FROM THE FLEA MARKET

by

Ariel Rebecca Krasnow

Bachelor of Arts
New York University
New York, 1981

Submitted to the Department of Architecture
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Architecture at the
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

© Ariel R. Krasnow 1986

The author hereby grants M.I.T. permission to reproduce and to
distribute copies of this thesis document in whole or in part.
FROM THE FLEA MARKET

by

Ariel Krasnow

Submitted to the Department of Architecture on May 9, 1986 in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture.

Abstract

This thesis is about marketplaces in general, and one flea market in particular. It explores some of the physical potentials the market has for generating a building and some of the social implications of a controversy which it prompted. The focus of this exploration is the recently evicted Canal Street Flea Market in New York City. The question raised is: given the success of the market, can this existing use, which thrives on an open parking lot, be maintained and encouraged in connection with a new building?

Close inspection of the site and its surroundings has informed a series of design considerations for the exploration of a building intervention. The steps involved in incorporating an understanding the flea market and the characteristics of the surrounding streets into an architectural design include photographing, sketching, film-making, interviewing and writing.

At each stage of the design, a number of issues were raised:

1. What are the specific qualities of the site and what is its relationship to the surrounding neighbourhood?

2. What is the general significance of the "marketplace" and how should it function today?

3. How do different forms of representation serve as reference material for an architect? What is the usefulness of the reference itself in the design process?

Thesis Supervisor: Maurice K. Smith

Title: Professor of Architecture
In memory of The Canal Street Flea Market 1973-1986
In acknowledgement of its spirit.....
... and the legacy
## CONTENTS

Abstract 2  
Dedication 3  
Introduction 6  
The Site 9  
  Physical Definition 23  
  Market Layout 27  
Social, Historical Relevance of Markets 31  
  Disintegration of Market 37  
  The Flea Market 41  
"Marketplace USA" 1985 45  
Flea Market Opposition 51  
  Why? 51  
  The Battle 55  
  Social Implications 59  
Design Studies 64  
Documentation 96  
  Use of Film 98  
Footnotes 105  
Photo Credits 107  
Bibliography 109
INTRODUCTION

This design study for a market place develops through some broad discussions concerning a site in Manhattan, markets in general, the controversy at the Canal Street Flea Market and its reflection on the city's social condition. Although direct connections are not always made, the information set out here which was swirling through head, pen and computer screen for three months, and many years, is integral and concurrent with the building considerations for the site.

In all cultures, it is the bustling marketplace where one always feels most connected to a people, their place, and their daily lives. In an age of supermarkets and chain department stores, the atmosphere of vitality present in more socially active markets is particularly apparent. By using the Canal Street Flea Market as the site for a design exploration the intent was to focus on possible building interventions which could maintain and enhance the very special nature of this recently evicted market. This is a particularly relevant design issue, given the trend of markets today to lose their essential and egalitarian basis, once they are "designed" and developed.

One question which has been left hanging all along is "Why build?". The flea market as it existed, was a successful, active, open market with all of the amenities, and natural drawbacks of a twice weekly market. The vendors brought their wares in the morning, set up on an empty parking lot, conducted a hectic day's business, and left an empty lot at sunset. The essence of this type of market, which appears elusively in its very openness and temporary nature, may be a fragile one. The major concern has been whether it would stand up to the imposition of a building structure. My hope, of course, is that the nature of this building type will allow for the market to remain a similarly vital and relevant place.
Because the building site and its surrounding area is rich with its short history and excessive usage, the decision to document and assess the value of the existing elements and incorporate them as they relate to and enhance the project was also a primary consideration. On-site exploration and documentation produced the generating ideas for the design. Questions concerning the role of representation, and how references influence the design process arose from the constant use of photographs, sketches and movie film images of the site.
"On some nights New York City is as hot as Bangkok...." ¹

The comparison of an American city to an ancient Asian city conjures images known and imagined, experienced and exaggerated. Looking up Canal Street from Uncle Steve's on a Saturday, it is not hard to see across a small slice of the world. From a diverse multitude of humanity, individuals stake their own path, pressed against each other between building and traffic. Wading across curb edges, pedestrians sift through the wheels of bicycles, taxis, tractor-trailors, or they may be swept over and into the base of buildings exhaling quantities of discount hardwares, close-out electronics, donuts, pork-buns, and t-shirts. Cacophonic harmonies accompany the breadth of people going about their personal business in this crowded open venue offering daily necessities and surprise frivolities.

"...and the people, thronging the streets, barbaric fellahin among the stupendous monuments of their mystery..." ²
The raucous commercial activity on Canal Street in lower Manhattan spans from the delta of the Manhattan Bridge on the east side, across the island, where it disperses into the manufacturing and warehouse district at the entrance to the Holland Tunnel on the west side. Chinatown, Little Italy and Soho, distinct, culturally and socially juxtaposed neighborhoods, link with the greater metropolitan area on the busy avenues and hectic sidestreets. The focus of this study, the Canal Street Flea Market, is in many ways a complex microcosm of the surrounding activity. It is funky to the Soho chic, cheap used goods to the bargain hunter, and an economic necessity to many of the dealers and local residents.

The flea market is a locally historic venture. It was begun in 1973 by a wiley eccentric entrepreneur who lives overlooking a 13,000sq.ft. weekday parking lot on the corner of Canal and Greene Streets. At the time, Soho (South of Houston Street) was changing from a depressed manufacturing district and an underground avant garde arts haven into a posh international arts and fashion mecca. This extreme and unique form of gentrification was partially responsible, both for the success of the market, and as of this year, its demise. Perhaps more important to the flourishing market has been the swelling of Chinatown and Little Italy with a young population demanding affordable "special" goods in a city becoming increasingly overun by expensive specialty shops.

The market has been instrumental in shaping the nature of weekends along the west end of Canal Street and in prompting a tremendous proliferation of street vendors and other open air markets in the area. Joel Kaufman, the manager, disclaims responsibility for bringing flea markets to the city, but admits that 13 years ago open markets were much more peripheral to the general population and only a few stores in the area were open on the weekend, compared to the excessive amount of weekend activity which exists today: "We feed off each other: neither can exist in a vacuum". 3
EXISTING PHYSICAL QUALITIES

Two existing design factors which help to turn this unassuming vacant parking lot into a vibrant focal point are:
1. the form and location of the open space.
2. the market layout.

It is impossible to distinguish the causes that are most responsible for the popularity of the market since, while the physical attributes are crucial, its economic and social relevance are equally as important.

Approach to the Market.

