institut with courtyard space.

The biggest attraction for Arts on Main (*figure 4.36*) is the very vibrant and well-spoken about across Johannesburg event 'Market on Main' which is held every Sunday from 9am - 2pm. This particular event encompasses all that Liebmann had envisioned for the Arts on Main. Attracting Johannesburg's trendiest young professionals who come and spend their Sunday socialising and networking whilst

enjoying the ambience filled with art installations and food stalls in the courtyard and variety of food and retails stalls inside the building.

1. Gravel Courtyard



Figure 4.37: (left) View from inside the courtyard with stalls and a live art installation project | Figure 4.38 (right) view of courtyard space with people seated or walking around (source: photos taken by author: 2013)

The courtyard (figure 4.37 & 4.38) becomes the heart of the Arts on Main during the Market. With pleasant weather this space is well utilised with stalls fully functional and adequate seating areas to soak in the sun and the ambience. The Canteen restaurant also has tables spilling out to this space to encourage an outdoor/indoor relationship. This is the first experience as one enters which creates a pleasurable transition from the street onto site.

2. Retail and studio space

The interior of the Arts on Main maintains the same language as the exterior, it remains rustic with the brick walls being painted to create a white washed interior space (figure 4.39) which gives the space more light and giving a sense of volume and openness. The open spaces are adaptable for possible future change working off a regular grid structure. This houses retail spaces and stalls during the market. This structure also houses studio units on the upper level to create a work-live environment within the same building.



Figure 4.39: Inside market area on the ground floor where different stalls are setup (source: photos taken by author: 2013)

3. Gallery and exhibition space

The openness of the exhibition area allows the space to be flooded with light and ventilation which makes the experience enjoyable. The use of the foyer area (figure 4.40) as exhibition space shows how the building maximises all opportunities to showcase art and becomes a pleasing buffer before entering the Goodman Gallery which showcases some of the most recognised South African artist's work.

4. Goethe Institut

Nestled in the back of the development but the front of the site just off Main Street is the Goethe-On-Main which is a multidisciplinary art space which has a casual come as you are ambience.

4.3.5 Other observations

What makes not only Arts on Main but Maboneng precinct as a whole successful is its attention to the pedestrian experience. The spaces created within the precinct expresses the idea of a society where people wish to experience it manly by foot with new and exciting opportunities along each street. Liebmann wanted to create an environment where people could go downstairs, watch a movie, eat in a restaurant, walk everywhere and ride on a bicycle (figure 4.41). One can see that this was highly influenced by European modern cities where the city is occupied by pedestrians that have a better connection with their built environment. Mural Art (figure 4.42 & 4.43) is seen all around the Maboneng precinct and many art



Figure 4.40: View from inside of the Arts on Main showing the exhibition spaces which lead into the Goodman Gallery and other facilities (source: author: 2013)



Figure 4.41: A table that serves as a bicycle rack (source: photos taken by author: 2013)

initiatives and community mural projects have seen this art district as the ideal platform to express their vision.



Figure 4.42 (left): Mural Art seen in the Maboneng Precinct (source: sphoto-b.xx.fbcdn.net) and figure 4.43: graffiti artist Cameron Platter painting a piece under Sivewright Avenue overpass (source: i-art-joburg.com)

4.3.6 Summary

Durban has many lost spaces in and around its city which have great potential for redevelopment. The city has a rich art history and it is evident in the vast amount of mural art pieces in our urban environment, however there is no significant art district which shows an appreciation for our local art and an environment that artist can come together to share their ideas. The Maboneng Precinct has taken what use to be an industrial demarcated zone which in essence is dead space as it is not occupied and inhabited by people, mostly machines and converted it into a multi-functional art district that has brought about new life, a resurrection of downtown Johannesburg. This was through a great vision and even better execution brought about through a great understanding between the architect and the developers. Commitment and belief was crucial in executing the development the way it is seen today.

One can see a major change between the precinct and its surrounding. The experience of moving through the dingy and grimy industrial area changes drastically when one is met by rich street life and urban landscape that creates a sensitive interface to those moving past by foot or bicycle. It is distinct from the point of access into Maboneng that it is an area which promotes arts, culture and street life. The buildings all spill out to the vibrant street where people sit and interact in trendy coffee bars, restaurants and public spaces. One can't help but feel overwhelmed by the ambience created in Maboneng. The concept of work-live-play is successfully achieved with what Liebmann sees as an ideal ratio to make this viable; 60% residential, 20% industrial, 10% commercial, 10% retail This diverse

arrangement allows for a community of different people to all be attracted to the many possibilities offered by Maboneng. The idea that all ground floors should either be retail or restaurants further enhances the dynamic street life that he aimed to create.

Through the *'theory of perception'*, this case study shows how mural art can play a pivotal role in urban revitalisation and creating environments that are pleasant and forever adapting to the times. With the use of mural art, the precinct is transformed, becoming more colourful and vibrant, depicting the artistic nature of the users of the Maboneng precinct. These walls in the precinct become the canvases for many mural artists to display their craftsmanship and communicate with the observer through imagery. Through this project, the 'perception' of this part of city has slowly changed and this is evident in the amount of entrepreneurs and young professionals have invested in property there.

However though this precinct has become more accessible and an attraction, in a sense it has catered for a more affluent community. The indigent community still is not accounted for within of this environment. There is still a strong divide within the city between the rich and the poor. Liebmann however has intentions to resolve this saying, "we offer both affordable and high-end products, and in between our properties are people who are poor. Hopefully in time the upliftment of the area will bring greater opportunities to these people and, with our ethos of fostering and encouraging entrepreneurship, they will stand to benefit. This is a long-term solution..." This illustrates how the *'theory of empowerment'* of the indigent community shall be considered and be significant in bringing diversity of all people within this precinct, giving them the opportunities to be involved in the precinct and gain from the success of this new thriving environment as well. Liebmann sees the empowering of these people being key in the overall success of the Maboneng project.

Through the *'theory of representation'*, the Maboneng precinct is a depiction of the ideal understanding and creation of a 'spirit of place' that harnesses the history of the place with memories of the past and giving the users the opportunity to create new more exciting memories. Urban regeneration aims to take spaces within the urban environment that are derelict and often underutilised, and give them new life and energy that is currently lacking. The Maboneng Precinct has transformed part of Johannesburg CBD that was considered a "no-go zone" into a vibrant environment that has drawn a large art population to it, becoming a symbolic as a 'place of light'. This project will hopefully expand deeper into the Johannesburg city centre. This precinct now represents a group of artistic 'go-getters' who wish to occupy the city and explore the many amazing possibilities of urban life. This the arts and culture hub of Johannesburg drawing people from all South Africa to experience the new urban culture.

