

Abstract

Architecture can achieve meaningful value through the appropriate design of connection to physical contexts.

This paper attempts to put into working perspective: the value of a contextual connection, how these connections can be designed and the tensions that exists in the task of connecting architecture to context by examining how one can mediate these tensions and ,in doing so , create meaningful architecture.

This is done through the review of current literature which relates to thresholds, edges, entrances, people and environments, personal observations on the subject and a study of existing precedents which show exemplary connection with physical contexts.

By prioritizing well executed connections ,and indeed dis-connections, to context that appropriately mediate any tensions that might arise, a building can add meaningful value to any environment. Considered connections and disconnections between space, people, and environment will contribute in the crucial creation and preservation of place and community, creating Architecture which best meets the requirements of Its users and enriches our environments.

This paper will table a theoretical discourse, and an example of an architectural design which is driven by the recommendations made by the discourse. The architectural design will be a production, exhibition and learning facility for metallic crafts . Drawing a parallel between the title of connections and the connective process of craftsmanship. The facilities design uses contextual connections to add value and enrich the users experience of the building .

The Facility will be sited on old railway sidings in Newtown Johannesburg, a site with appropriate current and historical connections to: it's surrounding contextual culture, its surrounding urban fabric and the industrial, artistic and educational nature of the designs programme.