RICE UNIVERSITY
CULTURAL CENTERS IN THE URBAN STRUCTURE

by

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ABSTRACT

CULTURAL CENTERS IN THE URBAN STRUCTURE

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Man has need for self-expression, be it language, music or portrayal art. Today, man's greatest achievement--the man-made world of the city--reflects an unflattering, unsatisfactory and unattractive image of himself, placing the pursuit of self-expression in the context of the city in serious jeopardy.

The "personality" of a city is expressed in terms of its structure, its spaces and its image. One of the better ways to change and improve the "personality" of the city is through art.

An analytical inventory of potentials in a city reveals the relativity of the structure, spaces and image to man and art.

A search for potentials exposes undeniable possibilities of change through art. Recognition of these potentials demands direction--a plan.

An "art place--a "forum"--would be established for the exchange of ideas, methods, philosophies and techniques of art--intensifying interests in the arts.

The principal concept is to provide an inner structure for the pursuit of fine arts, inter-woven into the existing urban fabric of Houston.
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A description of the analytical process employed in this thesis

Kevin Lynch states in *The Image of the City*, about contemporary urban development: "... it indicates that what we seek is not a final but an open-ended order." (1) Mr. Lynch continues: "We must learn to seek the hidden form in the vast sprawl of our cities." (2) These statements are the bases for an objective overview of a city.

To derive concise definition of the urban order, one is forced to seek the motivating forces and growth patterns causing a city's development. Thus, will its present characteristics and structure be presented.

It must be remembered that this structural make-up is multifaceted, composed primarily of spatial and social elements. However, other pertinent realities of the urban structure are expressed in terms of visual images and impressions, ecology, and psychological reactions. The hidden potentials of the city are inherent in parts of all of the elements and realities of the urban structure. Through investigation of the elements, might the goals be stated and the potentials be found.

The contemporary spatial make-up, coupled with the elasticity of change, provides Houston with many potentials for the inter-weaving of newer structure into the older and
established one.

The essence is: to review the city from its formative era to its present state, define its over-all urban form, seek its greatest potentials, and expose its most potent imageability, using this approach to alter the spatial character in order to increase social inter-action.
FOOTNOTES:


(2) IBID, page 12.
FORMATIVE FORCES

A brief narrative of the regional forces in the development of the urban form

Houston, the major city of the Texas Gulf Coast, was shaped in its early formation pattern by the inter-city activity of commerce. Trade was given impetus by the wealth of natural resources of the entire region. Trade and communications between the region and the cities tend to create tensions and counter-play.

The member cities of the region, vary in size, as do the strength of their dynamic relationships to Houston. Each exerted forces upon Houston, and their relationships are expressed by the direction and intensities of the communication channels—highways, waterways, and air routes.

These, particularly the highways, playing the vital role of inter-city communication, provided linkages to locations for the expansion of residential areas. Congestion occurs from this cycle of linkage and expansion, since the highways are handling both inter-city and intra-city traffic: thus larger highways, parkways and finally the freeways. The cycle continues—larger and larger residential communities being built along the freeways lead to larger and larger freeways.

The inputs of continual change, rapid growth and
the exterior dynamics of the region. create the initial urban form, and are the first forces which shape the urban pattern.

Houston, possessing most of these traits, has had its urban pattern shaped in large measure by these formation forces.
REGIONAL FORCES
INTRA-URBAN FORCES

A description of development
within the city and the change
"resultant"

The dispersed land use pattern of Houston has
several underlying causes. Burgeoning economy, ever-
growing variety of interest, and the automobile have
particualr impetus in explaining the urban pattern.

Basically, Houston was a central, one-point city
until the Second World War years. The war, and the growth
it brought, combined with the new concept of freedom by
automobile, produced rapid growth in the most expedient
manner.

With the advent of the automobile, residential
development occurred in a much less compact manner than
in cities before. Also, commerce was allowed the freedom
to locate outside the Central Business District. The
crossing of major arterials proved ideal for public ex-
posure for commercial establishments: thus separating busi-
ness centers. All this classifies Houston as a example
of the commercial, automobile city-- the new American city.
Paradoxically, the success of the separated business
centers caused such development to continue. These have
evolved into intense and constructive, as well as destruc-
tive, elements in the urban pattern, re-inforcing the
tensions of forces already at work.

It is well to describe the outlying developments as centrifugal forces and the Central Business District as a centripetal force. The resultant of these intra-urban forces, as in physical tension analysis, is a line between them—or linear commercial development.

This intra-urban commercial development pattern might be compared to out-lying rooms of commerce and business activity connected to a central activity by corridors comprised of various commercial activities and intensities.

