TRAVERSING THE LANE SPACE

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Degree of Master of Architecture, 2017

by Ashleigh Reagan Crofts

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ABSTRACT

Detouring between buildings subverts well-worn paths and reveals untapped space designated to Toronto's extensive laneway network. Exploratory walks followed by creative transcription of the findings capture fragments that would otherwise go unnoticed. By harnessing new ways of reading the lane space, the proposed project envisions a lane-building-street hybrid, rich with urban retreats and alternate pedestrian paths. Through the reinterpretation of an existing laneway block as a catalyst, the scheme explores strategies that grant this hybrid space to curious strollers, challenging highly-regulated and standardized street space as the primary means of moving through the contemporary city. These strategies invigorate the role of architecture in enhancing the quality of urban life, rewarding pedestrians with access to the city through new routes, expanded public realm, and countless discoveries.

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TRAVERSING THE LANE SPACE

This design research subverts homogeneous urban routes and experiences through spatial exploration and celebration of overlooked public land for public good. The result generates countless discoveries and enhanced quality of urban life.

Traverse (as defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

- 1 *a : to go or travel across or over*
b : to move or pass along or through
- 2 *to make a study of*
- 4 *b : to ascend, descend, or cross (a slope or gap) at an angle*
- 5 *a : to go against or act in opposition to*

INTRODUCTION

The structure and organization of this document reflects the qualities of the dérive while maintaining clarity of thought. Points of detour in the form of this literary device: “Detour: Title, page number” encourage choice routes and personalized choreography through the document.

There are many ways in which the city can be rendered unknown: things can become so familiar that they are simply overlooked, sites can be forgotten, misrecognized, or simply waiting to be discovered, lying off the beaten track (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 263). Walking is the best way to explore the city. A slow approach to landscapes complemented by idle wandering without destination is a recipe for heightened chance of discovery. *Detour: The Flâneur, p. 3*

Despite efforts to achieve welcoming, liveable, and safe places, contemporary city planning has cordoned movement through highly-regulated streets, relegating the pedestrian to sedentary ways of walking and seeing. “Yet our gait is as personal as a fingerprint, and so are our multiple itineraries. Knowledge is grown along the myriad of paths we take” (O'Rourke, 2013, p. xvii). *Detour: Critique of Walkable Cities, p. 7 / Walkability, p. 9*

This thesis looks to architecture as an agent in enhancing the quality of urban life by inspiring the active observer (people in alert reverie indulging in various ambiances while consciously deciding on routes through the city). Conjuring subjective sensation, this promeneur indulges in more subtle and transient distractions in the city such as movement, light, and ambient sounds. Through a consistent use and organization of definite sensory cues, the promeneur navigates their way through the city with a stimulus for new exploration. *Detour: Choreographed Walks, p. 11 / Ways of Seeing the City p. 19*

Detouring between buildings subverts well-worn paths through contemporary cities and reveals untapped public space for reinterpretation. Within the context of Toronto's extensive laneway network, continuous street walls and property relationships lock the city behind closed doors, but the laneways provide a back entrance, revealing the deliberately concealed. A series of exploratory walks through this untapped public space followed by psychogeographic interpretations using collage, shadow boxes, and animations reveal impressionable observations that are otherwise inundated by commercial temptation and vehicular dominance. *Detour: Exploratory Walks, p. 31*

This research reflects analytical and creative ways of reading the lane space, informing the reinterpretation of an existing laneway block as catalyst for applications across many uniform, unloved, and banal spaces. *Detour: Hybrid Design Project, p. 66*

Fig. 1: *The Flâneur*

1 | INSPIRATION

The Flâneur

Originating in 19th century Paris, the flâneur was a man of leisure, an idle stroller, a connoisseur of the street. It was Walter Benjamin, drawing on the poetry of Charles Baudelaire, who popularized this figure in the 1920s and 30s. With the new anonymity afforded by the metropolis, the flâneur desired nothing more than to merge with the crowd and celebrate fleeting glances, chance encounters, and mysterious pursuits. Benjamin's *Arcades Project* attempts to capture the flâneur's intoxication with walking through the city: "With each step, the walk takes on greater momentum... ever more irresistible the magnetism of the next street corner, or a distant mass of foliage, of a street name" (Benjamin, 1999, p. 417).

Although the street provides the primary space for flânerie, "newsstands, cafes, bookstores, and movie theaters, connected as they are to the street- actually extensions of it- also beckon the flâneur" (Mouton, 2001, p. 10). Maintaining anonymity, the flâneur observed the city-spectacle from voyeuristic zones¹ such as boulevards and arcades, spaces that were neither completely public nor completely private (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 248). These spaces grant the flâneur access to the city, to understand and participate in its many marvels, yet in the contemporary urban setting, these voyeuristic zones are often hidden.

¹ *Voyeurism in architecture acknowledges that spatial relationships play a role in the act of watching and being watched, and set the stage for such actions to occur. Voyeuristic zones allow one to see without being seen, satisfying curiosities to know what is happening in one's surroundings (Flores, 2016).*

The Form of the City

The form of the city is always of a particular time, but a city may change its face even in the course of one person's life with its original references ceasing to exist. As Baudelaire wrote, "The old Paris is no more; the form of a city changes more quickly, alas, than the heart of a mortal" (Rossi, 1984, p. 61). Using Paris as a model, how does the form of the city impact the way we walk, and subsequently, the way we see?

Mid-18th Century

Walking in the street as a social activity acquired an importance in Paris and London which it had never had before. The Baroque city planners in Italy had attached great importance to the pleasures of travel through the city, experiencing movement from one monument, one church, one square to another. This sense of the monumental city, translated into the life of London or Paris a century later, became less a matter of seeing sights than seeing other people. Making contact with other people on the street was no simple activity as the streets were still largely a tangle of small, very dirty roads. Sidewalks were rare, and usually built of loosely fastened wooden planks that survived only a few years of wear (Sennett, 1977, p. 84).

Mid-19th Century

Until 1870 carriages dominated the streets, and it was because of this that *flânerie* first took place principally in the arcades. Under Napoleon III, the elements of modernity moved out of the arcades and settled onto the new boulevards built by Haussmann. The construction of wide sidewalks first made strolling on the boulevards possible, where people jostled by crowds and in full view of the social realities which inhabited public streets (Buck-Morss, 1986, p. 103).

Walter Benjamin pronounced the demise of the *flâneur* when Paris arcades gave way to the automobile and department store. The speed-up principles of mass production had spilled over into the streets, waging war on *flânerie* (Buck-Morss, 1986, p. 102).

1930s

Public space allocated to walking continued to decrease while becoming increasingly regulated in the name of greater convenience for drivers. To improve traffic flow, sidewalks lining the *grands boulevards* were narrowed, and street vendors banished. To prevent jaywalking on the busier arteries, pedestrians were channeled into crosswalks by waist-high barriers, and directed to underground passages away from the traffic around the *Arc de Triomphe* (Grescoe, 2012, pp. 117-118).

As evidenced in Paris, the form of the city drastically impacts the way we walk, and subsequently, the way we see. With this in mind, this thesis will investigate the following research questions en route to *unhiding* the city:

Q1. While subjective, what characteristics contribute to stimulating walks? *Detour: Travel Reflection*, p. 7 / *Choreographed Walks*, p. 11

Q2. What theories and new modes of representation lend themselves to understanding, participating in, and portraying the city? *Detour: Ways of Seeing*, p. 19

Q3. Addressing Toronto's laneways as a vehicle for exploration, what does reading the city through unorthodox routes conceal/reveal? *Detour: Exploratory Walks*, p. 31

Q4. How do the learnings of this design research materialize through architectural intervention in reconceiving the lane space? *Detour: Hybrid Design Project*, p. 66

Q5. Approaching buildings as an extension of the lanescape, what architectural strategies inspire *flânerie* in the contemporary city? *Detour: Architectural Strategies*, p. 74 / *Conclusion*, p. 112

Q1. While subjective, what characteristics contribute to stimulating walks?

2 | CRITIQUE

2.1 Travel Reflection: Walkable Cities

My research commenced through independent travel to selected North American walkable cities where I asked: *What characteristics contribute to stimulating walks?* The trip included walking expeditions within Vancouver, Portland, and San Francisco, initiating in areas identified by Walk Score's 2015 list of The Most Walkable Neighbourhoods.

To answer the latter, I took part in a series of self-guided walks while calling attention to the influences that shape our experience of the city. My walks lacked protocol, in that I wasn't restrained by time limitations or destination. I liked to think of myself as a drifter, who, according to Guy Debord, "weren't like tadpoles in a tank, but were people alert to attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there, capable of agreeing upon distinct, and spontaneous preferences for routes through the city" (Sadler, 1998, p. 77).

Fig. 2: Selected Travel Sketches in Vancouver, Portland, and San Francisco

I recorded my routes via GPS and documented my observations through sketching and narrative journaling. The process forced me to pause in areas of interest and observe my surroundings in forensic detail. *Detour: Elaborated Travel Reflection, p. 117*

I found that my routes were largely impacted and enhanced by the following characteristics which are illustrated in Figure 3:

a. Diversity In Choice

Predicated by street grid structure

b. Atypical Conditions

Such as active laneways, street art, etc.

c. Performance Stage

Predicated on the presence of performers and an audience

d. Topographic Variation

As a continuous ground plane

In defining a *walkable* city or neighbourhood, these characteristics are often left out of the conversation which is more focused on the creation of welcoming, livable, and safe places.

My travels stimulated research interest in characteristics that inspire people to walk as active observers. For instance, I observed that gentrifying neighbourhoods to textbook *walkable* standards may effectively result in pleasant walks, but doesn't inspire an evocative lens through which to see cities.

Fig. 3: Four key characteristics contributing to enhanced walks

2.2 Walkability

According to the *Transportation Demand Management Encyclopedia*, “Walkability reflects overall walking conditions in an area, accounting for the quality of pedestrian facilities, roadway conditions, land use patterns, community support, security and comfort for walking” (Institute, 2015).

Canadian-based *Jane’s Walk* is a movement of free, citizen-led walking tours inspired by Jane Jacobs. Jacobs’ work privileged the pedestrian through the investigation of design features that fostered a lively street life, compelled by her belief that foot traffic is what makes an interesting place (Soderstrom, 2008, p. 80). *Jane’s Walk* starts to recognize *walkability* as more than the ability to walk. The organization’s interpretation is that it is a quantitative and qualitative measurement of how inviting or un-inviting an area is to pedestrians, and that it is subjective (Walk, 2014). A “Walkability Checklist” can be downloaded from the organization’s website which is intended to provide both a basic introduction to the concepts of *walkability*, as well as the tools to help residents measure and capture the walking environment in their respective neighbourhoods. A majority of the checkpoints are associated with sidewalk quality and safety, accessibility, and the interface with car traffic. This exercise engages community participation, yet its over-simplification diminishes the value of the subjective qualities associated with walking.

Walk Score further commodifies the term by providing “The first standardized yardstick for quantitative rankings of walkability” (Lissner, 2013). Their vision is for “Every property listing to read: Beds= 3 Baths= 2 Walk Score: 84. We want to make it easy for people to evaluate walkability and transportation when choosing where to live” (About Walk Score, 2016). When devising a neighbourhood’s rating, *Walk Score* looks for a center (whether a main street or public space), mixed-income/mixed-use developments, parks and public space, a defined street wall, complete streets, and proximity to parks, public space, schools, and workplaces.

Upon cross-referencing *Jane's Walk* "Walkability Checklist" with *Walk Score's* criteria for a high ranking, it becomes evident that *Walkability*, although a new term, has become a standardized commodity. These criteria result in highly-regulated streets that cordon movement and relegate pedestrians to sedentary ways of walking and seeing.

Without undermining the priorities associated with achieving welcoming, liveable, and safe places for the *pedestrian*, this thesis posits characteristics that evoke stimulating urban atmospheres for the *promeneur*. In reference to the Situationists, creating an architecture signifies not only fixing a way of life, but also constructing an *ambiance* (Sadler, 1998, p. 49).

Fig. 4: Walkability Checklist, Jane's Walk

3 | CHOREOGRAPHED WALKS

3.1 Toronto Walks

Field research for this thesis has consisted of *shaped walks*, in which the artist does the walking and brings back news of it to the audience (O'Rourke, 2013, p. 81). As an experiment, I participated in four different Toronto walks and analyzed factors affecting my mood, behaviour, and choice of route as I walked through the city.

Fig. 5: *The Junction Revitalized Main Street Walking Tour*

Doors Open Toronto Walking Tours

This is a program of free walking tours available during Doors Open Toronto. The tours feature stories and information on the histories and architecture of a variety of neighbourhoods in the city. The theme in 2016 was *Re-used, Re-visited, and Revised*, so many of the tours were choreographed through adaptive re-use projects and neighbourhoods with rich history. I participated in walks along *Reggae Lane* (running east from Oakwood Ave., south of Eglinton Ave.) and *The Junction's Revitalized Main Street* (Dundas St. W between Keele St. and Quebec Ave.).