4.4 BARTEL ART TRUST (CENTRE (figure 4.44)

Architects: **Architects Collaborative**

Location: **Durban harbour, RSA**

Client: **Hugo Bartel Trust**

Project Year: **1995**

Project cost: **R2.3 million (fully equipped)**



Figure 4.44: The Bartel Arts Trust Centre which expresses its function with mural art and sculptures done by local artist on its façade (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

4.4.1 Project Background

Hugo Bartel was an Austrian born engineer, entrepreneur and adventurer who had always had a major appreciation for the arts. During his travels, he had developed a strong connection with South Africa due to its diversity of cultures and multi-faceted city which had a dynamic 'buzz' and appreciation for the arts movement. When he passed on in 1992, he had decided to leave a large portion of his wealth to the arts. Attorney Dick Breytenbach and long-time friend would pursue his wish and establish a fund in his name that would focus on art development. Initially the fund policy would provide bursary and funding to worthy recipients within the art discipline but in 1994 the trust decided that it was necessary

to rather create a platform where various art disciplines could be explored for the intention of art development in the city.

4.4.2 Justification of case study

The Bartel Arts Trust Centre is considered one of Durban's most significant platforms for the development of arts and culture. The proposed architectural intervention for this dissertation is a Community Art and Assistance Centre for the indigent community of Durban, the analysis of the BAT Centre is then critical to the research in understanding how the building has functioned over the years and its successes and failures, so these key findings would begin to inform how to approach the design component. This building has become a landmark for the Durban art scene over the years, hosting a variety of events, shows and exhibitions. The Bartel Arts Centre has seen many international and local well recognized artists and musicians exhibit their work and perform at the centre. It has played a pivotal role in the enhancing of Durban's cultural life. The centre promotes the arts and expresses this through its decorative use of sculptures (*figure 4.46*) and mural art (*figure 4.45*) work on the facades. This building then becomes a platform for artist to illustrate their work inside and outside the building. The facility over the years has harnessed young people who are enthusiastic about the arts, generally from disadvantaged communities.



Figure 4.45: Mural art done by local artist on the backstage of the main hall exterior wall (source: photos taken by author; 2013)



Figure 4.46: Mural art done by local artist on the backstage of the main hall exterior wall (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

4.4.3 Location



Figure 4.47: Aerial map of The Bartel Arts Trust Centre which sits along the harbour edge, detached from the city (source: google maps – edited by author)

The Bartel Arts Trust Centre (figure 4.47) is located alongside Durban's harbour edge, running along Margaret Mncadi Avenue and the Victoria Embankment precinct. The Centre is somewhat isolated and detached from the urban fabric by this large vehicle route, furthermore being situated amongst Transnet premises, making the centre far less inviting due to the security needed for Transnet premises. Pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is not direct, having to travel down Maritime Place for a great distance after entering the Wilson Wharf precinct. The centre has thus managed to turn its back on the city, with its emphasis on the harbour. It is located not too far from landmarks such as the Roma Revolving Restaurant, Embassy building and Durban's City, however doesn't respond or relate to the significance of the city backdrop. This makes it difficult to identify the building when moving alongside the busy Margaret Mncadi Avenue.

4.4.4 Analysis of design

The building aims to promote arts and culture development in Durban, therefore the facilities within the centre were to accommodate this. It is a creative centre that accommodates a variety of art disciplines that aim to work together in linked and overlapping spaces (figure 4.48). This then breaks down the barriers that exist between the producers and consumers of the arts. It facilitates exhibition spaces for art work to be displayed as well as studios where the art work is created. The building also houses a small retail and commercial sector that will allow to generate revenue for the centre on a daily basis and brings varying users to the facility.

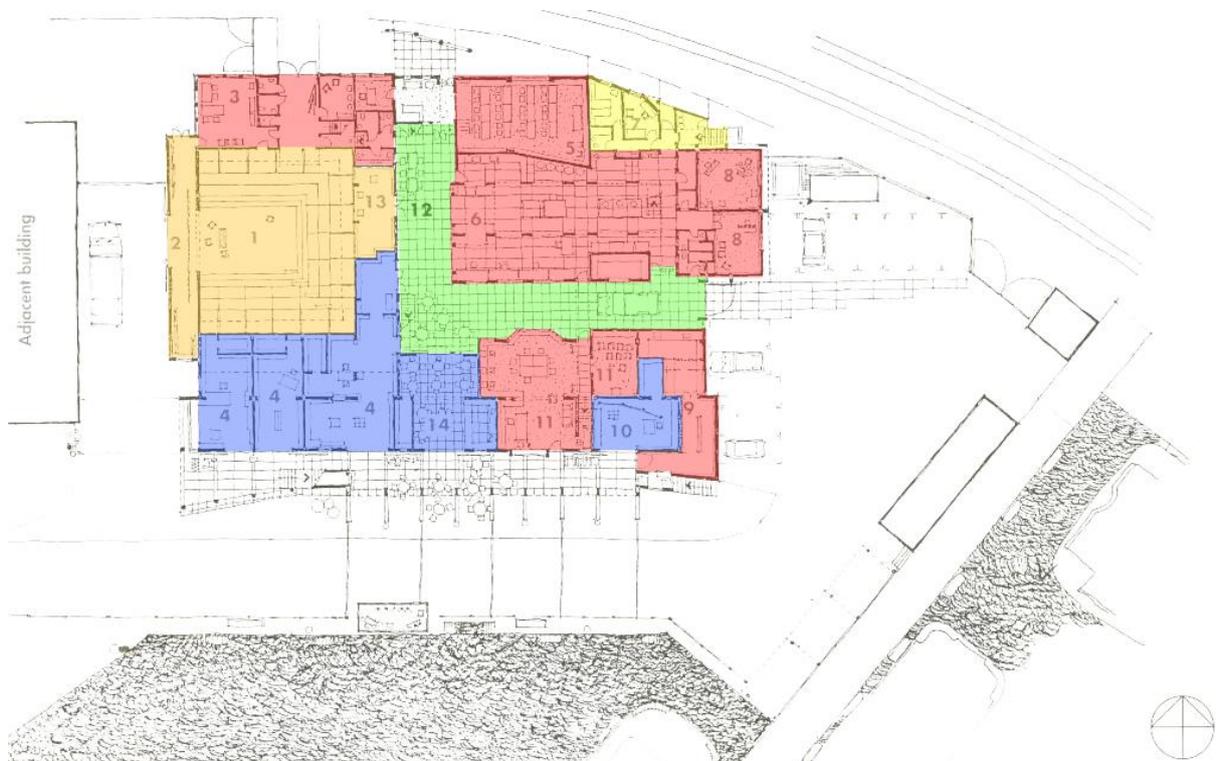


Figure 4.48: Ground Floor Plan of The Bartel Arts Trust Centre with the varying functions

ORANGE – Main performance hall | **BLUE** – Retail and commercial | **RED** – Art facilities (workshops, photo gallery, music practice rooms, resource centre) | **GREEN** – Open courtyard | **YELLOW** – caretaker room
(source: *kznia journal 1996* – edited by author)

By mixing the functions, this allows the building to attract varying users, aiming for the facility to be occupied at any given time, either for entertainment, or for education. As in most public buildings with street frontage, this part is utilised for retail purposes, these are often connected to the function of the building, with facilities such as small art curio stores.