This same vital intra-urban pattern tends to re-subdivide the city, leaving pockets of housing of various types and standards, enclose industrial complexes, and create large areas fluctuating in character.
HOUSTON'S INITIAL PATTERN
HOUSTON'S EXPANSION PATTERN
RESULTANT OF GROWTH PATTERN

A short discourse of the resulting factors of rapid urban development.

The formation and shape of the city of Houston most emphatically reflect diversity and dispersal of commerce and housing. Whether the dispersal increases or decreases the vitality of the complete city is the question, and this is somewhat lessened by the creation of the "pocketed" areas and the decline of some.

The more clearly defined "pocketed" areas lie in proximity to the Central Business District.

The general pattern of Houston from its infancy has been a concentration of industries in a linear fashion along the railways which were part of the national network. The shape and size of these industrial developments change as rapid expansion continues.

The placement of a deep-draught shipping port in Houston further shaped the industrial growth to the east of the Central Business District.

A counter-play in urban formation, as a reaction to the impetus of industrial growth, is best portrayed by the re-location of higher income housing. In Houston, this type of housing— which had been in the Rusk-San Jacinto area— began to re-locate far out on Montrose and Lovett Boulevard, and then out near Rice University on
South Main. Later, River Oaks followed the same pattern of movement and development.

The counter-play of the opposing kinds of development such as industry and high income housing create forces of cross-tensioning in the city, relating to each other only through the Central Business District.

As natural forces in a fast developing and ultradynamic city, the tension forces result in linear commercial development which is best exemplified by Westheimer.

Within the "walls" created by the linear-commercial development are the "pocketed" areas. A remaining question is the degree of life-force each have retained. Determining this is done by comparing the area to a set of analysis criteria and weighing the results.
COUNTER-PLAY PATTERNS OF OPPOSING KINDS OF DEVELOPMENT—HIGH-INCOME HOUSING AND INDUSTRIAL
HOUSTON'S EXPANSION RESULTANTS
INVENTORY CRITERIA

A listing of analytical criteria, land usage and change indicators with tables.

The force and pattern analyses exposed the "pocketed" areas to be most immediate to the Central Business District. Also a need for attention and study of these areas is indicated to increase their viability.

Analytical criteria for further investigation has been grouped into two principal categories, land usage and change factors.

Land usage is further subdivided into commercial activity, industrial or residential areas.

The commercial activity, the fastest moving factor has been based upon its intensity:

A- intense usage- is that type activity which has the highest frequency, usually retail, and requires frontage or exposure to the public--passers-by. This is not to say that it is limited to this particular type of activity, but rather it should be noted that the amount of activity reflects the intensity as well.

B- intermediate usage- is classified as a mixture of intense usage and activity which requires less frequency such as professional offices and general office space.
C- low usage- is categorized as neighborhood stores, bars, office space, and it too, is based on the amount of activity.

Industrial usage, slight as it may be, has been included in the criteria.

A- heavy industry- is that type of industry which is engaged in large-scale production of manufactured goods.

B- light industry- is classified as that type activity engaged in assembly production, such as light fixture assembly, transportation services, warehouse facilities.

Land usage has housing as its last criterion. This criterion reflects primarily the income level of the residents, and implies also the level of upkeep, structural soundness, and accommodations standards.

A- high- is that type of housing of long-standing, high-quality, usually owned by the resident.

B- medium- is that type of housing which is fluctuating in density, quality, and ownership. This is predominately older high-quality homes remodelled into apartments. It follows that type B housing is a mixture of old homes and newer two-storied apartment projects. This category is also comprised of mixed income levels, and rents of high and sometimes of low or low-middle levels.

C- low- is that type of housing which may be resident-owned, or may be rented on a weekly basis. It reflects
either low or sub-standards of up-keep and structural soundness, and it may be considered in some instances as "ghetto" housing.

Change indicators are the second portion of analysis criteria. These elements are described as those type spatial or social inputs which show a prospect of causing a change in the urban structure at present or in the near future.

A- accessibility- should be considered to be due either to freeway construction and route change in feeder streets, or the arterials which carry a majority of cross-city traffic.

B- land costs- have been classified either as a steady or sharp rise in the cost of land by square footage. This change indicator can reflect in some instances the eventual development that could take place if no physical alteration is made.

C- activity generators- has been based on an institution, such as the museums, Texas Southern University, or a commercial development which creates the coming and going of people.

The rates of change due to the indicators have been divided into three sections. These rates also express the present trend in change even though it is of lesser importance.
A- **immediate**- is of such a type which once employed will cause change of the greatest impact.

B- **steady**- indicates a less amount in change due to the indicators. It is as though the change is at present in process, and is expected to proceed relatively unchanged.

