

A TALE OF TWO CITIES: INVESTIGATING THE SENSORY AND EMBODIED ASPECTS OF PLACE

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Abstract: In architectural education, the traditional design process often begins with an abstract concept that precedes all subsequent architectural decisions. This denotes a sequence in thinking that departs from the abstract (typically language and diagrams) and culminates in concrete architectural environments intended for human inhabitation. This paper challenges this sequence and proposes a method starting from concrete experience, which prioritises human experience over abstraction. The proposed sequence begins with immersion and experience, leading to the development of an image, concluding with representation. To do so this paper discusses two parallel student projects, in Budapest and Cape Town, where students were required to immerse themselves in urban and architectural environments and capture phenomena and people / place reciprocities through film. By critiquing the complexities of abstraction, and discussing the student projects and feedback, this research illustrates the merits of an architectural approach that suspends initial abstraction and prioritises the more phenomenological approach of immersion and embodied interaction with architectural and urban phenomena.

Keywords: Sensorial Experience, Embodiment, The Everyday, Phenomenology, Architectural Education

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. From the concrete to the abstract

It is a well known phenomenon that in architecture schools students are often required to conceive of architecture projects by utilising a ‘concept’. An abstract idea that is all encompassing and seen as an holistic departure point for all strategic architectural decisions to follow. This mode of design, and teaching design, relies on a fundamental sequence. A sequence that starts with abstraction (the concept) and concludes in an architectural environment that is intended for human perception and inhabitation, that concludes in an architectural environment that comprises concrete phenomena that elicits human experience. This initial exercise in abstraction is most commonly developed through language and through drawings, typically diagrams.

This paper questions this sequence as the only sufficient mode for architectural design inception. And instead proposes and illustrates a method of design that is void of initial overt signification. In contrast, it proposes a strategy that prioritises concrete experience as the initial step in the design process. From a phenomenological perspective (that discards the dichotomy between the mind and the body) the intellectual or cerebral ‘idea’ or ‘concept’ would be replaced with the anticipated experience, and the images this experience evokes.

This strategy therefore proposes a sequence that starts with immersion and experience, developing an image of this and then concluding in representation (abstraction).

Traditional	Abstract Idea	>	Drawing	>	Building (concrete)
Alternative	Concrete experience (Abstract)	>	Image	>	Representation
	(Drawn from Perception, Memory and Imagination)				

Table 1 A Sequence of Thinking

To do so, we critically engage with four characteristics that typically contribute to abstraction as a departure point in architectural training. We question the notion of meta-narratives of legitimization, the studio setting, abstract modes of representation, and finally, the practice of intellectualisation.

This paper presents the methods and results of two courses for students of architecture: one in Budapest and one in Cape Town. Neither of the courses are traditional design studios: participants do not develop plans or technical drawings of future interventions, however they learn how to approach the present everyday world around them with constant curiosity and how to discover values in details of ordinary, real situations. This acquired sensitivity is hoped to serve as a useful tool for future practitioners during any kind of design process dealing with the built environment.

1.2. Meta-narratives of legitimization

This paper questions the credibility of meta-narratives of legitimization. The de-legitimation of global systems of thought implies that there is no longer a stable foundation to support a universal objective reality. This is echoed in Rorty [1] critique of objectivism, who speaks of ‘knowledge as the mirror of nature’ and the ‘illusion of the double world’. This double world, i.e. the world of knowledge that stands in opposition to the world as is, has been criticised by many, particularly by the philosophical position of phenomenology. With this ‘breakdown of universal meta-narratives, emphasis moves to the construction of a perspectival reality where knowledge is validated through practice [2]. Adopting these lines of thinking, allows one to consider architectural place, a significant dimension of the life-world, as a qualitative and multifaceted entity, that cannot be universally defined or conceptualised and should instead be interpreted through lived experience and embodied interaction.

