INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.
Redefining urbanity in a city of discrete centers

Baumann, Philippe Gerald, M.Arch.
Rice University, 1991
REDEFINING URBANITY IN A CITY OF DISCRETE CENTERS

By Philippe Baumann

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the viability of developing a localized area of high-intensity pedestrian activity for Houston—an exceptionally non-pedestrian, automobile-oriented city. I formulate one model of development in response to the unique character of Houston. This model synthesizes the energy of older city models and their compact, vital urban cores, within the constraints of a dispersed city.

I study the market as an enduring example of successful urban interaction and diversity, and suggest that an equally vital center that is pedestrian in orientation can exist in Houston's neglected metropolitan core. A confluence of public and private amenities and activities should increase social interaction, causing other urban elements to proliferate.

The central business district of Houston can reasonably support a denser center than those which currently predominate in peripheral locations. I attempt to resurrect a specific part of the city as a dominant center for a wide cross-section of the urban population.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Kathleen Roberts,
and to my peers,
whose help was invaluable

Thank you
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 1

PROTOTYPICAL MARKETS ................................................................................................. 3

THE SITE ............................................................................................................................. 9
  Location
  History
  Composition of the site
  Potential

THE CITY OF HOUSTON ..................................................................................................... 13

BUILDING FOR HOUSTON ................................................................................................. 15

PROGRAM ........................................................................................................................... 16

CONCLUSION ...................................................................................................................... 17

DIAGRAMS AND ILLUSTRATIONS ..................................................................................... 19

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................................................................. 33
INTRODUCTION

The market is chosen here as thesis topic due primarily to its longevity as a congregational space; an accessible and enduring urban phenomenon. History corroborates the notion that the urban market has traditionally enjoyed a central role in the dynamics of the city. The markets of Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the nineteenth century were important urban areas: they were centralized, all-inclusive collective spaces that successfully perpetuated social interaction at every level.\(^1\)

The primacy of the market as an extremely diverse communal space was not threatened until the 19th century and the advent of the arcade, a development which would radically affect the evolution of the market.

Today's markets (i.e. shopping centers), manifest themselves as arcades of the most severe type.\(^2\) Modern markets are completely interiorized, make little or no urban gesture, occupy peripheral locations, and defer almost entirely to economic concerns.

"When World War II was, for the United States and its allies, victoriously ended, pent-up desires and postponed developments burst into the open and caused, as one effect, 'The exploding metropolis'. Private construction activity which had been at a standstill during the war years, caught up with the backlog, concentrating on those areas where land was easy to get and the cheapest available--in the regions around the large cities...the department stores had lost physical contact with their customers."\(^3\)

---

\(^1\)Michael Grant, in his book, *The Roman Forum*, suggests that prior to their concretization as distinct architecturally defined urban areas marketplaces often occupied peripheral locations in the city and that their pre-eminence as central urban institutions was a byproduct of subsequent city growth.

\(^2\)One must acknowledge the occasional exception to this rule, nonetheless, the most prevalent arena for the exchange of goods in America remains the shopping center.

Houston epitomizes the decentered city of the late twentieth century. In contrast to cities like Boston or New Orleans—older, denser cities based on European precedents—Houston exists as a collection of autonomous centers which operate independently of one another and the city.

"Decentralization diffused development, setting the stage for the Houston of the 1970's and 1980's. This would become the poly-nucleated urban network, a series of high-density centers spread at intervals across the landscape, created by distribution available through the emerging freeway system."

The modern marketplace must reflect these altered design parameters. The radical contextual disparity between the modern- and the pre-automobile sunbelt cities demands unique solutions. The centralized urban market of the past has dissolved in Houston, yielding to highly specialized, peripherally-disposed centers.

I believe that downtown Houston can support a specialized pedestrian-oriented "market" and that the resultant mixed-use area will foster the repopulation of otherwise decrepit urban areas.