Each tour has an assigned guide and volunteer(s) who manage the group of participants. The guide follows a predetermined route with scripted narration, prohibiting spontaneous wandering. Individual participants adapt their pace and attention to that of the guide, walking and seeing in an educative yet conformist fashion.

Fig. 6: *GPS Tracings of Toronto Discovery Walks, Google Earth*

- a. *Downtown Toronto*
- b. *Garrison Creek*

Toronto's Discovery Walks

These self-guided walks link landmark buildings, public spaces, and hidden geography across neighbourhoods in Toronto. Presently, there are twelve walks that can be navigated with the aid of subtle signage mounted to telephone poles, downloadable maps, or the pilot mobile web application.

The self-guided nature of these walks allows for spontaneous detour from the route. A close comparison between my Downtown walk and the prescribed route reveals subtle differences. In numerous instances, I instinctively crossed the street at regulated intersections and followed the main street, later realizing that the choreographed route implied I either backtrack or jaywalk and continue along a side street. If and when I had an inkling to detour, I did so. The various signs along the route are a subtle wayfinding device, but do not restrict movement.

Fig. 7: *Discovery Walk Map*

The pilot application (now retired) focused on the Downtown Discovery Walk, emphasizing points of interest with a brief summary of specific history and cultural significance for reading in real-time. Herein, the application emphasizes the significance of specific sites rather than the route.

Undoubtedly, the Discovery Walks are choreographed through the identification of existing significances and then linked accordingly. What is interesting is that neither the final destination nor these points of interest are linked via the most efficient route (Figure 6a illustrates that I crossed University Avenue on four separate occasions). This leads me to believe that the routes are choreographed for strategic approaches to each point of interest which starts to uncover the potential of the route for the interpretation of the built environment.

Murmur Walks

[murmur] is a documentary oral history project that records stories and memories told about specific geographic locations. Storied locations are marked with a green ear-shaped sign, displaying a phone number that anyone can call to access that location's stories, or to leave their own. Participants can either refer to a map available online to find the collection of sign locations within a given neighbourhood, or they might spontaneously engage after taking notice of one of the project's distinctive signs.

At its core, [murmur]'s mission is to allow more voices to be woven into the "official" narrative of a place or city, democratizing the ability to shape people's perspectives of

press **3** for next story

press ***** to cancel

press **0** for help

press **#** to leave your own story

Fig. 8: *[murmur] signage and directions*

Fig. 9: The Junction [murmur] Walk. Marlena Zuber

place, and making cities, neighbourhoods and ordinary places come alive in new ways for listeners. [murmur]'s stories, though personal or even purely anecdotal, inevitably reveal elements of the wider social, civic and political history of a given spot, its surrounding location, and the communities and individuals connected to it (Hear You Are, 2013).

As one of the goals of this thesis is to stimulate subjective ways of walking and seeing, the interesting take-away from this interactive installation is that it has the ability to validate subjective experience.

Shawn Micallef's prescribed Strolls

As Toronto's self-appointed flâneur (and co-founder of [murmur]), Shawn Micallef authored *Stroll*, a collection of walks with supporting narrative and maps each motivated to direct a closer focus on the urban spaces Toronto residents move through.

Follow any of the 32 walks in this book, veering off whenever you want in whatever direction you like, or you can put this book down now and start out on your own, in any direction...While there is a general route described in each chapter, my notes are really just starting points for your own walks through the city. If things go right, you'll even get lost sometimes...You'll eventually find your way back to someplace that looks familiar...(18)

Fig. 10: Gerrard Street Walk. Marlena Zuber

In a city that was not designed with cohesive intention, Micallef advocates that more people should become Toronto flâneurs “because this city is more than the sum of its parts and those parts can be found only on foot” (Micallef, 2010, p. 16). *Stroll* offers a series of starting points, inspiring people with both subjective observations and deeply researched narrative to add their own layers to the loose routes featured within. For me personally, the book proved successful, inspiring an alternative route to school via a walk along the Gerrard Street thoroughfare. *Detour: Walk to School 1.0*, p. 23

Reflection

Upon reflection after partaking in some version or other of each of these walks, each is successful to varying degrees for offering a more attentive lens through which to see the city. The featured walks disregard the fastest route and participants are actively dedicated to the journey rather than the destination. Protesting directionality, the most stimulating walks prove to be those which do not have a prescribed route for participants to follow. The [murmur] project is particularly interesting for democratizing the role of storyteller and assigning many of its storied locations off the main thoroughfares stimulating the temptation to explore unfamiliar paths. From here, we start to understand how various methods of traversing the city can stimulate active observation and awareness of place.

3.2 Artist Walks

While the following examples are not conventional architectural projects, each case serves as a visionary study relating to the walking culture of the 21st century.

Jeremy Wood
Traverse Me, 2010

Fig. 11: *Traverse Me*. Jeremy Wood

a. *Warwick Campus Map for Pedestrians*

Fig. 11b. *Select GPS Readings*.

Conor McGarrigle
WalkSpace: Beirut-Venice
54th Venice Biennale of Art, 2011

Fig. 12: *WalkSpace: Beirut-Venice*. Conor McGarrigle

Walkspace involved two simultaneous drifts through the historic cities of Beirut and Venice, connected in real time. A group of participants walked in each city while receiving instruction and guidance from the other as they wandered and explored. Working from basic instructions such as ‘follow that person’, ‘take the next left and then the first right’ the two groups walked in tandem, each guiding the other. The groups carried GPS enabled smart phones running Google Latitude, which enabled them to see in real time the location of the other group. The project highlights the dual character of these technologies as tools of surveillance, tracking and control. It also demonstrates that location-aware, networked mobile devices lend themselves to a re-interpretation of psychogeography (Evans, 2013, p. 154).

Janet Cardiff
Her Long Black Hair, 2004

Her Long Black Hair takes listeners on a journey through 19th century pathways in New York's Central Park, retracing the footsteps of a mysterious dark-haired woman. Relayed in Janet Cardiff's narrative style, the project is a complex sensory investigation of location, time, sound, and physicality, interweaving observations with fact, fiction, local history, and other atmospheric and cultural elements. The walk uses photographs to reflect upon the relationship between images and notions of possession, loss, history, and beauty. As Cardiff's voice on the audio soundtrack guides listeners through the park, they are occasionally prompted to pull out and view one of the photographs. These images link the speaker and the listener within their shared physical surroundings of Central Park, shifting between the present, the recent past, and the more distant past (O'Rourke, 2013, p. 34).

Fig. 13: *Her Long Black Hair*. Janet Cardiff

Reflection

Through GPS, Google Latitude, and vocal narrative, these projects reframe one's surroundings and enable participants to experience invisibles otherwise unnoticed. These unconventional routes reveal secret histories and subjective sensation through disorientation. It can be understood how these projects might result in longer-term effects, encouraging detour from well-worn paths and attentive observation of the city.

CHECKPOINT 01

The process of interpreting the city via field research in North American walkable cities, participation in Toronto walks, and familiarization with walks choreographed by contemporary artists uncovered observations captured in Figure 14. This elaborated mind map illustrates characteristics that define a stimulating route, enhancing the walk, and begins to uncover hidden urban invisibles.

As design research advances, the elements within the mind map become *unhidden*, establishing connections and further clarity of ideas.

Fig. 14: Elaborated Route Mind Map 1

Fig. 15: *Project 360 Amsterdam*, 2007, Frank Dresmé

Q2. What theories and new modes of representation lend themselves to understanding, participating in, and portraying the city?

4 | WAYS OF SEEING THE CITY

4.1 Psychogeography

Guy Debord and the Situationists, 1950s, Paris

The Situationists believed that “Only an awareness of the influences of the existing environment can encourage the critique of the present conditions of daily life...” (Plant, 1992, p. 58). The techniques of psychogeography, a very specific use of urban knowing invented by Guy Debord and the Situationists, suggested new ways to expose the complacency that seemed to characterize everyday experience. The editors of *Strangely Familiar* argued that “Understanding cities and architecture - and communicating that understanding - involves telling real stories about real places...” (Borden, Kerr, Pivaro & Rendell, 1996, p. 9).

Through this particular mode of constructing pictorial narratives of the everyday world, rooted deeply in the insights of surrealist practices and depending on the privileging of the detail over the whole, or the arbitrary juxtaposition of the mundane with the significant, evokes not merely the urban landscape but simultaneously the existence of the narrator in that place. The narrator can capture something of the subjective sensation, the sheer vividness of urban experience and movement, and perhaps hint at the secret history of the city (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 19).

Psychogeographic narrative can reintroduce the city to the urban dweller, offering an opportunity to find a new mapping and a new way of thinking about cities. Setting out to study the specific effects of the geographical environment on the emotions and behaviour of individuals, the Situationists challenged conventional notions of mapping by walking around Paris using a map of London. They protested efficiency and directionality through disorientation, rejecting their usual routes and going to places that were not on their mental map of the city. *Detour: The Dérive*, p.26. Herein, psychogeography might have anticipated a new interest in the cognitive city. *Detour: Cognitive Mapping*, p. 25

The following section explores artists' modes of representation through a diverse array of graphic systems which map the psychogeography of the city:

Frank Dresmé

As a designer from the Netherlands, Dresmé meshes photos, sketches, and signs through collage; focusing on an urban section as a whole rather than one point of interest. His production of psychogeographic maps in Amsterdam (2007) and Rotterdam (2008) attempt to capture a realistic and personal experience of traveling through the cityscape (Dresmé, 2017).

Fig. 16: Kotti, 2008, Larissa Fassler

a. Detailed Fragments

b. Fine Art Print

Larissa Fassler

Fassler's works are inspired by everyday life in cities, focusing on perceptions, patterns and human behavior. Her psychogeographic maps reflect subjective depictions of urban space and evidence the way people interact with and use their built environment. Whether in Berlin, Paris, Istanbul, or Calgary, Fassler spends days on site, sketching and writing down all that she sees, superimposing these temporal notations onto axonometric drawings of the architecture found there. Details recorded include points at which sunlight hits the building, the sound of Turkish music spilling from a car, and the number of pedestrians passing a crossing in the space of a few minutes; everything that came after the architecture. Fassler also produced cardboard models which show these publicly accessible areas minus their public. This strategic approach offers a stark contrast with their cartographical counterparts (Shipwright, 2016).

Sergei Eisenstein

Eisenstein's diagram incorporates image frames, soundtrack, and the spatial composition of shots as well as the diagrammatic representation of movements. Eisenstein's work as a filmmaker has served as a model for an architectural notation that transforms the traditional representation in plan and section with indications of movement, frames of representation, and images (Tschumi & Migayrou, 2014, p. 24). Influenced by Eisenstein's work, Tschumi began to develop what he called Screenplays, trying to invent new modes of notation to describe an architectural interaction between space, movement, and event. He took as a starting point a film sequence or a diagram of a football player's tactics or a skateboarder's path (Tschumi & Migayrou, 2014, p. 222).

Fig. 17: Sequences diagrams for *Alexander Nevsky* and *Battleship Potëmkin*, 1938, Sergei Eisenstein

Eugène Atget

Atget was a French flâneur and a pioneer of documentary photography, noted for his determination to document all of the architecture and street scenes of Paris before their disappearance to modernization (White, 2001). His work served as an inspiration for the surrealists, who in the 1920s and 30s, engaged with the city through film, photography, and collage to create their idiosyncratic urban experiences. Rather than working from the representations authorized by surveyors or scientists, they set out to curate their own version of the city, celebrating the elusive qualities that cartography cannot capture (Chaplin & Stara, 2009, p. 40).

Fig. 18: 22 rue Cuincampoix, 1857–1927, Eugène Atget

Walk to School 1.0

As a means of psychogeographic analysis, I walked to school on two separate occasions and conducted a process of inventory through photography, sketching, audio recordings, and quantitative data collected via GPS, attempting to expose the complacency that seems to characterize everyday experience along the route.

Fig. 19: *Walk to School 1.0*, Google Earth

September 13, 2016:
9:30am, Sunny, 21°C,
6km/h winds

September 29, 2016:
9:30am, Rain, 16°C,
44km/h winds

Commencing at Woodbine Avenue and Danforth Avenue, I traveled west to Coxwell Avenue, south to Gerrard Street East, then continued west on to Church Street. The overall distance of the walk was 7.31km.

Fig. 20: *Psychogeographic Walk, AC*

Green: Smells
 Blue: Sounds
 Grey: Climatic Conditions

This particular mode of constructing pictorial narratives of the everyday world evokes not merely the urban landscape but also captures the subjective sensation of experience and movement. The investigation starts to reveal how the process of representation can reframe our surroundings, *unhiding* information otherwise left unnoticed.

4.2 Cognitive Mapping

Kevin Lynch, *Mid-late 20th Century, North America*

The publication of *The Image of the City* in 1960 marked a rising interest in *cognitive mapping*, an analytical method in which citizens perceive and interact with their city by first imagining it in their minds (Sadler, 1998, p. 92). Kevin Lynch was one of the first to apply this notion to urban wayfinding, implying use and organization of definite sensory cues from the external environment. Lynch stressed the importance of wayfinding skills in everyday experience as a guide and a stimulus for new exploration: "Indeed, a distinctive and legible environment not only offers security but also heightens the potential depth and intensity of human experience" (Lynch, 1960, p. 5).