1.3. Loci for learning

As architects, we are trained to be free thinkers. This training, however, often happens in a world physically and symbolically removed from reality. This self-referential and often static world of architects has been criticised by many. Till [3] expresses his concern for what he terms the ‘deluded detachment’ of architectural training. This detachment refers to a literal and symbolic removal and indifference that architecture schools have from the real world. This ‘real world’ is a term commonly referred to by architectural educators and students, in opposition to the hypothetical world set out in student project briefs. It can be understood as the lived world that exists outside the static and closed world of architectural training. Till argues that architects have a tendency to not see the world as a dynamic social system to be engaged with, but instead as a static abstraction, there only to receive mute form [4]. This research therefore suggest an alternative loci for learning outside of the studio environment, immersing students in architectural environments.

1.4. Abstract Representation

The predisposition of discarding the ‘real world’ in architectural teaching is often strengthened in the way students generate and represent their work – through photography that negates time and people, and through architectural drawings as autonomous objects. In architectural teaching and praxis today, such utopian imagery persists. Architectural renderings have been seen as a major culprit in this regard. Renderings that often lack a connection with the actual, built, imperfect architecture. ‘Time and again, projects seem intent on fleeing the real world of people and places, scale and context; retreating instead into fantasy realms of convoluted forms with no seeming purpose’ [5]. This problem could certainly be seen as a symptom of architecture’s obsession with the autonomous image.

Many have argued that architect’s reliance on visual seduction, their imposition of order, and their denial of contingencies and presences brought about through time, result in abstract and incongruous environments that neglect the lifeworld, and produce places that are awkward, intimidating, unpleasant and dysfunctional. This problem, writes Quirk [6], is symptomatic of architecture’s obsession with the image of architecture, an image completely detached from reality, propagated by both architecture schools and the media. ‘Our eyes’, argues Freeman [7] are trained to believe that a photograph is a true representation of an existing condition’. He argues that this is problematic since we live in a digital age where graphic representation of architecture has moved beyond an exercise in persuasion and has become an exercise in ‘deception’, becoming an incentive for architects to indulge in digital dissimulation [8]. Architecture hereby gets erased and overthrown by the image. Such images could be seen to create unrealistic expectations of architecture: ‘perfection that is impossible to deliver in the real world’ [9]. In this research students were guided towards documenting architectural environments not with diagrams or seductive photography and drawings but rather through intuitive films capturing spontaneous people / place interactions.

1.5. Intellectualisation

Finally, this research questions the practice in architectural training of intellectualisation and open-ended speculation. Where intellectualising occurs towards unlimited creativity, without an experimental basis either to support or negate the process or the results. It questions how this leaves the door open to endless theoretical conjecture and idiosyncratic propositions. Free to imagine anything at will, with no obligations to address the real world dimension, architects are often drawn to infinite speculation. Such a way of analysing and postulating place can be seen to work from the abstract to the concrete. This method of argumentation, can be seen as a weak system that perpetuates the development of alien vocabularies and imagery that are philosophically and politically biased. The courses discussed in this research are aimed to lay the basis for a design approach that prioritizes concrete interactions with places instead of abstract ‘concepts’ during the process of developing ideas.

2. CONTEXT OF COURSES

The course in Budapest is a practice-based studio of the Department of Urban Planning and Design at the Faculty of Architecture at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME). It is entitled Department Design 1 and its current program is called public life studies. International students attend the class who are either regular or exchange students from all over the world, though it is usually common that they are in their third or fourth year of studies in architecture. Classes have a seminar structure: the number of attendees are between 25 and 35, there are three contact hours per week that are used as individual and group consultations.

The course in Cape Town, South Africa was done at the Department of Architecture at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Located in the City Bowl of Cape Town the campus is flanked by mountains and the ocean. There, they have a diverse Third Year Architecture class with local and African foreign students coming from both urban and rural areas. Around 90 students participated in groups of four. Thirty years since the demise of Apartheid, South Africa is still considered one of the most unequal societies in the world and Cape Town still has a clear spatial legacy of Apartheid. For consistency in the projects, the students were prescribed a specific area (Cape Town CBD) to document. This project was done as part of the subject of Architectural Design. And done as a precursor to a design project.