I propose to redevelop a dilapidated warehouse district. Analysis of the urban condition will yield compositional clues as well as suggest land-use guidelines. The end-product will be a multi-use facility meant to evince a level of interaction common in older American and European cities but rare in Houston: a place where, as in the ancient stoas or Middle-Eastern bazaars, all elements of society interact within a common architecture—a dense nucleus of activity within the context of the fragmented, objectified city.

---

4The loss of collective space manifested itself nowhere more emphatically than in the sunbelt cities, whose infrastructure was never as established as that of the older American cities, and hence more easily prone to deterioration.
5Peter Papademetrio. Going Modern in Houston. P.12.
PROTOTYPICAL MARKETS

A brief evaluation of market arrangements from Ancient Greek types to more current ones will serve to reinforce the idea that these markets all prospered as vital communal spaces. The markets of Antiquity, the Middle Ages and even the nineteenth century were, as a rule, multi-functional urban spaces. They served as social gathering places, nodes for educational exchange, and as nuclei around which the city activated itself.

The Greek agora, center of socio-political life, was a multi-purpose space utilized by all inhabitants. Originally a loosely bounded area the agora gradually became a more distinct, well-defined space. The free-standing colonnaded stoa evolved to delineate the edges of this communal space. The stoa, a linear building bounded on one edge by a colonnade and on the other by a flat wall, was installed, often with private funding, as a public amenity. Fine art and mural painting depicting historical events embellished the interior.

In the stoa we find the precursor of the modern mall or marketplace, where public assembly, official banquets, and merchandizing all occurred within a specific building type--the isolated, covered portico.

The Roman forum took as its model the agora of ancient Greece. The forum was uniquely Roman in its strong axial organization, its arcuated structure, its total enclosure and the resultant interiorized public spaces. The

---

7 Spiro Kostoff. The History of Architecture. Pg.321
architectural definition of the forum effectively isolated this grand civic gesture from the more mundane surroundings.  

The forum was lined with shops and stalls which often incorporated projecting balconies or maenina, from which spectators could view the action below. The community gathered here not only to exchange goods but to vote, to hold court, and for many of the other daily activities which this centralized meeting place facilitated. The Sacred Way, an avenue which bordered one edge of this arena, bears inscriptions along its route which identify a wide range of professions which occupied this space, ranging from goldsmithing to hairdressing.

The forum site was originally quite marshy and used as a cemetery until permanent drainage allowed for its habitation. As early as 575 BC the population of the surrounding hill towns transformed this area into a crudely paved marketplace. The eminence of the Roman forum would escalate well into the next millennium, by which time it had come to occupy a central role in the life of the city. From its early days as a peripheral space, the Roman forum, like so many Medieval marketplaces to follow, was subsequently inhabited and finally celebrated as a central, vital urban area.

The clarity and monumentality of the fora made them ideal locations, in the wake of a fallen Roman Empire, for the establishment of new medieval town halls and markets, and, less frequently in the east, bazaars.

The Middle Eastern bazaar, like contemporaneous markets of the Middle Ages, was perhaps more distinctly commercial in nature than the Roman fora.

---

Bazaars manifested themselves as two distinct types, the manufacturing and the selling bazaars. The distinction between these types often blurred over time, as the marketplace became more diverse. There were the manufacturing bazaars which almost exclusively manufactured a certain product on a large scale, the wicker bazaar for example, and the selling bazaars where merchants converged with their wares. The selling bazaars provided numerous goods to the consumer in an atmosphere that reflected this variety. Merchants, artisans and businesspeople occupied these extensive markets which formed the vital core of the Middle-Eastern city.

Bazaars were typically organized in a linear, organic fashion and often partially enclosed to alleviate aggressive climatic conditions. Intersection covered market streets would provide the central node, the *charsu*. "The colonnaded avenue of the Classical cities, its bays gradually walled in, was transformed into the characteristic linear markets or bazaars, suqs in Arabic." Situated on the dominant caravan routes, bazaars became the sites for international patterns of exchange, crossroads of culture.

The Medieval marketplace initially existed as an extension of the churchyard. Market days were often planned concurrently with church holidays to capitalize on the pedestrian traffic.