Walking south through Soho the solid street edge of late 19th century manufacturing buildings is occasionally broken by empty lots. The depth of the packed buildings is felt as you look through parallel brick walls to shuttered rectangular back windows or across to an opposite street frontage a block away. Approaching Canal Street out of these small canyons, the wide thoroughfare’s openness and change of character is abruptly encountered. Towards the south end of Greene Street, the scale of Canal Street is forewarned by an open west-side corner which allows the frenetic, spacious landscape of Canal Street to migrate into the solemn solidity of the manufacturing zone. Coming from the east
Edge permeability

Open store fronts on Canal Street
on Canal, storefronts encroach upon the sidewalk with their array of sell-out electronics, tapes, toilet seats, sweatsuits. The building street edge is generally open, easily drawing in wandering shoppers. Many of the interiors retain the sidewalk gesture of bins and tables. The definition between inside and outside is blurred, reflecting store owners' acknowledgement of the street activity and the joys of window shopping without the inconvenience of a pane of sheet glass.

This quality of "edge permeability" transforms the sharp building edge, merging retailing and public way to build the. "economically, socially and sensually interactive quality of the marketplace. The edge so constructed of incomplete definitions and suggestion is by its nature receptive to incremental changes which will enable it to be of lasting value." 

From the corner of Greene and Canal looking west, the profusion of wares and merchandise extends one third of the way north up the block. In a glance, one can almost see the entire expanse of people, tables, clothing and proceed into the apparent chaos with no barrier other than the crowds.
"That which is not slightly distorted lacks sensible appeal; from which it follows that irregularity - that is to say, the unexpected, surprise and astonishment, are an essential part and characteristic of beauty." \(^5\)

This empty lot has many natural amenities that make it a successful city space. The first of these, which comes to mind when standing on the edge of Uncle Steve's steps, is not so much a physical quality as it is a feeling of satisfaction that comes from the efficient use of one thing intended for another use, or left for no apparent use at all. Although the market has been running every weekend (weather permitting) for 13 years, there is still a sense of spontaneity, of repeated surprise, that one gets coming upon the site. It is incongruous along the densely built edge, yet it is perfectly appropriate.

People in any environment love the sense of purposeful but unpredicted use. Statues, stoops, car hoods, siamese hydrants and railings are prime street furniture, obviously not initially intended for communal use. Stick ball, street fairs, rooftop decks, treehouses, firescape gardens are simple, obvious examples of the resourcefulness that people bring to enliven and claim their environment. J.B. Jackson stresses this traditional need in people to assume the right to use spaces which they don't own, "The world where we and our neighbors live is ours." \(^6\) He feels that the specialization of urban spaces has broken down the historical overlapping uses of the public arenas, and comments on the emergence of strange new open spaces which are used in unorthodox ways.
HAPPENINGS are happening
study Happenings, Events and Situations
3rd RAIL SCHOOL OF HAPPENINGS
For info, write: Al Hansen, 220 W. 2nd St. NYC

HAPPENINGS
in your home
For Information Call or Write
AL HANSEN OR 7-808
WOLF VOSTELL OR 4-4

CELEBRATION
THE BIRTH OF ART
CONCERT-HAPPENING
Tues. Jan 17, 8:00 PM
FILLIOU-HANSEN-TOCHI
and others at
ECCE HOMO:
the gallery
727 SIXTH AVE. (Mr. 2401K)
Cost?&% .
3,:675.60
art

A Happening is an experiment. An Happening takes place in Time and Space. Happenings are uniquely of our time. They involve overlap and interpenetration of art-forms. A lot of experimental theatre has been put on as Happenings but they were rehearsed in such a way that the element of chance, the possibility for something to happen that was unforeseen, was rehearsed out through prejudicing the performers towards a particular slant.

Painters Theater
You can trace Happenings back through the Surrealists, Dadaists and other groups. An interesting movement in France, called the Cobra Movement, did some things that could be called Happenings. It relates to the New York Ray Gun Project of Claes Oldenburg and Jim Dine. The ultimate aim of their Ray Gun Movement was to change the name of New York City to Ray Gun. They are both famous for their theatre pieces in

ALLSTARS
HAPPENING
Adapted interior uses are famous to SoHo, where, for years, artists have taken over disused manufacturing spaces as living/working areas. Many of these artists, aware of the ephemeral, stimulating quality of reinventing a space, became well-known in the sixties for art "happenings" in which they would manipulate a place, altering its use or changing its quality, for a temporary period of time.

Abandoned open spaces can provide a wealth of stimulus for such innovative uses. When most of the West Side highway in Manhattan had been pulled down, the mile or two left standing and abandoned became a local favorite linear playground. Joggers, bicyclists, picnickers, strollers and painters were inspired by the reuse of this lost expanse. An excellent promenade, a paved boardwalk elevated above the traffic and city, it gave views out over the Hudson to open sky. Winding beneath the World Trade Center towers, it became a special project for graffiti artists who worked for the benefit of tiptop tower gazers. Added to this was the definitive sense of a moment in time. The elevated highway was marked for destruction, and came down within a couple of years. Adjacent to the highway stood evacuated pier buildings. One was turned into an amazing gallery of paint and "environmental art" contraptions that linked the old destroyed spaces into a fantastic kaleidoscope of experiential art. Although their shed buildings are almost all gone, the abandoned piers are still active with sunbathers and strollers seeking a quiet place in the sun on the Hudson.
The Site: Park Safe parking lot

North side of Canal Street
Brendan Gill, king of the elite sophisticated world of the New Yorker summed up this experiential quality of left over spaces,

"Gill's Law...the proposition that when open spaces in cities come into existence by chance they nearly always prove more satisfactory than open spaces that are the consequence of foresight and careful planning".  

Similarly, in Bul's "Esthetique," a prelude to Camillo Sitte and his tenets on city planning, the author discusses a street condition which

"pleases by that delightful disorder that results not from art but from chance".

There are surprising moments of chance in the street layout of Manhattan. Canal Street veers across the grid, and at the skewed corners of Greene and Church Streets, the flea market site was created by later accidental design.
Physical Definition

A parking lot. Four buildings torn down, asphalt laid in and an outdoor plaza is left to be discovered. An open air room bounded on two sides by blank brick walls and the far corner formed by an array of buildings, sidewalk and street. Here, adjacent to one of the busiest cross-streets in one of the largest cities in the world, the crowded intimacy of a local market flowers two days of each week.

Lawrence Halprin, a perpetual student of "urban open spaces", has passionately tried to describe and to enhance in his own designs the qualities he feels to be crucial and imperative to the city.

"Great cities,...have a sense of self-identification with their people." They emanate a personality and relationship with the inhabitants which is determined by the public landscape, the platform where people interact. "The city is a choreography of spaces, an ordering of movement through which we move and live our urban lives." Our perception of our cities, "...depends on the landscape of open spaces". In this respect, the market serves as a continuation of the active mercantile, pedestrian landscape of Canal Street, where commerce is given free rein in an open lot.

In *Public Life in Urban Spaces*, Susanne C. Lennard bases some conclusions about public spaces on a few personal favorite squares and plazas in Europe, but the descriptions are surprisingly relevant to this parking lot in NYC and to considerations for design intervention. "Ideally the space is surrounded by buildings or other barriers forming the walls which seem to support the sky." A "proper square" has a very complete sense of enclosure. However, it is actually not so important that it be physically separated from the greater place, as S.C.L. attests, but that "the essential thing of both room and square is the quality of enclosed space".