The two courses that are introduced in this paper are not regular architectural design courses. Students do not design buildings during these courses, instead they learn about designated parts of the city through on-site experience and they are asked to document their observations through making short films.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In these student exercises, students were introduced to alternative approaches to urban and architectural perception and interpretation. This departs from the premise of discarding the mind-body duality. Indeed, many have argued that this Cartesian split of mind and matter has hampered our thinking about spatial design for too long. Considering our bodily movements in places necessitates us to acknowledge that our experiences of places are not static. Shirazi [10] suggests that phenomenological interpretations of architecture are commonly presented in episodic and fragmentary views, as an inarticulate and disintegrated complex. He calls this a ‘static and disabled phenomenology’ that negates the body as an essentially moving body and perception as a fundamentally moving activity and suggests that architectural places should instead be considered as a whole. For Pallasmaa [11] the ‘elements’ of architecture should also not be seen as visual units or *gestalts*; but instead as encounters, confrontations that interact with memory. These points relate to the point of Merleau-Ponty [12] that we always perceive from a perspective – and that this perspective is subject to our interactions with spaces.

This view resonates with J.J. Gibson’s [13] ecological approach, which treats perception as a direct and continuous interaction between an organism and its environment. His concept of “affordances” helps explain how spaces invite certain actions, depending on bodily capacities and context. Similarly, the enactive approach to cognition [14] emphasizes perception as an embodied activity—where cognition arises through the dynamic coupling of body and environment. Both perspectives challenge linear stimulus-response models, offering a richer understanding of architectural experience as situated, sensorimotor, and relational.

This research therefore takes the position that architectural place-making implies an understanding of place that is not abstract, but instead a dynamic entity to be engaged with over time, open to transformation. It implies an understanding of a place that is not in a state of being but rather in a state of becoming. The world, or places within it, cannot be considered in isolation, but always exists in relation to the living, moving and perceiving body. In such an understanding, experiences of places are not fragmented, static or isolated, but happen over time through bodily interactions. This approach is understood through the Japanese relational concept of space, known as *Ma*. This

concept recognises our interaction with space, or the ‘verb-essence’ of the architectural experience [15]. This relates to Thompson’s [16] essay on *Ma*, on the unity of time and space and the term ‘spacing’ instead of ‘space’ and ‘timing’ instead of ‘time’. It also relates to his use of ‘gerunds’ or verb-nouns.

3.1. Theoretical Framework for Budapest

The fundamental aim of the *public life studies* program is to make students learn about properties of everyday life in public spaces through real experience. The task of tutors in this process is to increase students’ sensitivity towards their environment, since sensitivity is required to notice and sustain curiosity about things and processes being in front of the students’ eyes. Through practical briefs the attention of students is coordinated towards phenomena that are usually overlooked or just simply out of sight. However, practical tasks can be only successful if they are supported by theoretical knowledge: theories help students identify meanings of things and events around them and even more importantly to discover relations.

When students manage to understand the interrelatedness of seemingly distant elements of the public realm – for instance relations of acts of people and the physical state of the built environment – they become more aware of the contexts of their environments. To raise consciousness of the importance of relations, theories are introduced that rely on inclusion of several factors instead of abstraction: an instance for this is Henri Lefebvre’s theory on the (social) production of (social) space [17]. The significance of this theory in the context of the course is that it connects physical, mental and social aspects of space into one concept: according to Lefebvre, space is not just a physical entity, but space is produced by the members of society through their acts, habits, memories and feelings. The physical and the social are not separate, but closely linked. According to this approach, space is not simply physical, nor simply social, but both. This also means that the production of space is not the mere privilege of architects and other professionals, but everyone, all members of society produce space constantly. Inspired by Lefebvre’s thoughts, the tutors wanted to develop a methodology for a course that enables students to understand the complexity of space and recognize the relationships between its social and physical layers.

3.2. Theoretical Framework for Cape Town

The project departs from the phenomenological position that prioritises human experience over mental abstractions. It discards the subject object dichotomy but instead prioritises the perceiver (students) and the perceived (place). The theme of the course, *The Body in Space*, was based on a Human Approach to Urban Studies, where we introduced a new loci of learning for students and required students to engage with real world phenomena. The aim here was to critique urban planning practices, and to study diverse, mixed-use neighborhoods with organic street life [18]. And also to explore how people perceive and navigate urban environments [19]. Furthermore, referring to *Theories on Everyday Life*, to understand how individuals navigate and subvert societal structures in daily routines [20], to understand how space is socially constructed [21], and to understand how people intuitively inhabit and appropriate places through *Place Ballet* [22].