"The close relation of the market-place to the church is found even in towns where there is no dominating seigniorial castle. Thus the church may occupy an island in the market-place or, most commonly, stand at one end or at the side of it. There is no doubt that the earliest places of congregation were at the church door and in the churchyards, just as the earliest occasions for congregation were the days when people were drawn to the festivals of the church year."  

---

The expulsion of money-lenders and a burgeoning population led to the
desertion of the churchyard in favor of a distinct marketplace, usually situated
on a well-travelled street. Many Medieval towns supplemented this primary
spine with smaller offshoots which, as in the bazaars, took their names from the
trades they accommodated.

These marketplaces were early determinants of street alignment,
influencing the establishment of housing, shops and manufactories. They were
often motivating forces behind city growth.

Medieval towns, whose influence can be felt in many early American
cities, notably Boston, expanded within their early organization into the
nineteenth century, when rapid industrialization and improved communication
and transportation facilities negated this earlier pattern of growth.¹²

The market hall evolved into the covered arcade building type of the
nineteenth century. Arcades arose in central city areas in response to
disagreeable and unsafe pedestrian conditions,¹³ and as a new method of
retailing given market facilities that had been rendered obsolete by the urban
population explosion. They derived from the exchanges of the sixteenth and
seventeenth centuries, open merchandizing areas surrounded by colonnades,
and from the arcaded streets of classical Rome and Greece. Early arcades most
commonly were organized as long, single- or double-loaded corridors with
shops on the ground floor and workshops or residences above. Thus
merchants, conglomerating their resources, produced an insular, artificial
landscape for merchandizing. The arcade, an insular market type, maintained a

strong rapport with the city, expediting urban circulation while complementing the existing urban framework.\textsuperscript{14}

Arcades dominated the market scene between 1800 and the early 1900's, following one of three main plan arrangements.\textsuperscript{15} The linear arcade either spanned existing buildings or was free-standing—the Weybosset Market in Providence and Quincy Market in Boston exemplify this type. Other arcades covered existing streets, shielding the pedestrian while maintaining circulation patterns. These often reflected the irregularities of the road, like the Galleria in Milan. Finally, there existed the arcades which did not provide linkage but simply occupied interstitial space, providing a central glazed court and upper level galleries. These arcades employed the wider spans and more extensive glazing that later technological advances facilitated.

The development of the arcaded market was generally limited to those cities which lacked existing pedestrian amenities. Bologna and Turin in Italy and Bern in Switzerland are conspicuously devoid of this market type\textsuperscript{16}, their extensive colonnaded urban areas already adequately serviced the pedestrian needs.

The covered arcade or enclosed mall of the nineteenth century is perhaps the closest historical analogue to the modern markets, the department stores, supermarkets and hermetic malls of the twentieth century.

The early shopping centers were designed as integral parts of the fledgling new communities and functioned as cores for the new developments.

\textsuperscript{14}Geist's book, \textit{Arcades}, provides excellent documentation on this subject.  
\textsuperscript{15}Margaret MacKeith. \textit{The History and Conservation of Shopping Arcades}, Pg.4.  
\textsuperscript{16}Paul Zucker. \textit{Town and Square}. 
They were multifunctional in nature, moreso than the later regional shopping centers, in their inclusion of many smaller, independently operated stores, offices and entertainment facilities, and their exclusion of large department stores. These developments, based as they often were on European or Mediterranean prototypes\textsuperscript{17}, with their Latinate building elements, and imported ornament and sculpture, generally achieved a greater architectural unity than similar developments today. The pre-World War II shopping center can be considered a forerunner of the regional shopping center and the 'satellite town'.