C- **slow**- is classified such that little change is expected and, if at all, will not be due to the previously mentioned types, but rather due to a large scale project.

The divisioning of the "pocketed" areas is admittedly arbitrary. The difficulty in precise partitioning of the areas is due largely to the "spill-over" and inconsistencies inherent in the development pattern of the city.

The general study area has been divided into fourteen areas as shown on Map I.
# Land Use Table I

**Key:**
- **A**: Intense
- **B**: Heavy
- **C**: High
- **C**: Low
- **B**: Intermediate
- **B**: Light
- **B**: Medium
- **B**: Low

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INVENTORY CONCLUSIONS

A discussion of the vitality exposed in the preceding inventory, and a listing of the potentials of the areas.

As shown in both Tables I and II, the greatest potentials of social, and spatial and imageability, lies in Sections 5 and 6, with lesser values in Sections 4, 7 and 8.

A quick review shows:

Section 4: commercial land usage is on the rise and the general pattern in housing is dropping as well. The rate is slow and might be construed to be of a stabilizing nature, not causing a complete change in character. The change indicators reflect a rise in land costs encouraged by commercial development. The major isolated activity generator is St. Thomas University, which also acts as a stabilizing factor.

Section 5: shows low commercial level of a fairly stable nature. The residential type is of mixed nature, high-quality, resident-owned, and student-oriented apartment units. The fact of the projected Contemporary Arts Association and the Museum of Fine Arts being close to one another presents a change indicator rated as immediate, and representing a significant potential.

Section 6: commercial activity is rising, presently
in the form of professional offices. The classification of the residential type shows an ad-mixture of medium and low quality and income, much the same as Section 4, but of lower quality. The major change indicator in this area is the ultimate linkage of Binz to the South Freeway. This change will increase the accessibility of this section to all of Houston, and the present land cost will rise.

Section 7 and 8 indicate a rise in commercial activity and reflect similar low income-oriented residential units. The change indicators differ, for Section 7 reflects accessibility, and land cost both in a steady rate. Section 8 reflects accessibility only, and of immediate change rate. It must be considered that this is the general pattern rather than particular, for Section 8 borders on Binz.

The essence of this inventory of the areas: a direct and strong imageability existing along Main south of Bissonnet-Binz to the Medical Center; this area having perhaps the strongest and longest-lasting image of the city of Houston; and the greatest social potentials existing in the area.
PART I  ON MAN AND HIS ART

A discussion of the meaning of art to the urban man, the pursuits of art in Houston, and the change an "art forum" might have

The urban "fact" has given man freedom from work. Lewis Mumford states that work and play stem, undetachably, from the same trunk. Man's mastery of hardships and tediousness of constant work frees him for the possibilities of art.

Art, regardless the product, has undergone numerous changes and has derived impetus from many sources. Used as symbolic decoration, as methods in didactic teachings or a god image, art has been, primarily, man's desire for self-expression.

The urban man has not differed greatly. Self-expression ranges from individual expression (fine arts) to collective expression (city art). The premise of self-expression has undergone a change— not the pursuit.

The revolution in art today reflects the extended demand by urban man for this self-expression. The vitality of art in the city is growing, but direction for cohesiveness in the pursuits of art is needed, as well as freedom for the pursuit of the full spectrum of artistic achievement.
Deliberate and intellectual artistic pursuits through time have produced the primary element in an art-hierarchy—the institutions which promote concentration and involvement in art.

Within the Houston area, there are three such institutions—Rice University, St. Thomas University, and the University of Houston. The colleges of art within these institutions encourage direct, personal involvement in self-expression. As well the colleges exhibit both student work and traveling collections.

Museums are the motivaters in the collection and exhibition of established artistic achievements. They provide the "place" in the city which the urban man goes for viewing "art at its best".

The museums of Houston are involved in the collection and exhibition of art as well as the teaching of art. Both of the museums collect art as a permanent facility and actively engage in the exhibition of the inter-museum, traveling-and-loan collections. From sources in Houston, they also collect art works into exhibitions for a greater number of people to enjoy. The Contemporary Arts Association provides a "rent-a-painting" service as part of its increasing participation of "giving art to Houston". The Museum of Fine Arts has extended itself for the pursuit of fine arts by including art classes as part of its facilities. This increased involvement by the museums
re-inforces the intellectual and deliberate self-expression which is offered by the universities. The museums have linked themselves to the universities by having instructors of art from these universities hold classes at the museums.

The universities and museums have become inter-related-- the universities teaching and exhibiting art, and the museums exhibiting and teaching art. The activities of each have grown in frequency and importance, drawing the popular attention of the city.

The linkages which occur between the museums and universities should be noted as a primary potential. A "place" within the city of Houston for expansion and promotion of the activities of the universities and museums is needed.