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Budapest Methodology

In order to experience the complexity of space and understand the limitations of its abstraction, students were asked to observe everyday human life in public spaces, especially on densely populated urban streets. Dealing with the public realm has several benefits: first, it is easily accessible by students, second, they have the chance to identify endless instances of human use, events, expected and unexpected acts and their direct relations to the built environment. The challenge of tutors is to ask for the appropriate tool of presenting observations. The chosen tool or medium is crucial since it should not only be a medium of representation but also an instrument for discovering hidden spatial layers constituting the seemingly banal, but in reality extremely versatile phenomenon labelled as everyday life.

In a search for the required tool of capturing everyday life, the course looked for inspiration in art history: the depiction of everyday life has been an important topic of artists for hundreds of years. Here, one can consider the works of the Dutch renaissance masters of the 16th and 17th century: compositions of Pieter Buegel the Elder depicting the life of peasants that are built up of several microstories presented with extremely focused detailing [23]. The drawings of Rembrandt van Rijn also represent micro stories of social life [24]. It is important in this context to mention paintings of Pieter de Hooch, where the physical environment is depicted with the same rigorous precision as the scenes of social life taking place in them [25]. Streetlife remained an inspirational topic for artists in the early

20th century as well: the American George Luks often painted the everyday life of urban dwellers creating compositions containing human bodies performing social activities and the built environment as equally significant constitutive elements: such as his work of St. Botolph street [26].

The pioneers of street photography in the USA during the 1960's and 1970's also managed to capture moments directly with their cameras. Photographs of Garry Winogrand [27], Helen Levitt [28], or Lee Friedlander [29] show the dynamic, ever changing nature of everyday urban life.

Filming possesses the capacity of documenting even further layers of reality: sounds, and time not simply as moment but as event. The documentary of William H. Whyte on the use of public spaces in Manhattan from 1980 [30] shows that film is an effective medium of presenting complex issues such as urban life. A less analytic but perhaps more poetic approach towards urban filming can be seen in the work entitled *Homo Urbanus* by contemporary filmmakers Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine [31]: collections of everyday stories show how people use, appropriate and inhabit space in various cities around the world.

This course adopted the method of filming for multiple reasons: first, this is the medium that can document the highest number of layers of the physical environment. Second, students are not limited by their own visualisation skills, a risk in other picture making mediums. Third, this tool is easily accessible, since all smart phones have built in cameras.

Students were required to take 120 seconds long micro-documentaries following given themes on a prescribed location. Narration, special effects, fake scenes, background music were prohibited: students had to present a collection of stories found in the real world without direct intervention. The location for the whole semester was Népszínház street, a historic area of the city center that is traditionally a hub for various migrant groups and is usually associated with poverty and social tensions. Students were required to make four microdocumentary films during the semester based on the following themes:

- The Body: How people move in the street. During this task students had to develop concepts that show how people use their bodies and how they interact with the built environment.
- Time: Rhythms of the Street. In the frames of this exercise rhythms, characteristic daily habits, repetitive patterns had to be discovered, through which the temporal layers of the streets are expressed. Lefebvre's theory of rhythmanalysis [32] were used as inspiration in this task.
- Space: How people appropriate the street and create their own territories. During the third project students had to find instances of people making borders in public space. Theories of space appropriation supported this section [33].
- Your Népszínház Utca: Reflections on their own presence in the urban context. The aim of the final task was to raise students' awareness to the effects of their activities as filmmakers at the site. It is important to learn that they can never regard themselves as invisible, they can never be completely neutral observers, their physical presence and their unique view on the world can never be taken out of consideration.

4.2. Cape Town Methodology

Our exercises were based in an alternative loci for learning. The intention here was to remove the students from the traditional studio setting, and to immerse them in the city. This does not mean that we discard the studio, but instead that we consider additional spaces and more importantly, different situations, in which knowledge of architectural places can be developed. By doing so we enable the students to do embodied interpretations of places and multimodal strategies for documenting and representing these places. The students were required to make films of the prescribed areas in our city that capture diachronic and idiosyncratic elements of the city that would typically get lost through abstract interpretations. The aim of course was for students to do qualitative analyses and multisensory interpretations and representations of urban places. And furthermore, to document the everyday practices of how people intuitively inhabit urban places. We referred here to theories of use as a creative act, that focussed on understanding the practice of the 'dérive' and identifying 'unites des ambience' in cities [34], understanding the production of space [35], and critiquing conventional notions of space, form, and function in cities, and understanding the instability of meaning in architectural places [36]. In addition, by referring to theories of place as a multisensory phenomenon we focussed on taking multisensory approaches to creating meaningful and experiential spaces, and to investigate holistic approaches to design that considers the tactile, auditory, and olfactory experiences of architecture [37].

