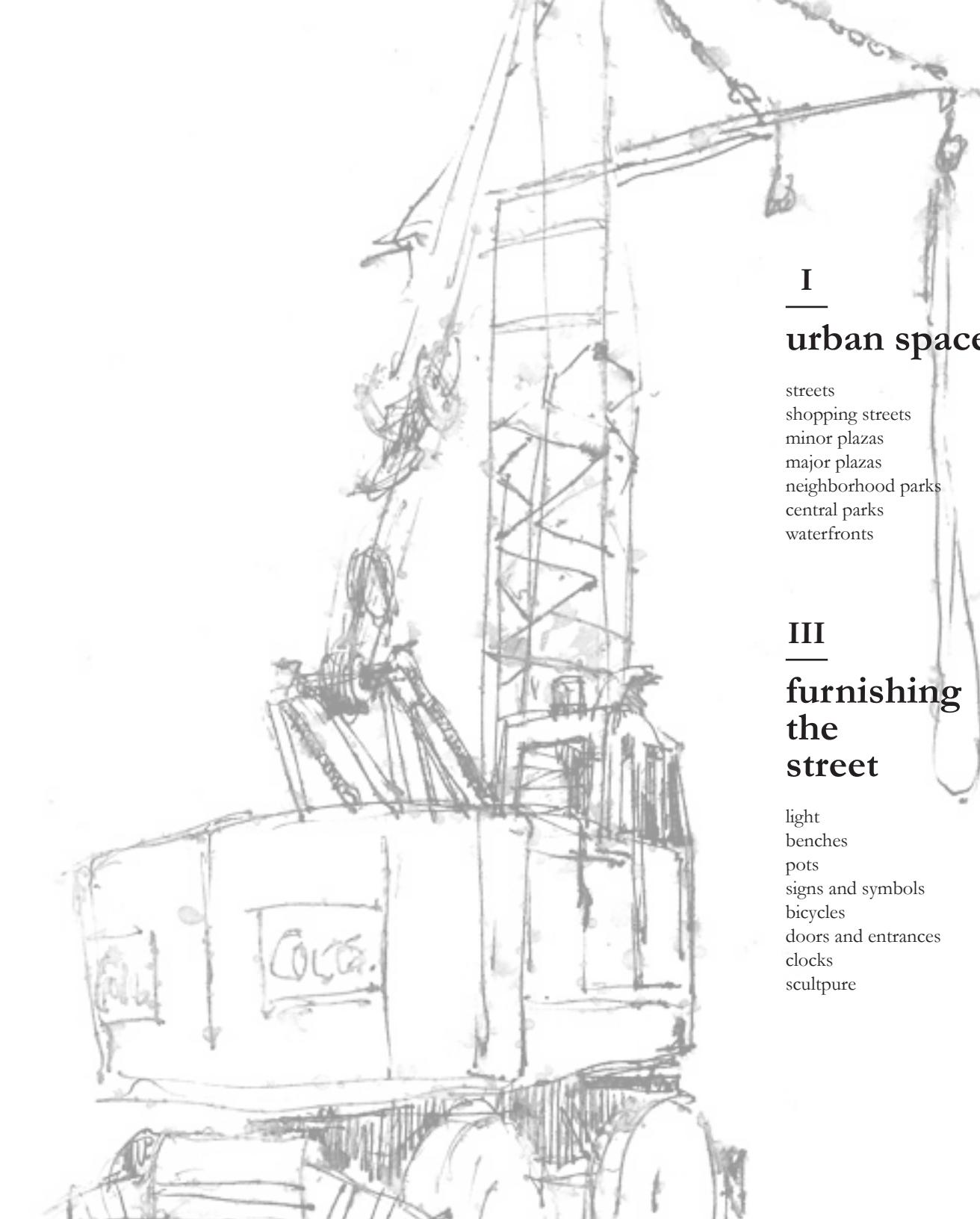


cities

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I

URBAN SPACES



The life of cities is of two kinds: one is public and social, extroverted and interrelated. It is the life of the streets and plazas, the great parks and civic spaces and the dense activity and excitement of the shopping areas. This life is mostly out in the open in the great urban spaces, where crowds gather and people participate in the exciting urban interrelationships which they seek as social human beings. It is the life of sidewalk cafes and museums and waterfront activities, of theater-going and night clubs at night; the public city, bustling, active and exciting.

There is, too, a second kind of life in the city: private and introverted, the personal, individual, self-oriented life which seeks quiet and seclusion and privacy. This private life has need for open spaces of a different kind, which will be described in this next chapter. It needs enclosure and quiet, removal from crowds and a quality of calm and relaxation. The city should respond to both needs and both kinds of activity for they are equally important parts of the urban environment we are seeking.



Our urban open spaces are the matrix of this two-fold life. It is largely within them that we can find for ourselves these variegated experiences which make life in a city creative and stimulating. It is the open spaces which give a character and quality to our life in the city and establish its tempo and patterns. They occupy a position of central importance, if only because they usually occupy one quarter of the downtown area and often almost half. Urban spaces, of course, are of many different kinds and perform many different functions.

In the most simplified and traditional form, they start as streets which provide access to buildings, light and air, carry utilities and cars and become, in fact, the very lungs and arteries of the community body. The main problems we are running into, in attempting to keep our older cities functioning in our present, more complex society, is the multi-purpose use to which the old street has been put. It is being called upon to perform functions for which it was not designed. We need to specialize again and separate the functions which streets and open spaces are called upon to perform.



10



11



Top: A beautiful, long, curving street in Siena which surrounds the Piazza di Campo. Sequences of vistas of the W occur at rhythmic intervals.

Bottom: A street in the Spanish city of Cordoba.

streets

The medieval street has intriguing characteristics for modern people. It tends to be narrow and winding, with an air of mystery and adventure. One does not see very far ahead, and the promise of fulfillment is always one step beyond. Houses line its course, tight up against the walking spaces, and the principal rooms face away from the street. The automobile here is an intruder, and, in fact, even today enters the street at its own risk. In early times, the street was a focus of neighborhood activity. It is still used for marketing and selling and the peddler moves up and down it crying out his wares. Here is the multipurpose and vital part of the open space of the city, and even medieval Londoners understood the need to keep it clean and wholesome. A proclamation was issued to prevent housewives from throwing slop from the upper windows, or, at least, to call out a warning beforehand. We need to recapture in our modern terms the aesthetic qualities of the ancient street - the quiet, the sense of neighborhood, the fine urban scale.

Left: A street in Venice which has been widened to provide open space for a small market. It is not commonly realized that Venice is interlaced by streets in which the Venetians carry on the normal day-to-day functions of city living. Venice, centuries ago, established some of the principles of traffic separation we now realize are so important. The watery canals carry the traffic and service vehicles and the pedestrians and trees are on the ground.



14



In order to make possible a gracious, un hysterical kind of life on a city street, it has become clear that the automobile must take second place and be excluded. These photos show examples in various parts of the world where banishing the automobile has made life more enjoyable.

Left: East Village, New York City - a paradise for connoisseurs of street art.

Top right: A street for little girls and hopscotch.

15



Top left: Sidewalk cafe in Venice - one of the most civilized and modern cities. One of the important functions of the street in Europe is the sidewalk cafe - a feature sadly lacking in America.

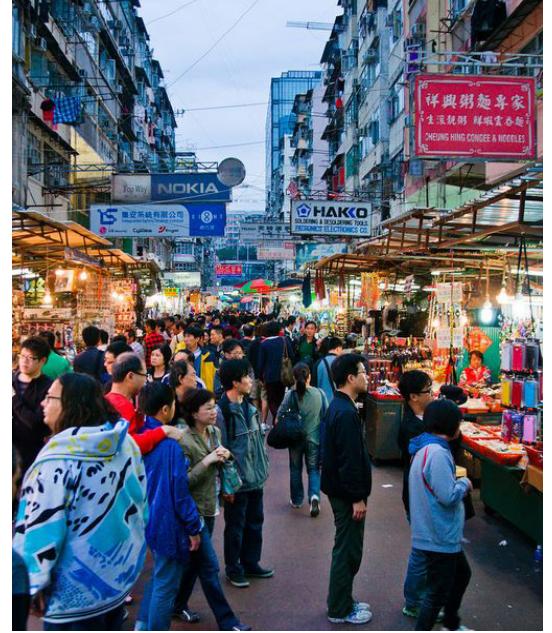
Bottom: A new pedestrian bridge in North Hollywood which carries shoppers from one side of the street to the other over the automobiles.



Top: Champs Elysees, a nineteenth century linear street driven straight through the heart of Paris. By its design the elegant, broad esplanade has separated the wheeled vehicle from the pedestrian. This early example of redevelopment in the city was executed without regard to the democratic process.