The exhibition of art-- the primary activity of museums-- is an activity which the dealer-galleries also pursue. The reason for exhibition differs, for the museums' intent is to show art and the dealer-galleries' intent is to sell art. The museums and dealer-galleries in some situations re-inforce each other's vitality.

The spatial character of the city reflects the viability of the dealer-gallery. In a high-density city the museum encourages close location of dealer-galleries to it. Houston's dispersal pattern, therefore should discourage the presence of such galleries, but they co-exist. Wide spread expedient location is the usual
practice, requiring one to seek out these galleries. The reason for their continued existence lies in the desire and need of man for possession of art and constant association with it.

It is the seeking out of fine arts which perpetuates the museums and dealer-galleries in Houston.

The surprise and "happen-stance" experiences of viewing art: exhibited, in the making or for sale, as activities close to each other, could be attributes of Houston. Jane Jacobs classifies such places as "primary uses, those which themselves, bring people to a specific place because they are anchorages"; (1)--the museums and galleries together. These in turn might perpetrate secondary activities, restaurants, supply shops, artist's studios-- sparked by a centralizing germ of activity-- the "art forum".

The last article in the art-hierarchy is the "people expression", "city art"-- the art of the street. The aesthetic qualities of the "city art" are shown by the appearance of street furniture, direction and location signs, colors and objects which the people of the city see and use every day-- things which have impact on man but too often are over-looked because of the rush and speed demanded by the city.

The "city art" is the least understood and of least concern to the "cultured" man. Regardless of its stature, the effect of this art form on the urban man is immense.
Tastelessness and vulgarity in size, color and wordage simply signify the lack of bases for graphic concern in advertisements. Billboards, location advertisements, neon signs, flags of different colors, and bare light bulbs over used-car lots, portray the art of the street. In street art the pursuit is not dormant, but active. Man's desire for color, light, change, diversity and excitement is potent. All of these efforts should be considered as part of the urban man's nature. Energies should be expended to shape a change if it is found wanting.

This street art is a direct and immediate "function" of the city--art that can be directed at the urban man to close the cultural lag. "Cultural lag refers to the distance tendency for the cultural framework to change less rapidly than the functional organization." (?) An "art forum" would bring the possibility of exposure of fine arts to a greater number of people, close the "cultural lag", and decrease the schism of fine arts and popular art.

The present inter-action of the museums and universities would be given direction and correlation by the physical framework of an "art center"--a "forum"--and provide planned participation between these institutions in presenting art to the public.

The scattered pattern that exists between the museums
and galleries, dilutes the effects and experiences of fine arts. The "art forum" with its "gallery-row" might stimulate and create an "art place": "the simultaneous awareness of the intellectual concepts-- form plus non-form, objects plus spaces, coupled with subjective experience". (3)

The collective inter-action of the museums, universities and galleries at a one point "place", could provide a subtle betterment of the city-art, acting as a communication vehicle to the city. Also the vitality of the street art would permeate the museums. This new kind of inter-play would encourage more creative efforts by local artists.

The tourist-- the outsider-- might find in the "art forum" the essence of Houston and its art. It would provide the recognizable "place" in the urban structure and extend the artistic "image" of Houston to the tourist.

Elizabeth Geen in Man in the Modern City states that only through concentrated efforts "can the city of the future provide the museums, the art galleries, the halls for music and drama, the great libraries", "that will yield the city's distinctive amalgam of variety and change." (4) The "art forum" is not to be a competitor for the attention of art, rather to react with the urban man in a different role, at a different frequency and a different scale-- a "place" in Houston where one may more fully experience art.
PART II ON URBAN STRUCTURE

A short narrative of the elements of the urban structure, the changes inherent in the city of Houston, and the change due to the "art forum".

The city represents the man-made, man-directed, and the man-controlled world. It follows that the urban surroundings should offer the greatest potentials for human achievement and self-expression.

Erwin Panofsky in The Meaning of Visual Arts portrays man as being greater than animals through his possession of rationale and freedom, and lesser than the universe—God—by his frailty and fallibility. Rationality and freedom produce man's humanist values, and his frailty and fallibility produce his humanist tolerance.

By definition all men possess these humanistic traits—values and tolerance. However, the quality and degree of man's traits are shaped by his plan and condition of life, where he lives and whether the social structure emphasizes individualism or collectivism.

The frontiersman—freed from the rules of the city and removed from the urban setting—possesses a kind of "freedom". He is limited to one place and tempo, battling nature to survive. His "view of life" is narrowed and generally he becomes uncompromisingly conservative, rigid
and self-righteously intolerant of weaknesses.