Opposite: Outdoor Room
"A typical town is not a pattern of streets but a sequence of spaces created by building" G. Cullen
The open corner of Greene Street is such an outdoor room, in spite of the six-lane highway that runs along its southern edge. The tremendously high but even density of vehicular, pedestrian and market traffic dilutes the impact of this intrusion, which is, in fact, a positive force on the market. The south-eastern corner is reinforced by the misalignment of Church Street, which, offset to the west from its Greene Street continuation makes that edge more strongly defined.

Paul Zucker, considers the market place to have been historically defined from three patterns, one of which was an expansion of the main street. "When vehicular and pedestrian traffic began to interfere with the market, lateral expansion of the main thoroughfare was developed by razing impeding buildings." The factors in the creation of this medieval market are completely different from the Canal Street situation, but the final result can be similarly described: "The expanded market is protected from traffic but still connected to it... the fact that the fourth side of this lateral expansion was at the same time part of the main thoroughfare did not diminish the impression of spatial unity, in some instances it even enhanced it." 

In his book entitled The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces, William H. Whyte is particularly fond of corners as places for social interaction. That is where conversations are held, goodbyes are stretched out, vendors stand, traffic stops and goes. For a public space, "The relationship to the street is integral, and it is far and away the critical design factor." Whyte maintains that, "...a good plaza starts at the street corner."
Market Layout

A strong characteristic of the market is its sense of understandable chaos. One cannot get lost amidst the strong orientation of the building walls and the torturous "avenues" of wares, but at the immediate tactile scale of hands and eyes, the meandering path of the open ground jostles customers from one vendor to the next in apparently no predetermined manner. However, the sense of order changes as the scale of observation enlarges. The strictly organized layout of the market becomes apparent when looking down upon it from above. Wide straight aisles leave more blacktop open to the sky than one would have imagined while wandering amongst the tumult below. The schematic plan of the market is straightforward, essentially that of the repetitious supermarket or department store. However, the dimensions of stall and pedestrian space and the density of individual, independent vendors is quite different, though fairly constant. This occurs not only in this market, but throughout open air markets in the city.
Typical layout of vendor stalls

Corresponding plan of pathways
The main walkways are four to six feet wide, and the vendors rent lots in 8'x 8' increments. Combinations and variations of these plots are the norm. An important factor is that the avenues are all fairly equal in importance. Therefore the market is evenly distributed across the site. It does not try to compete with the public street grid by creating a hierarchical interior street system. There tends to be a foot or two between tables, and the clothing racks are permeable to wandering shoppers. The market is completely open to the street edge. Vendors turn their back on the Greene Street side, but within the market, each vendor maintains a full 360 degree's worth of selling space. This is a noticeable difference from traditional European markets where vendors are generally packed together and back to back, leaving only one remaining side for business. The vendors at this market get much more exposure and the shopper has many more choices of paths.
"The public market, because it is one of the oldest urban institutions and because it offers the buyer what is naturally current and seasonal, is the ideal place for natural rhythm within the built environment."
SOCIAL, HISTORICAL RELEVANCE OF MARKETS

Throughout history the marketplace has been a focal point, if not the generating force of a village, town, city. While this is still true in much of the world, in the United States, open markets do not traditionally hold the same social and economic importance. In the 20th century expansive, auto-oriented US, Main Street, department stores and supermarkets primarily constitute the focus of shopping (and often, social) activity.

The transaction of goods has been a necessity to man since he found the means to benefit from being non-self-sufficient. By 2,000 B.C., the market, an original component of the city, could be identified in two distinct forms: as a booth or shop-lined street and as an open place or covered bazaar. A primary function, as important as the sale of goods, was its role as a public forum, its civic character being the main basis for its vitality. The 5th century Greek agora was a marketplace but its "...oldest and most persistant function was that of a communal meeting place. As usual, the market was a by-product of the coming together of consumers who had many other reasons for assembling than merely doing business." ²

Joel Kaufman, who runs the Canal Street Flea Market, takes a hard line on the pragmatic side of the market, but has obvious reverence for the unquantifiable gains which the market produces, "It's a purely capitalist machine. This is pure rotten raunchy capitalism that succeeds as satisfying so many different constituencies. I underestimated the passion of the customers, but where else, what an incredible place to shop. When I look at what we've done here, I'm really damn proud of it. Its a nice little operation. It's nice on so many perspectives." ³ The combination is much more significant than the specified transference of merchandise and money.

Opposite: Petticoat Lane, London
Vendors:

Jaipur, India

Rome, Italy
The immediecy of buyer to seller is an intrinsic and basic quality of the marketplace. Contact is encouraged by the dimensions of the public way and the layout of merchandise, allowing for more interaction than in a typical shopping situation.

A different relationship develops between vendor and customier than in normal retailing. The vendors don’t own their territory and therefore they are on more equal footing with the customers. Many adjacent sellers are all available to the shopper, so they must each be more individually dependant on their direct contact with the customers. In addition, each vendor is usually directly responsible for the merchandise he or she sells. This distinction is important since an alienating quality of large contemporary markets is that the stall or shop may be one of many controlled by an absentee owner. The sales people, as hourly employees, have little stake in the merchandise or profits and therefore little personal interest goes into their sales efforts.
"Anyplace is particular. It is durable as well as now & again it may support some events of the citizens there that in their own temporary time these events transpire to support or even alter the place." Rachel Strickland
Rural County Fairs, street fairs, and even major international trade shows are yearly events which offer the same kind of excitement generated by direct buying, selling or simple inspection of a large number of specific types of goods. Interest in crafts fairs, green markets, and suburban flea markets has increased in the past 20 years, as more of daily life activities become divorced from traditional human interactions. In dense urban centers, the street activity from small shops opening up onto the sidewalk crowded with vendors and pushcarts create an open market situation which is often reinforced by closing off traffic, either on specific shopping days or permanently. Although the experience of marketing has generally become an uneventful, non-social activity, it is clear that people still appreciate and enjoy, if not need, the public and responsive quality in shopping.

"Over the years... [the market]...has shown itself to be a tremendously resilient institution and quite capable of adapting to changing technologies and clients."

Because of its generally non-institutional nature, open markets do not have the ability to survive radical changes. However, the "temporary" cyclic state of markets allows them to function indefinitely, just as we usually have faith that the sun will rise each morning though there is no trace of it through the night. The ephemeral characteristic of the market adds to its sense of novelty and freshness, to a feeling of pertinence.

"... the market may exist as a separate entity without bringing into existence more than temporary shelters: some of this evanescent quality still remains in weekly markets in European towns..."
Disintegration of the Market

Why do open markets no longer characterize the townscape of the United States? Was a bold new life striving to shed characteristics of another older age? The town and city markets in this country, never had the opportunity to become traditional institutions as they did in Europe, where they have suffered as well. Public markets have faded rapidly as new, large scale, efficient means of production, transportation, and sales techniques have been introduced. This multilayered progress has had a severe effect on the form and place of markets and has consequently eroded the social function from marketing.