The suburbanization of the sunbelt city forced the marketplace to undergo a rapid evolution. Small independently-owned stores gave way to the chain store. Store sizes naturally increased, culminating, in the early 1930's, in the creation of the first "superstores". These one-story markets, often inhabiting abandoned factories and empty warehouses, thrived in low rent locations in peripheral locations. Their organization was similar to the prototypical open markets of the east (Faneuil Hall), composed, as they were, of agglomerations of individually owned units. "Depression weary housewives enjoyed visiting the markets, for the circusy, bizarre atmosphere that prevailed.\textsuperscript{18}

By the late 1930's these markets were spreading rapidly. The advent of the automobile allowed easy access to these dispersed market centers.\textsuperscript{19}

Indicating its presence with ever-larger graphic displays, located near major traffic arterials, and no longer entered ceremoniously from the front, the regional shopping center was thus established.

\textsuperscript{17} Victor Gruen. \textit{Centers for the Urban Environment}. Pg.18.
\textsuperscript{18} Markin. \textit{The Supermarket}. Pg.12.
\textsuperscript{19}Texas was always in the forefront of superstore development. Unlike other early superstores in southern California and New York, where goods were presented in dilapidated surroundings, the Texas stores were highly departmentalized and located in modern, well-kept buildings.
The twentieth-century saw a radical re-evaluation of the marketplace. No longer was the marketplace synonymous with urban vitality: the market had left the city.

THE SITE

LOCATION A site in Houston, located near the confluence of the Buffalo and Whiteoak Bayous, was chosen for its proximity to the current bayou development (which in its projected diversity will restore some of the areas original vitality), for its location near the intersection of numerous established routes connecting disjunctive urban elements, and because it borders the bayou, potentially allowing for the extension of the existing water park system.20

The site is bounded to the north by Interstate Highway 10 and along its remaining sides by Buffalo Bayou, a configuration of natural and man-made boundaries which defines a loosely peninsular condition.

HISTORY The site occupies an important parcel of land, located as it is directly north of Allen's Landing which is traditionally regarded as the symbolic center of Houston. Allen's Landing, Houston's first wharf which was established by the Allen brothers in 1836, was an integral part of the core of early Houston.

"It was from this point that Main Street was extended south in the original plat of the city...Today, Allen's Landing Park adjoins the city's largest surviving concentration of commercial buildings from the 1890's through

---

20 The Buffalo Bayou Task Force was created in 1984 to draft a plan for the revitalization of the bayou park system. Land-use guidelines were suggested that checked waterfront development to allow for the creation of a continuous water park system. Many of the Task Force's recommendations have been realized.
the 1910's, which together with the site itself, were listed as a historic
district in 1983.21

Buildings on this peninsular site always maintained an important
relationship with the bayou, which served as a vital commercial artery well into
the twentieth century22, facilitating national and later international trade. The
majority of buildings were occupied by manufacturing or commercial concerns
which utilized the bayou's unlimited water supply for their operations and to
ease the transportation of goods. Early in the twentieth-century the bayous
importance as transportation artery diminished as rail grew to prominence,
expediting the passage of goods from the Gulf of Mexico to the city and vice
versa.

The site's largest building dates from this time. The building, an
abandoned railroad depot, measures 1200 by 40 feet, and was once flanked by
eight rail lines. It is currently used as a municipal parking lot.

The depot originally occupied a central role in the daily activities of the
city of Houston. Goods were taken to this off-loading shed by train via the ship
channel, weighed, priced, and redistributed throughout the city and surrounding
communities. Commerce thrived here until supermarket chains and trucking
concerns became more efficient means of supply.

The area degenerated as manufacturing and commercial concerns either
became defunct or relocated, a process which, by the 1970's23, had effectively
devastated this area. The peninsula became a haven for the disenfranchised,

P.21. Turner surveys monuments through history and suggests appropriate monumental
imagery for Allen's Landing.
22Stephen Fox, in his article titled "The Warehouse District" provides a brief overview
of the warehouse district including a detailed description of the existing warehouse
buildings.
accommodating the fringe elements of society in a stark industrial landscape of empty buildings and stifling vegetation.

Today the area is enjoying a limited renaissance, as new inhabitants renovate spaces which had long stood unused and decrepit. Also, the indomitable advance of Houston's thick vegetation is rapidly engulfing the abandoned spaces and buildings, obliterating the industrial ruins.