Bottom: Arc de Triomphe, Paris.





Top left: Hong Kong.

Bottom left: Taxco, Mexico - the most primitive type of market.



shopping streets

The shopping street pulsates with excitement and an intense level of activity night and day. The new street for shopping is a bazaar made for our own times. Each one shown here has achieved dignity and amenity by the simple device of excluding the automobile. Here are great markets from all over the world.



Top right: The great galleria in Milan. High, arching, and glass enclosed, it connects to the square in front of the Duomo.

Bottom right: A typical, cool Persian bazaar whose appeal depends as much on smells and sounds as on visual qualities. As you walk through the bazaar, there are the tinkling of bells, the smells of spices, the smoke from water-pipes and the rich, deep colors of Oriental rugs.



Top: The famous Lijnbaan in Rotterdam, which rose like a phoenix from the ashes of the brutal, inhuman Nazi destruction.

Bottom: Galerie de la Reine, Brussels.

Right: A small alley in San Francisco, closed to traffic and connected to the main square.





minor plazas

At the confluence of streets there are often small spaces which should be developed as handsome and colorful incidents of the city. A small plaza can contain, in a relatively casual way, sculpture, fountains, art exhibits, cafes, and benches which are human in scale, intimate and usable. A local plaza gives a sense of place and becomes a focus for its neighborhood. It can be a rallying place for neighborhood activities and establish a quality and character for its inhabitants.



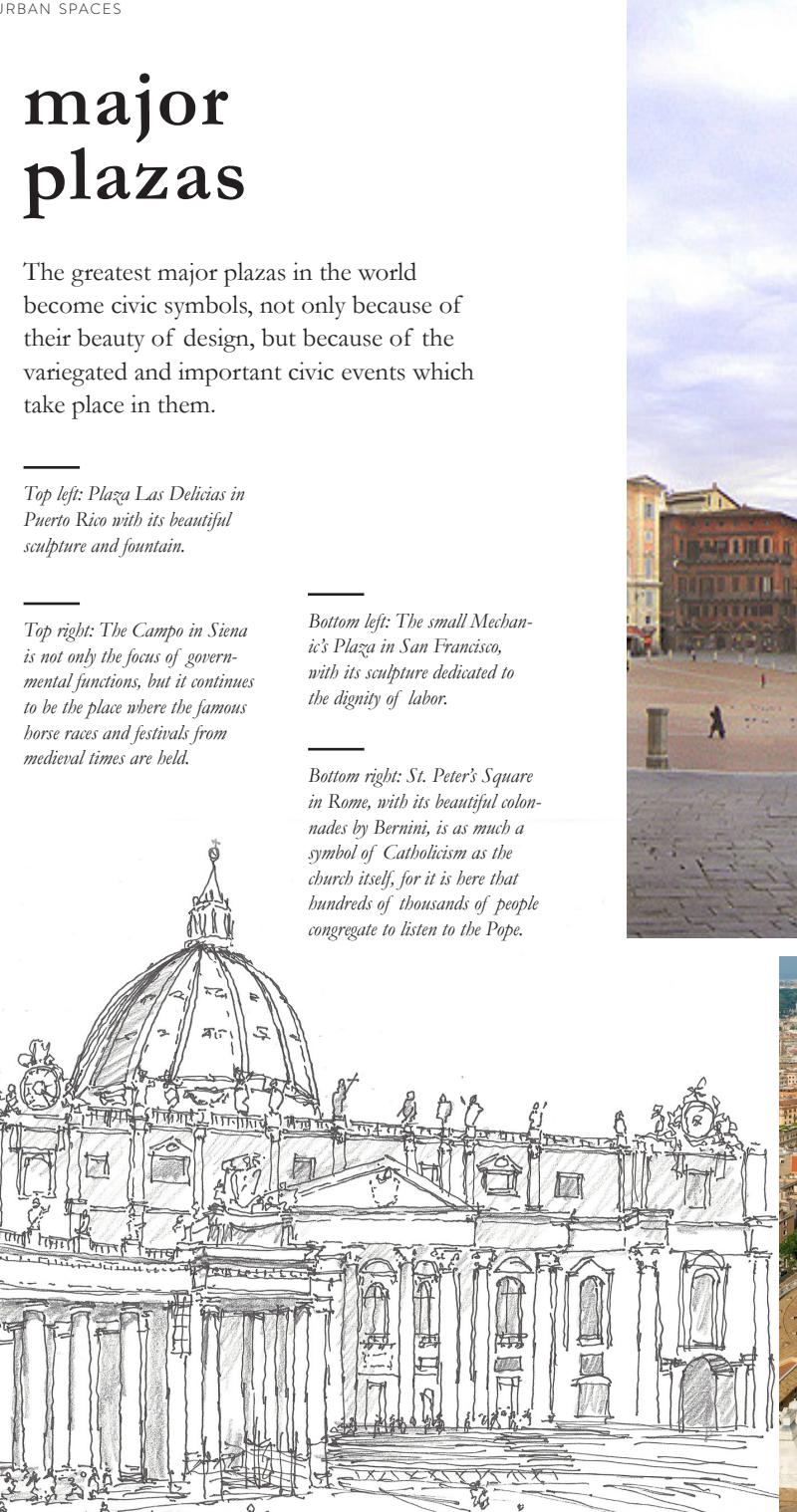
major plazas

The greatest major plazas in the world become civic symbols, not only because of their beauty of design, but because of the variegated and important civic events which take place in them.

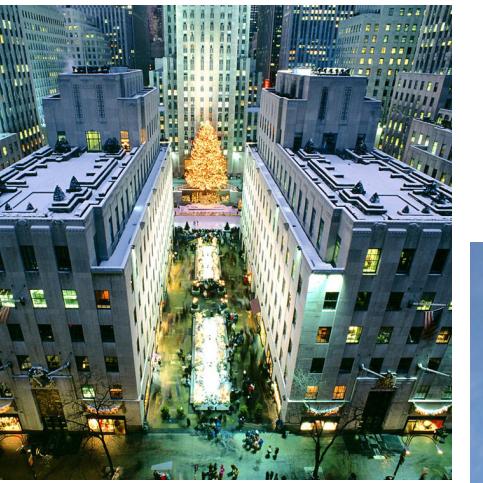
Top left: Plaza Las Delicias in Puerto Rico with its beautiful sculpture and fountain.

Top right: The Campo in Siena is not only the focus of governmental functions, but it continues to be the place where the famous horse races and festivals from medieval times are held.

Bottom left: The small Mechanic's Plaza in San Francisco, with its sculpture dedicated to the dignity of labor.



Top: New York's Rockefeller Center has become the focus of lively interest in the heart of a great city, not only because of its handsome design, but also because it accommodates a wide variety of activities.

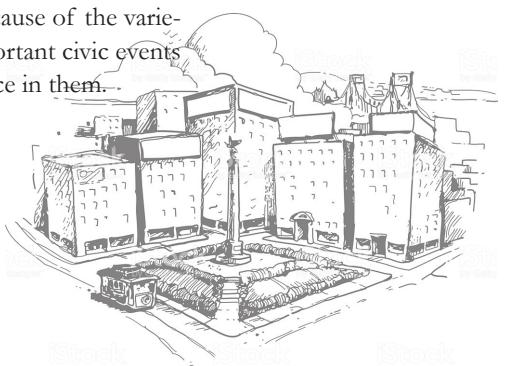


Bottom: San Francisco's Union Square in the core of the city has made the surrounding shopping area one of the most elegant and beautiful in America.



Right: The Piazza San Marco in Venice, that quintessence of civic design, focuses its activities of outdoor eating, shopping, band concerts and religious festivals, to say nothing of feeding the pigeons.

The greatest major plazas in the world become civic symbols, not only because of their beauty of design, but because of the variegated and important civic events which take place in them.





Top left: A green strip park along a canal in Berlin, by its simple presence and unassuming character, enhances the city and makes the neighborhood one of the most desirable in New York.



Top Right: Gramercy Park, a private community park, by its very existence, enhances the city and makes the neighborhood one of the most desirable in New York.



neighborhood parks

In addition to the open spaces created by the major and minor squares which are usually heavily paved, there is need in the city for green threads and neighborhood parks which can bring the qualities of nature and a relation to growing things that we all need.

Bottome left: Tessin Park, in the center of Stockholm, devoted to children's play, provides a green outlook for the surrounding apartments.

Bottome right: A green recreation park in the center of a new living area in San Francisco.

here, even in the city, children can play, birds can sing, and flowers can grow.

central parks

The major park in the city performs a weekend vacation function for city dwellers which is as important for their recreation and refreshment as the flight to the country. If we can maintain these great green areas and add new ones in the hearts of cities, they can help us maintain that ecological balance which our biology demands.