The urban man—guided by the limitations of the defined social structure of the city—possesses another type of "freedom". He is offered a wide choice of place and tempo, protected from the elements. The city's "spectrum" of ideas, methods, and beliefs broadens his attitudes and he usually is liberal, flexible and more indifferently tolerant of human foibles.

As human traits—the desire for freedom—the pursuit of whatever kind of life—whatever kinds of beliefs—are offered more outlets in the urban surroundings and have ultimate possibilities in the city.

American cities have undergone the "city Beautiful Movement" and the "city-utilitarian movement". The next step is the "city humane"—a city which better serves man's human traits.

The extent of the possibilities of a "city humane" can be exposed by examining the urban structure and the characteristics it has.

The study of the city is achieved through many separate disciplines, each placing particular emphasis on either social or spatial aspects. Anthropologists list the ethnic institutions, acculturation rates and behavioral patterns as parts of the urban structure. Planners stress spatial arrangement, communications and transportation. Sociologists state the study of human ecology and demography
as important elements. Observers, such as Jane Jacobs and Charles Booth, classify the urban structure in terms of activity junctures, diversity and frequencies of usage of particular spaces.

The complete structure is the compilation of all of these elements, one upon another, creating the complex patterns of overlaying reaction upon reaction, habit upon habit, communications upon communications, each giving a particular impetus to the over-all pattern.

This urban structure has been created by man, yet it has become alien to him-- in some aspects imprisoning him rather than giving him freedom.

John Ely Burchard regards the present cities as having neither a positive nor negative, rather a "neutral" effect on urban man.

The structure of the "city humane" should be such that the possibilities of free pursuit of an individualistic life are permitted. Great universities, great places and centers for learning inter-woven into the existing fabric of the city is one method by which the structure might become more effective for the urban man. "As an artificial world, the city should be so in the best sense made by art, shaped for human purposes,"(5) inter-connecting and inter-relating the elements of the urban structure into a consistent whole, capable of growth and change.
Examination into the urban structure of the city of Houston reveals a general lack of humaneness, save for the smallest instances.

"... a city which prevents conversation instead of promoting it, has scant reason for being"-- Jose Luis Sert. Houston is in great need of facilities to increase communication. By its dispersed spatial structure and its loosely affiliated social organizations, Houston does not offer opportunity for "happened" inter-action, but causes near non-communication.

However, in Houston there does exist a growing amount of interest in arts reflected by the establishment of Jones Hall and the new Alley Theater. More of Houston is becoming aware that art is available in the city. It follows that if the pursuit is strong for the performing arts, the pursuit for fine arts will increase.

The "cultural facade" has fallen, yet its crash has not been heard. This underlying and growing undercurrent of demands for more comprehensive cultural pursuit illustrates an evolving "culturally-aware class" of people in the city of Houston.

"Urban man often says 'they do this' or 'they do that' referring to decisions made by institutions to which he belongs that are not particularly his own."(6) "We do this, we do that" are the words of the involved urban man. Houston will be confronted with a new breed of cultural par-
participants, by virtue of improving education and opportunities for direct cultural contacts.

"We reject public support of the arts and of most elements of gracious urban life" -- John Ely Burchard. This might have been true in the past, but it is no longer true. Mr. Burchard states in *Man in the Modern City*: "...we neither know what the public taste is-- nor how it can be effected", further, "it does not tell us what the public will accept."(7) The "public" has not been tested by nobler alternatives, and it cannot be said how this "public" might react.

The community, typified by the monasteries of Medieval Europe, was the first phenomenon and place man had the opportunity to pursue intellectual achievement. The urban setting with its numerous opportunities for social inter-action and the more comprehensive choice of "goals", offers more encompassing array of involvement for achievement.

The social structure has had bearing on the effectiveness and scope of man's achievement, and will continue to do so. To clearly effectuate an improvement of the social inter-action, the spatial character of the city must be altered and added to.

"We must learn to seek the hidden forms in the vast sprawl of our cities,"(8) states Kevin Lynch, concerning the potentials of the city. Attempts should be made to
capitalize upon and catalyze the existing social and spatial potentials, and to anchor them to the existing urban structure.

By increasing the spectrum of interests and activities which surround the pursuit of fine arts in a "one-juncture place" in the urban structure, the influence of art is brought out into the city. By creating "place" in the city for a variety of people, a variety of tastes will be attracted.

The "art forum" would provide a change by addition to the social structure and intensify the existing image of the spatial structure.
PART III  ON URBAN SPACES

A review of urban spaces past and present, a classification of the urban spaces of Houston, and the concept of space applicable to the "art forum".

A study through time reveals many types of urban spaces, some more receptive to man than others. The agora of fifth century B. C. Athens is lauded as being the most man-oriented space ever conceived.