COMPOSITION OF THE SITE Two dominant architectural orders are found here that exist completely independent of one another. The first is the compact order of an older Houston neighborhood which skirts the northern edge of the site. The neighborhood was isolated from its larger fabric when the highway cut a massive swath through its core. The second dominant order is that of the large freestanding warehouse and manufacturing buildings. Intimate, highly detailed two and three-story buildings, residences, and light commercial structures exist side-by-side with sheet metal monoliths.

Three prevailing intersecting grids and axes find their expression here. There is the grid of the neighborhood, a remnant of a previous order, there is the grid of downtown which asserts itself at the southern edge of the site, and there is the axis of the railroad, which bisects the site and along which many of the industrial buildings are arrayed.

These systems do not coalesce; they exist antagonistically. The site conveys an impression of disorder, competing systems emerge and disappear, violent scalar anomalies juxtapose themselves, nuclei of activity inhabit abbreviated neighborhoods.

There is no regular organizing system here. The aggressive sweep of the bayou and the indifferent imposition of the order of the highway preclude any neat compositions.
POTENTIAL A number of factors positively affect the site and the success of its potential rejuvenation. Perhaps the most substantial factor is the relationship of the site to the city. The peninsula exists at the confluence of some major urban institutions; educational, governmental, financial and artistic communities are all located within easy walking distance of the site.²⁴

The site's physical location takes advantage of its primacy at the head of Main Street, diagonally north of the heralded Allen's Landing. Encircled by the bayou on three sides, the potential land-water connections are unlimited. A cluster of on-site buildings currently occupies an enviable location on the banks of the bayou—abandoned but exquisitely detailed pump house buildings built at the turn of the century perch over a sharp bend in the bayou—overlooking the soaring Houston skyline.

Finally, adaptive-reuse, as previously mentioned, is rapidly changing the appearance of this once-derelict peninsula. Artist's housing, studio spaces, foundries, and, more recently, film production facilities can be found here. On the northern edge of the site Diverse Works, an NEA funded foundation supporting artists, occupies an important position as anchor for numerous cultural activities.

THE CITY OF HOUSTON

Houston is a city absolutely attuned to the needs of the automobile public. Houston the 'free enterprise city' grew up around the automobile (its most rapid period of growth corresponding to the heyday of the gas-guzzling

²⁴El Mercado del Sol market failed miserably after hardly three years in operation in large part due to its fringe location, too far from the pedestrian core of Houston, too close to a large low-cost housing development, and, finally, caught in the economic recession.
muscle car), glorifying the convenience of the car at the expense of the pedestrian.

"Over the 1950-1970 period, many downtown blocks changed from residential and neighborhood retail to automobile-oriented commercial use. Automobile service, tire sales, rental, and service stations became more prevalent in downtown. As old houses and retail structures became economically obsolete, many were replaced by surface parking lots, resulting in the proliferation of lots which encircle the densely developed core of downtown today. Entire blocks were privately assembled for the development of modern office towers."\(^{25}\)

Distances between important urban centers increased since they could be easily reached from within the comfort of an air-conditioned pick-up truck. The widely-dispersed growth and stifled pedestrian activity which resulted is the same in many sunbelt cities, a seemingly inevitable by-product of weak or non-existent planning boards, limited social agendas, and a self-centered public domain. The lack of a comprehensive zoning mechanism and an undeveloped public transit system have exacerbated these problems.

"Houston is a partially planned city in which successive episodes of rapid expansion have outstripped whatever planning progress might theretofore have been achieved...support for constructing a public policy of planned development has been sporadic and inconsistent, dependent upon the personal commitment of individual citizens or public officials rather than institutionalized city policy."\(^{26}\)

The climate and the political structure of Houston has perpetuated this city of discrete elements. The refrigerated tunnel system in downtown Houston illustrates the way in which the city effectively denies its public domain--its urban environment--in favor of convenience. Three and one-half miles of tunnels accommodate hoards of selected pedestrian activity which could populate the streets.