Was it the messy activity of the market and its basis in distribution and sales among the masses that combined to make the notion of "market" an outdated concept in developed countries. Studies done of periodic open markets tend to stress the function of class differentiation. In the introduction to the CPL Exchange Bibliography on periodic markets, it states:

"... the marketplace is linked to the concept of peasantry as a part-society, part-culture...the marketplace is perhaps the most frequently utilized of these contact points between peasantry and its opposing halves... between the Little and Great Traditions, between the folk community and the greater society of which it forms a part....markets and market places are thus involved in the very definition of peasantry."
"Greenmarket"; Farmers market, Union Square N.Y.C.
In his preface to a 1979 bibliography, the anthropologist Ray Bromley states that "...The market place is the main focal point for commercial activities of most peasant societies." but he continues to say that markets may also "...retain considerable importance for the trade of specialized products in many of the most advanced economies. Farmers markets are still found in many cities and towns in modern America, although they are economically peripheral in this society."  

Wholesale markets selling fruit, vegetables, fish and meat are still an essential function but they are no longer a general public stopping point, and their activity is further removed from everyday life as they become larger and more centralized.
Independant individual vendors
The Flea Market

The flea market developed to fill a need and an economic gap, in which used goods were sold to the poor. The term "flea" market originated in Europe, where old, unclean, and often black market items were sold. Legend maintains that, in addition to the goods, one could also be certain of bringing home the accompanying fleas. The assumed lower-class status of the users persisted until recently when flea markets have sparked interest from a greater section of society. This has sometimes had the effect of changing the market from a, "second hand bazaar for the underprivileged into a playground for bargain hunting tourists and collectors." In either case, whether the junk may be precious antiques or extremely fashionable rags, the public interaction and knocking of elbows is an important part of the experience. Another essential ingredient is the merchandise, for the joy of a flea market is the expectation of a discovery. "Flea markets are mesmerizing places in the fashion of old magazines and time capsules..."

Kaufman is adamant about the type of merchandise which is allowed to be sold in the market: "New goods really screw a flea market". A vendor who has worked in many markets across the country agrees, maintaining that when new goods are brought in, the operation turns into a discount house.

Portobello Road, London; Paul-Bert, France; El Rastro, Madrid; and Trastevere, Rome are famous flea markets with a history and an important presence in their respective cities. The Canal Street Flea Market has, in a short 13 years, promoted and distinguished itself as a sales venue for "antique" clothing, hardwares, housewares and jewelry. But in the City of New York, this legally unprotected, privately managed market was recently closed down. Its popularity had been widespread, the growth of the market paralleled the local fashion trend towards antique clothing producing spin-off flea markets in nearby empty lots, but its presence was considered undesirable by some local residents who also discovered it was illegal.
The issue of economic/social class is pertinent in light of the recent controversy concerning the termination of the market. It should be brought into question as a design factor, given the tensions existing in this particular case, and the trend of newly built inner city markets in general to cater to an elite population, thereby outpricing the kinds of goods that inspire flea markets. Developers may try to recreate the sense of "market" but fail to maintain the interactive element of real need (or desire) with the independent exchange between vendor, consumer and merchandise.
"Is it true that public markets in the US are "functional anachronisms", or do existing markets make a real economic contribution to society? Public markets have obviously declined in number and importance in the past 40 years. They have been replaced by huge chains of supermarkets, vertically integrated with agricultural and transportation interests."  

Stuart Plattner
Tradition is an unconscious phenomenon. When it must be defined and then preserved or recreated for the sake of "tradition", it is lost. If the meaning in a thing or an act is imposed upon it instead of being integral to its existence, it is likely to lack substance.

The disembodiment of the civic and interactive component from shopping coincided with the growing anonymity of architectural definition in shopping centers in the last few decades. The recent trend in city markets places greater emphasis on architectural quality and social significance. Although there is a clear attitude of trying to generate an environment of public place and space, the process of development, the economics which determine rents and consequently effect the characteristic of the merchandise sold, and the environmental, functional and aesthetic controls that are imposed, end up creating a vastly different type of shopping experience than the markets of which they presume to be derivative. It is not the preservation of a building or an activity that can create a viable functioning enterprise, but it is the establishment and maintenance of a core of vitality that originally structured these places.

"What gives the public market its unique character is that it is a living institution where people buy real and essential things, not a museum where visitors must try to imagine what life was like in years past." ²

What is it that happens when a designer and a developer structure and operate a marketplace? Instead of being generated and effected by existing according to what it is believed can be sold, anywhere. Examples such as Quincy Market, South Street Seaport, Baltimore’s Harborfront, Giridelli Square, and numerous other downtown revitalization schemes capitalize on an image of the past vibrancy of markets. All of these places are highly trafficked, economically successful, and support a sense of public character, but there is already much skepticism concerning the nature of this new kind of artificially restructured public realm.
"Somewhere along the line it appears that a number of cities are missing the point." Padriac Burke

Mass-produced items
Absent owner
"in the face of a general 'social withering', the built environment is obliged to be a creative force which attempts to establish public life artificially."

In 1869 a London Baroness built a market for the poor of East London. "when she opened the Colombia Market it remained largely unused because it was thought to be too hygenic and too devoid of any room for spontaneity or interaction between buyer and seller." This sounds very much like a 20th century evaluation of a 19th century incident, but the description of the market's faults can be recognized in marketplaces today. The most disturbing aspect of today's large markets, and shopping malls is the amount of central control dictating the parameters of the environment. There are no surprises left around the corner. The edges of rented territories are strictly maintained, and signage must pass quality control. Time passes irrelevantly, so that the normal environmental changes and layering of usage have been filtered from consciousness.

"In this calculated world, incremental adjustments follow long term marketing strategies and fashion trends," instead of responding to immediate and always evolving pressures at the individual business level.

In Boston, 10 million people visit Quincy Market yearly, but according to a recent Boston Globe article, only about 30% of the users are local. The Quincy Market development has tremendous value as an arena for travellers to Boston, generating some of the social qualities of an active public space, but lacks spontaneity and variation from input and use by the city in general. There is an artifice, apparent in a number of markets like this, that is accepted and even embraced today. The rough
Opposite: Fulton Fish Market, New York City
edges of an interactive social/economic marketplace have been well-trimmed and replaced with a preordained set of regulations.

At South Street Seaport in New York the goal was "to blend commerce and culture without destroying the seaport's gritty charm". In an article written prior to completion of the development, this comment was followed by a well-intentioned, but revealing statement by the Seaport Museum President who was trying to figure out a formula for, "a marketplace that really functions as a marketplace, with a certain amount of clamor. The trick is how to keep it clean and attractive but not without soul." Unfortunately the 'soul' does not want to be manageable, and a city's soul is dependent on the perceptions of its numerous independant citizens. The urban planner was more skeptical. "Rouse projects survive on order and neatness and fish markets just don't run that way."
Popular Flea Market Ordered Closed

BY CRYSTAL NIX

For few or five years now, customers have been flocking to the Canal Street Flea Market, managing through the garbage and plastic bags, trying to scrounge clothing and playing xylaphones. But as the market has flourished and grown, a parking lot at Greene and Canal Streets in SoHo, some people say, has become a nuisance, producing trash, heavy traffic and cars in the neighborhood.

