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Terrarium: a food theatre, consumable seed bank and cultural greenhouse for urban food supply in Johannesburg

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Terrarium

A Food Theatre, Consumable Seedbank and Cultural Greenhouse for Urban Food Supply in Johannesburg

Abstract

A consumable seed bank, market and food theatre that challenges the relationships between formal and informal and creates a solution to the need for food and encourages a healthier lifestyle through digesting architecture and walking urbanism in Johannesburg's in between space. From the watershed above the river of gold, the Braamfontein Spruit flows towards the suburbs. Natural meanders and formal canals move with the winding bends of avenues, through golf courses and out into bird sanctuaries and parks to join the Jukskei river on its journey. This 50 km of between unbuilt space is the landscape in which this exploration takes place. At the beginning and end of this connection sits Dale Lace Park, divided by Barry Hertzog and united by the topography and spruit.

The three-part theoretical essay focuses on natural processes and their relationship to people and architecture. By creating a compact theory for walking in public space, we can begin to understand how people react to space both positive and negative. This metaphor can be analysed through DNA and gene editing to create the desired space. Identifying DNA is achieved through a process called electrophoresis. Current moves through the gel in which DNA is injected. Certain strands move faster while others move slower. Is this not the same as the movement of people through public space?

As we move up the plant through the stem, it becomes clear that the plant's core is its roots. The permanence of this and the temporary nature of the leaves can link to the above and below ground of programmatic design. The second part focuses on nutrition and food in architecture. Modernism and its functional programmatic approach to design are used to emphasise the importance of functional planting in architecture.

And as the plant escapes the soil, the light causes the adapting nature and evolution of the plant in its circle of life. Life and light and the purity of life will be used to analysis light and research space in buildings along with adapting to seasonal change.

This third and final part will explore the combination of planting and people in space and architecture's role in the human and social interaction. The deconstructed landscape will be explored. Through Architecture, the thesis aims to unearth the importance of seedling cultivation for consumption in an urban farm and research centre. Akin to the market it is a space of engagement and public identity.