\(^{25}\text{Central Houston Civic Improvement, Inc. Design Plan for Downtown Houston. P.2.}\)

\(^{26}\text{Stephen Fox. Planning in Houston: A Historic Overview. P.12.}\)
Downtown Houston, once a dense, multi-functional area where residential, retail, commercial, and manufacturing concerns operated on an around-the-clock basis, exists today as an unaccommodating office park. The residential exodus which began in the 1950's, reaching its zenith in the 1970's, saw the proliferation of extra-metropolitan shopping centers which acted to further dismantle the city core.

"Houston's skyline is often referred to as 'futuristic', as if this was a positive attribute...Cullen Center, Allen Center, Greenway Plaza, Transco, the Galleria, and Houston Center are modern fiefs made possible by air-conditioning, automobile travel, an absence of zoning, and a bygone easy-money market. Their formal solution--set back as free-standing objects in space, with no retail activities possible along the perimeters of the blocks, and entered through claustrophobic carpeted tunnels--has done more to kill the concept of public space than any totalitarian regime ever dreamed of." 27

Activity in Houston occurs peripherally at linear strip malls and restaurants which are reached by automobile. The Galleria, the Medical Center, Sharpstown Mall, Post Oak Boulevard, Market Square and the Montrose exist as independent entities of varying popularity, accessibility and usage.

The original compact grid of Houston has been almost entirely eroded, overwhelmed by the insular high-rise. The city of the wall and the street has yielded to the city of object and undefined space: localized areas of activity have replaced the continuum.

Our peninsular site occupies a fringe location between the downtown financial district and the vital ethnic communities to the north; a pseudo-residential interstitial space.

---
BUILDING FOR HOUSTON

Traditional methods of enhancing the public domain must be re-evaluated in the context of the city of Houston. For an urban intervention to succeed in Houston a number of conditions must be met. Perception of space is different in Houston; space is vast and easily accessible in a majority of urban situations. The intervention must acknowledge certain organizational precedents, it must be accessible by automobile, easy to comprehend at the speed of the street or highway, and defer as much as possible to the existing traffic flow. Also, the intervention must neither depend on nor project a future pedestrian population since the insufferably hot summer weather and the dominance of the car rule this out as a viable near-term option.

To sustain a pedestrian activated intervention a pre-existing pedestrian area must be utilized to spur initial growth of a separate but proximate area of vital pedestrian activity. Finally, any intervention which attempts to link, unify, or otherwise organize large expanses of the urban fabric must maintain a certain diagrammatic simplicity; the spaces involved are often so large and complex that a complicated urban overlap would obscure an already dubious urban ordering system.

"Old businesses, retail, and residents have fled from the center to the greener pastures in the west, where parking and shopping is easier, and new high-rises...have followed them. The success of downtown skyscrapers actually has been inversely proportional to the demise of the mixed uses that attracted them to the center in the first place; high-rises have become our urban dinosaurs. Value will not always increase by building up if the other functions of the city, such as dwelling, recreation, entertainment, and street-level retail are completely lost in the process...To recapture the value of a more varied landscape, Houston needs horizontal, rather than vertical, densification."\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{28}Richard Ingersoll. \textit{Bigger Than a Breadbox: The George R. Brown Convention Center}. P.8.
PROGRAM

No one seems to feel the need for the public vision that older cities have of a hierarchy of places and buildings, an organized concept of function and form. Houston has a downtown singularly without amenities.  

The essential aims of life are present naturally in every human person. In everyone their is some longing for humanity’s rightful dignity, for moral integrity, for free expression of being and a sense of transcendence over the world of existence, Yet, at the same time, each person is capable, to a greater or lesser degree, of coming to terms of living within the lie. Each person somehow succumbs to a profound trivialization of his or her inherent humanity, and to utilitarianism. In everyone their is some willingness to flow comfortably along with it down the river of pseudo-life. This is much more than a simple conflict between two identities. It is something far worse: it is a challenge to the very notion of identity itself.  

NEA grant recipients whose work has been censored gather here. Studio, performance, living and storage space are provided within which the artist can continue working, independent of government restrictions and unaccountable to misplaced moralities. This loose infrastructure will serve as the common denominator on a site where diversity of uses will be maximized.