They have asked the city to close the market. The city, backed by an appeals court, has agreed, saying it violates the neighborhood's parking laws. And yesterday, the market's 15th anniversary was marked by an event, by order of the Department of Environmental Protection, that might not have been seen before.

"How can we confront a city ordinance when it doesn't exist?" Mr. Kaufmann asked. "Ask the Building Department what use group the flea market is in and don't tell you. They really have no use group."

Mr. Kaufmann said a distinction between the Canal Street Flea Market and others. In one case, he said, the flea market is in a parking lot on 16th Street and Avenue of the Americas is permitted for antique art, antiques, and antiques, while Mr. Kaufmann's vendors sell a variety of items. He had found markets in several schools whose permits were allowed, because they are an accessory use of school property and raised money for teacher salaries and school facilities, while the Canal Street market was totally a commercial venture.

Joel Kaufman, manager of the weekend market, said it was shutting down because the lease for the property was canceled. The last market was in April, and a parking lot at the corner of Greene and Canal Streets owned by Soho Management, which leased the property to Fast Park Inc. Mr. Kaufman said he had been subleasing the space from Fast Park, and was informed in March 4 that the parking concern's lease would end.

The closing came as Mr. Kaufman was fighting an order by the City Department of Buildings that the market close because it did not have a certificate of occupancy to operate at the site. The order was issued last October, but the matter was still under appeal when the lease was canceled.
FLEA MARKET OPPOSITION

"Order and neatness" run a ragged edge along Canal Street. The following is an account of the recent fight to dispose of some of the human and mercantile untidiness that transforms the open pavement every Saturday and Sunday.

WHY?

In March, 1986, after a two year battle, culminating in a temporary shut-down, a court appearance, and a hearing before the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA), the Canal Street Flea Market was handed an eviction notice from the owners. Why was such a popular civic weekend event cancelled?

The fight against the market, and the struggle to keep it open illustrate some pertinent issues about the forces shaping the city.

1. What should be the nature of the streets, who decides, and for what reasons?

2. Why does the City of New York, with its progressive history of city zoning, and its current voluminous rules and regulations concerning the use of city space, have no reference to open air markets?

Since 1973 the Canal Street Flea Market has been operating illegally. In accordance with the New York Zoning Regulations there is no other way to operate such a privately run flea market. As the manager of the flea market exclaimed in exasperation: "How can we confront a city ordinance when it doesn't exist? Ask the Building Department what use group the flea market is in and they can't tell you. They really don't know." They do know: it is not listed at all as a use group, and by regulation, only designated uses may exist in a particular zone.

ATTITUDE OF THE CITY

How has a city with such a vibrant street life completely ignored the existence of, and the possibility of promoting open air markets? An example of positive action was taken in 1976 by a privately funded citizens' organization, the Council on the Environment of New York
In 1976, the Council on the Environment of New York City, a privately funded citizens organization operating out of the Mayor’s Office, opened its first farmers market at 59th Street and Second Avenue. While no longer there, it was the first of 24 to be located in 18 neighborhoods of New York City. Today over 120 farmers from New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania come to sell their own home-grown produce.

Our purpose is to:

- Improve the variety, freshness, taste and nutritional value of fresh fruits and vegetables available in the city
- Support agriculture and conserve farmland in the region
- Breathe vitality into city neighborhoods

Flea market, Salvation Army, Cambridge, Ma.
City. They took it upon themselves to encourage fresh fruit and vegetable markets in the city and established "Greenmarket". Benefitting both the metropolitan area farmers and city neighborhoods, the markets have been tremendously successful. Today there are 24 which run alternately one or two days a week throughout the city. The markets operate through either a "Street Activity Permit" issued by the Transportation Department, or on park ground through an agreement with the Parks Department. In all cases the markets operate on city owned, public rights of way, not on taxed lots.

According to Mr. Bhattacharji, of the Zoning Study Group, a department of the City Planning Commission (CPC), regularly operating open retailing is not allowed anywhere in the city. The closest classification to "flea markets" is under the category of "junkyard" and may exist only in certain manufacturing areas where they must be surrounded by high walls. For temporary uses such as carnivals or street fairs, special permits may be issued but they cannot operate more than three days per month. Colette Creppel, also from the CPC, explained that, "Flea market 'use' didn't exist when the results of zoning studies led to classifications. Therefore, it is not defined in the zoning resolution."  

Flea markets have for many years been associated with schools and churches, operating in parking lots, or on playgrounds. But in that type of situation they are a peripheral event, generally not connecting with the greater community, and functioning like a bingo fund-raiser. The suburban flea markets in the New York Metropolitan area tend to be very large scale operations, which maintain the interactive nature of marketing, but remain completely divorced from any other social activity. The markets are dislocated from town and city centers, their only sphere of influence being the large parking lots, which tend to naturally support the market overflow. It is not surprising, considering that planners have recently acknowledged the parking lot as a viable and important social meeting ground in suburbia, that the market activity continues to prosper there. By comparison, in the city center, a flea market is usually directly connected to the street, with its many
activities. In this case, the market is simultaneously influenced by, and, in turn, influences, these activities.

THE BATTLE

The Canal Street Flea Market, as already mentioned, has had a tremendous effect on the adjacent activity of Canal Street. Although the vast majority of people would agree this effect has been positive, a small handful of nearby residents felt the market was a nuisance and brought it to the attention of the Building Department (BD). They sited an increase in crime, noise, urinating in streets and doorways (there are no facilities at the market), lack of parking and general inconvenience. It is probable that all these claims are true, and more than likely that they will not disappear with the dissolution of the market. When many of these people moved into their southern SoHo lofts, the area was removed from the busy centers, the streets, empty. In the course of 15 years much has changed, and as Kaufman is fond of saying about his adversaries:

“They are 45 years old, their art careers have gone nowhere (while SoHo has blossomed), and they’re blaming it on the flea market.... They’re upset because we’re here. They lived here when SoHo was their domain. Listen, if you want open space, if you don’t want congestion, go to Wyoming or Montana. They just want this gone.”

