

HONG KONG GLOBAL STUDIO

27 november – 20 december 2009



KHOA DO + JOHN STEPHENS + EDMOND WONG

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE + INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

CURTIN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF BUILT ENVIRONMENT

HKU SPACE
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND LAW

Hong Kong Studio (hk-studio) is an elective unit offered as a global studio based in Hong Kong bringing together students from the Department of Architecture and Interior Architecture at Hong Kong University Space and Curtin University.

This global studio provides students with the unique opportunity to experience the “collage city” of Hong Kong and to work in partnership with colleagues in HKU Space University. Urban design issues will be explored that will look specifically at the built environment through the investigation of urban scapes, urban narratives and urban recordings.

introduction	3
students . ground rules . contacts	4
program itinerary > important dates	5-6
events and activities	7
project one: 5 postcards . urban narrative	8
project two: reinterpret . urban interventions	9
project three: exhibition . showcase	10
reading one . “Narrascope”	11
reading two . “From urban experiences to architectural narratives”	12-19
reading three . “enrich miralles: architecture of time”	20-24
other readings	24-28
address book	29
smarttraveller.com.au	30-34
lonely planet	35-41

Introduction

The mirrored readings of urban spaces is the grassroots of what this global studio will focus on. The framework for this studio is broad to allow a greater opportunity for a diverse collection of areas of investigation within the readings of urban spaces. So, within the overall frame work students may find a numbers of areas to suit their current personal interest and may choose to identify with a particular building typology or address contextual issues as related to ideas establishes from textual readings.

Cities are a complex assemblage of converging and diverging acts of inhabitation, work, living and playing framed through the built environment.

Cities are not just places we inhabit but complex living organisms with which we have complex relationships.

Cities are not just 'here and now' but the result of a history of living where the marks of that living are embedded in its social and physical fabric.

Cities have meanings which can be uncovered though their 'narratives'.

Cities are places that are constantly 'becoming'.

Cities tell stories.

Cities are settings and backdrops for the urban theatre

How do you *read* a city?

Your primary task in these projects is to translate a reading of the city into:

- > film
- > photographic essay
[caption/rationale]
- > audio
- > narrative
- > photographic essay

- > colour
- > material

Reader and lecture series > identify studio themes

Architecture / Meaningful Places & Spaces

"Architecture in context is neither a cursory attention nor a radical innovation, it is a strong and eloquent visual relationship to the surrounding. Individual building is always seen first as a part of the whole.

Creating Places and Spaces that enrich the lives of the people who use them is the foundation of Architects work. Every building can and should engage in a dialog with the history, beliefs and needs of a particular place and time.

Identification of place lies as a generative core of architecture. Place is to architecture as meaning is to language. Recognition, memory, choice, sharing with others, the acquisition of significance; all these contribute to the process of architecture"

Excerpts from Analysing Architecture, Simon Unwin.

Architecture & Urban Context

"Architecture is the physical language of city- and community building. The city is a living organism- with a unique culture and a past called a "contextual history" and a future in which new buildings act as the threads that weave the cities living traditions into new and whole fabric. Architecture projects need to be perceived as part of implementing an urban design project which entails gathering insights into urban fabric and how people use urban spaces.

The role of a Designer is to work on many scales, thoughtfully designing public places and spaces, to build on the unique local

character and the best qualities of the forms inherent in that geographic region"

Excerpts from Urban Design, UD Associates.

Architecture as Process

"Architecturally speaking, our physical environment is being increasingly designed without substantial content. The ancient notion of the unity of idea, unity of approach and unity of faith has ceased to be our premise for our thoughts and actions. The values of the truth, the good and the beautiful are ignored. Without this how can one ever create lasting quality of architecture, since architecture is neither purely a physical, a purely intellectual, nor a purely psychic phenomenon but a comprehensive manifestation of all three, capable of influencing the lives of individuals and communities. Not often in an architectural creation are all these aspects understood and translated into a design concept and the built -form conceived accordingly"

Excerpt / Balkrishna Doshi

Resources:

- > Digital Camera
- > Computer [optional]
- > CD-Rom [Cannon PhotoStitch program, eBooks]
- > drawing implements [markers] of varying thicknesses]
- > butter paper
- > watercolour pencils
- > 20x11.5cm [photographic processed, matt not gloss finish]

1	Akila	Rami
2	Beven	Madeleine
3	Bui	Prunella
4	Chai	Callie
5	Copeland	Kimberley
6	Finch	Matthew
7	Fletcher	Matthew
8	Armstrong	Jacqueline
9	Harrison	Jerwin
10	Ismail	Yomna
11	Jovanou	Kelsey
12	Lees	Andrew
13	Leung	Marco
14	Liu	Li
15	Nguyen	Khiem
16	Nohr	Tyron
17	O'Neill	Patrick
18	Omodei	Mathew
19	Quach	Amy
20	Richardson	Paige
21	Scullion	Angela
22	Smith	Sharyn
23	Smolik	Andrei
24	Tiong	Kevin
25	Ulyanov	Tatiana
26	Van Lieshout	Kara
27	White	Peta
28	Yong	Yi Ying
29	Zheng	Yaoming

Students

Ground rules

1. I shall not travel alone during my time on the trip. I will be accompanied with at least two other colleagues.
2. I will notify someone [preferably John or Khoa] as to my or my group's movements.
3. I will use commonsense, good judgement and to be aware of my environment at all times.
4. I will lookout for my welfare and the welfare of others and be considerate and respectful of others. This includes taking photographs, recordings or sketches (respect others' privacy).
5. Please do not publicly display either digital or hardcopy of "photos" of colleagues without seeking their approval.
6. I am aware that I will be representing my family, Curtin University and my country when I am overseas and will therefore act appropriately as an ambassador.
7. I am aware of my commitments and obligations in fulfilling all necessary tasks and exercises to enable me to successfully complete this unit.

Contacts

unit coordinators

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program itinerary > important dates

Dates	Description	Detail
	Pre-tour workshop:	> house keeping > discuss logistics > discuss safety /obligations > discuss procedures > discuss project
Leave Perth for HK_27 Nov	Perth to KL > MH126, 27 NOV leave 0110 arrive 0640 KL to HK > MH72, 27 NOV leave 0915 arrive 1255	> Check-in 3hrs before departure
Day 01_28 Nov	Trekking the city in small groups of four [share cab, rail ferry etc]	> familiarised + acclimatise > observation + impression
Day 02_29 Nov	Trekking the city in small groups of four [share cab, rail ferry etc] > victoria key area > mong kok market area > more to be added	> familiarised + acclimatise > observation + impression > designated areas to explore
Day 03_30 Nov	Project 1 start	> meet + greet HKU Space colleagues > a public lecture at HK university [evening]
Day 04_01 Dec	Project 1	Touch base evening
Day 05_02 Dec	Project 1	Touch base evening
Day 06_03 Dec	Project 1	Touch base evening
Day 07_04 Dec	Project 1	Touch base evening
Day 08_05 Dec	Project 1	Touch base evening
Day 09_06 Dec	Project 1	Touch base evening

Day 10_07 Dec	Project 1 Submit	Touch base evening
Day 11_08 Dec	HKU Space involved Project 2 Briefing	Touch base evening
Day 12_09 Dec	Project 2: Development	Touch base evening
Day 13_10 Dec	Project 2: Development	Touch base evening
Day 14_11 Dec	Project 2: Development	Touch base evening
Day 15_12 Dec	Project 2: Development	Touch base evening
Day 16_13 Dec	Project 2: Development	Touch base evening
Day 17_14 Dec	Project 2: Finetune	Touch base evening
Day 18_15 Dec	Project 2: Finetune	Touch base evening
Day 19_16 Dec	Project 2: Finetune	Touch base evening
Day 20_17 Dec	Project 2: Finetune	Touch base evening
Day 21_18 Dec	Submit and present Project 2	Touch base evening
Day 22_19 Dec	Free day to wind-up	Touch base evening
Day 23_20 Dec	HK to KL > MH75, 20 DEC leave 0905 arrive 1255 KL to Perth > MH127, 20 DEC leave 1830 arrive 2350	> Check-in 3hrs before departure

EVENTS + ACTIVITIES for consideration

OPEN CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

參展作品公開招募

公開招募 <四>: OPEN CALL 4: Bring Your Own Botanist

An open call for submissions focused on the greening of a standard shipping container.