HOUSING areas are to be provided. These will generally occur as retrofittings of existing buildings, an already well-established trend.

STUDIOS for the visual and performance arts

NATIONAL ARTS CENTER/CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM to include means for the dissemination of work and ideas, to counter the threat of increased government intervention in the arts, to provide alternate sources of funding for artists. The Union of Independent Artists, Houston Public Artworks and Diverseworks could align themselves here.

30 Vaclav Havel. The Power of the Powerless.
ARCHIVES to provide extensive storage space and cataloguing capabilities

URBAN PARK to centralize the existing artist’s community around an important cultural node, to create a vital urban place where confluence of expression yields a diverse field of cultural interaction, a theatre for the exposure of the obscene.

DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES/LICENSING BOARD to occupy central location, ensuring a permanent daytime pedestrian population.

CONCLUSION

The program reintroduces a market atmosphere in downtown Houston. It occupies the site with varied amenities that are meant to elicit a level of urban interaction not currently found here. The introduction of publicly-oriented attractions, especially on such a central site and given the current climate of revitalization, should further development in the area, identifying this peninsula as a distinct artistic center.

Deep Ellum in Dallas, a localized strip of restaurants, nightclubs, and boutiques, and San Antonio’s River Walk, a riverside agglomeration of bars, restaurants, and shops, successfully reintroduced centers into otherwise delimited cities. They re-established a pedestrian population in previously hostile environments.

"Whenever the public environment becomes hostile, then merchants are forced to band together and to create, separated from the hostile public environment, a more pleasant and sympathetic environment for trade. As examples serve the open markets of antiquity, the agora of Athens, the Roman forums, the Bazaars in the cities of the Orient, and in the nineteenth century the great arcades and galleries, all witnesses of the
necessity of overcoming the disturbing characteristics of an unattractive, hostile public environment."\textsuperscript{31}

The fruition of this thesis is an overall compositional strategy which reorders the site and a centrally located building which focuses activity on the peninsula. The two concepts are intentionally antagonistic.

The architectural presence of an imposing building at an important focal point of the site is a manifestation of the establishment. Public forums, concerts, political rallies and movies happen here: the inclusive functions of the urban condition.

The building is clearly on axis with San Jacinto Street and defers to the \textit{status quo}: complementing the existing urban fabric by reinforcing its clues.

The swath of inhabitable land emanating from Diverseworks and the rhomboidal intersection points exist as parallel but distinct orders. They derive from undiscernible urban organizations. This less decipherable order intentionally neglects the existing site conditions as a built (or imagined) corollary to the plight of the artist, who so often plots a seemingly obscure course. "A nature such as Nietzsche's had to suffer our present ills more than a generation in advance. What he had to go through alone and misunderstood, thousands suffer today."\textsuperscript{32}

This thesis suggests an urban condition where a nurturing architectural order is imposed on, and competes with, the hostile environment of downtown Houston. I suggest the possiblility of balance between the order of the built and the potential chaos of the random.

\textsuperscript{32} Hermann Hesse. \textit{Steppenwolf}. P.25.
*Top:* Overall site plan showing the I-610 loop and location of site (rectangular box) at terminus of Main Street.

*BOTTOM:* Analysis drawing isolating individual urban features, clockwise from top left: opposing built grids, interstate highways and feeder roads, railroad lines, density map, Market Square (east) and El Mercado del Sol (west), the bayou and existing (hatched) and proposed (dotted) park systems.
Top: Clockwise from top left: San Jacinto Street and the relationship of existing buildings to the street, axis of dominant rail line perpendicular to San Jacinto, existing park system (hatched) and proposed (shaded) and suggested pedestrian routes (heavy lines), axial relationships between buildings.
Bottom: Scalar comparison between on-site railroad depot (as a building which might accommodate a future marketplace), and pre-eminent pedestrian markets of the past.
Top: Scalar comparison of various marketplaces in context.
Bottom: Maps compare downtown Houston and her automobile-oriented public places at a scale of 1:1000 with other older pedestrian-oriented city centers at 1:100 to equalize distances according to the time of travel (assuming that the average speed of travel of the pedestrian is 2.5 miles per hour compared to 25 miles per hour for the motorist in downtown Houston).
Top: Analysis map of the site showing paved areas in gray, railroad as a double line.
Bottom: Figure-ground drawing of the site. The superimposed order of the telephone poles and lines is represented by black dots.
Top: The site and its dominant cross-axes produce the red-shaded areas which represent potentially prominent edges.