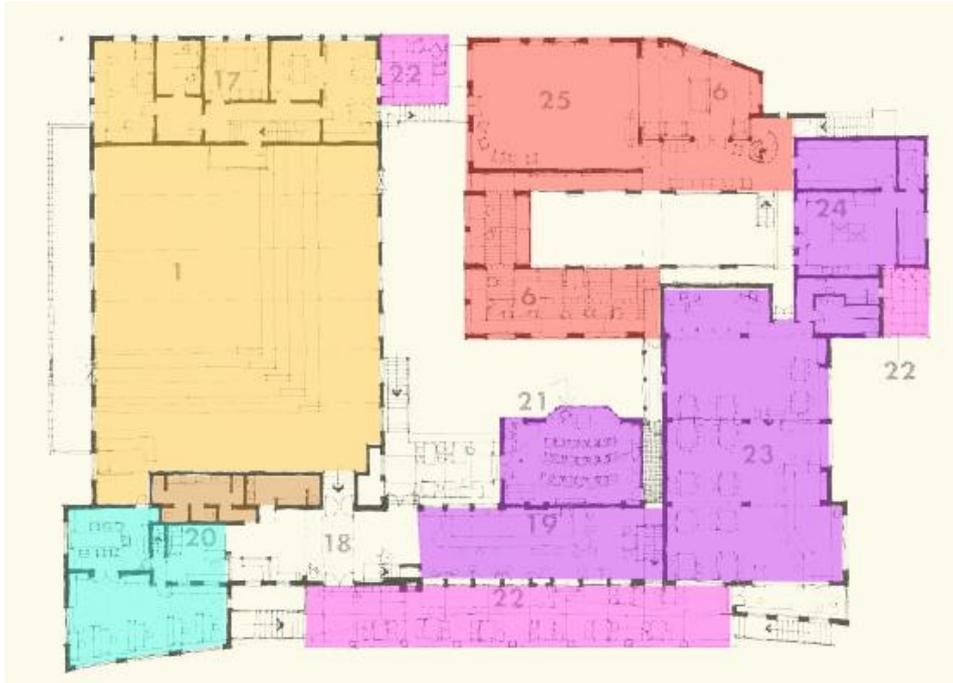


Figure 4.49: First Floor Plan of the Bartel Art Trust Centre

ORANGE – Main hall and offices | **PURPLE** – Retail and commercial | **RED** – Art facilities (workshops, dance studio) | **PINK** – Outdoor terraces | **BLUE** – administration | **BROWN** - ablutions (source: *kznia journal 1996 – edited by author*)

On ground level, retail rental stores spill out onto the pavement before met by the staircase that moves one up to the first floor terrace (figure 4.49) which overlooks the harbour and is where the main entrance of the facility is situated. The terrace is utilised by customers who attend the bar and restaurant on a daily basis, or during the many music events held at the BAT centre. The centre maximise its connection with the water's edge, allowing the area facing the view to spill out onto the spacious terrace with ample seating.

The BAT Centre's Jazz Café host several weekly entertainment events such as they well attended 'Live Music Sundowners' on Friday, 'Good Music Tuesday' and 'Comedy Nights' on Thursday, these events all drawing a wide variety of different users,



Figure 4.50: Curio retail store on ground level that sells handcrafted objects (source: *author; 2013*)

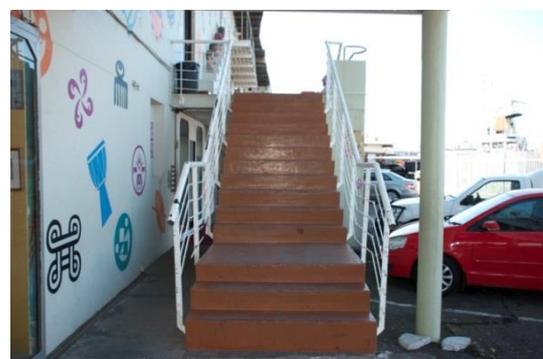


Figure 4.51: The staircase leading onto the main entrance of the BAT Centre (source: *author; 2013*)

allowing for the facility to welcome the diverse people of the city to use it. This also serves as the eating area for the facility on a daily basis, becoming a pleasant location that optimises the views of the harbour.

The site of the BAT Centre is compact and thus the building had to maximise on this with the footprint occupying a large portion of the site. Thus to give the building breathing space and light to penetrate into the internal spaces, an open courtyard (*figure 4.52*) is utilised which acts as a foyer space for the visual art studio (*figure 4.53*), retail stores and the Bat Café on the ground floor level. In the space, for the first time the backdrop of the city's high-rise buildings are captured, connecting one to the city edge that is neglected in most of the centre.

Adequate light penetrates the courtyard due to the low-scale of the surrounding centre buildings.

The centre has become home to several resident artist who produce, display and sell their artworks. Most these artist are have learnt their craft through the Arts and Cultures Development Programme offered by the BAT Centre and they are then also involved in the Youth Development Programme for the young aspiring artist. The training occurs at the Visual Art Studio which is a two-storey mezzanine building that houses the cubicles for the resident artist and these lead out to an open-plan working place space. This becomes the heart of the creative centre, where the inception of the craft work begins and is eventually produced and displayed in the various galleries in the BAT Centre.

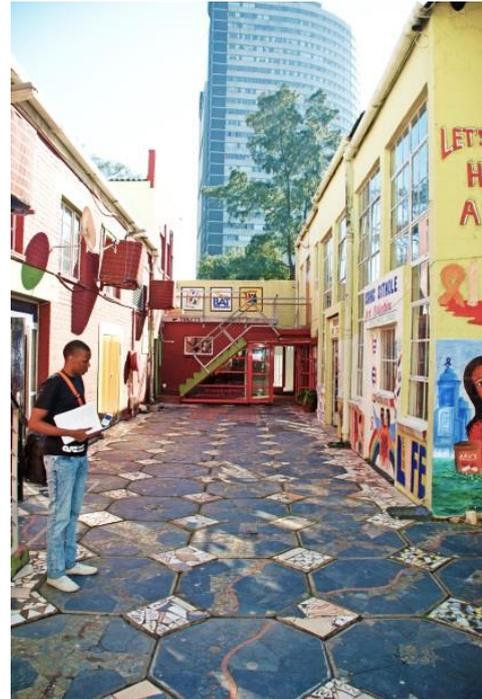


Figure 4.52: The spill out courtyard which becomes a foyer for the retail stores and visual art studio (source: author; 2013)



Figure 4.53: Interior of the Visual Art Studio and workshop (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

Within the BAT Centre, platforms are created not only to produce the work but then showcase the work of the artist, both as part of the building fabric and in the exhibition galleries on hand. The significance is expressed as a focal part of the centre with the gallery space being one of the first space one encounters as they enter the facility. The Menzi Mchunu Gallery (figure 4.54) sits elevated on a mezzanine floor above the entrance foyer and looks over into the bar area and has views of the harbour, once again reinforcing its connection to the water's edge.

