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Palimpsest: memory in layers/layers in architecture

Hadfield, Carla Evelyn

2017

http://hdl.handle.net/10539/23033

Hadfield, Carla Evelyn (2017) Palimpsest: memory in layers/layers in architecture, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/23033>

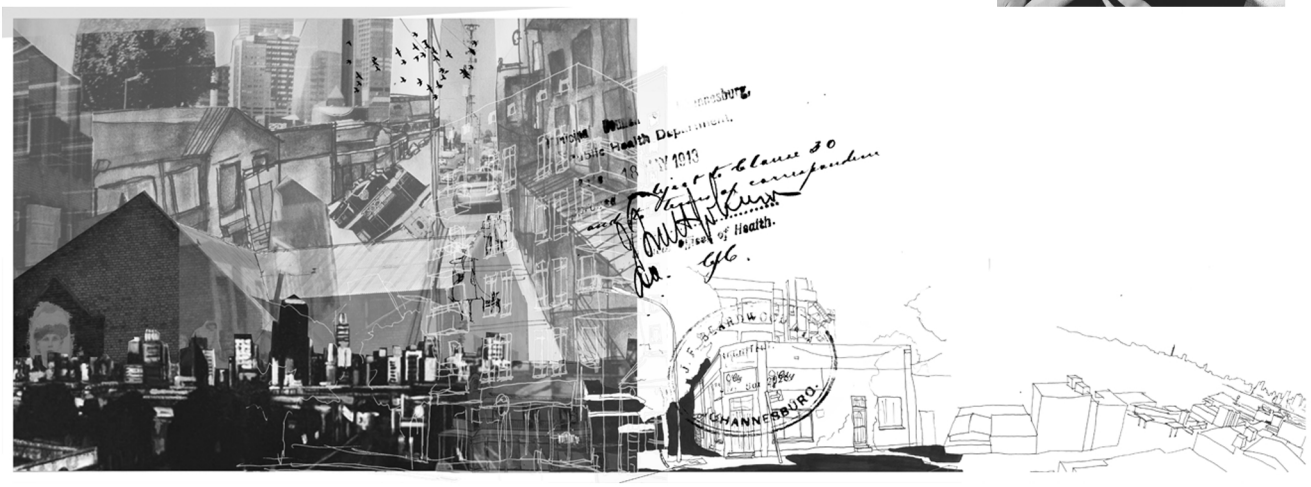
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PALIMPSEST

memory in layers/ layers in architecture

carla hadfield 538005



Throughout history, people have remembered their past through the dissemination of knowledge from one generation to the next. This transfer of ideas, history, culture and identity allows for the continuation of narrative to transcend the bounds of time and contribute to a rich memory landscape, that cultivates a unified perception of community memory. This is in turn, directly translated into the physical landscape. Architecture becomes the physical attribute of shared identity, and creates spaces where new memories can be made and the past, remembered. This idea of remembering and creating contextual memory is thus relevant to all people and communities, as it is a core principle in creating consensual outlooks.

This premise permeates into the exploration that memory, as a passive device of remembering and an active node of creation and education, is a unifying agent within a community and is directly related to the surrounding architectural space. Cultivating the question of whether there is a correlation between memory and the architectural spaces in which it is created, and to what extent they influence each other?
The investigation examines the various facets of memory and recall processes that affect the architectural landscape and in turn shape human perceptions surrounding it. This interplay between memory, architectural memory and human memory is a layered discourse that ultimately resulted in the finding that architecture and memory are linked in the way people remember and use space.

The historically rich memory landscape of Fordsburg became the apt site choice which allowed these ideas to grow into an architectural response. This culminated into the idea of combining preschool and exhibition typologies, with specific allowances for photographic and community spaces. These programmes were unified through their relation to memory and the spaces in which they occur. The aim was to unify these programmes and create a space which encouraged learning and community integration, whilst commemorating the history and memory of the past in a dynamic and linked manner.

The building aims at creating a positive architectural addition to Fordsburg by addressing the need for education within the community, whilst architecturally responding to facets of the past through the adaptation of the Lilian Road Art Studios, creating a
palimpsest of built fabric that speaks to the continuation of memory making in architectural environments.

This investigation and resulting building have demonstrated that architecture and memory are linked, and although this may not be the only way to link the two in a manner that speaks to the past, present and future is a response that amply describes the parameters in which they can occur.