Reference to cognitive mapping is evident in Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald's explanation of how we each curate our experience of the city:

Our individual experience of the city is innately fragmented, episodic and partial. In order to navigate the city a path must be traced. This path may consist of a sequence of known streets or a series of views to distant landmarks, but it could equally be framed by the determination to find something less tangible; warmth, fresh air, adventure or solace. Along this path individual moments are later singled out as significant milestones or as distinct, and sometimes treasured, memories. In between these moments, the rest is blurred or lost. This is why the individual's experience of the city is fragmentary. The mind makes sense of these moments by placing them in a historical sequence or by sorting them into a range of possible groupings and then by representing or reframing them...(Chaplin & Stara, 2009, p. 39)

Only by understanding how people experience the city can we then start to think about new ways to read the city.

Fig. 21: A Visual Excerpt of Los Angeles and Boston. Kevin Lynch

4.3 The Dérive

To encourage greater awareness of place, the Situationists developed the *dérive*, or drift, a technique of fleeting passage through various ambiances (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 240). Drifts were radical rereadings of the city (Sadler, 1998, p. 98), which often involved purposeful disorientation to subvert known space, efficiency, and directionality. Referencing Lynch, drifters have inherent wayfinding skills “alert to attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there, capable of agreeing upon distinct, and spontaneous preferences for routes through the city” (Sadler, 1998, p. 77).

Fig. 22: *The Naked City*. Guy Debord.

To map the experience of walking at street level, *The Naked City* tracked the urban ambiances of Paris by linking together districts that were miles apart in actual physical space:

Each section of the city depicted what Guy Debord called a “unity of atmosphere”- often a wasteland or an old district...that contained unusual attractions for strollers and encouraged unforeseen encounters. The arrows symbolized the random terms of direction a stroller might take through different “atmospheres,” disregarding the normal connections that ordinarily governed his or her conduct. This experimental map represented a system of playful spontaneity, enabling sensitive participants to experience the city’s many marvels, to recode and repossess its terrain for themselves (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 46).

Situationist cartography declared an intimacy alien to the average street map, admitting that its overview of the city was reconstructed in the imagination, piecing together an experience of space that was actually terrestrial, fragmented, subjective, temporal, and cultural (Sadler, 1998, p. 82).

Like the Situationists, critical architecture practice rejected the quest for the stable surface readings and stylistic concerns that had been the basis of postmodernism, in favour of destabilized spaces that encourages unexpected public encounters and events (Klingmann, 2007, p. 111). "Architecture is thus read as having the capacity to induce slow speeds, to inhabit silences, to trace new cultural vacancies and derelict spaces...simultaneously working against the grain of modernization" (Scott, 2007, p. 262). Inspired by this movement, I attempted the same walk to school without limiting myself to the main thoroughfare.

Walk to School 2.0

Upon observation of aerial recordings of my walks, it came to my attention that Gerrard Street, to its north and south, is lined with an extensive laneway network.

Fig. 23: Walk to School 2.0, Google Earth

October 19, 2016: 9:09am,
Sunny, 14°C, 17km/h winds

Fig. 24: Area of Interest

Can walking against the grain via Toronto's laneways privilege the unseen? And what does this type of unconventional route reveal?

These questions compelled a series of experimental walks. From the 7.73km walk to school, the selected area of study spans from Coxwell Avenue to Broadview Avenue.

CHECKPOINT: Q2

Exploration and application of psychogeographic modes of representation, cognitive mapping, and the *dérive* each contribute to the understanding, participation in, and portrayal of the route and city at large. Indicated in grey, this design research uncovered inundating distractions and additional urban invisibles including alternate routes through the city via Toronto's laneways.

Fig. 25: Elaborated Route Mind Map 2

Sensory

Reverse

Omnipresent

Compositional

Strata

After-hours

Fig. 26: *Exploratory Walks*

5 | EXPLORATORY WALKS

There are many ways in which the city can be rendered unknown: property relationships can limit people's access to buildings and sites...places can be deliberately hidden from sight; things can become so familiar that they are simply overlooked; sites can be forgotten, or misrecognized...or simply waiting to be discovered, lying off the beaten track...Knowingness and unknowingness are constitutive of the city...(Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 263).

As a means of reading the city and transcribing the findings, these walks were represented using psychogeographic methods. Each walk was viewed through a sensory, reverse, omnipresent, compositional, strata, or after-hours lens. This research methodology is outlined below:

5.1 Sensory

For this first exploratory walk, I had a friend follow me with a video camera as I repeated my laneway walk originally conducted. Upon personal reflection and cross reference of the video footage, I attempted to capture the psychogeography of the route through a process of storyboarding, featuring myself as the main character (in red). Seeing through this sensory lens and then transcribing the findings through the process of drawing captured various urban atmospheres and fleeting distractions.

Fig. 28: Sensory Storyboard. October 29: 3:19pm, Cloudy, 19°C, 28km/h winds

This process of storyboarding sensory observations through the laneways exposed transient qualities contributing to different ambiances from one fragment to the next. Lighting levels and quality vary, largely impacted by the dimness beneath foliage and behind tall and dense buildings. The sound of vehicles and streetcars was muffled, privileging the sound of birds and footsteps crunching over fallen leaves. I also noticed the transfer of information (satellite dishes, electrical cables, etc.), regulations (no dumping, no parking in lane, drive slow, etc.), and the delineation of public and private space. The desire for privacy between buildings was evidenced by locks, surveillance cautions, and dense wood fencing along residential backyards. I observed the rebels that chose not to obey the boundaries: roaming alley cats, unruly vegetation (vines growing up electrical poles, grasses poking through cracks in the pavement, etc.), pigeons on a wire, and squirrels hopping from one backyard to the next via fence lines and tree branches. These observations stimulated a new curiosity: what if strollers could move across conventional boundaries along new routes?

Evidenced by the auditory readings below, the ambiance along the laneway is much quieter than that of the main thoroughfare. In combination with the lush foliage from trees in rear lots and residential backyards, the width of Toronto's public laneways provide an intimate setting protected from the sound of wind and vehicular traffic, revealing subtle sounds that would otherwise go unnoticed.

Fig. 29: *Timestamped Auditory Readings*, recorded via GoPro

Fig. 30: *Typical Section through Laneways and Main Thoroughfare*

5.2 Reverse

In addition to revealing the deliberately concealed (such as garbage bins, staff on a smoke break, servicing, hanging laundry, storage, etc.), walking the laneways reveals an approach to buildings that has not been choreographed by the architect. Architectural landmarks are often grandiose in size and set back from the street creating an impasse for the laneway pedestrian. Detouring around the building, this *reverse* approach permits the pedestrian to have an extended and intimate experience with the secondary elevations.

Fig. 31: Plan Illustrating an example of the visibility of landmark buildings

- a. Via the laneways (left)
- b. Via the main thoroughfare (right)

There are several accounts where continuity of the route is interrupted while traversing the laneways. Just as streets do not fit the city grid due to geography, laneways do not extend to the city grid due to:

- Historical Buildings
- Churches
- Parks
- Retail Bookends (where lot/building orientation rotates at thoroughfare)
- Big Box Stores
- Residential Complexes
- Infrastructure (TTC Yards, etc.)

These obstacles distract from the straight line, forcing detoured movement available only to pedestrians, challenging the conventional way of experiencing a grid city.

The reverse approach to these obstacles revealed an intimate experience with *urban artifacts* along the route. Like the city itself, urban artifacts are characterized by their own history and thus by their own form (Rossi, 1984, p. 29). Four urban artifacts along the Gerrard route were designated for further exploration, “Simply waiting to be discovered, lying off the beaten track” (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 263). Two monuments were selected: Carlaw Hydro Building and St. Ann’s Church, complemented by two significant portions of the urban fabric: Craven Road and East Chinatown. The significance of each of these four artifacts was only revealed through detour during the walk. According to Rossi, “If one takes any urban artifact and attempts to describe it, difficulties arise...There will always be a type of experience recognizable only to those who have walked through a particular building, street, or district” (Rossi, 1984, p. 33). From this point of view it is possible to read the city. Through subversion, the detour recognizes the composition of the city and evokes a curiosity for its architecture.

Fig. 32: Identification of Obstacles along the Laneways Parallel to Gerrard Street East

Fig. 33: Artifact Selection
 a. Overview Map
 b. Choreographed Movement

Craven Road

Craven Road features Toronto's highest concentration of detached houses less than 500 sq. ft. in area. Across from these modest houses, Craven features the longest wooden and municipally maintained fence in Toronto, spanning about 2km, or 5 city blocks. Historically, the lots along Craven were an extension of the properties on Ashdale Avenue, where owners began to subdivide their lots, prompting a dispute over who owned the property. Around 1910, the City expropriated the land in question, created Craven Road between the houses and the rear lots, and constructed the fence (Daugherty, 2013).

At Coxwell and Gerrard, begin walking west along the north side of Gerrard Street in search of an alternate means to traverse the city. A graffiti wall along Craven Road attracts the eye, marking a gateway to the laneway network. Jaywalk across Craven on a diagonal oriented northbound and notice this street is unique. Rather than looking at front yards and porches, notice a wooden fence which extends as far as the eye can see. Before embarking on the route through the laneways, detour north. Being that there is no sidewalk on the west side of the street, walk tight to the fence and notice mounted art by local residents and trees breaking through the fence line.

Fig. 34: *Craven Road Psychogeographic Model*
Paper Collage, Wood and Twine on 8" x 10" Canvas

Carlaw Hydro Building

In 1916, the Toronto Hydroelectric System built this new two-storey building to supply power to the expanded and new industries. A “Hydro Store”, which promoted appliances such as electric refrigerators and stoves, operated from the building in the 1920s but has since been bricked in. In honour of Toronto Hydro’s 100th anniversary, Christopher Hume wrote:

Practiced in the art of architectural deception and masters of design disguise, Toronto Hydro has built an infrastructure that extends invisibly to every corner of the city...Most of us never notice them which is exactly how it was meant to be (Hume, 2011).

Walking along the laneway, notice a sizeable brick volume up ahead. As the lane orients southward, it becomes evident that the route is being extended around the perimeter of the building. Now close enough to make out the signs on the chain link fence ahead, read *WARNING TORONTO HYDRO*. While the signage urges that the building be left alone, the lane runs immediately alongside, alluring the walker to reach out and disobey the cautionary instruction. Read the coursing of the brick and feel the subtle depressions between pilasters. Via the laneway route, three of four elevations of the building are experienced, the first being the backside. This promenade reveals the building’s stone base course, decorative cornice, arched multi-pane windows rhythmically assigned, and the curved façade at Carlaw and old Gerrard St. E. In addition to offering an extended and intimate look at the architectural features of the building, approaching from the backside overtly exposes the hydro facilities housed within, engaging in the discussion of the rich history and role of the hydro substations.

Fig. 35: *Carlaw Hydro Building Psychogeographic Model*
Paper Collage, Millboard and Twine on 8" x 10" Canvas

St. Ann's Church

Continuing westbound, notice a sizeable white volume ahead. With each step more detail comes into focus: the subtle depression of the stone between pilasters, the arched window surrounds and intricate stained glass, the texture of the stone cladding. Having reached an impasse at the foot of what has now been determined to be a church, consider options in order to avoid having to turn back.

Aware of the continuous chain link fence to the left, look right and notice a small aisle between the church fence and what is clearly a private residence. Terminating with a closed gate, promenading through this aisle is most likely breaching private property.

Look left to ensure all options have been exhausted. Beyond the chain link fence notice a covered passageway connecting the church with the adjacent rectory.

By creating a physical separation between the church and adjacent rectory, this space can be reassigned to the public. Once having reached the impasse, walk along the east façade of the church before proceeding through the newfound passage. Here it is interesting to think about the relationship between the two buildings, one as a sacred space and the other as residential quarters. As the passage opens up, you are presented with a view to St. Matthew's Church across the street constructed in 1890. Acknowledgement of the contrasting gothic style stimulates greater intrigue when looking back at St. Ann's as you wrap around the extensively articulated backside, proceed down the stairs, and follow the west elevation before linking back up to the laneway network.

Minor intervention of a public passage via the laneway instills continuity of the route and expands on the potential for acknowledgement of the building's historical and architectural significance.

Fig. 36: *St. Ann Parish Psychogeographic Model*
Paper Collage, Plaster Cast and Twine on 8" x 10" Canvas

East Chinatown

Following the experience at St. Ann, the laneway network once again presents itself. Starting with the flower shop at the gateway to the lane, notice the eclectic mix of urban fragrances. From used cooking oil, truck exhaust, and perishables past their prime, these scents are uncurated evidence of East Chinatown. Here, it isn't about the commerce that consumes you while walking along curated storefront windows, it's about what is under your feet, in front of you, and around you. Notice garbage bins, staff on a smoke break, hanging laundry, the delivery process, and surplus inventory.