公開招募置於西九龍展覽場地的貨櫃箱外部的垂直綠化設計。

公開招募 <五>: OPEN CALL 5: Bring Your Own Banner

An open call for the submissions of creative large scaled art banners with visuals highlighting issues of ecology, cultural education, exchange, sustainability, or community and heritage.

公開招募置於雙年展展場：西九龍海濱長廊 - 的大型橫額設計，透過視覺藝術大力推廣生態平衡、文化教育及交流、可持續發展或社區本土遺產的主張。作品最後更會集成一個獨特的立體藝術創作。

遞交作品截止日期: 2009年11月02日
DEADLINE: 02 NOV 2009

For more information visit:
hkszbiennale.org/opencall

2009 Hong Kong Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism \ Architecture

Date:
4 December 2009 - 27 February 2010

Time:
11am - 10:30pm

Venue:
West Kowloon Waterfront Promenade

Category:
Arts Fairs / Bazaars

Description:
The 2009 Hong Kong & Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism \ Architecture will be held from 4 December 2009 through February 2010, with concurrent exhibitions in both Hong Kong and Shenzhen. Supported by the Hong Kong Home Affairs Bureau and the Shenzhen Municipal Government, the Biennale is currently the only urbanism \ architecture-themed international biennale in China and the only Bi-City biennale globally.

Since its inception in 2007 the Bi-City Biennale has established itself as a significant event in the architecture and design scene both in Asia-Pacific and globally.

Programme Highlights:

The Main Pavilion on the West Kowloon Waterfront site will feature an enormous paper tube construction designed by world renowned architecture firm, Shigeru Ban Architects. Daniel Wu, Edward Huang and Teddy Lo will be involved in an interactive installation that will host a series of performances. The site will also challenge concepts of eco-sustainability with the Gardening Society (BYOBotany), Eco Farm (BYOBirds), and Kadoorie Farm (BYOBeetroot), as well as bicycles and Segways (BYOBike).

Admission:
Free Admission

Getting There:
Exit from the lobby of "In-town Check-in Service" at MTR Kowloon Station. Cross the Nga Cheung Road and walk towards the bus stop at Western Harbour Crossing Toll Plaza via footbridge for a 10 mins walk.

Enquiry:
Tel: +852 2511 6323

Event Website:
www.hkszbiennale.org

PUBLIC LECTURE

on Globalization and Regional Practice held at the HK University in Pokfulam campus at 6: 30 pm on 30 Nov 2009 (Mon).

Event Website:

<http://www.hkia.net/en/Events/action.do?met hod=detail&mappingName=LocalEvent&id=402813c23ef40ee0123ef640c200011>

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG 香港大學
faculty of architecture 建築學院

Fall 2009

Lecture Series

Shanghai	Hong Kong	Speaker	Topic
7 Sept	4 Sept	Christopher Lee	Working in Scale
	16 Sept	Michael Rock	Formaldehyde
	18 Sept	Yan Meng	The Specific Place in a Generic City
25 Oct	23 Oct	Lars Müller	Building Books
	2 Nov	Antoine Picon	Digital Culture and Architecture: A Theoretical and Practical Challenge
	2 Nov	Jesse Reiser & Nanako Umemoto	Reley Architecture
23 Nov	20 Nov	Ken Tadashi Oshima	East/West: In-Between Space
	25 Nov	Oren Saldie	Private Jokes, Public Places
	30 Nov	Xiaodong Liu	Globalization and Regional Practice

IN SHANGHAI
Time: 7:30 pm
All lectures will take place in the 2108 North Szechuan Road, Hong Kong District, Shanghai and will be followed by an informal reception.