Top: A quiet and leisurely appreciation of nature in Edinburgh. They are all waiting

Middle/Bottom: Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, a combination of activities of all kinds and for all people

Bottom left: Biology takes many forms. St. James Park in London here is here shown as a setting for an important and universal need.



waterfronts

The in-between solution, which is thought to be so gracious, along the Hudson in New York City is almost as bad. If you look carefully, there are five tiers of transportation facilities, including the original railroad right-of-way. It is true there are trees, but they are only decoration. The whole city has been divorced from the great Hudson River waterway by cars and railroad and freeway, even though the actual design is pleasant. Directly across from the island on the East River at the United Nations, is a handsome example of how these various elements can be designed in an integrated way.

Through the simple device of building the freeway as part of the new complex, under the buildings and yet open to the river, and by building plazas and parks above, both visual and physical contact with the waterfront are obtained; the great activities of river boats moving up and down become part of the life of the city, and even the freeway retains its views and its amenity. Here the freeway has enhanced the city and given it a new dimension without destroying it.



Top/Bottom: View of the Hudson river along the West Side Highway, New York City.





GARDENS BETWEEN WALLS

I know of no great and beautiful city where people do not live close to the core. For the whole quality of a city's life - its personality and its image - is set by its inhabitants, not by its merchants or its tourists or the suburbanites who live on its fringes and scatter for home with the 4:30 whistle. It is the city's dwellers who fill its streets at night, use its parks and restaurants, populate its open spaces and plazas, and in the last analysis, fight for its amenities. When the city loses its inhabitants, it will die. And it will surely die as long as it does not provide a fine, well-rounded environment in which to live.

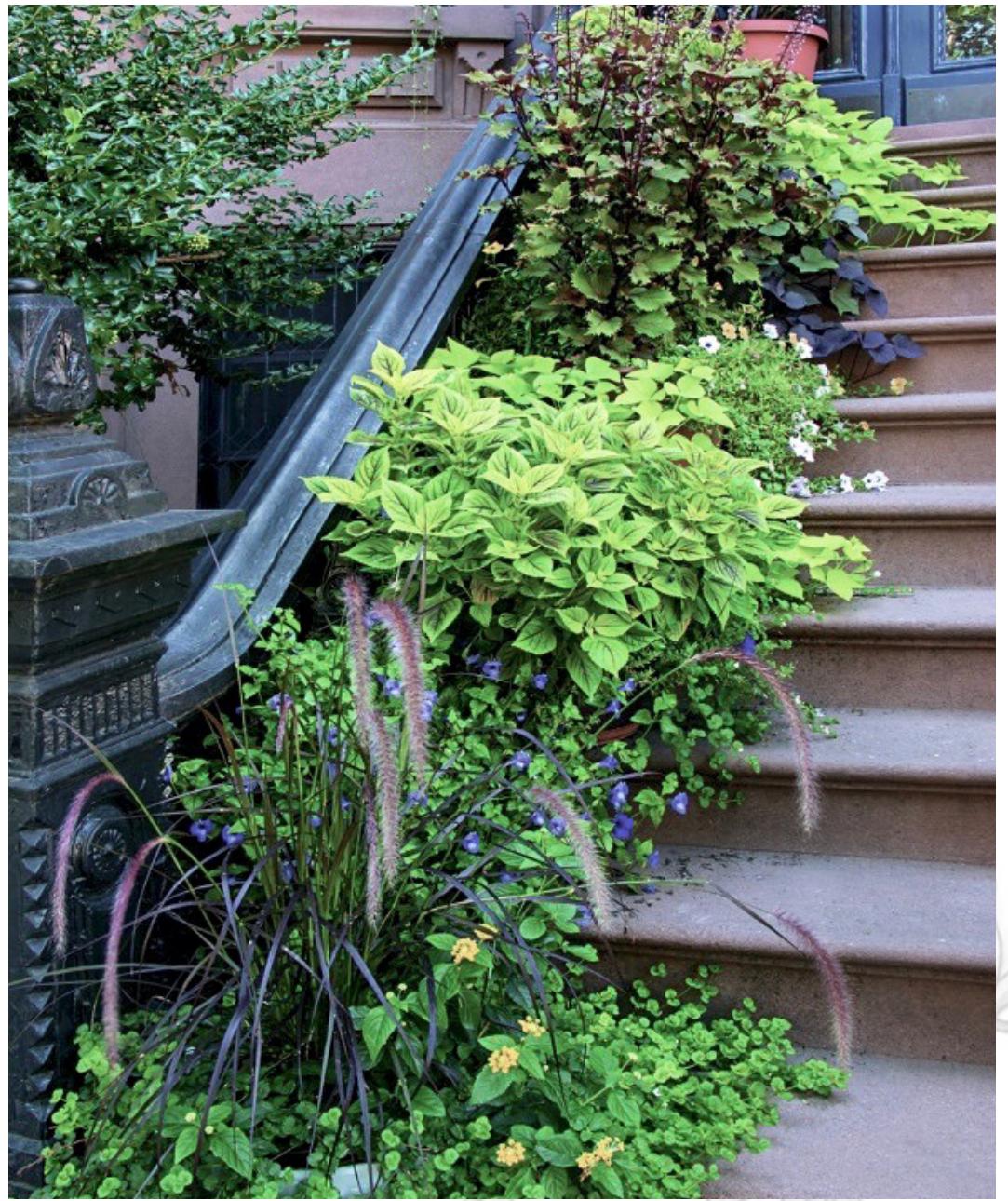
A vital part of this well-rounded environment in a city is daily contact with the out-of-doors. The simple pleasure of waking up in the morning to the sound of birds outside or the rustle of leaves in the trees is enough to help start the day joyfully. If you add to this the ability to step outside for a moment into an outdoor space, no matter how small, and get a glimpse of sky and a smell of damp earth and flowers, then the overwhelming scale and density of urban living can be largely overcome. And this simple biological amenity is by no means impossible to achieve.

Even in a large city, contact with the ground and life in a garden is possible. At extremely high densities, community gardens, jointly used by groups of families, may be necessary. Even these can provide adequately for outdoor family life, children's recreation, and a day-to-day contact with nature. They can be designed to form a central commons for surrounding houses and apartments. Or in the city, courtyard living is possible; rooms can face inward either to atriums or small private enclosures hidden by high walls for privacy. Each small space, if properly integrated into the fabric of living, can be designed to provide an outdoor experience no matter how simple.

It is necessary, of course, in these confined spaces, to shift our sense of scale and plan micro cosmically. The tiny garden must establish its own scale - its own frame of reference - so that in entering it, one enters into a private world, into a man-made sense of isolation and remoteness. Through care in the selection of plants and textures, the careful manipulation of intimate views and perspectives, a quiet perception of out-of-doors can be established, even at small scale.

The Japanese, of course, have developed the small garden into a high art; trees are dwarfed, rocks are selected for their tiny perfect scale, and a whole natural universe is evoked in nature.

Even without these symbols or these artificially dwarfed plants, nature can be brought into our city gardens, by pruning, by the selection of plants whose form and leaf and flower is in scale with the smallness of the spaces, and particularly by a careful reference to the indoor space of which the garden is an extension. Among the hard constructions of urban spaces, the confined and walled garden can generate a magnificent series of interrelations between man-made and natural forms seen at close range and intimately experienced - a complete universe in microcosm.



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This is a collection of beautifully illustrated gardens in the heart of New York City at the backs of some old remodeled brownstones.



*Left; Cherry Blossom Trees,
Brooklyn Botanic Gardens.*





common gardens

The combination of small private gardens joining hands with a central common makes possible a wide range of outdoor living. The private gardens adjoin the houses, and the centrally located common areas then can provide for more extensive children's play and outdoor community life.

Top: Boston Commons, MA.

Middle: Taking a stroll down the Chelsea highline in Manhattan.

Bottom: The owners delight in plants, and the intimate, small-scale qualities of leaf and flower and found objects.

Right: George Washington statue in the heart of Boston Commons.

private gardens

Top/Bottom Left: This is beautifully illustrated in the heart of New York City at the backs of some old remodeled brownstones.

Middle: A small adventure alongside the Spanish steps in Rome.



CITIES

GARDENS BETWEEN WALLS

Bottom right: A pot garden in Mexico.





Top Left: The Haas garden in San Francisco is wedged between the typical San Francisco framed house and the street. It is 13' wide and 80' long.

Bottom: The Manchen garden, completely introverted and built as a courtyard.

Right: Allotment gardens in Berlin. Apartment dwellers can rent small allotment plots on the outskirts of the city where, on weekends or on balmy summer evenings, they can retire to grow their flowers and vegetables and sit in the shade of their own trees.