5. STUDENT WORK

Two micro-documentaries in each city were chosen as the most descriptive of this task and will be discussed in the following sections.

5.1. Budapest Projects

The first one was entitled “*Gestures*” and filmed by Isadora Markovic and Borislava Cucic. They came up with a concept of capturing the characteristics and the identity of the street by only focusing on the movements of people's hands. These examples were absolutely varying: couples hugging or holding each other's hands, people using phones with both hands, smoking, or gesturing while talking. Some were holding one hand in another while walking or sitting. People also could hold hands on the waist like in a power pose or keep them in their pockets. Other situations included waving while saying goodbye to someone, holding coffee or food for takeaway, and locking a bike. The students managed to show in their micro documentary what kinds of attitudes or behaviours we can identify through just focusing on the hands of the street's visitors.



Figure 1 Isadora Markovic, Borislava Cucic: *Gestures* (2024).

The next microdocumentary was created by Marion Barde, Tímea Fazakas and Eszter Laura Borbély, its title is “*Tiny Relief*”. The focus of this movie was the bollards, safety poles standing along the sidewalks, and the way people were interacting with them. The students managed to find some instances of territorialization and illustrated the alternative usages of these poles. People were leaning on these bollards in different ways and situations. Most frequently, they were sitting on the poles, but some also just put a hand on them or a backpack. Usually, it happened while people were waiting for a bus or a tram. Sometimes, this situation was observed while they were smoking or talking on the phone.



Figure 2 Marion Barde, Tímea Fazakas, Eszter Laura Borbély: *Tiny Relief* (2024).

This microdocumentary illustrates the phenomenon of space appropriation which is shown by the alternative usages of these bollards. When those people were sitting on the safety poles, they created new seats just for the time they were interacting with those poles. The same is applicable to the situations when people were putting a hand on a pole, further instances of appropriation.

5.2. Cape Town Projects

Our first student film is entitled “*Stationscape*” and focussed on the impact of time on place. In the film there is a slow progression from morning to night, showing how the place and its functions evolves over time, daily. The film is taken from various perspectives, from up high on bridges to voyeuristic perspectives following pedestrians from

behind. Various functions of the place, the Cape Town Taxi Rank, are illustrated, such as people commuting, informal trade, people cooking and selling food. The film illustrates the various space-routines of the place and how its functions are in a constant state of flux.



Figure 3 Inam Maqashalala, Tshireletso Ntoane, Lesego Manyathela, Lucky Sigwebedlana, Lusapho Somdaka: Stationscape (2024).

Our second film “The Voices of Colour” focused on liminality, place ballet (the way people intuitively appropriate public space) and the sensorial characteristics of place. It is set in the colourful area of the Bokaap, the Malay area in the Cape Town CBD. The film is set at dusk and focuses on transitions, transitions from day to night, and from colour to colour. The area is well known for its public life and the film shows how it is used by people commuting, congregating, and how children play sports in the streets. Light, brightly saturated facades, cars and people's voices on the street all contribute to the multisensory characteristics of the place depicted.