IN HONG KONG
Time: 6:30 pm
All lectures will take place at Room 612, 4/F, Knowledge Building, The University of Hong Kong, Chung Yee Road, Shatin, New Territories.

* This Lecture will take place at Theater P2, Chung Yee Road, Shatin, New Territories, The University of Hong Kong. All lectures will be followed by an informal reception in Room 612, Faculty Office.

CPA (Construction Professional Association) will be the main sponsor and there will be other sponsors and donors for the HKU and for the AIA.

All lectures are open to the general public. For further information, please visit our website www.fao.hku.hk

project one: 5 postcards

urban narrative [30%]

Submit a photographic essay in the form of postcards [images/photographs].

A photographic essay aims to tell a story through the careful consideration for: the subject, the composition, arrangement and sequence of photographs.

The photographic essays make very specific comments about aspects of the city. They can either be in the form of purely photographic [untouched and not worked over] and/or photographs/images with captions, small annotations or written text.

The photographic essay must be threaded together by a common theme or subject. The sequential nature of the photos needs to be viewed in a specific way the order or manner in which the photos are to be read; individually or in whole or consecutively.

All photo essays are collections of photographs, but not all collections of photographs are photo essays. Photo essays often address a certain issue or attempt to capture the character of places and events.

READINGS

- > **"NARRASCAPE"**
- > **"From Urban Experiences to Architectural Narratives"**

SUBMISSION Requirements

A) FIVE x Postcards:

Postcard 1: built environment
[place + character]

Postcard 2: sensory
[experiential]

Postcard 3: urban object
[scale + micro/detail]

Postcard 4: your choice of subject

Postcard 5: your choice of subject

Consider the element of time, space, people, moment and place.

Postcard Format:

Panoramic format
200x115mm

Note postcards can either be landscape or portrait [Not both]

B) Written rationales:

Five short written rationales to accompany each postcard. This may take the form of:

- > a descriptive note
- > annotations, diagrams or annotated notes
- > poem

Written rationale format:

Panoramic format
200x115mm



Written Rationale

project two: reinterpret urban interventions [55%]

part 1 > tooling-up [pre-tour]

Identify a topic area of interest and undertake pre-tour research on your chosen topic in preparation for the work ahead.

Consider the selection of your topic in two ways:

- 1) The topic could be to develop your skill in a particular area: drawing, writing, imaging or reading.
- 2) The topic could be about connecting concept[s], notion[s] or a way[s] of thinking observed through the context of HK.

action:

- > research the topic
- > look for exemplars
- > build up a body of knowledge in the area
- > equip and gear yourself up for the task

Outcome:

- > a journal / job file
- > a format which is manageable for travelling around the city

part 2 > urban investigations

You should be now quite familiar with Hong Kong's urban characteristics across a number of themes.

Curtin based students working on the postcards/photographic essay would have started to observe Hong Kong's context and also be conscious of a possible topic. Hong Kong based students would already be familiar with the city but also be able to identify a topic of study. When choosing a topic to pursue you need to be informed as well as critical about your choice.

Hong Kong provides a unique urban contextual backdrop for you to read, experience and capture [REC > record]

You need to be reading the urban context framed through the theme as a way of identifying and interpreting urban opportunities. Possible themes are indicated on the next page. These themes will act as a lens in which to view the city and read it in a specific way.

Outcome:

- > a journal / job file
- > flip cards 200x115mm identifying key ideas

part 3 > design intervention[s]

The approach to part 3 will be to reinterpret the urban and cultural fabric of a place and space.

Informed by your theme select a site[s] in which you will need to know how your immediate site works at a micro scale within the city scale. Observe your site/place as a small microcosm of a much larger constituent.

Reinterpret aspects of your site to inform a number of small interventions.

Storyboarding of your design, set blue prints

visual journal [no smaller than an A4]
film
written +
format + choice

Outcome:

- > flip cards 200x115mm
- > The storyboarding or blue print of what you will be submitting as a final piece for the exhibition.