FURNISHING THE STREET

IN THE URBAN SPACES BETWEEN BUILDINGS

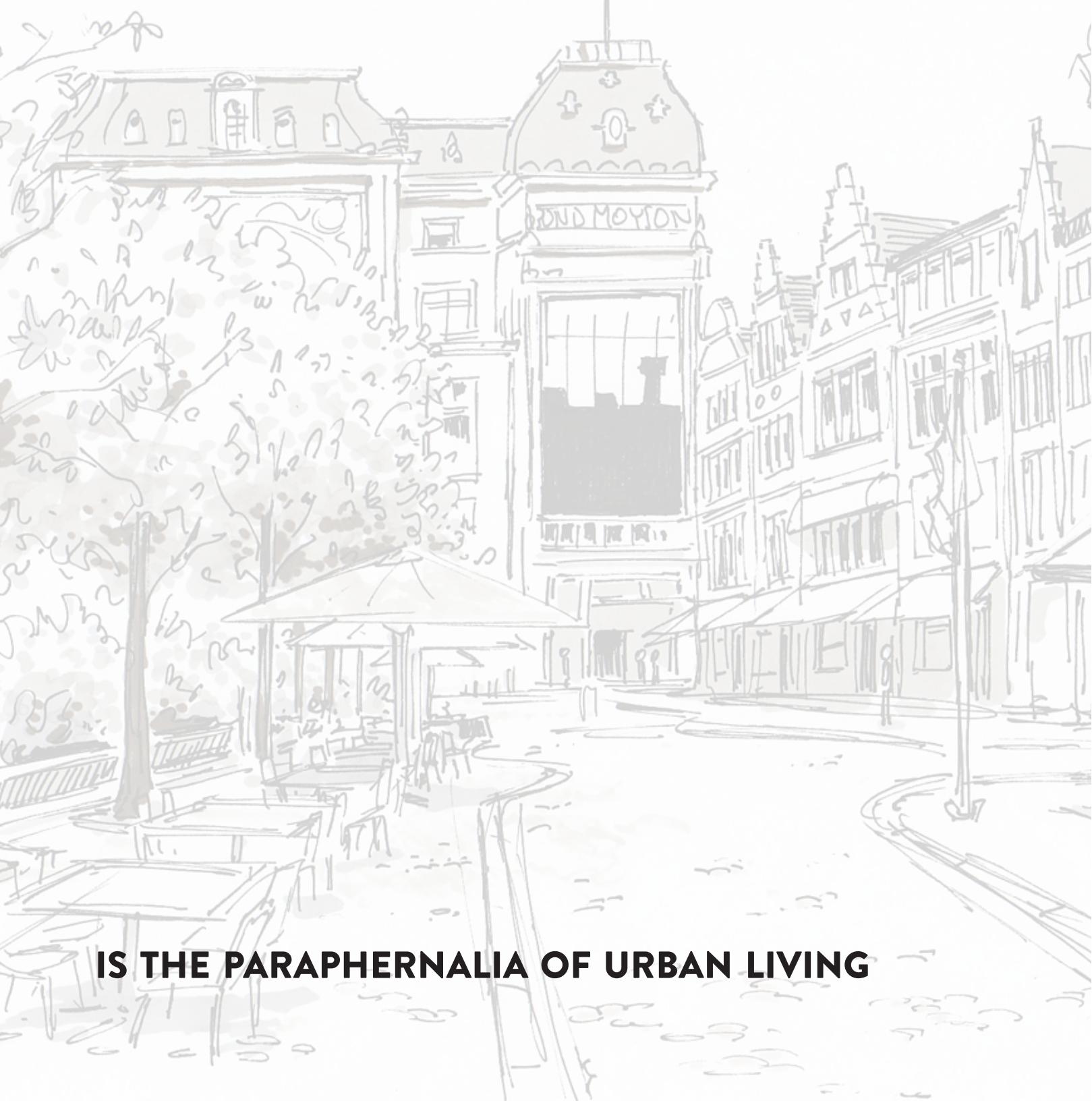
In the urban spaces between buildings is the paraphernalia of urban living - the furniture which makes these spaces inhabitable. Space itself is only an envelope within which events happen, and the city, like a stage set, demands modulators for people in motion - objects of use and comfort and artistry - guides for activity, shelters for incidental but necessary events, semi-buildings, signs, symbols, places for sitting - a whole universe of objects. They are the small scaled elements which we constantly use and see; they set the dominant quality of streets and plazas, and by their ubiquity, they *become* the street. And like furniture in the house, they tend to proliferate, at times to whelp whole litters of new objects, which in aggregate can overwhelm city by their sheer numbers.

Many portions of a city are market places segmented into shops, stores or amusement areas; vying for attention, they display eye-catching signs to announce their merchandise. Starting with small announcements, the signs tend to get bigger and bigger, more and more raucous, more and more gaudy, until they at last destroy the very purpose for which they were designed. Main Street has become, in effect, a mass of competing signs, each more eye-catching and blatant than the next, a nervous, jittery conglomeration of visual chaos. If you add to this jumble the wires of overhead trolley buses, the scaleless brilliance of street lighting, the messy trash containers, the poles with traffic lights, directional signs, no parking signals, mail boxes, fire hydrants, and other accouterments of the Public Works

Department, the street can in fact become a veritable dump-heap for necessary objects, ill designed, carelessly placed, and unpleasant.

What architecture there is becomes obliterated, buildings are defaced and the street itself is a quagmire of confusion. The fact is that attention to the detail and design of objects in its streets is as important to the qualities of a city's aesthetics as its buildings themselves. There are, it is true, many necessary elements of street furniture which most occur at certain places and fulfill specific functional needs. Traffic lights, fire hydrants, directional signs and symbols, pedestrian guards, all need their definite places. But they can be well designed and related to the total scene on the street. More than these purely functioning objects, however, are needed in a city. Streets and urban plazas, parks and small squares, as has been pointed out, are the stages for city's people's activities, and they need to be furnished with a whole range of well designed incidental objects for public enjoyment.

There are needs for benches and places to sit, handsome light fixtures with foot-candle brilliances scaled to human pedestrian needs. Signs can form exciting collages related to the buildings to which they are affixed. They need not necessarily be pristine or sterile; in fact, they can sometimes even be gaudy..



IS THE PARAPHERNALIA OF URBAN LIVING





Light is the medium through which most of us perceive and experience the world around us. But the qualities of light, of course, are non-static and co-changing. Through seasonal, diurnal, and weather changes, the objects in a city are seen in different lights, in differing relationships, and in different degrees of clarity. Color itself, seen in a shadow, is far more intense than seen in flat sunlight. Buildings acquire varying dimensions, weights, and silhouettes when views through oblique or horizontal light. Light imparts a mobile quality to even the most static objects. But light can itself become a mobile, as it does in most cities at night. The great masses of buildings come alive at dusk with a blaze of multi-dimensional color; dull stretches of street become exciting and colorful, blazingly alive with pulsating rhythms of color. In the most brilliant examples, Times Square, Piccadilly Circus, the square in front of the Cathedral at Milan, whole sides of plazas become light mobiles. Buildings are nonexistent and, instead, we experience the most colorful overlappings of light collages on 100-foot

Benches in a city are a focus of activity. For elderly gentlemen, they can be a place to sit in the sun and pass the time of day. They are places for students to study, for lovers to embrace, for young mothers to sit and envy watching their children playing, for shoppers to rest their weary feet. Elder statesmen have made the city bench a symbol of wisdom and thought. One can say that a city can be judged by its benches;

high mobile canvases. How much more brilliant and exciting these could be if they were deliberately designed as part of the city's scene - changing, more mobile as a great light canvas in the heart of the city. Light quality must be geared to specific uses as well. Many areas in quieter residential neighborhoods, at small squares and parks, need a warmer, simpler lighting geared to their own pace. Here the great, blinding glare of 1000-watt mercury vapor lamps, so uniformly and increasingly used throughout our city streets, must be replaced with lower-keyed incandescents, more attractive for ladies and more human in scale, closer spaced and lower. And each light, in turn, must be attractive to look at during the day when the pole, base, and transformer add a dimension to the street scene.



Top: Piccadilly Circus. The color scheme emphasizes the jolly English approach that any color is good as long as it is red.

their availability for us, their design, are a clear indication of a city's concern for its citizens' comfort.

There are two basic kinds of benches - one has a back, the other is flat and backless. The flat bench is adequate for short rest periods and simply enables the pedestrian to get off his feet.