Bottom: Preliminary design, concentrating on railroad depot as seminal building on site. Red shading indicates proposed construction.
Top: Preliminary design, alternate to previous plan.
Bottom: Competing orders on the site overlap to create a density map where the areas of greatest overlap are the darkest hue.
Top: Relocation of seminal central node on the site, away from the railroad depot, is shown in red. Relocation of the main building site corresponds to an extension of the limits of the site, now including the entire outlined peninsular region.

Bottom: The orientation of Diverseworks, the long rectangular building north of the site, is extended through the site as a possible future ordering system which reorganizes the site according to a discrete order.
Top: Map charting the intersections of peripheral street systems across the site.
Bottom: Map showing the overlap of the previous three analysis drawings.
Top: Site model showing location of central building (museum, storage facility, archives, public arena, and licensing offices are located here).
Bottom: Overall site model showing Diverseworks as a skylit building across the highway.
Top: First floor plan, stage and public seating which lead down to the bayou and look back at the city are flanked by arcade-like retail spaces and artists gallery.

Bottom: Second floor plan showing exterior seating area (in light gray) and curving ramp access to gallery.
Top: Site model.
Bottom: Site model, view from building across the bayou.
Top: East elevation showing arcaded retail space above public assembly area, tensile structure covers the stage area closest the water.
Bottom: South elevation, view from the city.
Top: Interior elevation of ramped gallery space.
Bottom: Overall site rendering.
Above: Illustration of the author during final presentation, compliments of Anderson Todd, FAIA.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

SELECTED WORKS


PERIODICALS

Agrest, D. and Gandelsonas, M. "Architecture Between Memory and Amnesia". Design Quarterly. Jan-Feb '80 p22(2).

Agrest, Diana. "The City as the Place of Representation". Design Quarterly. Jan-Feb '80 p8(6).

Ayele, Wolde-Giorggis. "El Mercado del Sol". Cite Fall '85 p9(3).


Brown, Peter. "Incremental City Planning for Houston". Cite Fall '85 p15(3).


Fox, Stephen. "Planning in Houston: A Historic Overview". Cite Fall '85 p12(3).

Fox, Stephen. "Remember Houston". Cite Fall '86 p12(3).


Ingersoll, Richard. "Bigger Than a Breadbox: The George R. Brown Convention Center". Cite Spring-Summer '88 p6(3).

Jackson, John B. "Fields of Play: Sport and Public Places". Cite Fall '86 p16(1).

Jensen, Deborah. "Houston's Indo-Chinatown". Cite Winter '87 p14(3).

Kaliski, John. "City Myth, City Reality, and City Voice in Houston". Cite Spring-Summer '88 p20(2).


---------, "Design Awards-Competitions: Three Competitions for Paris". v172 Architectural Record March '84 p64(6).


Mayo, Marti. "The New Market Square". Cite Spring '87 p7(1).
McBride, Elizabeth. "Inside the Houston Mirage". Cite Fall '87 p12(2).

Papademetrio, Peter. "Going Modern in Houston". Cite Fall '84 p11(4).

---------. "Houston in the '80's: In Search of Public Places". Cite Fall '87 p9(3).


Pope, Albert. "From Neiman's to Macy's". Cite Winter '87 p11(1).

Robles, Eduardo. "City Edges". Cite Spring '87 p16(1).


---------. "Views From Nowhere: A Bend in the Bayou". Cite Spring-Summer '88 p16(3).

GENERAL