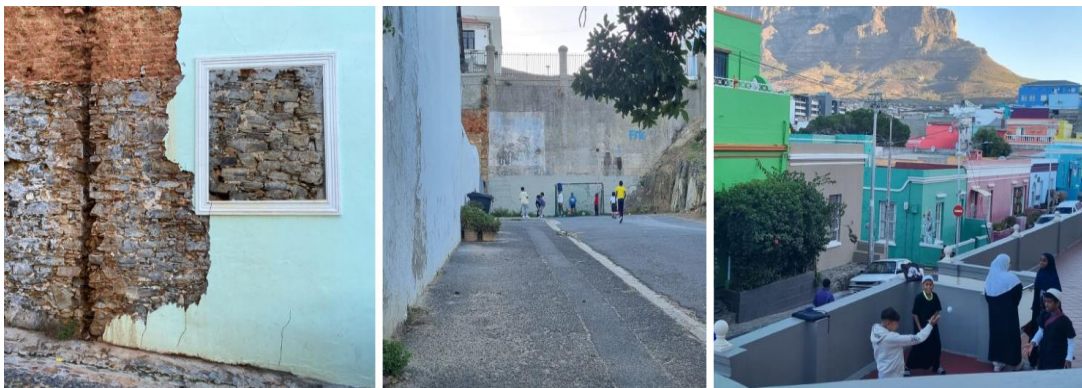


Figure 4 Yaseen Talaaboedien and Ranaldo Africa : The Voices of Colour (2024).

6. SURVEY FEEDBACK

Students from both Budapest and Cape Town participated in a survey reflecting on their sensory and spatial experiences during the course. The survey not only served to collect feedback but also acted as an educational tool which could direct and drive their focus.

The first section of the survey encouraged students to consider orientation, light, smell, sound, and texture. In Budapest, most students were unfamiliar with Népszínház Street and used prominent landmarks like McDonald's and Tesco and a tram line for orientation. Visually, they focused on architectural elements and the street's mix of liveliness and neglect. Light was described as insufficient due to tall buildings, while darkness was associated with insecurity. Sounds of trams, cars, and people were dominant and seen by some as vibrant, others as disturbing. Smell was mostly perceived negatively, though food-related aromas were also noted. Students connected sensory impressions with memories and emotions, pointing to the experiential depth of place.

Cape Town students had more freedom in site selection and relied on both man-made and natural elements like the ocean and mountain for orientation. They highlighted texture and colour as strong visual cues and described

varying spatial qualities between day and night. Natural light was linked with openness and safety, whereas darkness often triggered anxiety. While car noise dominated, quieter areas revealed natural and human sounds. Scents were less noted, with some mentions of incense and spices. The sea breeze and surface textures also influenced their experience. Some students became more conscious of how cultural background influenced their interpretations and reported moving more slowly to absorb spatial details.

In both cities, students reflected on the method of using film as a research tool. In Budapest, many found filming strangers awkward, though the process helped them familiarize with the street. The constrained camera frame allowed focused observation. Suggestions for improvement included adding interviews or sketches. Safety perceptions were mixed, and most students avoided the area after dark.

Cape Town students found the filming process more intuitive, though choosing meaningful shots was challenging. The medium was appreciated for capturing elements such as sound and movement, despite its limitations in conveying a holistic experience. Most students preferred familiar locations and felt positively about their sites. Repeated visits helped reveal spatial changes and nuances.

In both cities, the exercise was generally enjoyed. Students became more attentive to their surroundings and used film to engage deeply with everyday urban phenomena.

The table below summarises the comparative findings between the two student groups:

<i>Comparison Item</i>	<i>Budapest Result</i>	<i>Cape Town Result</i>
Main Orientation Points	McDonald's, Tesco, Il. János Pál papa Square, tram line	Pathways, urban objects, landmarks, mountain, ocean
Visual Characteristics	Architectural details, textures, colours, conditions (mess, liveliness)	Textures, colours, contrast between old and new
Light and Darkness	Mixed perceptions, less direct sunlight, mixed feelings of safety	Light expands space, darkness creates uncertainty
Street Noise	Noisy (cars, trams, people talking/screaming), perceived as lively or disturbing	Dominant car noise, nature sounds, pedestrian chatter, echoes in interiors
Scents	Mostly bad smells, occasional restaurant aromas	Limited comments, occasional incense and spices
Weather	Mild and pleasant, warm materials contributing to thermal qualities	Mild and pleasant
Cultural Influences	Diverse backgrounds, mixed influence on space perception, familiarity increased over time	Less commentary on cultural biases, some unfamiliar with wide expansive spaces, encouraged slower movement and detailed observation
Safety	Mixed feelings, many avoiding the street after dark	High awareness of safety concerns due to crime, mixed maintenance levels, most avoid meeting friends there after dark
Task Difficulty	Varied; some found it easy, others challenging, especially filming people	Generally found easy, challenges in shot selection and filming people
Video Format	Helped familiarity and focus, effective for incorporating various elements (time, behaviour, movement, sound, visuals)	Helped direct and navigate experience of space, noted inability to fully capture holistic experiences but found it the best medium regardless
Alternative Methods	Suggestions included photos, sketches, interviews	No specific suggestions noted