Given Kaufman’s abrasive, outspoken character it is possible that the immediate case of the Canal Street Flea Market turned into, as he claims, “a personal vendetta” against him by disapproving neighbors who have “suggested 17 ways I could hang myself” There is no dispute that Kaufman is scrupulous in keeping the market clean. As a result of earlier complaints, he will not allow vendors to begin setting up until 9:00 a.m. When the objectors complained about the smell of greasy food vendors, he kicked them out of the market (They got licences and moved over 12 feet onto the sidewalk). However, the main strength behind the plaintiffs claims is simply that the market was operating illegally. As Kaufman notes, this is an ironic shift in policy,
Article IV
Manufacturing District Regulations

Chapter 1 Statement of Legislative Intent

41-00 GENERAL PURPOSES OF MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS

The Manufacturing Districts established in this resolution are designed to promote and protect public health, safety, and general welfare. These general goals include, among others, the following specific purposes:

(a) To provide sufficient space, in appropriate locations, to meet the needs of the City's expected future economy for all types of manufacturing and related activities, with due allowance for the need for a choice of sites.

(b) To provide, as far as possible, that such space will be available for use for manufacturing and related activities, and to protect residences by separating them from manufacturing activities and by prohibiting the use of such space for new residential development.

(c) To encourage manufacturing development which is free from danger of fire, explosions, toxic and noxious matter, radiation, and other hazards, and from offensive noise, vibration, smoke, dust and other particulate matter, odorous matter, heat, humidity, glare, and other objectionable influences, by permitting such development in areas where this resolution restricts the emission of such nuisances, without regard to the industrial products and processes.

(g) To promote the most desirable use and direction of building development with a well-considered plan, to protect the character of the City, to conserve the value of land and to protect the City's tax revenue.

41-10 PURPOSES OF SPECIFIC MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS

41-11 M1 Light Manufacturing Districts (High Performance)

These districts are designed for a wide range of manufacturing and related uses which can meet performance standards. Manufacturing establishments of this type, within completely enclosed, provide a buffer between Residential (or Commercial) Districts and other industrial uses which are more objectionable. New residential development is excluded from these districts, except for living and work quarters for artists in M1-5A Districts and dwelling units in M1-5M and M1-5F Districts, both to protect residences from an unacceptable environment and to ensure the reservation of areas for industrial development.

41-12 M2 Medium Manufacturing Districts (Medium Performance)

These districts are designed for manufacturing activities which can meet a medi
since the history of longstanding SoHo residents, has been to observe the unwritten law against calling the BD because until the zoning laws were changed, they were all living in illegally converted lofts.

Through the Green Street Block Association, the objection went to the local Community Board which took legal action by notifying the BD. The Building Department reluctantly ordered the market closed. The Market took the case to court, where it lost, but appealed to the Board of Standards and Appeals for an interpretation of the zoning regulations.

The Director of Public Affairs for the Building Department, Mr. Tiryakian expressed disappointment in the action taken against the market saying that officially, the department had to issue a violation because the market did not have a "certificate of occupancy", and since they were sub-leasees, would not be able to obtain one. The Building Department did its best to ameliorate the situation, reducing the fine from $20,000 to $250 and allowing the market to remain open until the BSA hearing announced a decision.

At the BSA hearing, hours of litigation were spent trying to persuade the members of the board that the flea market could operate legally if an interpretation was made on three counts concerning the implementation of an "accessory use" category:
1. the use is on the same zoning lot as the main use to which it is related.
2. the use is for the benefit of owners, occasional visitors, and the lessee of the principal use.
3. there is a clear precedent for the operation.

Unfortunately, instead of being a ruling concerning the value, need and importance of the market's presence (which would have been the focus of a zoning amendment) the hearing was kept strictly to the legality of the market under a variance of the zoning resolution.

The lawyer for the flea market and the chairwoman of the BSA argued inanely over what these criteria meant in terms of the flea market use. The lawyer's hope was to convince the Board to refrain from a narrow
Selling personal items on the street

Broadway, New York City
reading of the resolution and be flexible in considering the use. This would be necessary since the activity was not regulated by the Building Department. The site had never been structurally altered, nor is it classified by the zoning resolution.

The spirited, circular and at times ridiculous discussion was brought to an abrupt and inconsequential end when the lawyer for the property's owner announced that the market was being evicted. No reason was given other than "the owner does not want the flea market there." After 13 years of operation, one can only assume that either the owner did not want to become involved in a legal battle with the city, or, as many people immediately assumed, there was a big payoff.

It was unfortunate that the case came to a moot ending, since the city was not forced to take a legal stand on the issue of open markets. However, it did raise key issues and there are a number of people at the CPC who have been taking this oversight in the zoning regulations seriously. No significant action was taken and probably none will until the problem is raised again.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Mr. Tiryakian, who lives in a nearby neighborhood undergoing similar stresses felt that this case was indicative of a much wider and serious trend in the city. The demographics of the city are noticeably changing. "There are more poor people in the streets while rents and condominium prices have risen extremely high. Those people paying the high prices don't want to see the people living and working in the streets." Increasing concern has been expressed regarding the split between wealth and poverty, which is consistently becoming more apparent. The writer, Elizabeth Hardwick has spoken of, "The increasing Bombayism of New York City,...the sense of an inchoate mass of citizens, always there and in large numbers, who cannot be provided for."  

One reflection of this is the amount of street vendors, (many of whom have licences, many of whom do not) which has increased dramatically...
THE ETHICS OF PUBLIC SPACE:

Why public spaces tend to promote democratic and ethical conduct, attitudes and relations.

1. Minimize the inequalities of access and opportunity for use that prevails within most private indoor spaces.
2. Promote a wide range of encounters and relationships of short and long duration, planned and unplanned.
3. Users encounter others different from them in many respects. Their co-presence may generate a rethinking and reevaluation of premises on which unfavorable or prejudices reactions are based.
4. Diminish the exclusion of, and inattention to physically or mentally disabled. A variety of contacts and sociable interactions become inevitable in the shared use of facilities and services.
5. All persons are enriched in their view of others through the recognition of the wide range of behaviors, emotions and relationships each is capable of.

Susanne Crowhurst Lennard in, *The Social Life of Small Urban Places*
in the last five to ten years. In Tiryakian's building (about one mile from the market) a petition was written by the tenants to clear the vendors off of the sidewalk for many of the same reasons given on Greene Street, particularly congestion. One petition was put up claiming that the vendors 1. have lower prices, 2. are not noisy, 3. are clean and leave nothing behind, 4. actually keep the streets safer with their presence - but it remained unsigned.

A Daily News editorial entitled, "Who Owns New York" echoed these comments:

"Canal street in lower Manhattan has at least as much diversity and vitality as any commercial area in the city. Now a piece of that charm, a significant one, is under a death sentence...Gentrified SoHo doesn't like the flea market. It's too common, vulgar, popular. There are no ferns in a flea market. The Green Street Block Association complained the flea market was in violation of some city ordinance. It will be closed. That's upward mobility." 8

Places like the Canal Street Flea Market are vital components to the city because they serve as gathering place, and civic focal point. Although such places are privately managed, no-one is excluded, anyone can wander in and out as they choose. A vendor of many years told me about a single 84 year old woman from the neighborhood who comes every weekend, just to be among people and chat with the vendors. There are no steps to hinder her and she enjoys her walk outside. Davy, a local, mentally handicapped boy was, according to Kaufman, initially considered a nuisance around the market, but the vendors put him to work and now appreciate the small chores he does for them. Davy's own sense of enthusiastic pride in his responsibilities is tremendously optimistic. For these very personal reasons as well as the broader benefits to the surrounding environment, places such as the flea market are essential to the social life of a city.