The approach via the laneways reveals this back-of-house environment, intoxicating walkers with uncurated urban distractions.

Fig. 37: East Chinatown Psychogeographic Model
Paper Collage, Wood, Twine, Wire, and Spices for Scent on 8" x 10" Canvas

Reflection

The findings from each of these four examples were only revealed with an unorthodox route through the city; in this case, via a portion of Toronto's laneway network. During my original walk along the Gerrard Street thoroughfare, I walked passed Craven Road without a glance, the Carlaw Hydro building was out of sight, the setback of St. Ann's Church prohibited any intimate engagement, and I was limited to experiencing the curated side of East Chinatown.

As a means of reflection and communication of findings, this walk has been represented through psychogeographic models on canvas. When illuminated and viewed from the backside, the perception of the composition transforms. With a hierarchical shift of information, this reversal privileges different details than one would notice when viewing from the front, evoking parallels with the reverse walk and key themes this thesis looks to explore. A reverse and unconventional approach to the psychogeographic models and the urban artifacts they represent reframes one's interpretation, exhibiting information that would otherwise go unnoticed, and granting access to understand and participate from a different point of view.

*Fig. 38: Reverse View of
Illuminated Psychogeographic
Models*

Fig. 39

Fig. 39: Toronto's Extensive Laneway Network

Fig. 40: Movement along Toronto's Main Thoroughfares, data courtesy of The Laneway Project reworked by AC

a. Traversing East/West

b. Traversing North/South

Fig. 41: *Laneway Mapping Analysis*, data courtesy of The Laneway Project reworked by AC

a. *Decentralization*

b. *Fragmentation*

The process of mapping the laneways from an omnipresent lens reveals underlying city fabric. Since the laneways run orthogonally to city streets, one can see how traversing the city along east/west and north/south axes via these untapped public spaces is possible. An analytical reading from an aerial vantage point reveals fragmented routes which offer agency to the promeneur by introducing choice points and opportunity to meander. This study starts to unleash the potential of Walter Benjamin's idea "that it's from the fragments, the forgotten bits, that you actually read the world" (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 392).

5.4 Compositional

Photography showcases beauty in the mundane. Seeing the city through the viewfinder of a camera captures unexpected fragments of the city as art. A passerby might notice the compositional beauty of infrastructure, shadowed graffiti across light-coloured siding,

Fig. 42: *Compositional Capture 1*

messages transcribed with eye-catching colour, or everyday life imitated by reflective surfaces. They might notice a pattern in the fence pickets along residential backyards, or the maps made in vegetation as it seeps through cracks in the pavement.

Fig. 43: *Compositional Capture 2*

Fig. 44: *Compositional Capture 3*

Fig. 45: *Compositional Capture 4*

Fig. 46: Compositional Capture 5

5.5 Strata

Design research in the form of exploratory walks has also *unhidden* tactile and historical layers otherwise left unnoticed. The *Strata* walk observed the urban fabric as an eclectically-crafted quilt: rich with unique layered swatches assigned to various surfaces and neighbourhoods.

Fig. 47: Evidence of Palimpsest

*Bottom left: Series 372, Subseries 94, Item 2203, February 3 1919,
City of Toronto Archives*

Those above and adjacent courtesy of AC

The process of photographing these observations through the laneways captured evidence of palimpsest through superimposed layers and erasure and evolving style through architectural detailing and materiality.

Fig. 48: *Evidence of Evolving Style*

5.6 After-Hours

This walk was conducted between 7-8:00pm in the month of February, 2017. At this point the sky was dark, street lamps were activated, and people were home from work.

I found this walk most interesting. At night, the lanes have a tranquil and mysterious quality. In order to compensate for the darkness, I found my senses were heightened as I walked in alert reverie. I listened attentively to the rhythm of my own footsteps, wary of any sounds that were not of my own making. I soon realized I was not alone: illuminated windows framed people going about their evening routines, urban ghosts in the form of shadows and reflections revealed themselves on wet pavement, snow and glass, and raccoons cautiously followed alongside via fence lines and garage roofs. These liquid routes are poetically described in Marco Polo's reading of the *Invisible City of Esmeralda*:

Secret and adventurous lives, here as elsewhere, are subject to greater restrictions. Esmeralda's cats, thieves, illicit lovers move along higher, discontinuous ways, dropping from a rooftop to a balcony, following gutterings with acrobats' steps. Below, the rats run in the darkness of the sewers, one behind the other's tail, along with conspirators and smugglers: they peep out of manholes and drainpipes, they slip through double bottoms and ditches, from one hiding place to another they drag crusts of cheese, contraband goods, kegs of gunpowder, crossing the city's compactness pierced by the spokes of underground passages (Calvino, 1997, p. 79).

In an attempt to document the walk, I intended to rely on my camera flash to reveal what is hidden in complete darkness. To my surprise, it was difficult to find areas that were not already subtly revealed by the artificial lighting from street lights or censored lighting mounted to garages along the lane. As an alternative, I photographed my observations without the camera flash and inverted the black-and-white imagery during post-production to capture the ethereal atmosphere of the lanes after-hours (Fig. 49). Beam spreads of light, shadows, and exhaust fumes are starkly depicted in black; while tree branches, growing medium, and infrastructure stand out against their inverted backdrops. The image reflects a hierarchical shift in information, privileging uncurated and ghostly distractions, resulting in a mysterious atmospheric output.

Fig. 49: *Night Vision*

CHECKPOINT: Q3

This series of exploratory walks transcribed via psychogeographic methods reveal impressionable observations that are otherwise inundated by commercial temptation and vehicular dominance. These analytical and creative ways of reading the laneways informs their remaking. Harnessing the fruitful invisibles within these overlooked spaces, the proposed project in the following chapter envisions the activation of urban retreats along an alternate pedestrian network within Toronto, Canada.

Fig. 50: Elaborated Route Mind Map 3

Q4. How do the learnings of this design research materialize through architectural intervention in reconceiving the lane space?

6 | HYBRID DESIGN PROJECT

As evidenced in the exploratory walks, the laneways are rich with unnoticed marvels, waiting to be curated through architectural intervention. Utilizing a selected laneway block as catalyst, the hybrid design project exhibited in the following chapter will reconceive this underutilized space for interpretation by strollers alike.

Rather than approach the lane as void, this exploration looks at the laneways as positive space. The project will fragment and build upon existing conditions, integrating with the urban fabric and simultaneously engaging with adjacent buildings, ground, and street network. Fragmentation has proved to promote behaviour which subverts efficiency and directionality, while extruding the lane space creates urban retreats and shelters in the form of urban rooms. Inspired by the voyeuristic zones from which the flâneur would observe the city-spectacle, this street-building-lane hybrid with neutral tendencies (neither completely public nor private) is capable of inspiring new flâneurs and bringing new life to cities. Acknowledging that built form has the capacity to capture fragments of the city by framing one's interpretation from different points of view, this shift in the way we think about buildings and the space between has the capacity to exhibit unexpected information and encounters that would oftentimes go unnoticed.

Kenneth Frampton stresses landscape as priority over freestanding built form in the making of cities, yet to build landscape requires the ability to see it, and the inability to do so continues to permeate architectural design culture (Waldheim, 2006, p. 127). Acknowledging Frampton's observation, this thesis approaches building as an extension of the lancescape. The hybrid design project will explore strategies which simultaneously coexist in the realm of architecture, landscape, and urban design to exploit the relationship between street-building-lane, activating new routes and urban retreats for strollers to pause and occupy, explore and discover.

6.1 Site Selection

Fig. 51: Area of Interest

In reference to the findings from the *Omnipresent* research conducted in Chapter 5 (*Detour: Omnipresent Walk*, p. 53), the laneway network is diminished in dense areas, as illustrated in Toronto's downtown. In light of future density in peripheral neighbourhoods, the selected area of study is located in an area with abundant laneways to be preserved as part of Toronto's open space network. The area of interest is bordered by Danforth, Coxwell, Lakeshore, and the DVP: an area I've grown familiar with during my various walks.

In contemplating the selection of a specific laneway block for exploration, analysis of the existing public spaces including streets, parks, and laneways were conducted to ensure enhancement of the overall open space network. This analytical reading of the city exposed six sites for exploration including the laneway block bordered by Gerrard Street (north), Logan Avenue (east), First Avenue (south), and Degrossi Street (west). Previous walks familiarized the attributes of this specific block, which include a mix of low-rise residential, office, and retail shops along the north, two-storey residential walk-ups along the south, and St. Ann's church (a noteworthy urban artifact previously mentioned) anchored at the west end. The church was a significant draw to this specific block since open space adjacent heritage features can create improved views, vistas or spatial definition of the heritage resource.

Fig. 52: Selected Laneway Block for Exploration

6.2 Remaking the Lane

⊗ Fig. 53: Proposed Laneway Block

Fig. 54: Proposed Laneway Section Exhibiting Texture, Pattern, and Colour along the Laneway

⊕ Fig. 55: Plan of the Proposed
Laneway Block Exploration
1:2000

0 40 100 200m

Fig. 56: Reference Plan

Reconceiving this specific laneway block encompasses the extrusion of the lane into vacant or underutilized lots in the form of three hybrid buildings. The configuration and programming of the buildings respond to the neighbourhood demographic and context, while attempting to fuse pedestrian movement and the private realm. Acknowledging the Urban Design Guidelines, these POPS (privately owned publicly-accessible spaces) have been designed as “a layer within the City’s open space system, filling in gaps where necessary, creating new focal points, protecting important views and enlivening the public realm.” (Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Space Draft Urban Design Guidelines, June 2014, p. 6)

Building A
Indoor/Outdoor Office

Building B + C
B: Mixed-Use Residential/Retail/Event
C: Mixed-Use Office/Retail/Event

Fig. 57: Proposed Buildings and Space In-Between

Fig. 58: Architectural Strategies for Reconceiving the Lane Space

Strategies	Informed by Exploratory Walks	As Interpreted by Strollers	Application to Selected Laneway
Reframe the city as composition for reinterpretation through spatial manipulation of lane:			
Detour	Reverse Omnipresent	Deviate and liberate via multiple routes. Glimpses and gateways induce curiosity and pause for decision-making.	Address current dead end and lack of public permeation along street wall
Urban Rooms	Sensory Compositional	Induce diverse rhythms and levels of enclosure. Stimulate activity and interaction via creative demarcation of public/private space. Offer shelter. Establish a rapport with urban artifacts.	Utilize surface parking lot at base of Church and 793 Gerrard as infill sites. Pair with Piazza to define public open space. Relate to St. Ann's Church (the side), a hidden urban artifact
Activate and Connect via:			
Multi-Level, Constructed Ground	Sensory After-Hours	Changing views and advantage points for voyeurs. Turning, rising, descending via a course of steps, landings, and bridges. Kinesthetic interest.	Address current drainage issues (standing water) along relatively flat laneway surface
Urban Ghosts	Compositional Strata After-Hours	Perceive reflections, atmospheric qualities, and movement of light and shadow via built form and landscape elements. Visual interest.	Utilize the lane's lengthy southern exposure and uninterrupted natural light entrance above the low-rise residential to the south

Q5. Approaching buildings as an extension of the lanescape, what architectural strategies inspire *flânerie* in the contemporary city?

6.3 Architectural Strategies

The design project explores strategies that coexist in the realm of architecture, landscape, and urban design to exploit the relationship between lane-building and street. Activating new routes and an expanded public realm for strollers to pause and occupy, explore and discover, these strategies invigorate the role of architecture in enhancing the quality of urban life, and challenge highly-regulated and standardized street space as the primary means of moving through the contemporary city.

In addition to the properties outlined in the mind maps (Chapters 1-5), the strategies outlined in Figure 58 inspire subjective environments sought after by Lefebvre and the Situationists involving “the spatial exploration and celebration of the essentially subjective unalienated areas of life, such as humor, creativity, play, imagination, street life and carnivals, passion, history, spontaneity, and bodily pleasures” (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 240).

Reading the city through the exploratory walks conducted in Chapter 5 informs the strategic manipulation of the lane space via *Detour*, *Urban Rooms*, *Multi-Level Constructed Ground*, and *Urban Ghosts*. For instance, recalling the *Compositional Walk* which captured unexpected fragments of the city as art when observed through the viewfinder of a camera, these findings initiated the design exploration of *Urban Rooms* as architectural agents in reframing the city. *Urban Ghosts* were *unhidden* via several of the exploratory walks, particularly evident during the *After-Hours Walk* when senses heighten and strollers tend to walk in alert reverie. The intentional curation of *Urban Ghosts* via articulated built form, climatic conditions, and landscape elements privilege distractions oftentimes unnoticed, and activate subjective and ethereal qualities of the lane space.

The following Chapter explores each of the strategies identified in Figure 58 when applied to the selected laneway block. While design research is investigated within the existing site constraints, the proposal is intended to remain speculative, intentionally overdesigned to *unhide* a wealth of potentials in reconceiving the lane space.

Fig. 59: *Detour through Subtraction*

6.3.1 Detour

Deviate and liberate via multiple routes. Glimpses and gateways induce curiosity and pause for decision-making.

