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Bicycle plant- A bicycle factory for Olympia Park in the heart of Springs

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2014-10-07
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/15640

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Bicycle plant.
FH Botha. 2013
Abstract:

This design intervention takes place in the Olympia Park sports precinct in the town of Springs. Here, unique contextual conditions have informed the development of a Hybrid typology between industry and Public Park. A bicycle factory is proposed along with bicycle transport infrastructure that is implemented on an urban level. This intervention is aimed at creating an interface between the community and the existing, dilapidated sports and recreation facilities that exist within the precinct. Industriality is an important part of the eco-systemic organism called Springs. The new typology questions the notion that ""the harmony of natural landscapes as embodied in songs or poems, cannot be reconciled with the brutality and pollutant image of industriality" (Corner, [video] 2009). By using contextual elements, a design language and programmatic response emerges that could satisfy these criteria.

The park by its very nature is a landscape that embodies a spirit of relaxation and relief. By using earth as a spatial device or building material, it is possible to integrate that spirit, and literally the park, into the building. James Corner, Landscape architect of the New York Highline Park says that; "The harmony of natural landscapes as embodied in songs or poems, cannot be reconciled with the brutality and pollutant image of industriality" (Corner, [video] 2009). The park and the industrial are two completely different bodies of thought. But by using the landscape in all its green glory as a foundation for and industrial building, one creates a condition where both these elements are overlapping in an effort to survive and thrive. The park typology signifies a desire to experience a specific kind of environment. By using landscape to soften the interface of the hard industrial aesthetic, the factory is absorbed into the romantic image normally associated with landscape.

However, conceiving landscapes purely pictorially does have limitations. The imperative is to overlay a new layer of activity onto a landscape. By placing the factory and the bicycle infrastructure in the un-programmed park, you are creating a pragmatic and technical landscape. The design is therefore not conceived in a pictorial way, but in a productive and functional way. Scripting activities in the park does not force a specific set of activities but allows the user to have a subjective and interpretative experience. This will consequently also have a catalysing effect for new layers of activity to be imported through the passage of time. It is therefore not a concluding intervention but part of the process of progress and growth; or an engine for process.

The design is conceived as a mechanical tree. The power of this metaphor lies in the fact that both a tree and a machine are process based. There is no climax state for the tree, only a useful life span. Similarly, the machine is made to be completed, but to be used. Its function is a process, like producing something and doing so continuously. Viewing cities and buildings as process driven organisms should be integrated into our perceptions of industry and sustainable environments.