Possible topics of study

Tourism
Collage
Identity
Desire
Static and kinetic
The past
Eating
The city as theatre
Hawkers
Temples and shrines
Cemeteries
Monuments
Skins
Streetscapes
Textures
Materials
Way finding
Vernacular Architecture
Billboards
Heritage
Adaptive reuse
Architectural Typologies
Footpaths – journey
Place making
Parks and nature
Scale
Globalisation
Temporality
Polarities

project three: exhibition

showcase [15%]

The exhibition will be sometime in the early part of semester two [around February]. The exact date will be confirm at a later stage. John and I need to confirm all marks for this unit by Friday 22nd January 2010. We MUST have everyone submit their exhibition package by Wednesday 20 January 2010 on the blue carpet area. We will then store the work until the exhibition date.

Due date:

Wednesday 20 January 2010

at 12noon on the blue carpet area.

Submission requirements:

- i) Project 1 > 5 postcards + rationale
- ii) Project 2 > intervention[s]
- iii) Burn a disk with all your work saved on it
- iv) Journal / job file

reading one **NARRASCAPE**

is an International Research Network
funded by the UK's Arts & Humanities
Research Council (AHRC)

Urban Environment as Narrative System in
the UK and China

<http://www.narrascope.org/>

Today we live in a world of cities and urban environment has become a fundamental human condition. 'It is vital that we understand the impact of this urban growth on people and the environment, as the links between architecture and society become both more complex and more fragile.' (Tate Modern, 2007) An understanding of urban conditions, including the conflicts, values and memory as well as human experience of them, necessitates multidisciplinary approaches and offers a challenge to the arts and humanities.

Narrative is integral to human experience: on the one hand, we live in a world abounding with stories of various forms; on the other hand, narrative is one of the fundamental ways we organize and understand the world.

Narrative is one of the prior schemes that are 'actively used to organize and interpret a person's encounter with the environment, both internal and external.' (Polkinghorne, 1988) We inhabit new spaces by making, telling and enacting

stories; likewise spaces with sound stories are more intelligible and engaging for people.

Narrative offers a distinctive approach to understand how our knowledge and experience of the environment is constructed and in return, how to organize the environment that conforms to human experience and memory and facilitates human interactions with the environment.

This project will examine urban environments through investigations into the interaction between temporally structured narratives and their spatial configurations, in other words, to investigate how 'space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history.' (Bakhtin, 1981) This project aims at revealing the hidden 'narrative landscape' in urban environments as a collage of narrative strata corresponding to the natural ways of experiencing an environment, namely gaze, route and survey modes. This 'narrascope' provides an intermediary layer between the cognitive image of a 'legible city' and the creative geography of a 'ludic city'. Narrative landscape, with underpinning meanings and values, characterizes urban spaces on the one hand and instructs individual actions on the other. Urban narratives are patterns of a diachronic space.

The concept and methodology of 'narrascope' will be developed through

four multidisciplinary workshops with separate but correlated case studies. Digital media, especially moving images and virtual reality, with their extraordinary power in representing (and creating) human experience, will be employed and explored as the primary tools in presenting and developing urban 'narrascope'.

Urban Environment



Narrative Environment



Enquiry Methodology



reading two

From urban experiences to architectural narratives

By Vaso Trova

Dept. of Architecture, University of Thessaly, Greece

0. Introduction

Cities are a densely coded context for narratives of discovery and the recovery of experience. They have a capacity to act as condensers of information and to integrate assimilations of behaviours, people, styles, typologies, forms, ideas. Cities are comprehended through spatial practices. Movement in the city is a major practice which enables us to accumulate and organize urban experiences. It creates spatial narratives containing memories and views, specific places, objects, beginnings and ends, distances, shadows, buildings or parts of them, encounters, signs and panoramas. Urban space becomes intelligible through sequences of movement. Its complexity, mystery, splendour, rhythm, are revealed and interrelated through the route of the urban dweller.