Amongst all the facilities at the BAT Centre, the Main Hall (figure 4.55) is one of the most significant. This is a large open Hall which houses up to 500 seated people and is used for major art conferences and concerts. The hall's seating is tiered to maximise on views of the stage. This has an adequate backstage facility and its own administration offices that handle the booking and running of the Main Hall.

4.4.5 Other observations

The building having been built in 1995 has had to adapt and accommodate other elements which seem to conflict with the integrity of the existing structure, appearing almost as 'after-thoughts'. Of these, the most noticeable is the Menzi Mchunu Gallery which sits as a lightweight mezzanine structure above the entrance foyer. The initial foyer space was designed as double volume space with high level windows which penetrate into the space. This can be noted in the manner in which the mezzanine structure sits halfway in-between these large openings, exposing the side structure of this from the outside terrace



Figure 4.54: The Menzi Mchunu & Democratic Gallery on the mezzanine level above entrance foyer (source: photos taken by author; 2013)



Figure 4.55: The Main Hall in the BAT Centre which houses concerts and various other conferences (source: www.redbull.co.za)

seating area. The other observation is the change of 'style' of mural art from the earlier years of the building to more recent times. The building is now decorated with more 'graffiti-style' contemporary murals using spray cans as opposed to the initial hand-painted with acrylic less refined mural art, perhaps showing a shift in the identity of 'mural' art in Durban.

4.4.6 Summary



Figure 4.56 (left): Mural art done in acrylic paint in the earlier times of the Centre (**source: media.lonelyplanet.com**) and figure 4.57 (right) more 'graffiti-style' mural art using spray cans which is commonly seen throughout Durban (**source: photos taken by author; 2013**)

Through exploring the concept of mural art and the 'theory of perception', it was discovered how these are significant to the Bartel Arts Trust Centre, with the building itself being a canvas with varying art work and messages displayed on the facades. The building is symbolic and represents Durban's rich art culture, making this a platform to connect art with the audience. Over the years the work displayed on the facades has adapted to the local cultural climate of the city, showing how art in essence has moved on and our interpretation of it evolving (figure 4.56 & 4.57). The building expresses its strong connection with the arts, representing a platform that aims to promote the arts and culture development in the city.

Through exploring the concept of the indigent community and 'theory of empowerment', this illustrated how these also play a pivotal role with the centre, with the facility not only being a building that exhibits art but creates and harnesses young children within the indigent community who may have had a desire to pursue a career in the arts profession but never had the means to full follow their dreams, the centre provides several youth development programmes and workshops for these individuals. The BAT Centre aims to be a catalyst for development of arts and culture from a young age, taking in many impoverished kids from all communities into their various programmes and teaching them the skills to

express themselves and create art work that they can be proud to have produced, therefore empowering the children and giving them self-confidence.

Through exploring the concept of a meaningful architecture and the 'theory of representation', one understands how the BAT centre is symbolic of how Hugo Bartel had perceived South Africa, more specifically Durban as a 'place' that had a strong connection with arts and culture due to its vast diversity of racial and cultural groups, this factor would in essence best depict the country and its people through the arts. He felt the city of Durban had great potential to become a key catalyst in the raising the appreciation of arts and culture in South Africa. The BAT Centre represents the art movement, with the building facades adapting over the years, with different themes and narratives that are expressed on the building facades through mural art and sculptures etc. A meaningful architecture was defined as a building that has semiotic qualities, aspects of both connotation and denotation, as well as a building that understands and expresses a sense of place and identity. The building not only provides the facilities for arts training but the users of the building themselves have a more connected relationship to the building due to it empowering these individual and instilling key life lessons through art, showing its significance and double function within semiotics.

The BAT Centre however has very little relation to *critical regionalism* beside in the manner at which it is a building that aims to be in essence, socially responsible in the way it aims to utilise art in educating and empowering people. It responds more so to the three key social theories which in turn make this a building of its place and users. The BAT Centre has potential to play a significant role in the development of the arts and culture in Durban but its disconnection from the city hinders this to a large extent. The facility turns its back to the city and Margaret Mncadi Avenue which is a busy route where many people move past on a day to day basis, either by foot or vehicles thus not being easily identifiable. For public buildings to be successful, accessibility is one of the most important factors that need to be considered, the BAT Centre is not very easily accessible by visitors which has been one of the major issues with the facility over the years. However, this facility has become highly significant to many young artist and art lovers around the city, being symbolic of the diverse arts and culture movement within the city of Durban.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter of the dissertation was an analysis of buildings and precincts that were visited on one or more occasions. The chosen case studies were to reflect the theories that were mentioned in the previous chapter and be relevant to the topic of research. Through the critical analysis of these three case studies, one has a clear understanding of how these buildings function, their contribution to the greater environment and how people perceive them through discussions and interviews conducted.

The study investigated the various key aspects required to create a meaningful architecture that is not only functional but aims to create a greater sense of place and uplift those within its community, as well as driving factors that illustrated representation in and of art and architecture as a tool to empower and act as a narrative for the past and the present of its place and the individuals. The studies also explored how place is significant in how these buildings are realised and respond to this.

The investigated case studies, as well as the precedent studies from the previous chapter will be used to generate a brief for the design of community art and assistance centre for the indigent. These have revealed valuable insights into the functional requirements of the proposed building typology.

CHAPTER FIVE
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the dissertation shall investigate first hand views on the opinions through interviews and questionnaires that were undertaken with the general public visiting the case studies, as well as key professionals such as Ilse Mikula from the Community Mural Projects. With regards to the indigent community, basic informal discussions were had with several individuals who were willing to partake in answering simple questions. The data collected was to gain a further understanding of the perception of mural art and what can be done by society to assist the indigent community, as well as what role the built environment plays in this. The questionnaire was broken down similarly to the literature review with part one addressing mural art and the perception of this medium within society, part two addressing the indigent community and how we can empower these individuals and lastly meaningful architecture and how this can be represented to the users of the space. This chapter will only highlight the most significant responses and views from the questionnaires and interviews.