The power structure of each city, quite naturally, is reflected in the urban spaces created within it. Imperial Rome portrayed its power and might. Monarchical absolutism showed forth in Kyoto, Peking, Versailles and Karlsruhe.

The contemporary American city poses grave question about its spaces. If the city is the creation of man do the spaces within the city serve man's human needs? And in what sense or aspect are they man's? Do the urban spaces provide the freedom of pursuit which they should?

The major spaces of the contemporary American city—the plazas, nodes and paths are shaped by the automobile. Man utilizes these spaces yet he does not fully participate in them. He is shut into his automobile and directed from point to point in a closed transparent corridor in space.

The major automobile spaces—freeways—present a
wealth of paradoxes to the urban man—freedom to go where ever he wishes, but restricted by the channels he must follow—distant from the center city, but connected to it by time—contained in his "suburb-cell", but connected to the entire city by a transportation network—visually a part of the surroundings, but physically isolated in the "transparent tube".

The contemporary-utilitarian city gives man speed through the automobile. The recreation derived by driving the automobile cuts experiences short. The speed does not allow full perception—one sees only bits and pieces of the complete surroundings.

The "city humane" should provide spaces in which man may decelerate his speed and increase awareness in the surroundings—terminating the "automobile experience"—providing man with a "humane space" in which he is more physically involved at his slower speed—his tempo of recreation and leisure.

The "humane space" requires definition of a specific image—differentiation of experiences by atmosphere and tempo. Aldo Van Eyck states this is an expression of human conduct—making "space" into "place", and "time" into "occasion".

Man is the planner, the client, the observer, the participant, the seeker and the finder of "place" and "occasion". Man is the unquestioned producer, product and
consumer of his own spaces, and these should be shaped around human traits.

An investigation of Houston and its urban pattern has shown its primary characteristic to be a vast transportation network, devoted to the automobile.

Houston has been involved with the function of production to such an extent that the process of life--living, enjoying and recreating, may have been forgotten. The city's additional pursuit should be the creation of new spaces for the function of "living".

"We need to cherish with great care all the personality our cities have ignored; to be very suspicious of benign causes which are anti-urban."(9) A complete change of personality is not sought, rather to emphasize the existing personality. The quest is to create "a strong physical impression and a fine aesthetical appearance."(10)

Freedom for expression is the purpose of the "art forum". Care must be taken to insure participation by the seekers of the arts in the space. Animation, diversity of activity, movement patterns and visual orientation are the inputs to achieve this humane space--a place for leisure and freedom--a space for man at play.
FOOTNOTES:

(1) DEATH AND LIFE OF GREAT AMERICAN CITIES, page 161.
(2) EXPLORATION INTO URBAN STRUCTURE, page 42.
(3) "MA", THE JAPANESE SENSE OF PLACE, page 117.
(4) MAN IN THE MODERN CITY, page 2.
(5) IMAGE OF THE CITY, page 95.
(6) URBAN BEHAVIOR, page 110.
(7) MAN IN THE MODERN CITY, page 14.
(8) IMAGE OF THE CITY, page 12.
(9) MAN IN THE MODERN CITY, page 22.
(10) IBID, page 12.
CASE STUDIES

A critique of existing centers of similar types to the "art forum". An attempt to derive comparatives by which to measure form and order

Research of existing centers, which were created for purposes parallel to this "art forum", was undertaken in order to determine the detrimental as well as beneficial characteristics they possess. The characteristics deal mainly with physical structure, but note should be taken of the social implications in the physical design and site.

The examples are:

the Museum of Modern Art, Rio de Janiero—situated in a park, separated from the city by traffic.

Rockefeller Center—a composition of spaces within the grid-iron pattern of streets, skyscrapers and business area of the city.

Lincoln Center—a complex, designed as a new concept in performing centers, placed far-removed from the supportive activities existing in the city.

the Whitney Museum—a bold architectural statement—distinctiveness of form, breaking the continuity of the surroundings—an example of "offered art".

The accompanying drawings are summations—derived criteria.
The viability of "cultural centers" is reflected many times over by placement in the urban structure.

Jane Jacobs cites Philadelphia as having a library placed in a monumental park, receiving fewer visitors than the three branch libraries of lesser importance. She cites as well, far too many isolated cultural centers within a framework of streets, bounded by traffic, inaccessible to the potential users. There are many--Los Angeles Art Center--"It rises from the traffic which darts past on three sides", alike to an elegant subway kiosk.

*ISOLATION BY STREETS AND TRAFFIC*
Mrs. Jacobs also expresses the detrimental effects developed by placement of these types of centers far from the urban vitality, isolated by distance; put into the "dairy-farm lands".