Similarly to urban space, architectural space is perceived in terms of sequences and spatial practises. According to Jean Nouvel *“To erect a building is to predict and seek effects of contrasts and linkage through which one passes...in the*

*continuous sequence that a building is...the architect works with cuts and edits, framings and openings...screens, planes legible from obligatory points of passage”*ⁱ

This parallel is being used as the underlying idea for introducing first year students to Architectural studies at the Dept. of Architecture, University of Thessaly. The didactic approach takes for granted that students are accustomed, although rather unconsciously, to navigate into the urban context and to understand it's multi-layered and multi-informational structure. Therefore it tries to draw gains from previous experiences undervalued or thought to be completely irrelevant to students' expectations.

The idea of spatial narrative as structured by the student becomes the spine line for realizing that architecture is a complex structure, it exists in the dimension of time and movement, it becomes important not as an object of art but during a process of inhabitation and that it has the power to shape human practises.

1. Urban experience as spatial narrative

Routes and journeys are very fundamental ways people use to understand urban space and to make sense of it. They enable people to comprehend a complex structure (such as the city) and to familiarize with.

Journeys within the city can be seen as urban narratives. A road establishes a sequence, it opens possibilities of chance encounters, it can become the scope of an epic or the confines of a personal drama. It holds secrets and invites exploration or interpretation. Trees, the ground, a shop's window, crossings, advertisements, a large building or a yellow line, people's movements and gatherings, a glimpse through a window, the view of the sea, all can serve as emblems in this kind of narrative.

Sequencing, setting boundaries, revealing or concealing, gathering, opening etc are common cultural practises with strong spatial character found in all kinds of urban contexts as well as in design projects at different scales.

Walking recognises boundaries. Boundaries act as explicit signs of narration, separating the specific route from all the other places. Spatial elements (edges, openings, borders, walls), mark the thresholds to different venues, to different possibilities. Within its frame a spatial story involves places, events and actions, transitions from stasis to process. Urban routes can plot events and places into lines, create hierarchies, relate elements which have no relation whatsoever, construct scenario (someone is waiting in front of a yellow wall).

A concert poster is half hidden behind him. I have to twist to read it).

Urban space is perceived through the continuous action of movement, and it is being understood as a whole through the synthesis of various points of view and through the additions of those parts which are not seen but are understood to exist.

The urban experience has common qualities with a film's viewing. The architectural ensemble and the cine city share the framing of space and the succession of sites organized as shots from different viewpoints. Additionally, the elements of both are adjoined and disjoined by way of editing. Like film, the montage of spectatorial movements shapes architecture –apparently static – are framings of space and successions of sites which are organized as shots from different viewpoints. Additionally, these elements are adjoined and disjoined by way of editing. Like film, the experience of the city (as well as of any architectural ensemble) is shaped by the montage of spectator's movements.

2. Human body, mobility and spatial comprehension

Walking in a city means the employment of the body in the process of understanding space. It's a complex process, which involves both intellectual and physical activities.

The experience of movement into an urban context is not just a visual experience. It is based on contiguity between the human body and space more close and intense than a visual one.

According to Paul Valery ⁱⁱ it is through this miraculous subject (the human body) that people are able to participate to the surrounding material world by touching and seeing and exchanging contacts and breaths with it.



The perception of space is being realized through the movement of the body. This does not mean just its general progress from one point to another. It also includes all kinds of tours and detours, long views and short glimpses, sounds and smells, stops and runs. In other words, all those functions of the human body which enable people to perceive the world.

3. The city as encyclopaedia

Urban context offers us an unlimited variation of spatial elements. Enclosures, openings, boundaries, thresholds, edges, passages, landmarks are some of the numerous categories one can name. These general categories are taking form through material constructions, objects, walls, windows, corridors, gates, facades etc.

They are being materialized intentionally (ie an enclosure produced by a room's walls) or unintentionally (ie enclosures produced by lorries parked at a parking lot). Spatial formations can be permanent (such as the room) or ephemeral (such as the parked lorries).