The issue here, of course, is that essential benefits to one group of people, are detrimental nuisances to others. It seems unfair, in this case, that the objectors are a small minority of about four to eight people,
verses thousands of supporters. This confrontation between a varied population and their city, and the stand which the city takes, must be acknowledged in the hypothetical design proposal to intervene on the market lot. How can the design for a market encourage one without alienating the other, or provide a crossover. As Kaufman has said with belief in the strength of the city,

"I think there is room in the neighborhood for all of us."
proofs.
To keep the market open
it's not a building like a store
(No overhead here). It's old
and people like getting in weather
cool down.
nothing but weather, some things, it's just to
leave things as they are.

Jan 1, 1986
DESIGN

"5,000 people signed to keep the market open. It would never be the same if you put up a building. We couldn't afford it. It's cold, but people like getting up early, checking out the weather. Nothing is certain. A building would kill that, sometimes it's better just to leave things as they are."

(A vendor of used army jackets.)

The design approach has been to search through a series of building interventions, ranging from temporary elements that would not alter the current uses of the site, to a building which, while maintaining the market, would also accommodate galleries, offices, and living/working quarters for artists in interior spaces on upper floors. At each more structurally and programatically involved level, all possible options for transforming the site would still operate.

The delicate balance between a parking lot market and a "built" market is difficult to assess. As already discussed, the liveliness and accessibility of the flea market is due, in part, to its temporary nature and its location in an appropriate open space. Five days of the week, the empty site is filled with cars, and on market days there is nothing to hinder the open sky (precious in this dense area) and the use of a flat expanse of pavement. The structure has been designed to try and accommodate both usages, observing the vendor stalls sizes and shopping pathways as well parking dimensions. However as the amount of building and levels of usage is increased, the efficiency and desirability of maintaining parking comes into question. If parking is superceded by the structure does the market become a daily event, and if so, how will that change its character? The question of ultimate usage is left open-ended, for the main focus has been to keep the street level a part of the greater structure, at all stages of development. This is crucial, particularly at the final design stage, since elevated buildings often become completely severed from the ground and activities, (or lack of them) over which they hover. The intention is that the scale of the building structure, the selective enclosures, and variable mezzanine coverage will create a plaza-like space complementing the streetscape.
Light Frames:

Spring Street Flea Market

Canal Street Flea Market
The project is conceived of as a series of developments. Although they are listed below as "stages" one through four, the deliniations are by no means absolute. At each more involved stage, the building continues to integrate all the basic elements explored. The series of design sketches and explorations for the site includes a number physical elements referenced from surrounding buildings, the flea market, and other marketplaces.

The layout assumptions are based on the existing market:
- N-S walkways
- open grid
- market scale, (8'x8' lots, 4'–6' main walkways, 2' secondary walkways)
- daily variations of density

FIRST STAGE:
- no intervention, use of existing walls, open asphalt.

SECOND STAGE:
- Light frame, erected on weekends
  - definition of vendor areas
  - place to hang merchandise
  - bars for stringing lights
  - framework for hanging protective fabric
Sketches: canopies and mezzanines

1/8" model of scaffolding, platforms, awning frames
THIRD STAGE:

- seasonal, semi-permanent construction
  - scaffolding-like structure gives greater definition of territories
  - frame system creates a screen and increases depth of physical definition
  - built-in support established for mezzanine platforms, awnings, canopies

-the building structure has now crystalized but it is still open-ended
enough to accommodate a further stage of development. It must allow for:

1. market layout, possibility of active parking
2. incremental, stable building units
3. variable implementation for varied coverage of site
4. change in direction of building, allowing for daylight penetration
to lower levels
5. ability to build larger territories, or not
6. clear circulation
Early studies: Canopies and mezzanines
Sketches: elevations and plans using large, soft canopies
CANOPY

Market Canopies;
Taxco, Mexico
Rome, Italy
There are a number of secondary elements evident in the design which have been important to the overall composition. The references for some of these, such as canopies, stairs, and screens are illustrated as part of the design studies.

**CANOPY, AWNING**

"There are two rhythms of change in the city, the hard layer, in constant but gradual mutation, and the soft layer which stretches between buildings and creates a hierarchy both in space and time. In space, by changing the nature of the area and in time by their ephemeral nature."  

Loosely stretched canopies can be protective against the sun, and give a wonderful sense of occasion to a market. However, they are only useful at a very small individual scale. Initially, an attempt was made to employ the soft, draped canopies at a large scale but it became apparent that, once strung, the vulnerable material would likely be inflexible and non-functional as protection.

Hot-dog vendor and umbrella, N.Y.C.
1/8" model:
awning frames, mezzanines

Sculpture:
Michio Ihara
For larger scale coverage, the soft canopies have been replaced in the design by rigid frames that allow for variable use of covering material. The material can be loosely pulled over the frame allowing for some sag, pulled tight to give rain protection, or left rolled up, leaving the bare trellis of the frame.

1/4" model: awning frames and canopy
Stairs, loading dock; SoHo
STEPS:

The stairs and loading docks which extend from the base of the warehouse buildings enhance the building edge and are often used as sales platforms.
SCREENS:

Elements such as firescapes, railings and the light frames of the vendors are not only useful and necessary but add another layer of texture at a smaller, more human dimension than that of the greater building structure. Although the main structure and the lighter scaffolding becomes structurally separate systems in the more developed designs, they each still retain a transparent, but structured quality.
SECONDARY SCREENS & STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORKS
1/4" model: canopy and mezzanines

1/4" model: bare frames
Stage 3: Stable framework, variable flooring, canopy coverage

1/8" model

1/4" model
Stage 4: Framework with full enclosures
FOURTH STAGE:

permanent structural framework accommodates previous stages and establishes permanent enclosures. It features:

- selective voids
- variable mezzanines
- limited enclosure at street level

The following drawings represent the most developed stage of this design exploration. The basic organization and use of the structural system is similar to that used in "stage three" however the structure is adapted to accommodate the increased loads.

Transparency and Reflection
PLAN OF VENDOR AREAS AND CORRESPONDING PATHS (One option)
1/8" model: Elevation
ELEVATION (early sketch)
PERSPECTIVE: MARKET AISLE
DOCUMENTATION: Observation and Representation; eye, pen or Kodak....

"In nature we never see anything isolated, but everything in connection with something else which is before it, beside it, under it, and over it."¹

The architect is a dedicated observer of precedents, direct and abstract, from which to mold personal concepts, judgements and attitudes into built forms. References are as varied as the imagination, drawing from architectural, art and natural forms, philosophy, motion, light and atmosphere.