This causes not only loss of availability to the pedestrian, but causes one to be isolated from the centers by modes of travel. The Museum of Modern Art, Rio de Janeiro-- reminiscent of the City Beautiful Movement-- sits in a park, able to claim only a spectacular view. It was regarded as being in the "center city", but is relatively isolated by both traffic and distance.
Sigfried Giedion—"In the great city of our age there will be a civic center, a public place, which like the agora of Athens, the Roman Forum, and the medieval cathedral square, will be a community focus and popular concourse." He cites Rockefeller Plaza as having no real innovative thought regarding the inter-weaving of such a center into the urban situation, and imposing no structural inter-course.

This type of isolation might be isolation by anonymity.
Progressive Observer cited of Lincoln Center:
"power of concept (loosely called ghettorizing by its detractors) which separates drama from the rest of the city into a world of its own." Further, within the center itself there was the appearance of self-isolation of the buildings unto themselves-- "haughty elegance"-- isolation by atmosphere-- "free of inter-action, almost free of action at all, with opulence so powerful it becomes almost trashy"-- intra-structure isolation.

INTRA-STRUCTURE ISOLATION

ISOLATION BY OPULANCE
Lincoln Center, a joint venture for various disciplines, was lauded as being a new concept in performing centers. It required major physical surgery to achieve its goal, and major social surgery as well. Removal of the Metropolitan Opera from Carnegie Hall meant isolation from the shops and stores and restaurants that supported and created activity within the urban framework— isolation from supportive activity.

[Diagram: ISOLATION FROM ACTIVITY]
In the search for the better situation of art-man-space-urban structure equation, the Whitney Museum appears to have many obscured assets by virtue of the bold architectural statement it makes. "Marcel Breuer has given the Whitney its landmark, setting it apart from the surrounding clutter in two ways—massive projecting walls making it unlike its neighbors in every way"—John Morris Dixon.

The Whitney expresses the selectivity of correct form, in a defined situation. In the Whitney, it is the distinctiveness of form, breaking the continuity and uniformity of the surroundings.

In addition, the Whitney has acted as a magnet to the dealer-galleries—consequently they have located close at hand.

LEGEND
Whitney museum galleries business

DISTINCTIVENESS OF FORM

GALLERY MAGNET
The Whitney is replete with "reaching-out". Contrary to the majority of form in museums the products, the consumer objects are offered by the museum to the passer-by, regardless of his primary motivation. "Though it rebuffs surrounding buildings, the Whitney is socially related to the street."

The front wall is of glass, with a sunken sculpture garden--part of the museum and part of the street--offering inter-action.
EXISTING VISUAL IMAGE

The modular landscaping (trees) along Main and Montrose tend to unify the surroundings of the Museum of Fine Arts, and imbue it with particular qualities.

These particular qualities -- the image -- are best portrayed in vistas and atmosphere or ambiance.

The articulation of the landscaping extends the atmosphere of Hermann Park across Main onto the Rice University campus, along Main and Montrose on two sides of the museum, and somewhat includes the Warwick Hotel.

The strength of the ambiance fluctuates -- along Main north of the museum -- eastward on Binz and northward on Montrose -- generally decreasing as one moves away from the museum to the north and east.
EXISTING VISUAL ANALYSIS

To illustrate the extent of the area's "image", the vistas and ambiance qualities are examined.

Vistas (v) may continue while the ambiance (a) changes, as shown by the break in arrows which accompany the notations.

The prominent buildings (shaded) and the spires and towers (t) of the area comprise other important physical aspects of the visual analysis.

Note should be made of the effects the Southwest freeway has on the view and ambiance along Montrose--acting as an "arch-way", first restricting the view then releasing it.
TRAFFIC DENSITIES

The traffic volume carried by the streets of the area is shown numerically and by the relative width of the arrows of shade.

The South freeway will service an undetermined number of automobiles. Binz-Bissonnet acting as the single arterial connector to the freeway between the Southwest freeway exit and South MacGregor Way exit, will doubtlessly continue to be a major thoroughfare.

This input of traffic volumes represents the major change factor in spatial arrangement and eventual development in the area.
TRAFFIC DENSITIES
LAND USE ANALYSIS

The input of a change in traffic densities coupled with the present land use trends show marked direction for the types of eventual redevelopment of certain parts of the area and development of presently unused land.

The differences in "change time"-- immediate or slow-- are based on the social or spatial potentials inherent in the area.

Note should be made this is not the proposed land use, but rather a compilation of the present and expected development patterns.
The proximity of the two museums represents the most potent inter-action possibility, shown in the darkest shade.

