

The Treasures of Hidden Communities of Johannesburg

A Housing Typology for an Immigrant Community in Bertrams

“Johannesburg, South Africa’s gold rush city, is a city of arrival. As part of the largest and fastest growing urban region in the country it’s a place where people continue to migrate to in search of gold, and for a better life than the one left behind.” (Asmal&Trrangos. 2015. Pg8)

This is an investigation into whether an appropriate housing typology based on socio-economic considerations can possibly contribute to, and facilitate, the assimilation and integration of foreigners into their new society by means of creating an “Immigrant dissemination centre.” This study focuses on Mozambican immigrants and thus the proposed dissemination centre will create a space for the dissemination of Mozambican culture through food markets, restaurants, a home economic management skills centre and a housing element. The housing element will serve as a temporary residence for the new arrivals to the city. They will pay their keep to live in the residence by contributing their time in the dissemination centre until they have established themselves by obtaining a stable job with a good enough income to live within the greater community.

The research explores to what extent an appropriate formalised cohousing typology can facilitate cultural dissemination and integrate the new arrivals from Mozambique into the greater city of Johannesburg, thus demonstrating the ability of culture to reshape and define a community. The aim of the research is to propose an architectural design for a housing development for Mozambican immigrants in Bertrams, Johannesburg, which addresses these issues.

The proposed design



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