On-site observation and the means of gathering references for subsequent use and integration into building design were of primary interest in the development of this design study. The question of what is the most effective way to draw on and evaluate the existing landscape prompted the use of a number of different methods. The documentation resulted in the identification of a series of elements and considerations which became instrumental in shaping the design effort.

The location was chosen because its distinctive architectural features and the quality of space which is created are significant and offer interest for further investigation and interpretation. The site is an empty lot with tremendous intrinsic potential, capable of being transformed by a few simple, effective rules from a parking lot into a bustling market. Given such strong existing patterns of form and usage, how can the built, transitory, and natural qualities be recorded and judged, transformed into references and eventually articulated into design objectives and physical elements? In this process, what is the role of "representation", that is, what attributes of a preserved piece of the world, be it words, ink or celluloid, contribute to the design process.
USE OF FILM: 35mm still, S-8 movie.

"A movie has meaning in the same way a thing does; neither of them speaks to an isolated understanding; rather, both appeal to our power tacitly to decipher the world of men and to coexist with them....A movie is not thought; it is perceived."²

All manner of direct representation of this world are second-hand to the reality that they depict. They are subjected to the bias of who or what produced it and become of themselves a singular newly invented reality. For immediate observation, we use many senses; sight, touch, sound, smell and taste. However, for the transference of observations, as acknowledged by Bruno Zevi, the conventional representation of architectural space is limited.

"Methods of representing buildings, most frequently employed in histories of art and architecture, consist of 1. plans, 2. facades and elevations, 3. photographs. We have already stated that neither singly nor together can these means ever provide a complete representation of architectural space."³

Zevi attributes, perhaps overzealously, tremendous capabilities to the medium of film.

"The discovery of motion picture was of enormous importance in the representation of architectonic space, because properly applied it resolves, in a practical way, almost all the problems posed by the fourth dimension."⁴

Within the traditional media there is a lot of leverage for intention, scope and types of representation, but none are as versatile as film. Film can travel, projecting the passage of time and sequentially expressing architectural space.

"Motion picture does more than record the surfaces of physical things, it reconstructs physical relationships."⁵

The camera can wind through the built environment, test, describe, inspect and report on the surroundings. It can contrast the sombre, silent cast-iron fronted side-streets with the commercial chaos of Canal
Street. What is special about the buildings, the sweep of the street, the varied, thematic facades? How does the activity of the street fit, move, interact (or not) with the imposing solid structures which frame the life of the adjacent neighborhood. The relevance of the film is not to simply record or recreate, but to paint, consider and evaluate the sense of a place. How can the "quality" of space be captured? Film theorist, Gerald Mast, states that.

"Classifying the cinema's communicative elements is an extremely complicated task..." He divides cinema into three languages: "The language of time (succession), the language of space (image), and the language of sound."

The ability to jump between aspects of the streets, the market and people and to focus a series of interpretations into a cumulative portrait is the intent of the film made in connection with this project. Andrew Sarris's comments concerning the movie, "Hiroshima, Mon Amour", suggests the strength with which film can represent a place:

"One thing I love about it is the experience of walking through the city...I think wandering is the essence of living in city."

Attention focused not only on what this film might say about the surroundings and why it was important to make. Given all the properties for documentation and expression, how can such a powerful tool be of use to architects. As the documentator and the designer a constant consideration for me was whether the actual representations, be they film, photographs or sketches, directly influenced the design, or just served as a memory of things closely examined first-hand. Does the act of creating this secondary rememberance alter one's perception of the place? What does the film-maker learn in the course of choosing what is to be framed and how it is to be translated to film? Was it necessary to capture things already known from years of observation in order to explain to others, or would new aspects of the place be discovered by looking through a lens? The intent of filming and carefully looking for what is important to film accentuates certain perhaps even obvious details.
"Motion picture is simply discovering a way in particular to love moving and how things move and that is what you discover when you make a film and of course you had always known about a thing how it moved, but anyway you do discover it.

Upon watching the film over and over, there are aspects which I hadn't consciously considered that reappear and in fact helped to emphasize the presence of these qualities.

1. Layering: of physical elements, people, building, vehicles,
2. Reflection: light, shadow
3. Depth of space: through and between building structure, activity.

It was, however, much more a consideration of what and how I wanted to express to others about this place that organized the filming. For this reason, the film became less crucial to the actual design process but served as an important stimulus for remembering what, for me, were significant aspects of the site.

What then, does the viewer of the film gain as the recipient of a continuous image collated by someone else? There is the hope that a personal description of a place can impart a new understanding, or perhaps simply point out unseen qualities. The cavalcade of real and cinematically varied motion, focus, or lack of focus, camera angle and movement, light, shadow, color, speed combines to present an incredibly lush image. Placing two disparate edges of film together creates a further distortion of the "real" picture but enhances the sense of movement within the frame.

Though film is tremendously expressive and powerful for presenting a vision of a place, it itself becomes a memory quickly. The photographs and sketches that fill these pages were constant reminders, always present.
FOOTNOTES:

Chapter 1: THE SITE

1,2. Saul Bellow, The Victim, p. 1.


8. Bul, Camillo Sitte and the Birth of Modern City Planning, p. 33.


10. Ibid.


12. Ibid., p. 23.

13. Paul Zucker, Town and Square: From the Agora to the Village Green, p. 75.


Chapter 2: SOCIAL HISTORICAL RELEVANCE


4. Padriac Burke, op. cit.


Chapter 3: MARKETPLACE, USA

1. Stuart Plattner,
2. Burke, op. cit., p. 38.
6. Patricia Leigh Brown, "Is South Street Seaport on the Right Track?" Historic Preservation, Vol 33, No. 4, p. 17.

Chapter 4: OPPOSITION

5. Ibid.
7. Elizabeth Hardwick, "Literature and the City," The Vision and Reality of the American City, p. 70.

Chapter 5: DESIGN

Chapter 6: DOCUMENTATION

1. Goethe quoted in Eisenstein, *Film Form*, p. 45.


4. Ibid., p. 25.


7. Andrew Sarris, "Film and the City," *The Vision and Reality of the American City*, p. 11.


PHOTO CREDITS:

Unless otherwise noted, all illustrations and photographs are by the author. Additional sources are as follows:

John Dale, p. 22
Moholy Nagy, p. 30
Piet Breugel, p. 36
Anne Hritzay, p. 44
Howard S. Krasnow, p. 72
Bernard Rudofsky, *Streets for People*, p. 73
Michio Ihara, (catalogue), p. 78
Wassily Kandinsky, p. 81
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Dale, John & Pieprz, Dennis, "Public Space as Private Enterprise", Boston: January, 1986 unpublished article


Eisenstein, Sergei, Film Form: Essays in Film History. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949


Mast, Gerald, Film Theory and Criticism. Oxford University Press, 1979

Mumford, Lewis, The City in History. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich,


Sohm, Zusammengetellt Vonh. Happening and Fluxus, im Koelnischen Kunstveren, 1970


Ekistics, Vol 45, #273, Nov/Dec 1978