3 Precedent studies [1]  

"There are ceremonies that determine space, and spaces that determine ceremonies" (Tschumi, 2000: 19). The notion of public gathering is apparent in African cultures and cannot be overlooked. South African cities, Pretoria included lack sufficient adequate public spaces and facilities that function properly, they either non-existent, inadequate or merely in a state of deterioration. These activities have patterns and tend to develop unofficially and spontaneously and bear a sense of formality and are generally more successful than most enforced interventions.

Natural gatherings of people be it city markets, transport interchanges or where there is some kind of function are inevitable and have to be emphasized in the South African context and most South African cities bear the mark of apartheid planning with large sector of society being geographically isolated from job opportunities. “…many new projects built with post-apartheid public funding work around points of mobility such as transport interchanges” (le Roux, 2003:17) in the case of herb traders the pattern is observed people tend to situate themselves where there is some kind of function, be it transport interchanges or where there is high pedestrian movement. These take place where there are bus ranks, taxi interchanges, market places.

Attention is drawn into existing scenarios, the "herb traders market, Warwick Junction Durban, omm Designworkshop Architects" the trade focused itself under the bridge where there is public circulation. The architects in partnership with the Ethekwini municipality in attempt to resolve the situation, provided the traders with a place where they felt comfortable to trade in, with a basic sheltered roof over the space they traded on, with a provision of communal toilets, and private consulting rooms for the ‘inyanga’s’ and ‘sangoma’s.’

Herb Traders’ Stalls:  
Location: Durban 
Architect: OMM Design Workshop- Architects

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over the railway lines remained high and dry, the vestiges of the Queen Street vehicular on ramp and the Victoria Street off-ramps to a freeway never completed, yet the need for further overhead pedestrian paths connecting the Victoria Street bus terminus and the various taxi ranks to the city became pressing. Besides, herb-traders began plying their trades by lining the pavements, there being no other space available.


fig.13

fig.14

fig.15

17

Lessons
• It acts a link between the freeways and the Railways lines.
• The project allows for diversity in the functions allowed for within the spaces created. A character created within the Proposed Traditional Healers centre
• Formalization of informal and alternative trading, to create and encourage a distinctive architectural idiom and approach that leads to interest and debate within the urban fabric

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the centre for indigenous medicines. lehae lehae yasethu. the centre for indigenous medicines. lehae lehae yasethu. the centre for indigenous medicines. lehae lehae yasethu. the centre for indigenous medicines. lehae lehae yasethu. the centre for indigenous medicines. lehae lehae yasethu. the centre for indigenous medicines. lehae lehae yasethu. the centre for indigenous medicines. lehae lehae yasethu. lehae lehae yasethu. lehae lehae yasethu.
Design by East Coast Architects for the African Centre for Health and Population Studies, this centre is set on a South facing slope, four research pods cluster around a cruciform space containing social functions. A 15-meter tower acts as a thermal stack that allows the area to ventilate naturally. A strong reference point, around which communal activities are arranged, makes a bold statement to the surrounding landscapes. Within each pod, open plan offices offer maximum exposure to natural light and ventilation. Concrete frame construction filled with steel, block work, aluminum, glass and timber display a vibrant honesty. (Atlas Phaidon Contemporary World Architecture 2005:638)

Eucalyptus, ubiquitous in the area, used to support the main tower and roof, with saplings used for shading and balustrades. Storm water collected in tanks or channeled into the adjacent wetland systems, and the gardens on site.

Lessons learnt:
• The use of locally available and sustainable materials. Used to reflect the indigenous environment in which the project stands. This has been used in the proposed Traditional Healers Centre which incorporate timber lattes shading, and the structure
• The use of a centrally located stack and or space, as a ventilation tool within the building
• The sensitivity to the context within which the building is located
• The use of transparent roofing materials to allow for natural lighting and create a unique ambience within the building

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The Farraday Market

The Farraday precinct situated along the Eloff Street extension, in the South – eastern sector of the Johannesburg CBD. (Digest of South African Architecture 2004:32) the area, characterized by narrow industrial buildings, which predominantly serve the motor industry. Apart from the motor related industry and attendant street trading, a traditional “muti” market exists in the area under the prominent M2 roadway. Started 10 to 15 years ago this traditional market provides divination and herbal services to the numerous commuters and job seekers that move through this area.

Located to facilitate traffic flow on and off the adjacent M2 highway, there by maximize the opportunities for future changes in use, which encourage a variety of trading spaces, and opportunities. A dynamic diverse space is created, that sets the stage for appropriation and human interaction. Linking the Farraday precinct with the Johannesburg CBD.

The various other market buildings, designed to reflect a relatively flexible and open experiential space and provide a gateway within the urban fabric, as suggested in the proposed Traditional Healers Centre in Marabastad.

• The use of a historic site as a gateway within the urban fabric, as suggested in the proposed Traditional Healers Centre in Marabastad.

• The use of a particular site and function to as a link in the urban fabric, as suggested in the proposed Traditional Healers Centre in Marabastad.

• The use of a historic site as a gateway within the urban fabric, suggested in the proposed Traditional Healers Centre.

• The use of interlocking spaces, used to create a hierarchy in terms of privacy on the site. By the incorporation of historic symbolism both visual and spatially.

• The use of discretion were important attributes to a centre that combines retail, health and religion, and where the sacred and profane come together in new ways. This confluence applied in the architecture by combining the urban and rural. The objective of the architecture responds to the existing industrial and urban setting whilst incorporating elements of displaced traditional symbolism both visual and spatially.

• The use of historic symbolism and preexistent urban energies like movement, transport and nuclei to give credibility to a proposed development.

• The use of traditional healing and healers into an existing urban fabric.

• The use of materials to depict (displaced) traditional African symbolism in architecture.

• The use of a particular site and function to as a link in the urban fabric, as suggested in the proposed Traditional Healers Centre in Marabastad.

• The use of historic site as a gateway within the urban fabric, suggested in the proposed Traditional Healers Centre.

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