5.2 ANALYSIS OF THEORIES

5.2.1 Perception



Figure 5.1: A mural by local artist TAPZ in Braamfontein as one enters Johannesburg CBD (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

Through the *'theory of perception'*, the research has discovered the role of mural art in its context of the urban environment (figure 5.1) and how it can be perceived by the observers. The questionnaire would further investigate how the general public perceive mural art and what this medium signifies to varying individuals. The questions were to be basic but allow for interpretation and further description if necessary.

Question 1: What is your perception of mural art and graffiti? Positive/Negative and why?

All the 20 participants had perceived mural art and graffiti being positive with 3 of the 20 stating that it can be both positive and negative depending on the purpose and the message behind the work. The comments from the participant was evident that through the research, the mural art that was being referred to in the questionnaire was that which had good intentions and aimed to add value to the space, not merely 'bombing' as is commonly seen in the city. With a young local artist, musician and film editor who resides in the Maboneng precinct saying, *"Both and neither. It all depends on intention. Intention is the root of everything that manifest. It can even look beautiful and be of ill intention."* What was noted was that one of the participants made reference to world-renowned graffiti artist Banksy, saying that it is a great expressive art form that can be used for positive social commentary such as his work. This illustrated that mural art even though it is not as "mainstream" as other more popular art forms such as visual and performance art, it has slowly begun getting exposure and acknowledgment across the world. One participant felt that graffiti technique can be symbolic, saying, *"moreover I like the expressionism, like the roughness of the art piece, mirroring society"*. This showed that when mural art and graffiti is utilised with positive intention, it is highly appreciated by many people, seeing it as a piece of art and not vandalism.

Question 2: Do you feel mural art/graffiti has the potential to play a positive a role in our cities? Yes/No and why?

Again like the first question, all 20 participants felt that mural art and graffiti can contribute positively to the urban fabric. There were common factors that we shared throughout all the responses such as; it was noted that most find that it had the potential to liven up bland or derelict areas within a city, giving them a new and dynamic characteristic, mural art was also seen as having potential to create social commentary and educate through the message behind the art work, and finally its potential to create a local identity was also seen as mural art significant within the city. One participant was a 30 year old German Lawyer who is living in Potchefstroom for research purposes, she shared her experience of mural art in Germany saying, *"In Germany its pretty common to express feelings and frustrations in this manner, especially in Berlin"*. Further saying that she felt that mural art and graffiti is unique as it expresses the views shared by the youth of a city, thus reflecting on the mind and thoughts of these young people during a specific period. It is evident from the general responses of both these questions that there is an overall positive perception and appreciation of mural art and graffiti that has been created and produced to be art work that depicts meaningful and significant messages.

The indigent individuals interviewed had varying perceptions of their understanding and connection to mural art. Most of them due to the lack of knowledge of the various subject matter felt that they could not relate to the work itself, although most found it pleasurable to look at and gave a more pleasant experience of some of the dull spaces within the city. When asked if they would enjoy partaking in community murals throughout the city, all 8 responded positively to the idea of being involved in such projects, saying that it would be ‘fun’ and an opportunity to get involved with the city.

An interview that was key to the understanding of mural art and its contribution within Durban’s context was with Ilse Mikula who was part of the Community Mural Project responsible for many of the murals seen throughout Durban today. She perceives mural art as *“an art form that which due to its public profile, is directly influenced by its physical placement, its time, its social context and its purpose. It can be purely decorative, the city becomes a communal lounge/room/space in it is placed paintings to make it look nice, be a challenging artwork etc. in this way a mural is a luxury.”*

5.2.2 Empowerment

The dissertation has investigated the ‘theory of empowerment’ as a means for reformation of the indigent community. There are varieties of ways that this can be achieved but for the purpose of this research, ‘mural art’ has been explored as the mechanism that shall be utilised to empower these individuals. What was found to be key in the success of any empowerment process was the connection and instilling several key factors within individuals such as; ownership, skills & competencies, leadership, sustainability, and commitment (figure 5.2). The questionnaire would further investigate how the public felt this could be achieved and what involvement can society play to assist the indigent community in the reformation of their lives. Several indigent individuals were also interviewed regarding

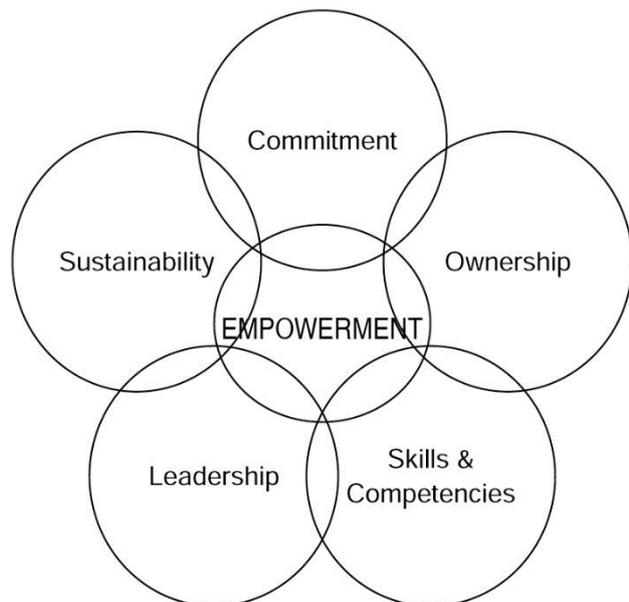


Figure 5.2: Bubble diagram illustrating the key factors necessary within the empowerment process (source: www.emeraldsinsight.com)

how mural art be utilised as an empowerment tool. The questions were to be basic but allow for interpretation and further description if necessary.

Question 1: What is your opinion on the indigent people within your city?

It was evident through all the questionnaires that there was a large sense of sadness and pity felt towards the indigent community and the conditions that they live in. Most of the participants felt saddened by the mere thought that there are such people who have to suffer like that, with the one participant stating, *“There should not be indigent people in a fair society.”* Several participants mentioned that they had respect for these individuals for enduring the hard lives they live, one saying, *“They are fighters. I respect them, do not judge them, and know that I am linked to them.”* This shows that even though the indigent have a negative stigma attached to them, its not through dislike but rather pity. People acknowledge that these live in their own struggle and most feel that there should be something done by either the government to assist or the public. Several participants had noted that they were saddened by the lack of opportunities and support which was one of the reasons they are in their current state. Over all this illustrated how the participants all felt the need for these individuals to be assisted out of the harsh living conditions that they currently experience.

Ilse Mikula feels that with the use of public art in our cities, this can create vibrant and challenging environments for the indigent, which uplifts and makes them think of what they observe. During her time with the Community Mural Project she found that often when painting a project in the city, there would always be a couple of indigent individuals who would be eager to assist them paint or scrounge some lunch and they would let them participate with them, leaving their mark on the city. Whilst doing one project at Medwood Gardens adjacent to Durban’s City Hall, every morning they’d be greeted by several indigent people and one would always scream, *“Smell the roses, mind the view”*, which then became their motto whilst doing that project, she felt that the indigent people had taken a liking to the artist during that project.