Intended to introduce alternative routes, the proposed series of detours create notable beginnings that take strollers elsewhere. Points of detour present options to deviate from the route, granting the promeneur agency by enabling the act of decision-making. "Each intersection represents an available choice or challenge to a user, to go this way or that [yet] intersections are not the only places where pedestrians should have choices..." (Jacobs, 1993, p. 266). In Figure 60, Jane Jacobs illustrates how short cuts make sense to build community, offer different routes for walking, and improve business along the connected paths. She criticizes the lack of porosity along long or large blocks in that they "sort people into paths that meet too infrequently, so that different uses very near each other geographically are, in practical effect, literally blocked off from one another." She goes on to say that large blocks:

Thwart the potential advantages that cities offer to incubation, experimentation, and many small or special enterprises, insofar as these depend upon drawing their customers or clients from among much larger cross-sections of passing public... (they) also thwart the principle that if city mixtures of use are to be more than a fiction on maps, they must result in different people, bent on different purposes, appearing at different times but using the same streets (Jacobs J. , 1961, p. 183).

Fig. 60: Circulation through Short Blocks

With this in mind, the proposed scheme permeates the street wall through subtraction, creating a series of offshoots along the lane for detour. Three additional points of entry/exit through the block have been established, ensuring the ways open to the promeneur are many, sparing them the boredom of repetition of following the same routes.

Fig. 61: Mid-block Connections

*Detour 1
Bounded by Building A*

*Detour 2
Bounded by Building C*

*Detour 3
Bounded by St. Ann's Church*

Fig. 62: Entrances at Mid-block Connections

Detour through Interstitial Space	Orientation	Access to Public Destination	Repetition of Elements	Overlook
Detour 1 (Space between 2 Buildings)	Perpendicular to the street	Courtyard	Mullion pattern, cherry trees, paving	Office entrants, courtyard users
Detour 2 (Subtraction)	Perpendicular to the street	Atrium	Arches, seating, paving	Retail entrants, atrium users
Detour 3 (Space between 2 Buildings)	Perpendicular to the street	Piazza	Paving	Piazza users, church goers

Fig. 63: Detour Criteria Summary

“The city is about maximization of mental and sensual stimuli...about liberation rather than control of people’s behaviour...” (Sauerbruch, 2010, 580).

Detour A and B are established within the context of proposed infill projects. Subtracting from the ground plane of the proposed infill creates a bridged volume framing a courtyard beyond, establishing detour A. The intent is that the passersby will catch a glimpse of the building’s intermediate volumes, hear voices of people within the courtyard and see its brightly-coloured cherry trees through the building’s ground floor glazing, drawing them inward from Gerrard Street. When passing underneath the bridged volume, the promeneur will notice it frames a section of the neighbouring building’s history: worn brick which has been spared from its stucco coating.

Detour B cuts through the second of the two infill projects along Gerrard Street. The entrance arch marks the beginning of the journey through the colonnade towards the laneway beyond. This first arch frames retail shop windows, people sitting on benches, rhythmic walking, echoed voices, and patterned light passing through the wall’s open brickwork. The afternoon sun casts powerful strokes of light across the center of the colonnade, suggesting a central atrium to be discovered.

Once having reached the base of the church, Detour C presents two newly-established routes in place of the previous dead-end. By creating a physical separation between the church and adjacent rectory, this space is reassigned to the public. Walk along the east façade of the church before proceeding through the newfound passage. Take the newly established connection to the existing procession towards the church’s main entrance off of Gerrard Street.

In walking along the main thoroughfare, the following narrative captures a stroller's interpretation at Detour 1:

Fig. 64: *Detour 1 Perspective Section*

Detail 1

While only a subtle glimpse is granted to those moving westbound, this projecting room within a room is clearly visible while walking east along Gerrard Street. Inhabiting this space, the occupant is projected beyond the vertical plane and side yard property line in an exhibitionist fashion, provoking strollers to look upward.

Fig. 65: *Detour 1, Detail 1*
1:50

Fig. 66: *Detour 1, Detail 2 and 3*
1:50

Detail 2

The intermediate room is suspended between floors and accessed via the stair landing. While completely contained within the building envelope, this intimate urban stage and its performers are showcased through a glazed wall to an audience of passers-by.

Detail 3

The setback of the adjacent residential walk-up allows views outward and inward through a picture window. In terms of wall assembly, insulated sandwich panels feature the same concrete finish on both faces, blurring the boundary between interior and exterior.

Detail 4

The underpass marks Detour 1 and the threshold between street space and lane space, demarcating a change in atmosphere from busy street to urban retreat. Pedestrians are pressed against the existing Liberty Building and mural which has been preserved, and through ground floor glazing can see feet without faces traversing the interior stair.

Fig. 67: *Detour 1, Detail 4*
1:50

6.3.2 Urban Rooms

Induce diverse rhythms and levels of enclosure. Stimulate activity and interaction via creative demarcation of public/private space. Offer shelter. Establish a rapport with urban artifacts.

Buildings are used primarily as defining elements for urban spaces (Krier, 2006, p. 122). Even the urban courts and squares of the late baroque, with their surrounding walls, were a form of interior space, roofed by the open sky (Giedion, 1967, p. xlviii). While they are enclosures in and of themselves, the proposed scheme utilizes urban infill projects to define various degrees of public enclosure along the lane. Infill A establishes a courtyard for solitude and sheltered pause, Infill B defines the east side of the piazza and open-air passage adjacent, while Infill C promotes activity and interaction within its colonnade and public atrium.

These proposed enclosures are inspired by Gordon Cullen's new language and system of elements for designing small-scale urban settings, describing "urban rooms", "enclaves", "precincts", "outdoor rooms" and "passages" that allowed pedestrians to move elegantly and comfortably about the village through a series of urban enclosures (McGrath, 2013, p. 264).

Architect and Urban Planning theorist Camillo Sitte noticed that, "It is quite astonishing how many delightful small gardens are to be found in the interior of the building lots of old towns; one has no suspicion of their existence before entering the courtyards and rear areas" (Sitte, 1965, p. 102). Inspired by this concept, a series of public open spaces have been integrated within the block, bounded by building volumes and planes, intending to provoke curiosity for further discovery within the city's extensive laneway network.

Fig. 68: Assorted Urban Rooms in Section and Plan

Urban Rooms	Level of Enclosure	Access Ensuring Use	Scale	Association	
Courtyard	All sides, open-air	2 points	Intimate	Existing and proposed offices	
Piazza	All sides, open-air	4 points	Urban stage. Large enough for flexible programming	St. Ann's Church (significant urban artifact), proposed café and residential lobby	
Underground Concourse	All sides, open-air	4 points	Intimate/ tranquil setting, depth emphasized	Proposed pond feature, public washrooms, existing Paint Cabin	
Aisle	Two sides	3 points	Intimate, multi-story	Proposed market use	
Atrium	All sides, skylight roof	2 points	Multi-story. Large enough for flexible programming (basketball, ceremony, performance..)	Proposed retail and office uses	
Lobby	All sides	3 points	Spacious, multi-story and inviting	Residential uses and urban artifact (St. Ann's Church)	
Freestanding Shelters	1 side (folded plane)	2 points (directly connected to public laneway)	Intimate, pedestrian-scale	Defines lane as positive space	

Fig. 69: Urban Room Criteria Summary

	Access to Sunlight	Shelter	Visibility	Landscape	Uses/Things to do
	Midday	Mitigates noise, wind impacts, offers shade, improved air quality	High, particularly at the ground floor. Eyes look down into the space	Soft/ garden setting	Retreat, sitting, intimate gathering
	Midday (low-rise residential to the south)	Mitigates noise and wind impacts	High, particularly from café and residential lobby above	Soft and hard	Walking, sitting, playing, gathering
	Via translucent pavers overhead	Mitigates noise, wind impacts, offers shade, improved air quality	Piazza users above, Paint Cabin users	Soft/garden setting	Retreat, sitting, secret entrance to Paint Cabin
	Midday	Mitigates noise, wind impacts, offers shade	Market goers, office users above, laneway pedestrians	Hard	Walking, sitting, window shopping
	Morning, midday, afternoon	Mitigates noise, wind impacts, offers shade	Retail users adjacent, office users above	Hard	Sitting, playing, gathering
	Afternoon	Operable building skin mitigates noise, wind impacts, offers shade	High, elevated level enables views into piazza below and St. Ann's church beyond	Hard	Sitting, gathering, perusing local art
	Southern exposure ensures backdrop for sunlight and shadows	Modest shelter from wind impacts	High	Hard and soft (green vein)	Sitting, intimate gathering

Courtyards

An urban room is established along the mid-block connection enclosed by Infill A. This intimate courtyard is slightly depressed and spans four storeys, capped by an open air ceiling. The ground level features seating and landscaped elements while its walls host Infill A's vertical and horizontal circulation, ensuring the room is both activated and monitored throughout the day. A series of intermediate volumes straddle the threshold between inside and outside, fragmenting the boundary between environments, and initiating visual conversation between interior occupant and public citizen.

Fig. 70: *Courtyard Perspective*

Fig. 71: Courtyard Section and Plan

Fig. 72: Courtyard Perspective Section

Piazza

By displacing vehicular parking below Infill projects B and C, a piazza has been designed in its place as an urban stage, situated at the base of the church. The piazza is accessed via the laneway, the procession to the church off Gerrard Street, as well as through the physical separation established between the church and adjacent rectory.

Once discovered, these spaces induce pause and offer the promeneur stopping places for contemplation and interaction. Following church service, the piazza is often host to spontaneous gatherings, activated with a bustle of pedestrian activity: children playing, dogs barking, strangers conversing in various languages. Hear the fountains and smell a blend of fresh coffee and herbs growing in the rooftop garden. On a weekday evening, one might pass a strolling couple, hear guitar practice, smell late-night dinner, and lock eyes with fellow people watchers.

Fig. 74: Piazza Section and Plan

Fig. 73: Piazza Perspective

Fig. 75: Piazza Perspective Sections

The allocation of the piazza at the base of the church re-establishes a rapport with this urban artifact. In addition to offering the piazza a highly articulated backdrop, the points of view and access into the piazza from various locations and levels acknowledge Camillo Sitte's criticism, encouraging a diverse interpretation of this urban artifact:

We are always of the delusion that everything must be seen at once, that around about a thing only a uniformly empty space is in order. It is not taken into account that this vacuum of a space, in itself extremely boring, also destroys any diversity of effect. Just how impressive the powerful masonry walls of Florentine palaces appear when viewed from small back streets... (Sitte, 1965, p. 29)

Within the devised scheme, one's frame of reference changes based on choice of route, each choreographing unique architectural promenades and creating ever new impressions. While the proposed detours draw people into the lane, the series of urban rooms offer people a place to see and be seen.

Fig. 76: Underground Concourse Perspective Sections

Underground Concourse

Fig. 77: *Underground Concourse Section and Plan*

The underground concourse is created by carving out ground to extend the boundaries of the lane one storey below ground level. The concourse offers a direct pedestrian connection between the laneway and the retail shops along the west end of Gerrard Street. Upon descent below grade, the promeneur will discover a series of back entrances to social-retail program, including access to the *Paint Cabin*: an existing coffee house and social art workshop. Paint Cabin goers are free to utilize this underground retreat, activating the space with activity for passersby. This subterranean room features a combination of translucent and open-air ceiling, defying the stigma that subterranean levels be gloomy or dangerous.

The concourse is further enclosed by climatic conditions, also contributing to the atmosphere of the underground retreat. During a storm, water from the ground level drains through spouts in the parapet before running down the face of a series of concrete columns and spilling into the pond below. The rainwater washes down the edge of the passage, and on cold winter days, the passage becomes a cave-like shelter bounded by stalactite icicles.

Fig. 78: *Underground Concourse Climatic Conditions*

Aisle

Pass through this longitudinal, open-air, and open-ended room which frames the side of St. Ann's church and the piazza beyond. Its boundaries are soft: Building B cantilevers overhead and features a recessed ground floor and colonnade, while its paving surface seeps into the adjacent hardscape. Building C is bounded by a permeable ground-level membrane of open brickwork, granting the voyeurs in the aisle glimpses into the arched colonnade beyond. The aisle is positioned at the intersection of several routes, presenting choice while programmed in itself for activation and extended use.

Fig. 79: Aisle Section and Plan

Fig. 80: Aisle Perspective

Atrium

Upon discovery of the atrium and event space within Building C, the promeneur is invited to pause, engage in activity, or climb the spiraling staircase to the upper mezzanine levels for a different vantage point. This ambiguous interior/exterior room features a skylight roof which allows sunlight to pass through its membrane and shelters users from harsh climatic conditions. While the atrium is situated at the heart of the building, it remains connected to the outdoor public realm via its colonnade which is fused to the street and laneway at each end.