Spatial properties refer to characteristics of the spatial elements such as geometric structures, order and disorder, horizontality, verticality, linearity, centrality, strength or weakness of boundaries, voids or overflows, transparencies, whole or fragmented views, light and shadow, multi layering, continuities and discontinuities and their constant interplay.

4. Representation: Transforming the experience into spatial patterns

Multiple representations of the individual urban routes is a key issue which links the theoretical approach to spatial understanding. Diagrams, sketches, models, photographs and montage are techniques used not just to envisage the urban narratives but to reveal and organize spatial properties and surveyed movements.

Representation is a complex process. It does not refer just to techniques but to ways of translating observed situations and abstract ideas into material products. It's a process we set up not just to express existing knowledge but to think through it.



Cities as coded context for narratives of discovery

Conventional documentation, mapping - such as maps that totalize the representation of space - are not suitable means for representing this kind of urban narratives. Conventional maps erase the narrative actions, the journeys of discovery, the daily routines that produce the spatial patterns in the first place. According to De Certeau (121) only the cartouches of certain old maps that depict explorer's ships, travellers or surveyors' hind at this experiential dimension.

Complex representation techniques such as diagrams, models or photographic collage and three dimensional abstract models seem to be much more appropriate to represent the interplay of moving and fixed elements. Films can be important in the process of develop representation

techniques for this kind of data. One could experiment with analogies drawn from cinema. Cinematic framing, sequencing, disjunction, fragments of events and superimposition are all techniques which could be employed in architectural education.

In this process of representation outcomes should be partial and unfinished. They constitute gateways to something not yet formulated.

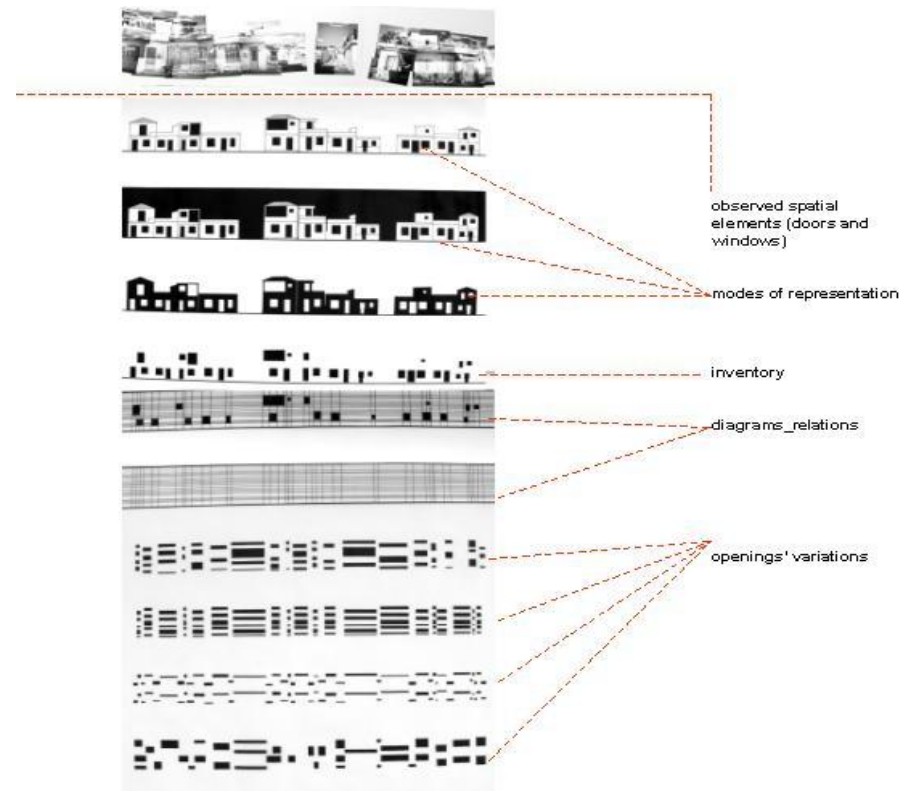
5. The studio process

The first semester studio has 14 weeks duration. It is organized in two weekly studio sessions, four hours each. The process is structured in four phases. Each one has a individual outcome which creates the essential ground for the next phase of work.