Flat benches tend to be more popular in architectural compositions, where they can be places as sculptural elements in a plaza to imply amenity, without actually providing comfort for long periods of time. Thus they most often are made of hard masonry materials - concrete, stone, tiles - which relate more easily to the buildings which they surround and whose spaces they least confuse. They are also least susceptible to vandalism. But the most usable and comfortable benches, are ones with the most flair and whimsy in design, are these elegant, backed benches, but very little variation in the actual proportions of the bench itself is acceptable. It should support the

On the hard, unyielding surfaces of city streets, plazas, and traffic intersections, flowers can grow in pots and containers; their bright splashes of color can do much to bring a quality of urbanized nature into the city. The city street is no place for grass or shrubbery or imitation rock gardens, whose captive suburban character can be worse than artificial plantings. There is real place for plants in containers.

Pots have many advantages for the display of flowers or flowering plantings. They are readily moved; they can be easily filled with seasonal flowers which can be replaced when necessary, and they keep the flowers out of harm's way. When properly designed, they add sculptural elements to the floor surface, which even in the winter, add much

needed interest. There are many materials that can be used: cast stone, glazed or unglazed clay, wood, metal, cement asbestos mixtures, and fiberglass. The size and depths of pots should be geared to the plants to be planted in them. On the whole, containers are completely inappropriate for trees, unless they are large enough to support the trees adequately, which is very seldom possible. Even when it is achieved, much better growth will result when trees are planted directly in the ground. Many cities, such as Stockholm, have carefully established programs for maintaining flowers in pots.

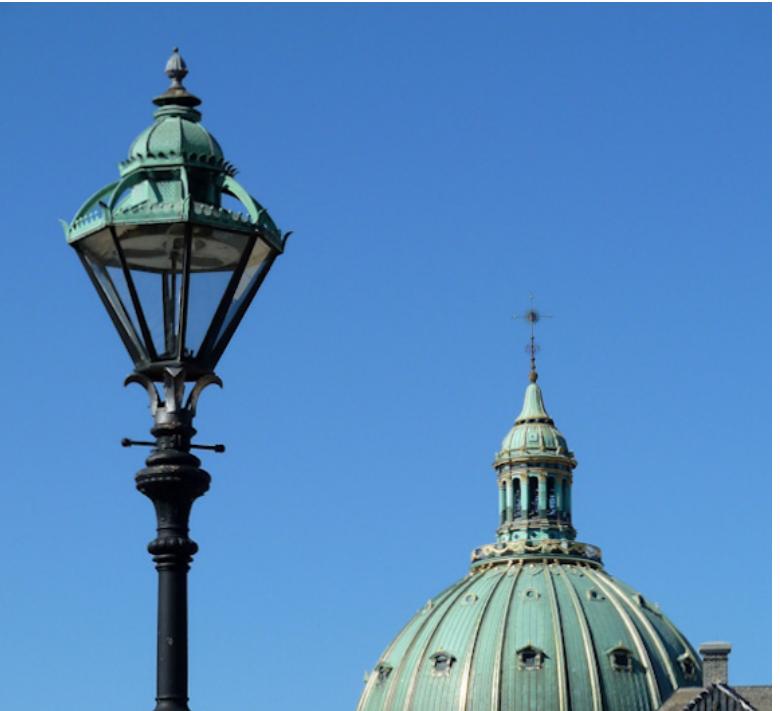


The modern fixtures designed for lighting pedestrian walkways. They give a low level of illumination which is warm and human in scale.

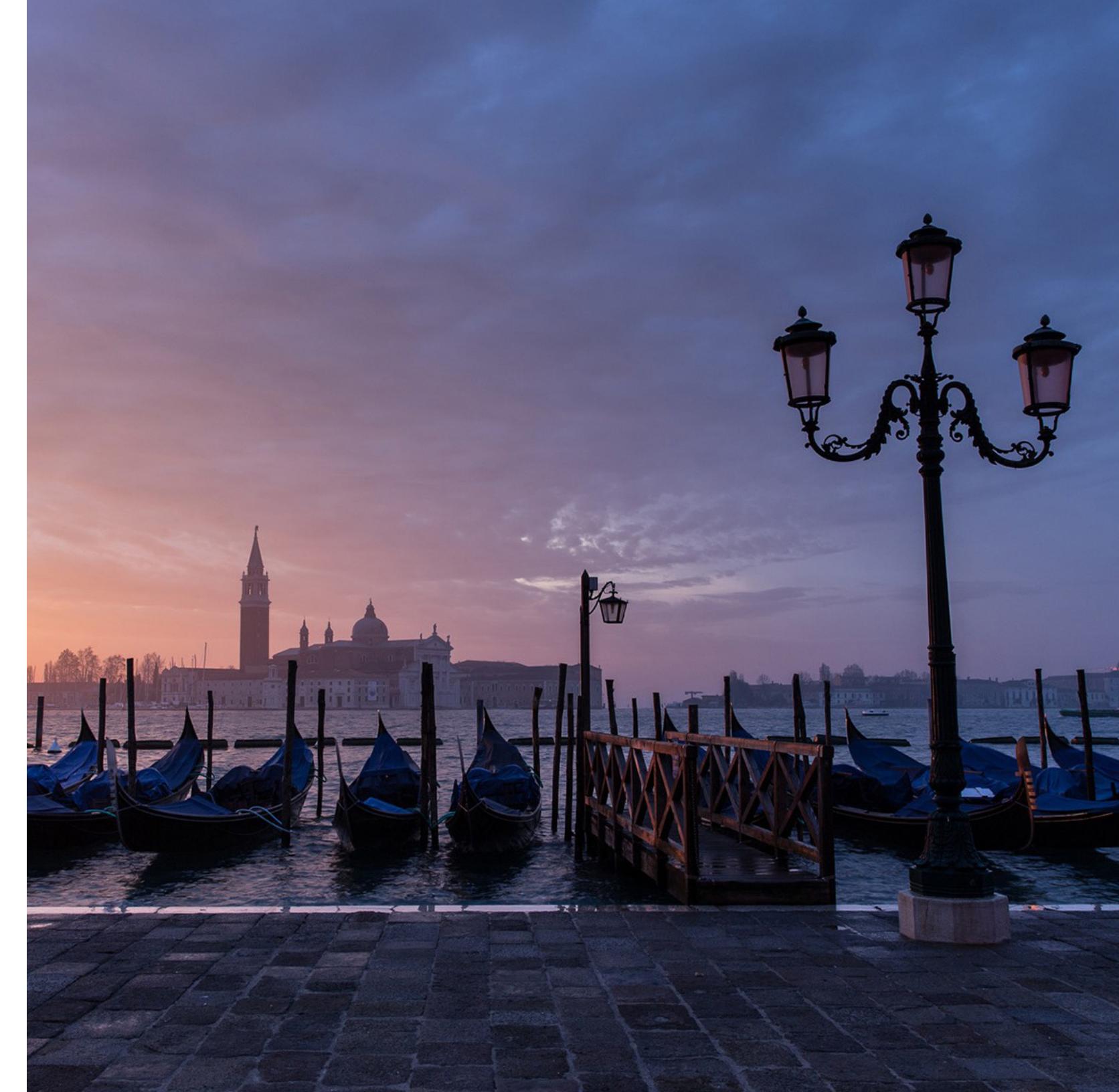


CITIES

Top/Bottom: Two elegant cast iron 18th century light fixtures in Florence (above) and Copenhagen (below). The Florentine globe served as a prototype for the modern fixture.



Right: The beautifully sculptured light standards in the Piazzetta of San Marco during the day as well as providing a soft glowing light at night. In the background are the two great emblems of the city on the pedestals facing San Giorgio Maggiore.



Left: A carefully proportioned double bench to conform to the most comfortable sitting posture.

Right: A tile bench in Park Guell, Barcelona, Spain, more picturesque than comfortable.





Left: A wood bench supported around a tree. The tree supports the sloped bench and acts as a comfortable back.



Middle: A wood bench on circular iron legs serves as a resting place at the edge of a man-made lake in Spokane, Washington.

Right: A wood bench is incorporated into an elaborate series of planting boxes in Coventry.



Top left: Precast concrete pots at the Washington Water Power Company, Spokane, Washington.

Bottom left: Bronze posts along the streets of Miami, Florida.



Top right: Steel metal pots cantilevered from a retaining wall. The shapes allow for a wide variety of combinations and a massing of floral displays.



Bottom right: A street of pots in Sevilla, Spain.





Left: Pots give a sense of vibrancy and life to the streets of Santorini, Greece.



Right: Fired clay along the streets of Lisbon, Portugal.