Fig. 81: Atrium
Section and Plan

Fig. 82: Atrium Perspective Section

Lobby

This room provides an intermediate space between the very public piazza, community rooftop garden and private residences within Building B. The lane ascends an extended stair with intermediate lookout before extruding two storeys to the sky. The lobby is unquestionably the most interior of the urban rooms, defined by a roof, vertical and horizontal planes and accessed through a door. Its operable south and west glazing fragments the boundary between interior and exterior environments, enabling air flow, temperature, sound, smell, etc. to freely pass through the threshold. This public gathering space hosts local art in partnership with the *Paint Cabin* (an existing coffee house along the lane offering social art workshops as previously mentioned).

Fig. 83: Lobby Perspective

Fig. 84: Lobby Section and Plan

Freestanding Shelters

Defined by intermediate sculpture and subtle topographic depression, these subtle forms of enclosure start to define the lane as positive space. When stopping for shelter or illuminated pause, passersby will notice reflections across the wet or icy depressed surface around their feet where rainwater collects and feeds the lanescape's irrigation system.

Fig. 86: Freestanding Shelter Section and Plan

Fig. 85: Freestanding Shelter Perspective

Summary

Evidenced by this series of broad ranging urban rooms, built form has the capacity to vastly inform the public realm and pedestrian experience. Recalling the primary space for flânerie, these urban rooms echo voyeuristic, quasi-public/private zones, granting pedestrians renewed access to the contemporary city and its many marvels. *Detour: The Flâneur*, p. 3

[The flâneur]’s greatest delusion is spatial, since he experiences the streets as an interior, a mixture of shopping arcade, conservatory, living room, panorama, music hall, cabinet of curiosities or botanical collection, and Great Exhibition hall. This interior unites all...and their availability in one moment or glance intoxicates the Flâneur... (Lauster, 2007, p. 142)

Fig. 87: Activated Urban Rooms

6.3.3 Activators

Multi-Level, Constructed Ground

Changing views and advantage points for voyeurs. Turning, rising, descending via a course of steps, landings, and bridges. Kinesthetic interest.

My frequent walks acknowledge the ground beneath my feet as gravity fastens my every step. I often imagine its geographic, infrastructural, subterranean layers that give it thickness.

As “the traffic-flow-support-nexus for the vertical whole” (Sennett, 1977, p. 14), the ground plane connects different neighbourhoods and districts and supports the city’s network of sidewalks, streets, open space, and built form. This association has led to contemporary interest in surface continuities, conflating separations between landscape and building (Waldheim, 2006, p. 30).

Constructed ground represents a hybrid framework that crosses between architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design, to engage the complexity of contemporary urban landscape. This framework invests in the ground itself as a material for design, using landscape as both a structuring element and a medium for rethinking urban conditions, to produce everyday urban spaces that do not exclude nature. Its goal is to address simultaneously the concern of architecture, landscape, and city, without having one or more recede in importance, as would happen in a conventional disciplinary framework (Waldheim, 2006, p. 127).

This hybrid approach inspires the activation of multi-level surface continuities along the lanescape.

Evidenced by the findings of my initial travel reflection from walkable cities (*Detour: Travel Reflection*, p. 7), the most enjoyable walks featured noticeable changes in elevation, albeit not very steep. Topography and slope stimulate the promeneur by increasing views and adding drama (Jacobs, 1993, p. 305). "Observers are impressed, even in memory, by the apparent kinesthetic quality of a path, the sense of motion along it: turning, rising, falling" (Lynch, 1960, p. 97).

Reflected in Fig.88, the proposed scheme features a series of levels, creating both evident and hidden routes. Inspired by the *Invisible City of Esmeralda*:

The network of routes is not arranged on one level, but follows instead an up-and-down course of steps, landings, cambered bridges, hanging streets. Combining segments of various routes, elevated or on ground level, each inhabitant can enjoy everyday the pleasure of a new itinerary to reach the same places (Calvino, 1997, p. 79).

Fig. 88: Activation through Multi-level, Thickened Lanescape

Evidenced in Fig. 89, a majority of the lane has been depressed, ramping up along its perimeter for access to garages and servicing. Integrated landscaping invites promeneurs to engage with this subtle topographic variation, slowing their pace and prompting a sensory response. This depression also allows for the collection of rainwater and moderates vehicular traffic.

The lanescape also features access to various levels at the scale of urban storeys. An underground level features a pond, visual connection to the water filtration system below the piazza, and access to relocated surface parking. A rainwater cistern feeds a greywater circuit which collects the rainwater from the piazza and rooftops of Infill projects B and C, and a solar-powered pump moves the water from the cistern to a drip-irrigation system which feeds the landscaping along the lane and provides the building's non-potable water supply.

With the exception of the freestanding shelters, each of the urban rooms engage in visual conversation with elevated or depressed storeys. For instance, the elevated *Lobby* and art gallery enables views into the *Piazza* below, where occupants can in turn look down into the *Underground Concourse*. Voids surrounded by circulation as evidenced in the *Courtyard* or *Atrium* are tools for voyeurs to watch. The transition between each level marks a choice point which induces curiosity and pause for decision-making. These various points of ascent and descent also connect different urban rooms and atmospheres along the lanescape.

Fig. 89: Multi-Level Routes

Fig. 90: Activation through Light and Shadow

Urban Ghosts

Perceive reflections, atmospheric qualities, and movement of light and shadow via built form and landscape elements. Visual interest.

The emphasis on movement in the lane via perceived light and shadow offers visual interest to the promeneur. Negating the distraction of constantly moving vehicles, the laneway offers a slow environment where the most subtle of movements is noticed.

As observed by Allan Jacobs, “Buildings do not move. Light, though, moves over them, and the surfaces change, in lightness, darkness and shadow, and therefore in colour... Complex building façades over which light can pass or change make for better streets than do more simple ones” (Jacobs, 1993, p. 283). In designing the proposed rooms and surfaces within the laneway, a series of shadow studies were conducted in the form of shadow box models to envision the interplay and dramatization of lighting effects. Sun studies revealed effective areas for subtractions such as recessed windows, balconies, and courtyards, as well as protrusions such as dormers, cantilevers, bridges, and sills. Additionally, the highly articulated church façade has been thoughtfully adapted as the backdrop to the piazza, continually in flux as sunlight passes throughout the day. Patterned light passes through the intricate brick pattern in the arcade of Building C and the promeneur will notice natural light filtering through the translucent concrete above the underground passage.

Along with strategic articulation of built form, interplay with natural elements was also integrated.

...What makes trees so special is their movement; the constant movement of their branches and leaves, and the ever-changing light that plays on, through, and around them. The leaves move and the light on them constantly changes...If light filters through them, casting moving shadows on walks and walls, so much the better. Branches of deciduous trees may not move much in winter, but the light plays over their uneven surfaces, changing them always, challenging the eyes if ever so subtly (Jacobs, 1993, p. 282).

Acknowledging the expansive trees within residential backyards along the south of the lane, the intermediate shelters have been designed for the promeneur as backdrops for shadows of tree branches and foliage to dance against their angular planes, read vividly against their light-coloured concrete surface. Planting areas are maximized and foresee the subtle distraction of bending tall grasses. The promeneur may also catch the reflections in the underground pond, across wet pavement surrounding the fountains in the piazza and rainwater collection points designated along the lanescape.

Fig. 91: *Shadow Box Models*

6.3.4 Representation

The representational strategies within this thesis privilege the audience to visual sensations (i.e. polarization of light) and senses (i.e. smell, sound, touch, kinesthesia, sense of gravity) which are often omitted in conventional architectural drawings. During my exploratory walks, psychogeographic representation was utilized as a tool in understanding nuances, invisibles, ambient cues, and inherent urban atmospheres (*Detour: Psychogeography*, p. 19). In remaking the laneway, overlaid perspective section drawings and collage techniques have served as points of entry which blur boundaries and investigate the relationship between lane-building-street. Drawings executed through overlaying, overlapping, and fragmenting offer a new way of thinking about urban space and present architecture differently: “as a medium for the continuous exchange between natural and artificial ecologies, internal and external activities” (Allen, 1999, p. 142). This representational strategy investigates the ambiguous edges along the lanespace resulting in a perpetual state of entering and exiting.

These ideas are conveyed in the collaged filmstrip in Fig. 92 which captures dramatic choreography through blurred boundaries of lane-building-street. Strollers fluidly traverse the lane space as one condition seeps into the next, challenging highly-regulated and standardized street space. The filmstrip informs further investigation through the making of an animated walkthrough.

Fig. 92: *Leaky Filmstrip*

Inspired by the artist walks investigated in Chapter 3 (*Detour: Artist Walks*, p. 15), the following animation looks to inspire its audience to examine the city in forensic detail; enjoying the more subtle and transient qualities such as ambient sounds and movement of light and shadow. The video traverses the fictional lanespace while overlaid footage of a walk I personally conducted through the existing lane simultaneously plays. The overlay allows the audience to cross-reference various visual, auditory and spatial conditions. While the footage of the existing walk continuously plays, the journey through the fictional lanespace captures moments of pause at choice points and urban rooms, simulating how a stroller might engage with the architectural strategies investigated in this thesis.

Fig. 93: *Animation*

7 | CONCLUSION

This thesis acknowledges that the form of the city impacts the way we walk, the way we interpret our experiences, and subsequently the way we live.

Conducting field research in the form of choreographed walks led to an understanding of how various methods of traversing the city can stimulate different interpretations of place. Exploratory walks through overlooked public land designated to Toronto's Laneways followed by creative transcription of the findings drew away from the blatant and called attention to unnoticed marvels. Recalling Chapter 5, illumination and observation from the backside, or through the viewfinder of a camera, or inversion during post-production, each captured unexpected fragments of the city.

This thesis acknowledges that built form has the capacity to capture fragments of the city by framing one's interpretation from different points of view. For instance, the proposed *Aisle* frames the side of St. Ann's Church, the underpass through Building A frames the existing mural, and the *Freestanding Shelters* act as backdrops for dancing shadows, each exhibiting information that would usually go unnoticed.

Fragmenting the lane with *Points of Detour* and *Urban Rooms* subvert efficiency and directionality, and echo the boulevards and arcades as voyeuristic zones from which the flâneur would observe the city-spectacle. Strollers are granted access to the city while traversing these spaces and interpreting the information that they compose or capture. Research has uncovered an architectural vocabulary capable of informing the remaking of untapped public space for strollers to pause and occupy, explore and discover.

This thesis approaches buildings as an extension of the lanescape and subverts our perception of urban buildings as being respectfully placed within their designated property boundaries, oriented to the street, and encapsulated from the air and earth that surrounds them. Regardless of whether publicly or privately operated, this lane-building-street hybrid is capable of inspiring new flâneurs and bringing new life to cities. Herein, this thesis challenges highly-regulated and standardized street space in favour of an architecture that privileges new routes and an expanded public realm beyond boundaries, between and amongst buildings, just waiting for discovery...

7.1 Additional Applications

This in-depth, analytical research inspires applications across many uniform, unloved, and banal spaces. While architectural strategies exercised within the selected block showcase intended outcomes specific to place, reference to Situationist cartography suggests additional applications throughout the city. “[An] advantage of the fragmentary system of urban design is that a known urban formula can be repeated in a different location, with further improvements built into the new fragment, creating an iterative fractal or evolving fragment” (McGrath, 2013, p. 267). The fragmented space of the city, as actualized in the *dérive*, is precisely what is imaged in *The Naked City* (McGrath, 2013, p. 245). *Detour: Naked City*, p. 26

Reflecting on the learning from this thesis, an adapted model of *The Naked City* (Fig. 95) envisions a new pedestrian way through the lane space network, disregarding the normal connections governed by our attenuated street life. Five additional sites within the area of study have been selected (refer to Appendix F) for reimagining via the architectural strategies outlined within Chapter 6. *Detour*, *Urban Rooms*, *Multi-Level Constructed Ground*, and *Urban Ghosts* have the capacity to *unhide* unique atmospheres, attractions, and encounters within each fragment.

Fig. 94: Additional Fragments

Fig. 95: Lane Space Map

- Lane Space
- Existing Park Network
- Existing Urban Artifacts

The areas in red depict the random routes a stroller might take through the city via the lane space network, connecting and enhancing the existing park network and access to urban artifacts. In reference to the selected laneway block investigated in Chapter 6, the network moves through the proposed infill projects, signifying building as extension of the lane space, beckoning the contemporary flâneur. This experimental map maintains the playful spontaneity originally depicted by Guy Debord, “enabling sensitive participants to experience the city’s many marvels, to recode and repossess its terrain for themselves” (Borden, Kerr, Rendell & Pivaro, 2002, p. 46).

APPENDICES

A | ELABORATED TRAVEL REFLECTION

In July of 2016, I traveled independently to selected North American walkable cities as a means of research towards the development of my Master's Thesis. My research looked to re-engage the Flâneur as someone who wanders the city with the sole purpose of paying attention to it, inspiring a newfound understanding and celebration of our cities.

The reason I looked to travel to unfamiliar territory as a research method can best be described by Shawn Micallef, author of *Stroll: Psychogeographic Walking Tours of Toronto*:

When you walk through places that don't fit your mental picture of the city, you create what Bertolt Brecht called a distancing effect, taking what's familiar and making it strange. By removing yourself from your habits and context and letting some unpredictability seep into your routine, you're better able to see what all the excitement is about (19).