The relationships between the Museum of Fine Arts and both Rice University and St. Thomas University are shown in the lighter shade.

The remaining linkages between the "forum", the churches and the Warwick Hotel are shown as well.

This linkage pattern is the portrayal of the inter-action--the social potentials--which might be strengthened and improved by a physical framework of an "art forum".
INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGE PATTERNS
EXISTING VISUAL IMAGE

Presently a "space" is created around the Museum of Fine Arts.

The major axes originate from the Mecom fountain and are baroque in style.

The major "vista terminals" and "backdrops" are the Plaza Hotel, St. Paul's Methodist Church and the Warwick Hotel. These represent the major tangible elements which have bearing on the creation of an "art forum" on this site.

Both the axes and the "backdrops" might give direction and cause for locations of elements of the "forum".
PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR ANALYSIS

An analysis of the approach to the site of the "art forum" illustrates Montrose as oriented to the pedestrian and Main to the vehicular traffic.

This is not to say the opposite might occur, but it should be noted that this is the general approach to the site by pedestrian and vehicular.

This analysis will aid in the placement of integral parts of the "forum" and the structuring of the "space".
PROPOSED LAND USE

Utilizing the approach analysis—pedestrian and vehicular traffic—the pedestrian oriented elements are placed along Montrose, and a major penetration point into the space for vehicular traffic is provided off Main.

Arrival from the below-grade parking area is oriented to the common space which acts as an anchoring element.

The two museums—major items of the "forum"—are each given a particular space which are linked to the "common" space.

From this common space, a pedestrian link along "gallery-row" is created by canvas covered walkways and leads to the socially hyper-active section of the "forum".
VISUAL PÉNÉTRATION

Placement of the trees, the Contemporary Arts Association, the art school and the supportive activities is based on the functional relationships of these elements, one to the other. This allows an analysis of the "vista" or "glimpse" from the street.

Note should be made that visual penetration is uninterrupted through a "wall of water" along Main. This "kinesthetic-wall" -- a major part of the fountain plan -- tends to dilute the street noise of Main and Montrose.
"FORUM" PLAN

By compiling the pedestrian and vehicular, the visual, and the image analysis data, the "forum" is conclusively structured.

Penetration by the automobile into the space produces animation and motion off Main. This also provides the automobile orientation and definition in a space that is primarily for man at his slower speed. Off Montrose, the opposite is achieved by immediately sub-ordinating the automobile.

Pedestrian activities-- the shops, restaurants, studios and galleries-- have both Montrose and the "archade" from which to draw passers-by.

The art school, placed opposite the Museum of Fine Arts, is oriented to the north for light, and given separate spaces for outdoor studios.

Paving, grassed areas, water and buildings together with the trees define the "space", and the separate elements of the "forum".
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND EFFICTUATION

Recognition of the necessity of Binz-Bissonnet Streets' continued existence requires construction of grade separation between Main and Montrose--four lanes wide.

Additional construction would be necessary for the approach ramps and an eight-hundred-car, underground parking garage, as part of the "forum".

The plan of street re-distribution would limit access to the major streets and arterial-collectors, and restrict congestion. It would also shaped or at least solidify eventual re-development patterns of each of the areas.
PROPOSED LAND USE, LANDSCAPING AND CIRCULATION

The culmination of the public and private participation and involvement in the areas surrounding the "art forum" would:

• create a "center" in the dispersed urban pattern of Houston, giving "place" and "occasion" for the pursuits of art.

• answer the need of the city for a tangible method of self-expression, causing the "art identity" of Houston to be expressed in a definite way—allowing the uniqueness of Houston to be shown.

• provide a "one-juncture" place in the city, with a variety of activities for a variety of tastes and interests—attracting a broader spectrum of people of different social levels.

• give "place" in the urban structure for the process of life—enjoying and recreating—leisure—the human traits of man.

These are aspects which the "city humane" should have for its inhabitants for further social inter-action and an increase of communication.

The street re-distribution and physical change would:

• define patterns for housing and commercial development in the area.

• continue the "green" atmosphere of Hermann Park.
beyond its present limits.

extend the ambiance of the immediate surroundings of the museum along Montrose and Main-- having fountains to define and emphasize a change on these streets due to the "forum".

provide a pedestrian linkage to St. Thomas, physically joining it to the "forum" in much the same way as Rice University-- connected by the tree-arcade along Main.

project this ambiance to the South Freeway, linking it to the entire city.

These would be consequences of landscaping, land use and re-distribution of circulation patterns that would extend and strengthen the existing "image"-- the ambiance and vistas-- of the area, and provide the solidity for the future of the "image" of the "forum".
PROPOSED LAND USE, LANDSCAPING AND CIRCULATION
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