We have become over-verbalized, and the earlier methods of visual communication unfortunately, are fast losing ground. We need to recapture them in the city almost in self-defense - or we will become inundated with lettering and printed signs, each screaming for attention. Art in the street can bring with it easy communication. The early cigar store Indian, the bicycle hanging above the door, the barber pole turning and twisting its never ending moving peppermint stick, and the three golden balls which have signified money since medieval times were examples of well-known and easily identifiable symbols, indicating the business of the stores before which they stood.

In the clutter of our modern cities, there is a redundancy and an unnecessary length to the necessary informational messages which can be more simple and graphically presented. There are many things we need to be told about and informed of - pedestrian crossings, one-way streets, bicycle paths, no parking areas. Europe has already standardized many of these directional and information signs into a handsome and simple system of graphic symbols.

In addition, there are vast areas of advertising signs which transform our city streets into a chaotic, endless, linear ugliness. The typical example is seen

everywhere, a kind of urban nightmare not good enough to be surreally exciting, a folk art gone haywire, a hodge-podge of bad lettering, confused gigantism, disjointed agglomerations.

The opposite of this, of course, is the over-polite uniformity of signs in some of the newer, more elegant, shopping centers, where everything is carefully controlled, in good taste, and completely uninteresting. There is a point where good taste can become ineffably dull.

The city as a market place has always meant excitement, movement, kaleidoscopic color and sound. It is full of overlappings and strange juxtapositions. Much of this quality can be achieved through the use of colorful signs and symbols, mounted on buildings, hanging from canopies, painted on walls in the spirit of great collages. Attention to lettering and color, real concern for the quality of an entire street and one's neighbors, and a respect for the inherent shape of architecture (more than rigid design control) can give us both lively and well-designed signs in the street. An exciting environment of colors, symbols, and letters - all thought of as painterly devices - can transform our advertising and communications into a great art form in the heart of the city.



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The wonderful clutter of signs shown here is an early form of pop art, and has long been an inspiration to Dadaists. On the "strip" leading into many of our American cities, this form of folk art has gone stark, raving mad and turned buildings into derby hats or boots or hot dogs - a form of architecture called "Googie." But the quality of excitement, vitality, and direct appeal to the senses makes a vital contribution to our cities.

#05.
bicycles

First came the person walking in the street, and then he rode a donkey, a horse, or possibly, a camel¹. These older methods of riding through a city have given way in modern times to the bicycle. Halfway between the pedestrian and the motorist, bicycles give a mobility, an ease of negotiating traffic quickly, and an individuality and choice to motion which mass transportation cannot equal. Furthermore, it is inexpensive and easy. European cities, particularly, are jammed with bicycles; Amsterdam at the beginning and close of a day is swirling, eddying mass of bicyclists in transit. More American cities, built, on flat ground, could profit from the lesson of the bicycle. In

New York City traffic jams, it is by far the easiest way of getting about. And doctors have made clear the value of the bicycle as a healthful method of exercising.

Like automobiles, bicycles require not only special pathways to travel, but parking areas for their storage, and here is their great virtue. While an automobile requires approximately 10 square feet, they demand less space and simpler, less costly facilities, to which a great deal of thought and ingenuity has already been devoted.



#06.
doors

Doors and entrances in the city have a great evocative quality which gives a hidden dimension to the street. They speak not only for themselves, of their own hidden qualities as designs, but also of the life behind them - of hidden meanings, half-expressed relationships, of implied possibilities, even of secrets. A door can be an invitation or a rejection, an opening or a closing; it can invite the passerby in, or exclude him. In the past, doors have been objects on which sculptors and painters have lavished their greatest artistry, and they well deserve it. At human scale, related to the passerby on the city street with an air of great immediacy, they are the most personal

aspects of architecture in the street.

If the door speaks to the passerby, its hardware is even more immediately related to him as a person. These pieces of small-scale sculpture, in fact, are to be touched. Of the furniture in the street they are one of the elements with which one has immediate physical contact. Door handles and door pulls, bells, grasp and touch, and which need to be designed as hand sculptures, whose pleasures go beyond the visual to the tactile.

Color doors line the beaches of Capitola, California.

CITIES



Top left: Bicycle paths running along a river in Belgium. These special paths prevent pedestrians from getting knocked down.



In areas where bicycles are a major form of transportation many ingenious devices have been developed for their storage.



Right: Leidse Plein, Amsterdam,
one of the city's busiest arteries.

Bottom left: Door decorated for a festival in Mexico.

Middle: A modern door in South Kensington, London.

Right: Art Nouveau entrance to the Paris Metra. An example has been placed in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art.



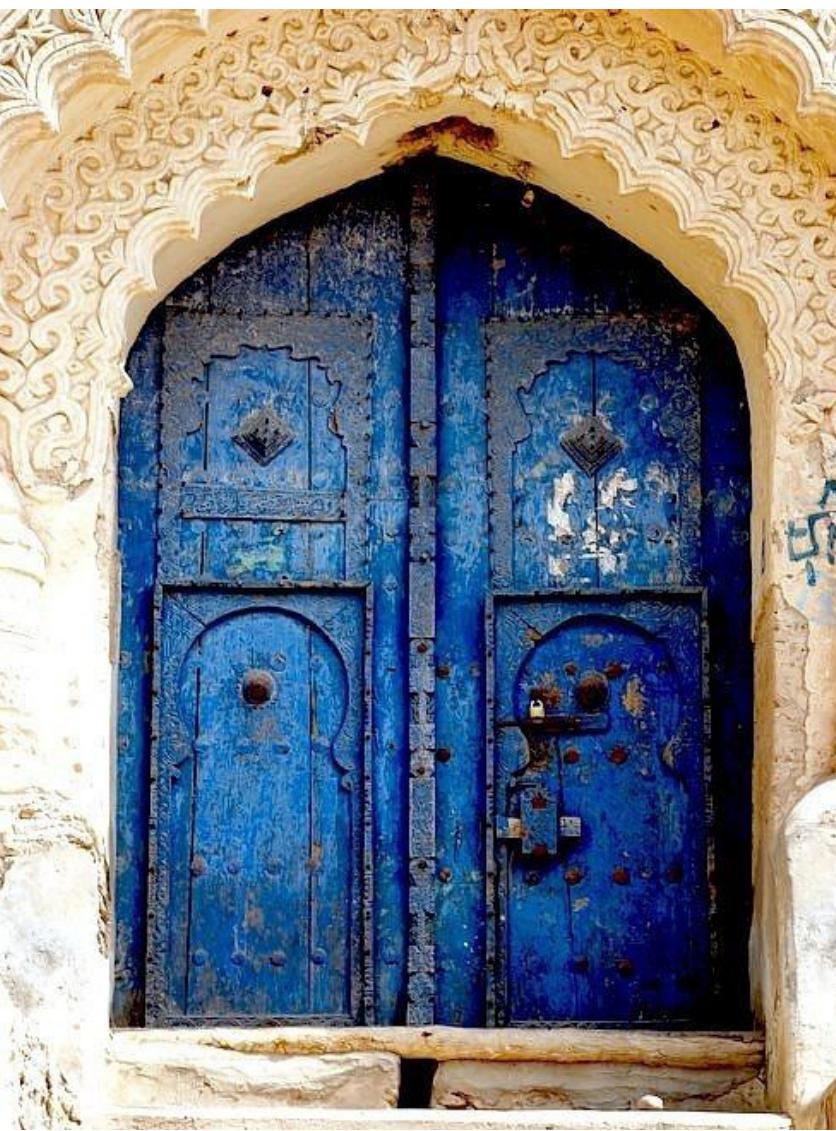
Door knocker and pull detail from church in Strasbourg.



FURNISHING THE STREET

Left: The arcade along the Arno, Florence - a beautifully forced perspective.

Right: Doors to an artist's studio in Safed, Israel.



Light is the medium through which most of us perceive and experience the world around us. But the qualities of light, of course, are non-static and co-changing. Through seasonal, diurnal, and weather changes, the objects in a city are seen in different lights, in differing relationships, and in different degrees of clarity. Color itself, seen in a shadow, is far more intense than seen in flat sunlight. Buildings acquire varying dimensions, weights, and silhouettes when views through oblique or horizontal light. Light imparts a mobile quality to even the most static objects. But light can itself become a mobile, as it does in most cities at night. The great masses of buildings come alive at dusk with a blaze of multi-dimensional color; dull stretches of street become exciting and colorful, blazingly alive with pulsating rhythms of color. In the most brilliant examples, Times Square, Piccadilly Circus, the square in front of the Cathedral at Milan, whole sides of plazas become light mobiles. Buildings are nonexistent and, instead, we experience the most colorful overlappings of light collages on 100-foot

high mobile canvases. How much more brilliant and exciting these could be if they were deliberately designed as part of the city's scene - changing, more mobile as a great light canvas in the heart of the city.