Question 2: How can we (public/society) assist in bettering the conditions of the indigent community?

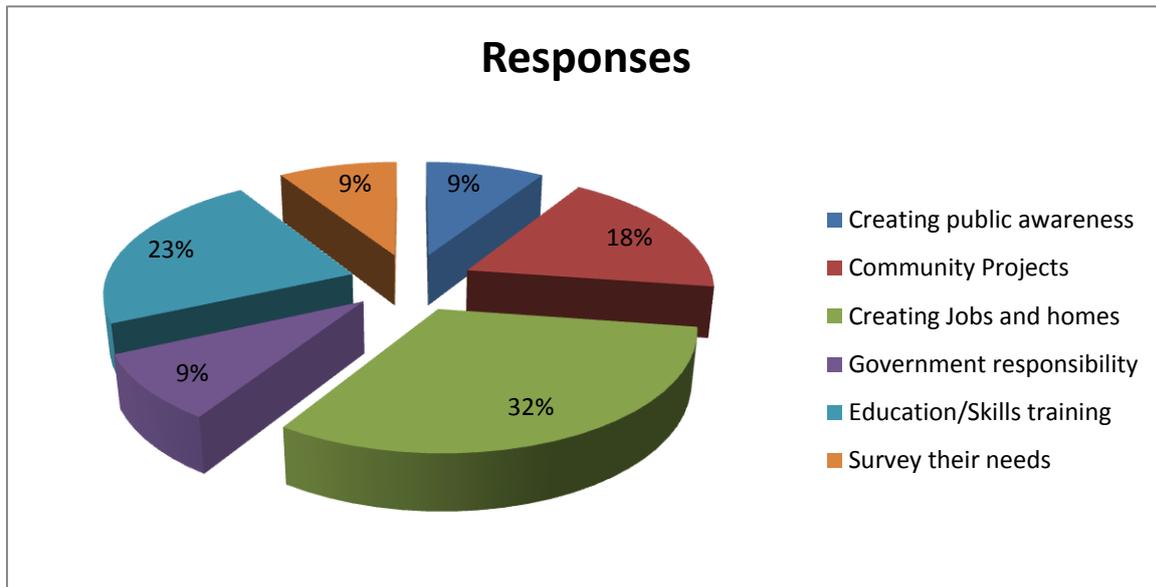


Figure 5.3: Pie graph illustrating the various responses from the participants. (source: author; 2013)

There were a variety of different responses for this question, a graph (figure 5.3) was generated to show what were the key prospects to address empowering the indigent community. One of the main issues with the indigent is that we often do not have much knowledge about these unique individuals, we see them but never acknowledge them on a deeper level of understanding their situation. Therefore before we can begin to assist the indigent, it would be appropriate to first make sure there is a general public awareness. Community participation and having more community organisations that help such groups was noted as being vital to this, one participant saying, “Form more local grassroots organisations within all communities. Also encourage more community participation with already established organisations i.e., Habitat for humanity.” The relatively high percentage of participants reflects the people believe individual growth and empowering has the potential to occur far better through a collective participation. Another major issue that would be important in addressing indigence would be to give these individuals skills training in various platforms and providing a platform for them to further their educational knowledge. Many participants further suggested that art skills training could be essential as this could assist these individuals as they could learn to produce their own work which they could later sell, simultaneously teaching them how to be self-sufficient. As would expect, creating jobs and housing by government and other organisations was seen as the best solution to eradicating the indigence situation however as the research earlier showed, the government has implemented several housing policies over the years and this hasn’t eradicating this issue of indigence.

When designing facilities that aim to empower and cater for the indigent community, all these key factors should be addressed within the building.

5.2.3 Representation



Figure 5.4 (left): Drill Hall in Johannesburg CBD and figure 5.5 (right) is the courtyard of Arts on Main in Maboneng Precinct (source: photos taken by author; 2013)

Such buildings as the Drill Hall (figure 5.4), Arts on Main (figure 5.5) and BAT Centre are have utilised the theory of representations in their own sense, aiming to be symbolic of the identity of the place and the users. Of the three facilities visited, it was only the Arts on Main building that had reasonable amount of people during the time of the case studies and this was said to be a regular attendance during all weekends. However an impromptu interview was conducted with director of the Keleketla Library at the Drill Hall, Mr Rangoato Hlasane. The questionnaire aimed to investigate how the visitors felt about the purpose of buildings such as this which promotes the arts.

Mr Hlasane when asked about the Drill Hall, was quick to inform that most of the information on the internet about the Drill Hall is out-dated so many people are unaware of the change of structure and organisations based at the facility. Up until 2008 the Drill Hall was operational under the Johannesburg Chest Community which catered for the disadvantaged children in the inner city and the Joubert Park Project which was an arts initiative that aimed to promote arts in the area. However the Keleketla Library, to which he was the director, had taken over the facility since then. The Keleketla Library which is an inter-disciplinary, independent library and media arts project had been at other premises and had many members prior to moving to the Drill Hall. The facility he said was highly functional during the various art events held there and with the various workshops for their children's art development programme, there were often large numbers of children that would attend these. It was evident that

facility like this and the BAT Centre have a large significance to the development of youth talent within the arts, being a symbol for arts and cultural growth at grassroots' level.

All the participants found that the experience at the Arts on Main was very pleasurable, becoming a strong draw and attraction into a part of the city that has been ignored for some years now. Some of the users had noted that they had seen the understanding of projects like this, with one saying, *“I can see what they are trying to do, i.e. create an environment which is totally against expectations of the South African norm. However, I think the message is lost if it remains in the confines of the building.”* This can be understood in the internalised experience created by the facility, not really connect with its outer edges and context, even though being such a significant element of it. However many do see it's the catalyst for change with Fred Clarke, an artist who lives and works at Arts on Main saying, *“Arts on Main is a positive beginning, it is growing, the challenge is to include organically, not fearfully. I trust it will grow well...”* What was also generally noted by the participants is how they had found the reuse and interpretation of an old urban structure into a facility that housed the new 'image' that is Arts on Main was highly pleasurable and made for a positive connection to the existing buildings in its context. Some though felt that perhaps it was too stark and if it is to be an “arts building”, this should be represented in the built form, or perhaps in the manner in which BAT Centre has the mural art and sculptures on the facades to indicate its function.

5.2.4 Critical regionalism

Foster (1983) refers to critical regionalism as a *“critical mediation of the forms of the modern civilization and of the local culture, a mutual deconstruction of the universal techniques and regional vernaculars”* (Foster, 1983: xi).