The trip included walking expeditions within Vancouver, Portland, and San Francisco. Preliminary research suggested that these are some of the most walkable cities in North America as a result of: prioritizing non-auto transportation projects and street-level over skyline, the preservation and adaptive reuse of landmark buildings and neighbourhoods, the embrace of alleyway projects and abundant quality urban parks and greenery, and the engagement with natural features including Pacific Ocean waterfronts, undulating terrain, and the Willamette River flowing through Portland's city center.

Prior to my departure, a list of select neighbourhoods for exploration was devised according to Walk Score's 2015 list of The Most Walkable Neighbourhoods. Walk Score rates are generated based on analyzing a neighbourhood's routes to amenities so high scores do not necessarily translate to pleasant walks. This is where my curiosity initially resided: *How do we define terms like "walkability"? And how can the design of our built world support a walking culture?*

To answer the latter I took part in a series of self-guided walks while employing a strategy of inventory to call attention to the influences that shape our experience of walking through the city, and the aspects of our environment that are so ordinary they have become invisible. In the spirit of the Flâneur, there was no protocol or set of rules for these walks. Upon arrival to the predetermined neighbourhoods, I drifted with improvisatory movement with the sole purpose of observing the city by moving through it. I exercised various forms of documentation including sketching, GPS tracking via Walkameter (an application downloaded to my phone), photography, collage, and written narrative. To enhance the value of my sketches, I referred to *The Urban Sketching Handbooks: Understanding Perspective*, as well as *Reportage and Documentary Drawing* which I picked up from the acclaimed Powell's Bookstore while in Portland. The following is an analysis of the spatial data collected, cross referenced with my qualitative observations that attributed to the experiential outcomes of these walks.

Fig. 96 Various GPS Readings, Google Earth
(p.118-122)

07.17.16 Vancouver

21°C | Mostly Cloudy | Wind: 11km/h sw | Humidity: 83% | Ascent: 47m, Descent: 36m | Distance: 13.8km

07.18.16 Vancouver

21°C | Mostly Cloudy | Wind: 13km/h ese | Humidity: 83% | Ascent: 21m, Descent: 25m | Distance: 13.51km

07.19.16 Vancouver

21°C | Cloudy | Wind: 15km/h e | Humidity: 78% | Ascent: 26m, Descent: 23m | Distance: 9.57km

07.19.16 Vancouver

21°C | Partly Cloudy | Wind: 13km/h wsw | Humidity: 64% | Ascent: 36m, Descent: 52m | Distance: 7.42km

07.21.16 Portland

26°C | Mostly Sunny | Wind: 7km/h wsw | Humidity: 64% | Ascent: 46m, Descent: 38m | Distance: 18.03km

07.22.16 Portland

20°C | Cloudy | Wind: 6km/h sse | Humidity: 78% | Ascent: 46m, Descent: 84m | Distance: 9.57km

21°C | Cloudy | Wind: 7km/h wnw | Humidity: 68% | Ascent: 94m, Descent: 76m | Distance: 19.44km

07.26.16 San Francisco

23°C | Mostly Cloudy | Wind: 7km/h wnw | Humidity: 70% | Ascent: 328m, Descent: 311m | Distance: 26.02km

07.27.16 San Francisco

21°C | Mostly Sunny | Wind: 15km/h wnw | Humidity: 61% | Ascent: 49m, Descent: 13m | Distance: 13.02km

Fig. 97 *Travel Sketches* (p. 123-133)

Granville Bridge and BC-99 S, Vancouver

A later search on Google Maps indicated that I had taken the route exclusively prescribed to drivers. Walkers are counter-intuitively directed to head towards the Aquatic Centre and take the Granville Island ferry. Can access for pedestrians be improved?

Crossing the expressway straddling the SW District via SW Columbia Street, Portland.

Portland lacks a blight-inducing, multilaned freeway. The few urban expressways the city has are well-hidden.

I walk this sidewalk alone. Long strides. Uninterrupted gait.

Although I'm not entirely alone. The rush of cars traveling at highway speeds brushes my side. I glance downward and notice the depth of the curb. Cliff-like, I could overstep my boundary.

I traverse over a harbour, waterfront trails, roadways, railway tracks lined with tall trees, and no-man's land traced with litter. I know this because the periphery of the bridge privileges the view. But what do they see?

A sign ahead affirms that others have walked this same path. Before crossing the threshold, I look back over my shoulder and time it right. The speed of my gait is faster now.

It's much quieter here. If I stop I can feel a soft presence of cars beneath me. Is it the foliage of the trees that buffers their sound? Or the fact that I'm on a ground plane above?

A woman walks my direction yet we don't make eye-contact. The sidewalk is wide enough that she doesn't have to look up from her phone. She trusts that I'll walk around her.

It's a new day. Where do I begin?

As a means of wayfinding I find myself gravitating towards the water's edge as a starting point. This lively threshold between man-made and natural infrastructure is often lined with beaches, parks, and trails.

East of the hoards of tourists on Granville Island, this particular spot is popular amongst locals. The dogs and baby strollers make that apparent.

False Creek Waterfront condition, Vancouver

The striations on the channeling along the rivers edge have me envisioning a high-tide condition at a different time of year.

As the bridge in the distance comes nearer and nearer, I notice that it is being informally guarded by a group of homeless men. I wish to cross but I feel unease as a lone, female traveler. These men may be homeless but this is their turf. I respectfully proceed to cross but choose to take another bridge when I later cross back over.

The Riverwalk pedestrian and bicycle crossing constructed in 2001 at the Steel Bridge connects the east and west of Portland's Willamette River.

Portland's bridges do not privilege pedestrian flows unlike Parisian bridges or Prague's Charles Bridge.

Walking along the main streets feels as if I may never reach the end. What waits for me there? I fixate on the horizon in the distance which is framed by canopies, colonnades, and overhangs and watch as everything recedes to a singular vanishing point.

When given the opportunity via oversized sidewalks, I notice that people tend to gravitate closer to the roadway, distancing themselves from building facades and overhangs. Can they see this singular vanishing point without a framed view?

Short blocks entice me to sway from the direct path and its terminus. Each intersection provides a moment of reprieve as I'm forced to yield for oncoming cars. Does my attention to places and elements heighten during these moments of repose, or am I just as observant while walking?

Granville Mall, Vancouver

Gastown, Vancouver

Colonnade conditions in Portland's NE District along Burnside Street and Belmont (SE) Street

There are no curbs at this junction. Instead, the ground plane is delineated by street furnishings, balustrades, and subtle paving differentiators. People and cars harmoniously navigate through the intersection without the regulatory measures of traffic lights or crosswalk signals.

Each building's interior-facing façade has its own vanishing point, instilling a loose sense of enclosure. A homeless man seeks refuge here and leans against a street light.

Gastown, Vancouver (Intersection of Water, Alexander, Powell, and Carrall Streets)

San Francisco, (Intersection of Columbus Avenue, Chestnut Street, and Taylor Street)

San Francisco, (Intersection of Columbus Avenue, Newell Street, Lombard Street, and Jansen Street)

Diagonal streets inlaid within the traditional city grid result in intersections offering up to six differing paths. As an urban wonderer, this condition presents a varietal of choice but I anticipate confusion in terms of wayfinding if I were headed somewhere specific. The resulting expanse of asphalt is uninspiring and daunting to traverse.

Old Town facade, Portland

Modern integration amongst Victorian and Edwardian, San Francisco

At the end of my first walk in Portland I find myself asking, what is it that people like so much about this city?

I spent the day passing generic corporate high-rises, construction sites, and new residential mid-rises. Apart from the preservation and adaptive reuse of buildings in the warehouse district and Old Town, where was Portland's quirkiness I had heard so much about? I embraced whatever unique attributes I could find. For instance, when walking through the Pearl District, I gravitated to walking down the side of the street lined in historic mid-rises rather than along the row of newly-constructed high-rises across the way. I found the experience greatly varied from one side of the street to the other.

It wasn't until I ventured to the east of the Willamette River that my interest peaked. Between eccentric window displays and provocative bumper stickers collaged onto cars and street signage, the east oozes of counter-culture and determination to "Keep Portland Weird."

Preservation of existing mid-rises adjacent high-rise condo developments frame walk in Portland

I walk by the voids between buildings everyday, but it's not often that I feel invited to turn off the sidewalk and explore. Being on a campus is different. Here, pedestrian-activated voids at intersecting volumes is the norm. I take the route off the beaten path, and for a moment it feels like I'm the first to discover this alternative route. Just then, two students emerge in the near distance as they turn a corner and start walking towards me. Each with a backpack, it appears like they attend classes here. I'm sure they walk this space regularly as a shortcut between classes. It was moments like this that stimulated an interest in points of detour along conventional routes.

My exploration continues as I walk through colonnades and passages created within singular buildings. Sometimes I'll walk right up to a set of doors and gauge whether I'm permitted pass through the interior space as an alternative. It's invigorating to feel like you have free rein to wonder about and explore without the confines of public/private thresholds.

PSU Urban Center diagonally traverses through piazza/
interstitial space between buildings in Portland

Various conditions at UBC Campus,
Vancouver

Off-campus, pedestrian-activated lane ways exist as a rarity within the city fabric so I never pass on an opportunity to sway from the main thoroughfare. I came across a couple instances where buildings at the periphery of public piazzas were connected with various volumes which offered a campus-like experience.

In another instance, the building faces which framed the lane way weren't parallel which created a dynamic space to walk through. Rather than a shortcut to the next parallel street, this pedestrian-activated void offered public open space in the form of a hidden piazza with an outdoor patio and direct access to an indoor public space. Although just outside of Gastown, it was apparent that I had stumbled across a local treasure as there wasn't a tourist in sight. While some people sat on patio chairs and ate lunch, others preferred to people-watch from the steps of this tiered space.

Vancouver

Alley, San Francisco

Granville Island, Vancouver

When in Portland, I noticed that various surface parking lots were being used as real estate for food trucks. Entire city blocks in the heart of the financial district were occupied by a diverse array of vendors, attracting a diverse array of people. I followed two men in suits as they circled the trucks before deciding where to commit. One of the men probably worked nearby because he was making recommendations to his comrade like he had tried just about everything. While most people walked alongside the trucks in order to get a good read of the menus or a smell and a glance of what was being served, a homeless man walked along the tree line, stopping at each of the garbage cans, hoping to find someone's leftovers.

In addition to the food trucks and carts, community gardens, and farmer's markets have concretized the rapid return of food to North America's urban public spaces. Cities are animating these spaces with activities, and food is once again becoming part of public life.

Food truck culture, Portland

Bustle of Portland's Saturday market

Bustle from Saturday market pours out onto SW Ankeny Street, activating the adjacent outdoor patio space and retail shops

Wondering about I began to realize I was no longer walking along a conventional city street. This street had it all, including elements that were typically relegated to the back alley. While one side of the street was lined with a conventional sidewalk, the other featured a raised platform that provided access to restaurants and retail shops. The platform offered a deep enough setting for patio space, landscaping and pedestrian circulation. Various canopies and overhangs tied back to the rhythmic brick piers on the old warehouse façades. Two men, who looked like they could be chefs at one of the restaurants, were chatting while leaning against the platform railing. It was still a little too early for the lunch rush.

On the lower level, cars slowly passed by while others were diagonally parked alongside the raised platform. Some of the sections were designated for garbage and recycling bins. This street, along with a couple others running parallel, was a haven for urban design strategies...But why was it so quiet? Where were all the people?

Yaletown, Vancouver

The difference in levels continued to resurface. I noticed how residential town homes, from Portland's Georgians to San Francisco's Edwardians, featured walk-ups as a way of delineating the public and private. People seem to associate the difference in level as a threshold, so it doesn't seem likely that raising access to retail shops would be a successful model (perhaps this explains why Vancouver's Yaletown was so quiet?). In some cases there was a ramp supplied, most likely to satisfy accessibility requirements. I tended to take the ramp over the stairs so the rhythm of my walk wasn't interrupted.

Residential Walk-ups

Rather than meander through parked cars, pedestrians engage with the raised walks

Retail Walk-ups

If given the choice, pedestrians tend to walk alongside the "thickened ground plane" rather than engage with the grade change

From subtle grade changes to steep topography, I found walking in San Francisco to be quite treacherous (at times ascending 30-70m/km, particularly in Nob Hill, Russian Hill, North Beach, and Telegraph Hill). In some instances there were even stairs inscribed into the center of the sidewalk across the length of an entire city block! I noticed people walking alongside their bikes and I even received words of encouragement from a fellow walker. These neighbourhoods are too steep for the pedestrian and bicyclist to comfortably traverse so there are more cars moving about. I watched as a driver orients her vehicle perpendicular to the street while parking. I can just imagine cars sliding down these streets if they were parked conventionally.

Across the three cities, I noticed that the steep terrain was often relegated to residential neighbourhoods, particularly that of high-class. Portland's Williamette and King's Heights are situated at the highest point in the City, privileging its residents to expansive views. Everyone in these inner-suburban neighbourhoods owns a car and therefore has not trouble traversing the steep terrain.