Light quality must be geared to specific uses as well. Many areas in quieter residential neighborhoods, at small squares and parks, need a warmer, simpler lighting geared to their own pace. Here the great, blinding glare of 1000-watt mercury vapor lamps, so uniformly and increasingly used throughout our city streets, must be replaced with lower-keyed incandescents, more attractive for ladies and more human in scale, closer spaced and lower. And each light, in turn, must be attractive to look at during the day when the pole, base, and transformer add a dimension to the street scene.

An early form of mobile sculpture was the clock. Throughout Europe, on towers and churches, the hourly rhythm of the day was a signal for the most complex mechanical contrivances to activate moving figures.



Left: Near the Gabo sculpture is the screeching, searing figure of Zadkine, a symbol of the brutal Nazi bombing of Rotterdam.



Right: The great Gabo sculpture in Rotterdam in front of the Beehive department store has become a symbol of the rebirth of Holland. When it was placed in position, there was dancing in the streets.



Top left: Noguchi garden at the UNESCO Building in Paris, in which groupings of carved granite forms create an environment of sculpture.

Top right: The Barbara Hepworth sculpture is a focus in a new small plaza in Coventry.

Bottom: Two metal sculptures in Paris. The one in the foreground moves and gyrates and is by Alexander Calder at the UNESCO Building.

Right: The tower in English New Town Stevenage adorned by a modern clock.





Top Left: Clock in the London air terminal.



Bottom left: An elegant cast-iron clock tower in downtown San Francisco.



Right: Big Ben illuminating the skies of London.

IV

CHOREOGRAPHY



choreography

Participation and activity are essential factors in a city. One can be a passive spectator in the enjoyment of other arts, but the essential characteristic of the city as an art form is that it demands participation; it requires movements through its spaces. A city is a complex, many-dimensioned elaboration of structures and spaces organized into rhythmical juxtapositions where events happen. And a city must be experienced through movement to come alive in its most unique sense.

As an environment for choreography, many dimensions must be considered in the city. First is the dimension of speed. The quality of a city sensed by moving about at the speed of a pedestrian - a maximum of four miles per hour - is vastly different from that at faster speeds. At pedestrian speed, all the elements and details which we have described come into sharp focus. Floor, ramps, steps and other minor shifts in elevation exert a physical impact, and the furniture in the street is directly at hand and personally experienced.

The process of sitting in a sidewalk cafe, the spatial qualities of great squares, the shopping street as a heavily crisscrossed area - all are experienced by the pedestrian who moves about the city at a pace of his own choosing. While walking in the city down a quiet street, the surroundings are comparatively static. Buildings and objects move past at a slow speed and the effect is relatively quiet and unhurried. Objects are seen in the same position long enough so their relationship is clearly established and perceptible. The cross movements and staccato qualities arise only from other pedestrians who establish movement patterns of their own. The crisscross sense of overlappings comes from these oppositions and crossings, and they create eddies of motion, like water currents in a river.

At certain times, pedestrian movements become vastly more active. They vary with the time of day and the intensity of activity.

Shopping areas or meeting places are usually full of the most vibrant movement, and the streets can become so full of activity that a pedestrian must adopt a defensive attitude of watchful walking, so as not to bump into others or be himself knocked off his feet.

People have different rhythms of moving while walking, and the sense of their own gestures is varied and noticeably different. The variations are individual, it is true. Each person moves differently and has his own particular signature in his movement. But the rhythmic movement also varies with cultural backgrounds and patterns, and the movement of national groups in a city vary considerably one from the other. This is most noticeable as one moves from one neighborhood to another, particularly when national groups have maintained their own identities.

It is particularly noticeable when people are traveling away from home; an American in Paris is more distinctive by his method of walking than by any other characteristic. The places for pedestrians to move around should be designed for their activities and their kinesthetic characteristics.

The type and design of space has a vital influence on choreography. Long linear vistas, overly great spaces, undifferentiated and uninterrupted streets, lack of color are dull and uninteresting, not so much because of their static visual qualities but because they are uninviting to move through at pedestrian speeds. If they become too uniformly dull, they achieve a nightmarish quality of personal disassociation; they are impossible for a person to relate to. If he finds no fixed intervals, or changes, or points of interest, he will even choose *not* to walk through these amorphous kinds of spaces.

pedestrians on the other hand, contribute to an active environment with many closely placed, small-scaled objects of great interest can become frenetic even at slow speeds, because the person on foot finds them visually too complex and exciting. They can force the pedestrian to slow his speed by their very complexity. Active and interesting shop windows are a good example of this phenomenon; their detail and pull can be designed so as to practically force pedestrians to stop and look and "window shop."

The design of urban spaces for pedestrians should be thought of interims of the person in motion, and the environment through which he passes should be designed to fulfill specific functions. This is a fact well known to merchants and store designers, whose careful evaluation of pedestrian movement geared to salesmanship could well be studied by urban designers. Shopping center developers, for example, have made careful studies of pedestrian tendencies and among other things, have established width criteria for streets based on impulse shopping habits. In addition, they know the typical pedestrian pattern of right-hand movement down a street, and its relation to the positioning of store fronts and entrances. In contrast to this was the static axially oriented point of view popular in Renaissance and Beaux Arts planning. Their spaces were all laid out as if

views in perspective from a fixed point. Cities, as well as paintings, were designed to be seen from one place in a one point perspective, as if movement did not exist. But this is giving way in our time to the understanding of the changing point of view, the mobile, non-fixed ever-shifting viewpoint. Even when designing for pedestrians who move at comparatively slow speeds, the environment relates to the person constantly in motion with a varied viewpoint and a constantly changing position.

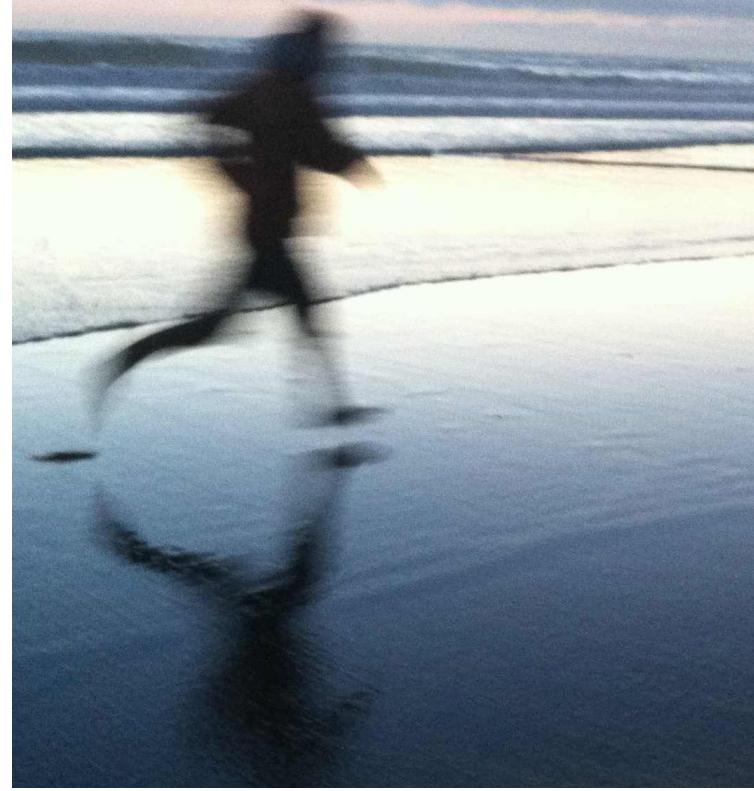
The essence of our urban experiences is the process of movement through a sequential and variegated series of spaces.

Thus, the beautiful street is beautiful - not only because of the fixed objects which line it - but also because of the meaningful relationships it generates for the person-in-motion. His movement is the purpose for the space, and it should function to activate his kinesthetic experience in a series of interesting rhythms and variations in speed and force. The qualities of moving up and down on ramps and steps, of passing under arches and through buildings, of narrowing and widening of spaces, of long and closed views, of stopping and starting are qualities which make a vital urban experience for the walker and his mobile point of view.



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Top left: Futurists based their experiments on the notion of movement. Their intricate spatterings and elaborate overlappings of web-like lines convey to the observer a sensation of moving points traveling rapidly through spaces of vast depths and complexity.

The sense of speed can here be grasped as an endless track through the painted surface, the lines as a tracery of motion. Photographs of people or objects in motion disclose the same characteristics as these paintings.