With *critical regionalism* being the principal theory throughout the dissertation, the research has revealed how the concept of place can play a fundamental role in how architecture could connect better with the observer. Through exploring case studies such as Maboneng Precinct (*figure 5.6*), one can begin to understand how architecture and its surrounding can create a harmonious relationship that can strengthen

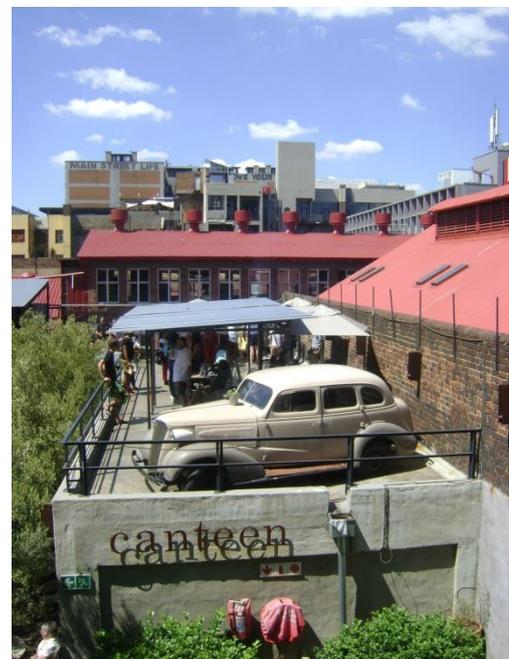


Figure 5.6: View of the rooftop at Arts on Main in Maboneng Precinct (*source: photos taken by author; 2013*)

both these as separate entities, but together, the dialogue between them can create a sense of place that responds to the user. With trends and globalisation constantly influencing the way in which we think as humans and especially designers, this can begin to reveal how we are losing touch of our local self. Our local identity should be something we all aspire to maintain the integrity of and assist in strengthening this so that future generations can understand where we have come from and where we are going.

Upon visiting Maboneng Precinct, the spirit of the place was overwhelming, from moving through spaces within the city that you would see no life, to arriving at this gateway, where colour and street vibrancy begins to consume you. This is what urban regeneration aims to do. Through analysing the existing framework, the developers had a goal and that was to convert a space in the city that was abandoned and become dead space, making this a new city centre on their own. But unlike other developers, who have no understanding of place, Propertuity had a vision and that was to redefine and reimagine an industrial precinct, maintaining its rustic characteristics and create a place for pedestrians and new urban life. When speaking to visitors and residents of the precinct, it was noted that all of the responses regarding the spirit of the place was relatively high and the main reason was due to the environment that they were in being natural and not at all contrived. The buildings were rustic but elegant, giving a character one wouldn't find anywhere.

This is a result of a design approach that is sensitive to its existing landscape and letting the observer's create the energy instead trying to create this experience by introducing buildings that have no connection to place and are just 'urban icons'. *Critical regionalism* stresses the importance of place creation between man and the built environment. When buildings respond to their site, the user and historical factors, these produce works that have meaning and personal value for the observer.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The primary data that was collected through the interviews, questionnaires and discussions with the various individuals is significant in understanding of the key concepts and theories utilised in this dissertation in the practical application of the case studies and then how this information can further give a better understanding to the program and design approach for the proposal of a Community Art and Assistance Centre for the indigent.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation set out to explore how through the understanding of the principles of mural art and its significance to both society and the urban landscape, this can be utilised to empower the indigent community by giving them the opportunity to express themselves through this medium as well as this being used as a tool to educate and communicate through representation. For conclusions to be made, it is essential for one to revisit the hypothesis: ***“To determine a meaningful architecture that will facilitate indigent reformation and empowerment through the acknowledgement and understanding of mural art. Mural art has the ability to contribute positively to the development of culture and society through the representation and perception by individuals and due to its exposure on a public scale.”***

The dissertation has utilised a variety of research methodologies to gather key information relating to the topic and key research questions, concepts and theories. Through the critical analysis and investigation of the literature review, precedents and case studies, the information gathered has proven pivotal in understanding the objectives of the research and a way forward. When making analysis it is crucial to understand the global and local issues that one aims to address. The global nature of the precedents provided insight into innovative concepts and resulting designs whilst the case studies allowed users or designers, of the selected facilities, to have an input in the recommendations. This chapter will be broken down into the three key theories and hypothesis and describe how these have been responded to throughout this document in order to resolve the research problems. The three theories being that of: ‘*perception*’, ‘*representation*’ and ‘*empowerment*’.

6.2 Conclusions

The research’s first key theory was of perception. Perception is critical in the nature and order of how we see and experience what is all around us. The perceptual process allows us to gain key information about properties and elements of our environment that are crucial to our survivals as humans. (McLeod. 2007) Perception of ‘things’ differs from one individual to another, that was discovered to be due to everyone have different backgrounds and previous life experiences, thus when perceiving the same object, everyone has various recollection and memory of either the object or what it may signify to them is largely different. Within the topic itself, the research explored how both ‘*mural art*’ and ‘*indigent*’ are subject to perception, in most cases negative. The literature investigated means to understand why this is the case as these two concepts of the research have potential to play a pivotal

role in the development of society and the urban landscape. It is through past experiences and our often 'uncomfortable' engagement with these in that respect.

To empower is to 'give power to or authority to'. This is a fundamental process that is key in the success of the research and the appropriate building typology that shall be generated from it. In a society and country where there is a substantial margin and difference between the rich and poor, educated and uneducated, this gap cannot be resolved merely by the idea of 'policies' and 'acts' compiled by government, greater society has the potential to assist in this process. Through the investigated literature, it was discovered that Architecture can play a pivotal role in community development and empowerment through participation of these individuals to shape their environment and spaces. To empower the indigent community will help develop their self-esteem and hopefully this becomes the catalyst to reconnecting this community back into society and changing the negative perception many have of them. Through the various precedents, the concept of empowerment was key in giving these users a sense of importance regaining their dignity, this approach is one that shall be brought forward into the design proposal.

The theory of representation was explored due to its significance and relation to both '*mural art*' and '*meaningful architecture*'. What constitutes the significance of mural art to the observer is the representation and meaning of the content displayed. This can be applied to what constitutes '*meaningful architecture*'. Both these objects have the potential of going beyond their primary function. Through understanding semiotics, it was discovered that by applying this principle when designing and or conceptualising a piece, the product therefore aims to have a far greater connection with the observer/user and create a variety of layers of perception. These become a means of communicating and representing a broader vision and objective to which the user and observer become more involved with this, giving them a richer sense of meaning. Architecture in essence, is a symbol that communicates to the viewer sense of that place, the period it was designed and built, the people and the context it serves. Buildings however represent much more than practical and functional space for the immediate users, but have identity, cultural and symbolic characteristics.