Topography privileges views of cityscape, San Francisco

Nob Hill, San Francisco

Centenarian homes, San Francisco

Portland's Nob Hill integrated into steep topography

This exercise is a documentation of how I walked through the city; of my improvisatory routes and sensory experiences. Throughout this series of walks I was also attentive to the walking patterns of others in order to comprise a critique of these reputable *walkable* cities. From this, I exercised a critical eye for strategies that successfully support the culture of walking. I found that routes were largely impacted and enhanced by the following characteristics which are explored in greater detail throughout the thesis:

- Diversity in choice (predicated by street grid structure)
- Atypical conditions (such as active lane ways, street art, etc.)
- Performance stage (predicated on the presence of performers and an audience)
- Topographic variation (as a continual ground plane)

In defining a walkable city or neighbourhood, these characteristics are often left out of the conversation which is more focused on the creation of welcoming, livable, and safe places. My travel experience stimulated research interest in characteristics which inspire people to walk as active observers. For instance, I observed that gentrifying neighbourhoods to textbook *walkable* standards may effectively result in pleasant walks, but doesn't inspire an evocative lens through which to see cities.

B | SPATIAL CONDITIONS FOR EXPLORATION

Exploration and elaboration of the characteristics and spatial conditions introduced upon travel reflection attributing to enhanced walks and capable of capturing essential features of architectural experience:

Fig. 98 *Physical Model
Explorations*

Gesture

We experience such architectural forms as spatial gestures when we feel addressed in relation to our own behaviour, and find ourselves compelled to a performative response...The architectural gesture induces us to follow a dynamic impulse through which a constructive-spatial situation prescribes a movement or recommends a posture.

Janson & Tigges, 2014, p. 144

Topographical Variation

Observers are impressed, even in memory, by the apparent "kinesthetic" quality of a path, the sense of motion along it: turning, rising, falling.

Lynch, 1960, p. 97

Orientation

Through orientation, the spatial disposition of the human individual becomes anchored in the spatial structure of the surroundings... [orientation] forms the basis for spatial discoveries and new experiences,

Janson & Tigges, 2014, p. 212

Diversity in Choice

The junction, or place of a break in transportation, has compelling importance for the city observer. Because decisions must be made at junctions, people heighten their attention at such places and perceive nearby elements with more than normal clarity.

Lynch, 1960, p. 72

Directionality

Through gestural quality, a spatial situation acquires its characteristic dynamism...But we do not attribute directionality to architectural forms solely by virtue of constructive features; we also experience directionality based on the disposition of our own bodies...we seek out a destination point that lies before us...

Janson & Tigges, 2014, p. 89

Sequence

In considering our present way of experiencing a large, urban area, one is drawn to another kind of organization: that of sequence, or temporal pattern. This is a familiar idea in music, drama, literature, or dance.

Lynch, 1960, p. 113

Performance Stage and Theatrical Entrance

How do experiences an audience of strangers have in the theatre or music hall compare with the experiences they have on the street?...In a society with strong public life there should be affinities between the domains of stage and street; there should be something comparable in the expressive experiences crowds have had in these two realms.

Sennett, 1977, p. 37

C | ADDITIONAL CASE STUDIES

Teeple Architects, Chemical Science Building
Trent University
2007

The Chemical Science Building was conceived as a promenade, both architectural and natural, that brings one into repeated contact with the Otonabee River. As the promenade weaves between levels and contours of the landscape, views of the river are presented to students as they move through the campus and building.

The facility provides shelter and function to direct and indirect users while engaging architectural strategies as a mode to reveal information. In this case, the architect as curator brings attention to the river as a constant reference point, ever present in one's experience of the place. While the building is tucked within the landscape, views of the river remain intact.

During a site visit on November 1st, two forms of field research were conducted.

1. In the first experiment I asked, "At which moments am I aware of the river?" and "What architectural strategies curate this awareness?"
2. In the second experiment, I stationed myself at each of the 10 points of entry into the building interior and across its roofscape and traced the movement patterns of staff and students via GPS readings. It was observed that many students trace the building indirectly via its roofscape as a shortcut to and from the adjacent Faryon Bridge. On the interior of the building at the lower level, students are constantly on the move, headed to and from the facilities offered with the building itself, or as a shortcut to and from the Environmental Science Building adjacent. It is probable that the interior routes gain ample traffic during the winter months for protection from Trent's frigid climatic conditions. While the corridor walls are lined with informal seating and the point of convergence between paths features a small common area, a vast majority of users are constantly on the move, engaging with the building as a promenade as was intended.

Fig. 99: Tracing Movement

Fig. 100: River Awareness

Fig. 101: St. George Street Site Walk

- a. *New grass verges reinforcing existing pattern of trees*
- b. *New urban square at Sidney Smith Hall*
- c/d. *Pavement delineation and alignment*
- e. *An example of the relationship with a historic mansion on the street*

Brown+Storey Architects, St. George Street Revitalization
University of Toronto
1997

The revitalization of St. George Street, a main thoroughfare of the University of Toronto and a major traffic artery in the City of Toronto, was commissioned by the University and the City to bring improvements to what had once been a stately boulevard lined with mansions. The elements that bound together the public street and private mansion formed a fine grain pattern consisting of the carriage pavement, curb, grass verge with trees, sidewalk pavement, low stone wall, raised private lawn, a constant distance from the wall to entrance porch, to the subtleties of the interior spaces of the mansion, the foyer, reception, parlour, etc. This urban infrastructural grammar connected the mansion to the public street through a repetitive element, and created a collective public landscape of the street.

Two critical changes to the street completely altered this system: the widening of the street from two to four lanes in the 1940s, which resulted in the elimination of the verge and tree canopy, and the acquisition by the University of Toronto of most of the mansion properties.

The design response implemented a new set of grammatical rules balancing many separate layers of infrastructure (traffic, pedestrian movement, underground services, lighting, plantings) with the social operations of the boulevard. The actual width of asphalt pavement for cars was narrowed while still accommodating existing traffic, new grass verges and boulevards were introduced, along with a new urban square at Sidney Smith Hall. The delineation of pavement and grass verges identify and elaborate the cross axes along the street to connect the main space to its east and west systems of open spaces and courtyards. The revitalization of St. George Street raised the possibility of restoring a balance between the pedestrian and the car, and created considered relationships between buildings and the public realm.

Fig. 102: *St. George Street Revitalization*

Fig. 103: *Architectural Promenade* towards the entrance of Villa Jeanneret-Perret

Architectural Promenade

“An architecture must be walked through and traversed,” emphasized Le Corbusier. During a promenade architecturale, the individual should sense in her movement “the result of a succession of shocks”

Le Corbusier, Talks with Students (‘Charte d’Athènes’), 1962

Le Corbusier advocated that architecture is appreciated on the move, on foot: “By walking and moving around, one can see how the architecture’s ordering devices unfurl” (Le Corbusier, *The Complete Architectural Works*, 1964, p. 24). At Villa Jeanneret-Perret, the house he built for his parents in 1912, the route through the garden to the house’s entrance is winding, making it possible to approach and observe the building from various viewpoints. It leads under a bridge, goes up a few steps and runs along the perimeter of the façade before finally reaching the door. All this represents not so much a descriptive exercise, a reassuring and predictable unfolding of spaces, materials and forms, but rather a powerful emotional experience (Baltanás, 2005, p. 7). His concept of *architectural promenade* is also exemplified at Villa Savoye, Notre-Dame-du-Haut, and the Carpenter Center, each offering constantly changing, unexpected and sometimes surprising views.

D | A BRIEF HISTORY OF TORONTO'S LANEWAYS

Fig. 104: *The emergence of the City of Toronto's Laneway System in Reference to Lot Division and Built Form (Shim & Chong, 2004)*

Toronto's laneway system is a result of 19th century city planning and a particular pattern of land development. Toronto was originally settled along the waterfront and was organized into small square blocks, with large estates (park lots) granted to loyalist families running north-south between Queen Street and Bloor Street. These estates had the city at their front and unsettled land at their back (Stinson & van Eslander, 2003).

Toronto's development in the 19th century was rapid but uneven. Prior to subdivision control in the City, property owners were free to divide their properties as they wished (Vaughn, 2004, p. 2). The landholders differed in their ideas about the nature of Toronto's future and each estate was developed with an individual vision. This individuality of development is entirely characteristic of Toronto. Neighbourhoods are coherent and identifiable, uses are mixed, streets (especially those east to west which cut across old estate divisions) often jog or change direction, and the urban scale is fully exercised in which large and small buildings coexist easily.

In general, the estates were divided and sold off to smaller landholders. Streets were laid out and the lots were divided into narrow rectangular lots for row housing and commercial buildings. At this point, the laneway system began to feed through Toronto's blocks. Individuals were able to use their lots to generate income by building housing or commercial uses at their back or sides of the property, accessed by the lanes. The laneway was an intentional and useful part of the 19th century city. The lane allowed the distribution of services and goods, reduced street congestion, accommodated stables and related uses, and provided housing for workers. They became instrumental in achieving density, the integration of services and uses, and in maximising land use (Stinson & van Eslander, 2003). The residential and commercial uses of the laneway have continued to the present day and a walk through the network on a pleasant day will show them to be active and social places.

E | DESIGN APPROACH

Utilizing an experiential approach, these strategies will be applied and developed within the context of an existing site:

An experiential approach requires architects to relinquish the idea of absolute control and accept that fact that they can only choreograph and direct the desired effects, which ultimately take shape in the mind of the user. To achieve a vibrant choreography, it is important to devise design principles that stimulate drama, activity, and interaction, by concentrating on the behavior and movement of people...The architect as choreographer sets the stage (architecture), determines the plot (activities), and guides the actors (users) through a dramatic sequencing of situations and events. (Klingmann, 2007, p. 314)

This experiential approach is cultivated in the following examples of design research through unconventional architectural representation:

In 1961, architect and urban designer Gordon Cullen created an influential drawing summarizing his “serial vision” of how a person moved through an ideal Italian village or hilltop environment. In his drawing, like a cinematic storyboard, sketches showed how, after entering the city walls through a city gate, a series of bounded squares led to the cathedral square and beyond. (McGrath, 2013, p. 264)

Fig. 105: *Serial Vision*. Gordon Cullen.

Movement read in pictorial sequence was also explored by Bernard Tschumi in *The Manhattan Transcripts*. These drawings use a particular structure indicated by photographs that either direct or witness events (McGrath, 2013, p. 249).

At the same time, plans, sections and diagrams outline spaces and indicate the movements of the different protagonists- those people intruding into the architectural “stage set”...Their explicit purpose is to transcribe things normally removed from conventional architectural representation, namely the complex relationship between spaces and their use; between the set and the script; between objects and events (McGrath, 2013, p. 251).

The original purpose of the tripartite mode of notation (events, movements, spaces) was to introduce the order of experience, the order of time- moments, intervals, sequences- for all inevitably intervene in the reading of the city (McGrath, 2013, p. 255).

In light of these influences, the proposed architectural strategies were explored by choreographing experiences within the selected laneway block, acknowledging affinities between the domains of stage and street, comparable in the expressive experiences participants have in these two realms. The design process iteratively shifted between interventions to the set, and prospective outcomes perceived by the promeneur in writing the script. The script is a pictorial sequence with supporting narration intended to transcribe the relationship between spatial discoveries in interaction with the promeneur.

Fig. 106: *The Manhattan Transcripts*, Bernard Tschumi.

F | POTENTIAL FRAGMENTS FOR EXPLORATION

Fig. 107: Additional Fragments for Exploration

Reasoning for selections:

Site 1

- Gateway @ subway stations at Chester and Pape to continuous, fragmented laneways
- Detour @ Church and existing choice points northbound
- Urban Room @ Church and existing underpass @ Carlaw apartment
- Access to Logan Avenue Parkette and Carlaw Avenue Parkette

Site 2

- Gateways @ subway stations at Greenwood and Coxwell. Entrances to long blocks and continuous laneways
- Movement of light and shadow since laneway runs east/west and is bounded by low-rise to the south. Movement of landscaped elements along wide lane/potential topographic variation
- Topographic Variation engaging wide lane, while addressing existing drainage issues along the lane

Site 3

- Urban Stage @ intersecting lanes (where people cross paths, meet naturally)

Site 4

- Gateway established alongside existing church to continuous, fragmented laneways
- Movement of landscaped elements along wide lane/potential topographic variation
- Topographic Variation engaging with adjacent tiered parking lot, while addressing existing drainage issues along the lane
- Detour to Gerrard Street East
- Urban Room @ existing raised parking lot
- Urban Stage as pocket of public space in area of necessity, acknowledging the relationship to existing parks

Site 5

- Entrance/exit gateway @ TTC yard to continuous laneways
- Movement of light and shadow since laneway runs east/west and is bounded by low-rise to the south. Movement of landscaped elements along wide lane/potential topographic variation
- Topographic Variation engaging wide lane with adjacent tiered lots
- Detour to Queen Street East
- Urban Room @ existing potential infill sites
- Access to existing hidden urban park (Maple Leaf Forever Park)

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