CHOREOGRAPHY

automobiles and freeways

has introduced another, more compulsive dimension of speed into the city than the pedestrian, and the mobility is even more with us. The visual experience of viewing a city skyline from platforms strung high over the streets, at the speed of 65 miles an hour, adds a whole new quality of experience in viewing the city, and opens up a whole new series of relationships to the city dweller. The skyline becomes more important to the motorist than for the pedestrian, not as a static image, but as a mobile, ever-changing series of overlapping images, superimposed one next to another, almost like a moving picture. Close-in detail gives way to large-scale impressions, telescoped in time and space, and different in impact. The great scale of the city as a gigantic functioning organism becomes more apparent, detail is lost and the strength of large scale landmarks and geographic forms becomes significant.

As a result, design for movement becomes a function of safety, and not only matter of aesthetics. In high speed freeway design, motion is the most compelling requirement, and engineers have learned well the close relation between alignments, curve radii and transitions, and the impact they have on safe design speeds. Our engineering standards on roads are excellent. What highway designers have yet to take adequately into consideration

is the relation of road design to the environment, the visual images seen and felt beyond the road, the road's impact on the surroundings through which it moves.

The problem in handsome freeway design has been thought to be primarily one of the design of structures, but this has been overemphasized. Most freeways, no matter how beautifully structured, cannot overcome the enormous damage and destruction which these vast and complex arteries cause in the heart of a city by their very presence and, more importantly, by the fact of their dumping cars integrate freeways into the fabric of the city without destroying important civic values. It is the fragmentation of outlook, and inadequate attention to integrated overall environment planning, rather than the architectural design of the structure, that has resulted in serious errors. It is impossible to think that the sole concern of freeways is to bring automobiles quickly into cities with no concern for aesthetics, environmental impact or scale. In the process of single-minded approach to mobility, every other aspect of environment design has been sacrificed as though speed and mobility were the only and ultimate justification, with an overriding virtue of their own.

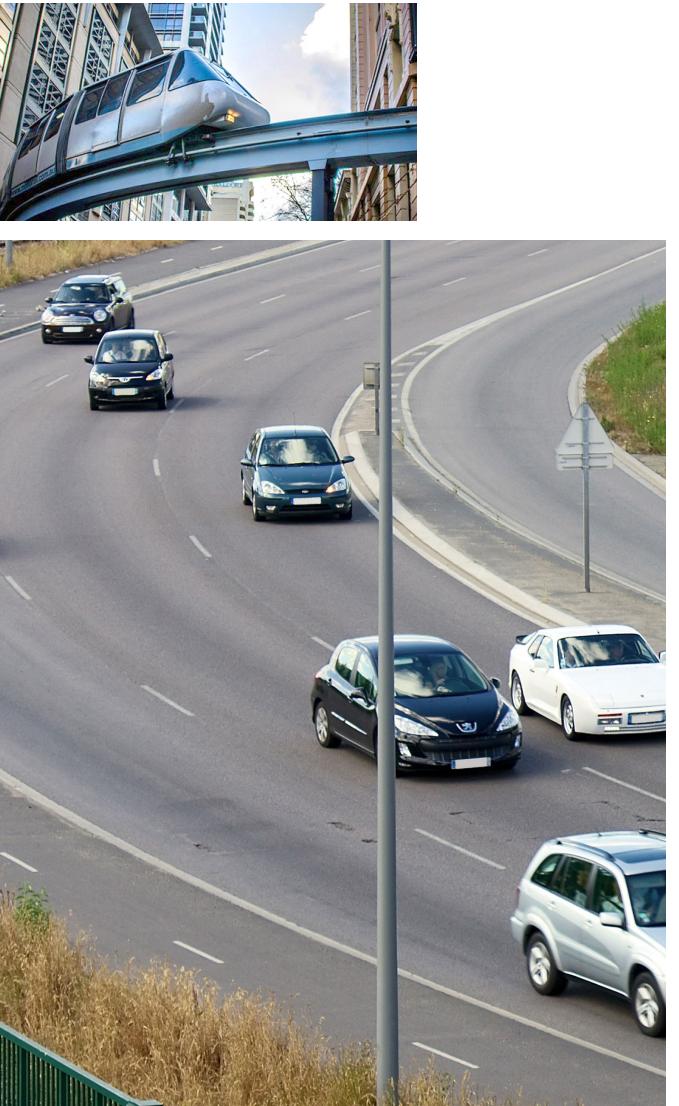
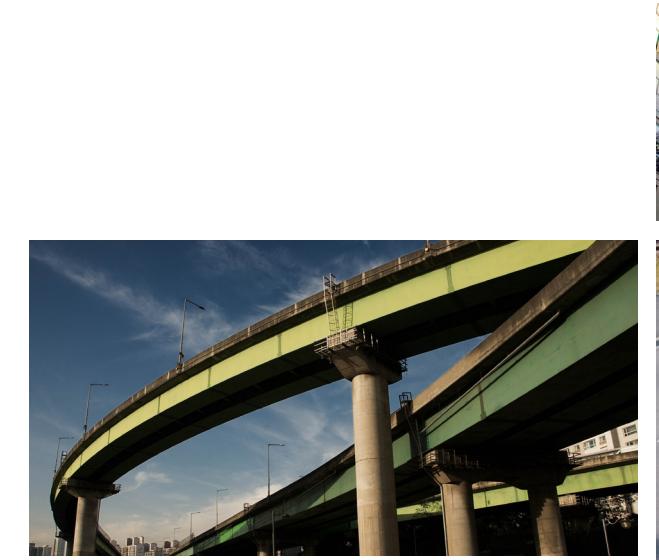
Top left: Freeways have cut great swaths through urban communities, whole neighborhoods have been sliced in half, parks have been segmented, waterfronts have been cut off from the body of the city, and the intricate, closely woven texture of the city's tapestry has been demolished.

Top right: The monorail installed for the Seattle World's Fair. It is rapid and quiet, and the light rails do not darken the street.



Middle: The grounds beneath should be devoted to parks, greenways, and pedestrian open spaces, so that the freeway becomes a generator of amenity, rather than blight.

Bottom left/Bottom right: While driving a car, the mobile viewpoint actually becomes physically essential. Here, the ever-shifting relationship to surroundings is more frenetic; adjustment to shifts in speed and position in relation to other moving objects is more demanding and dangerous.





Traditional Cuban cars. Most of the best-looking chromed-up convertibles and coupes are on full-time tourist duty, cruising the Malecon from Old Havana to Miramar night and day.

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skylines feel the most impact of change. In older times the rate of change in a city was slower and more leisurely, and the skyline grew carefully. There were also accepted patterns of architectural importance which found their outward signs in the heights of buildings. Churches were most important and their silhouettes dominated the skyline. The “duomo” in the Italian city rose like a symbol above everything else. By convention, if not by law, the Italian city was dominated by the physical presence of the church. All other buildings were subservient to this; everywhere you walked in the city, the church rose as a central dominating element, giving a sense of place and centrality to the composition. And from afar, the white dome has always rose over the countryside. Next in the hierarchy of importance and, therefore, heights, were the civic buildings, the town hall, the burgher’s offices and finally the towers of the richer citizens. It was a carefully organized hierarchy, whose outward forms echoed its inner workings and as a result, the silhouette of the city remained stable for centuries.

Now our skylines change overnight. Great skeletons rear up on the hills overnight, topping one another in height and mass, each new one dwarfing the scale of the next and cutting the views of its neighbors. In our times the hierarchy has been reversed and the office block dominates, followed by the high-

rise apartments, and finally the civic buildings and the churches. The gem-like public buildings are the small ones, whose importance is almost indicated by their tiny size in comparison to their immense neighbors.

But our real problem lies in the rate of change and the accelerating pace of new constructions which constantly shifts the character and outline of the city’s silhouette. We have few valid mechanisms for controlling this change and little to guide us in ways to shape this important image of the city. What we do know is that change has become the essential element of our time. The static conception of society and its image in the city has given way to a conception of fluidity, of constant change. Our great mission, is, I believe, to deal with change, to recognize it as an essential element in our time and accept its implications. Since our ideal form for the city is uncertain, what we need to strive for is an environment designed for the process of creative living. In the search for this environment, the acceptance of the process of change as the essential basis for civic design will signify our understanding of the problems and uncertainties of our technological future.

*Right: Il Duomo di Firenze,
Florence, Italy.*



Top: View of the San Francisco skyline from Twin Peaks.

Classic NYC skyline.



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A city is a natural phenomenon as well as a work of art in the environment. Form in nature is not a result of preconceived order. It evolves as it grows or happens, as mountains develop by upthrusting, boulders by glacial dropping. An art form to me is a result of the inherent nature of material and the process of putting them together. The art of urban design, as other branches of modern art, follows a naturalistic process. The designer does not give form to a preconceived idea, he takes the elements and allows them to come together. In the process of their coming together, he finds new relationships between things, and only then does he exercise control by making selections. The form evolves as the total process is in process. The search for form is a search for valid processes.