6.3 Recommendations

The primary objective of the research is to create a meaningful architecture that will be appropriate for its users and place. It is highly significant that generated architectural and urban intervention becomes a representation of its user and its environment. Contemporary architecture in the South African context

must be culturally attentive and engage itself with its users and surrounding contextual setting. Understanding the background of the users was pivotal and the literature review revealed many reasons why often the buildings that aim to service this community fail and this will be taken into consideration when dealing with site selection and the program that will be implemented into the structure.

The building and its program need to be driven by the theory of empowerment, from community participation which will give the users and the community a sense of ownership, as well as skills training being gained. This building should represent a building of the people whilst still maintaining strong design merit in its entirety. Elements of the design need to derive their source from contextual surroundings, people and lifestyle in order to generate a holistic solution. Therefore people need to be a part of the building and understand the architecture they occupy. What will also be taken into consideration is the history and significance of a place with this building aiming to enhance the characteristics of place. Through the various precedents and case studies, it was noted that some of these were refurbishment of existing structures that were significant to the local past, these building thus then have a stronger connection to the people and place due to the memories created in the past and the building being a reminder of this but still creating new memories and possibilities. This approach also becomes a means of sustainable development as it has less impact on its environment by making the most of what is there, which in essence is how the indigent community themselves survive. This could be explored within the proposed intervention.

Mural art being the main subject of research, this proposal must make a clear connection with the subject matter. It is merely the representation of mural art and its principles as an art form. It should be a building of self-expression and upliftment, much like mural art aims to do. Like mural art, it should be rich in layering and versatile for interpretation. Mural art depicts the cultural climate and political commentary of our everyday lives (Gleaton. 2012). The building should therefore express its sense of place and belonging to the context, with the possibility for flexibility if need be as the cultural climate and society evolve and change, the building should be able to adapt to this. The building itself should act as an open canvas for self-expression to occur, creating narratives of the community.

There are many significant factors that will play a pivotal role in creating a meaningful built environment. Through all the investigated research and conclusions made from this, guidelines have been generated and a way forward on how to approach the proposed architectural and urban intervention. These will need to be carefully explored and it is critical to always refer back to the research and topic.

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9.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

The following is a list of questions from the questionnaire based on the key concepts and theories of mural art and its perception, the indigent and their empowerment and meaningful architecture and its representation. There were directed at visitors who actively and physically engaged with either Drill Hall, Arts on Main in the Maboneng precinct, or the Bartel Arts Trust Centre. The information gathered from these questionnaires are judiciously incorporated into the analysis of the case studies as they account for personal experiences which allows for a more honest reflection of the case study.

NB: Participation in this questionnaire is voluntary. Participants are informed of the nature and purpose of the research and institution with which the research is associated with. All information gathered from the interview is solely for the purpose of this research study. Participants are free to withdraw from the research at any time should they wish to do so.

Part one: *Mural Art/graffiti*

- 1) What is your perception of mural art/graffiti?
 - A) *Positive*
 - B) *Negative*

Why?
- 2) Do you feel mural art/graffiti has the potential to play a positive role in our city?
 - a) *Yes*
 - b) *No*

If yes, how so?
- 3) Do you feel mural/graffiti art plays a role in portraying a sense of “local identity”?
 - a) *Yes*
 - b) *No*

If yes, how so?
- 4) Would you appreciate more community driven mural art/graffiti to educate and liven up the more derelict areas within your city?

Part Two: *Indigent*

- 5) What is your opinion of the indigent and destitute people in your city?
- 6) Do you feel that the vast amount of homeless people and street children reflects negatively on your city?
 - a) *Yes*

- b) No
- 7) How can we (public/society) assist in bettering the conditions of the indigent?
- 8) How can we reconnect this “lost community” (indigent) back into our society?

Part Three: Architecture

- 9) What is your reason for being at this building?
 - a) *Staff member*
 - b) *Visitor*
 - c) *other, please specify*
- 10) What was the first impression of the building as you arrived?
 - a) *Powerful*
 - b) *Oppressive*
 - c) *Disconnected*
 - d) *Welcoming*
 - e) *Uplifting*
- 11) Is the building and its entrance easily identifiable amongst its surrounding?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 12) Which would best describe how you feel when you in this building within its context?
 - a) *Connected to the context*
 - b) *Isolated and disconnected*
- 13) Which would best describe your experience of the circulation/walkways/movement within the building? Select one or more:
 - a) *Confusing*
 - b) *Intimidating*
 - c) *Pleasant*
 - d) *Understandable*
 - e) *Dark*
 - f) *Light*
 - g) *Warm*
 - h) *Cold*
- 14) Are you able to identify the function of this building from the exterior?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 15) As a pedestrian moving past the building, the building you?

a) *Overwhelms*

b) *Welcomes*

c) *Respects*

d) *Intimidates*

16) General comment on the building?

APPENDIX B:

The following is a list of questions for impromptu discussions with indigent individuals within the city. These individuals could not be approached with a formal interview structure so any individuals willing to partake in the informal discussions were approached. The information gathered was to receive a first-hand understanding of the conditions that these individuals experience.

- 1) How are the living conditions on the street?
- 2) Do you ever receive any assistance or help from local authority?
- 3) How do people treat you as an individual who is indigent?
- 4) Do you feel that you have a voice that contributes to the development of the city?
- 5) What basic needs would you wish to obtain as a citizen of South Africa?
- 6) Would you wish to have the opportunity to express yourself and be heard through mural art practice?
- 7) If given the opportunity, would you wish for chance to start afresh through a programme aimed at empowering the indigent?

APPENDIX C:

The following is a list of questions directed at Ilse Mikula of the Community Mural Project that is responsible for most of the significant and highly recognised mural art in Durban. The information gathered was to gain a far greater understanding of the historical significance of mural art in Durban and how the city became a platform for mural art to flourish.

Part one: *Mural Art/graffiti*

1. What is your perception of mural/graffiti art?
2. What inspired your interest to create the Community Mural Project organisation?
3. Do you feel mural/graffiti art plays a role in portraying a sense of "local identity"?
4. Do you feel mural/graffiti art has the potential to play a positive role in our city?

5. What was your first mural/graffiti art experience like? In general when and where was it?
6. Do you believe that other people have any misconceptions about mural/graffiti art?
7. How have you seen mural/graffiti art change or evolve over the years?
8. What messages are important for you to communicate with your work?
9. What is mural art/graffiti art about? Would you say it is about personal recognition or something more?
10. Do you have a specified audience you try to reach with your work? If so, who?
Why or why not?
11. Do you think mural/graffiti art belongs in the traditional, mainstream art community? Why or why not?
12. What do you think the future holds for mural/graffiti artists?

Part Two: *Indigent*

1. What is your opinion of the indigent and destitute people in your city?
2. Do you feel that the vast amount of homeless people and street children reflects negatively on one's city?
3. How can we (public/society) assist in bettering the conditions of the indigent reconnect this "lost community" (indigent) back into our society?

PART TWO

DESIGN SCHEMATIC