Task Enjoyment	Most participants enjoyed the task, found it interactive, and the time limit adequate	Most enjoyed the task, found it interactive, and noted the time limit was adequate
Observational Improvement	Improved attention to surroundings, aiding detailed observation and site sensitivity	Pathways, urban objects, landmarks, mountain, ocean

Table 2 The survey feedback summary

7. CONCLUSION

This study has highlighted a gap between theoretical abstractions and the lived reality of urban environments, for architectural students. This gap, this research has argued, is found in the overemphasis on meta-narratives, visual representation and intellectualisation, often at the expense of real world lived engagements. By highlighting these critiques, two parallel student projects were set up that focus on interactive and experiential encounters with urban and architectural places.

One project was set in Budapest and one in Cape Town. These were done not as design exercises but rather as exercises that enhance our students' perception and sensitivity towards built environments. In these exercises students were required to suspend abstract conceptualisation and instead intuitively observe and document spontaneous urban and architectural environments. These exercises resulted in a diverse array of films, each focusing on different phenomenological aspects of architectural and urban places. The feedback we received from students underscores the effectiveness of this approach, revealing increased sensitivity to the complexities of urban environments and a greater capacity for critical reflection. This experiential learning model not only enhances students' perceptual and analytical skills but also prepares them to create more responsive and human-centered architectural solutions.

Overall, integrating phenomenological perspectives and practice-based methodologies into architectural education is essential for cultivating architects who are not only skilled designers but also empathetic observers and active participants in ever-evolving urban and architectural landscapes.

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APPENDIX

Navigation

1. What place did you select to document and why?
2. How did you navigate the space?
3. Were there objects of identification and orientation? If so, what?
4. Was your movement directed, if so, how?
5. What were the visual characteristics of the place?

Light and Darkness

6. What were the qualities of light and darkness of the place?
7. How does the quality of natural light and darkness influence the perception of space and mood within a building?
8. How do the sensory characteristics of a place change throughout the day, season, or year?

Sound and Acoustics

9. What are the sounds and acoustics of this place?
10. How do the sounds contribute to the place's atmosphere?
11. How do scents within a space influence your memory and emotional response?

Thermal Comfort and Texture

12. What are the thermal qualities of the place?
13. What textures contribute to these?

Cultural considerations

14. How does your cultural background influence the interpretation of the sensory characteristics of this place?

Method of studying the space by making micro-documentaries (the format)

15. Was the task difficult or easy for you? What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?
16. How did the short movie format influence the process and the result of discovering the space?
17. How different was your perception of the space through the camera lens from what you actually saw while being at the site? Did this format help you to investigate the space more deeply? How? Is there anything new you could see while doing the task and anything you didn't manage to show in this video format?
18. Did you enjoy performing the task? What did you like the most about it and what didn't you like at all?
19. In your opinion, what format would be better for investigating the space than what you did and why? Propose your ideas.
20. Were two minutes enough to show what you wanted? Or was it too much or too little? How would you improve this format? Write your ideas.

21. What is your opinion on the method of studying the spaces with the help of video creation? Write 2-3 sentences. Would you like to do movies to investigate spaces for your future projects?

Familiarity of the space

22. Have you known the site before? If yes, did you think of this place in a positive or a negative way?
23. You had to visit the same site several times. How did your perception, attitude to space and people change with each time? Write your thoughts about it.
24. Is there anything new you could notice with each visit?

Perceived safety

25. Is it a safe or dangerous place?
26. Is it a pleasant place?
27. Is it a well-maintained place?
28. Would you meet friends here after dark?
29. What do you think about this site in terms of safety?

Further impact of the method

30. Since the beginning of the filming tasks have you observed new things in your daily life, have you noticed things in the city or in your domestic spaces that you haven't noticed before? If there are any new discoveries of yours, please share those!