Project 1: The spatial inventory

Students begin with walking in specific urban areas trying to establish an inventory of spatial elements. As stated above, enclosures, openings, boundaries, thresholds, edges, passages, landmarks, nature fractures, etc are some of the elements students identify and arrange in catalogues. Organizational criteria are of crucial importance. Students have to define those spatial similarities and differences that justify the element's entry into the catalogue. Location and relative position are also of importance.

Students use mainly photographs to identify and present the elements they choose. Additionally they use sketches or plans as a way to isolate the elements they focus on (fig.)

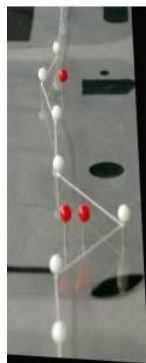


Facades' opening (doors and windows) are the basic elements of this inventory. The student has analysed the relative position of the elements and this analysis has led her into the creation of grid variation (student: Th. Makri).

Project 2: The human action inventory

The second inventory refers to human actions. It aims to facilitate students to understand the crucial relation between the human body and space. Students watch people walking, sitting, exchanging, dancing, waiting, constructing and they are asked to analyse both the variations of the actions (ie different ways of *waiting*) and the process of each action (ie skateboarding.)

Photographic shots remain the basic tool for representing their selections. Additionally they use plans and small abstract models (fig) to represent the relation between spatial elements and actions observed.



Routes and journeys

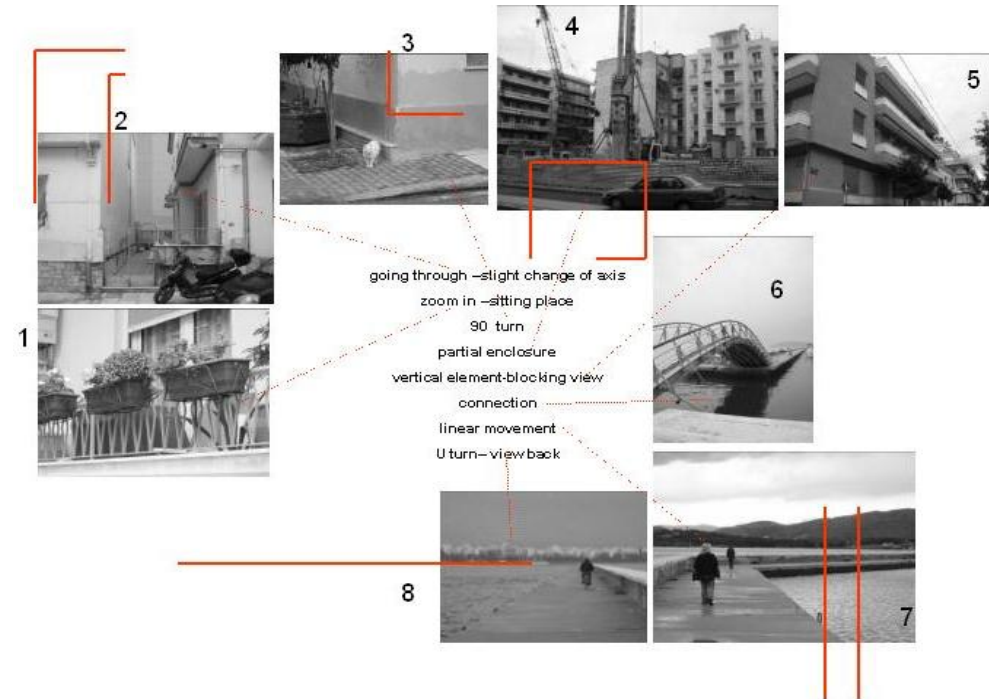
Sarvani_Pavlou, 1st year, 1st semester, 2003



Maps and abstract models of walking people relate the action to the space where the action has been observed (students N. Sarvani, E. Paulou, 2003)

Project 3: The route

This phase aims at exploring a variation of actions within space. It introduces the notion of narrative as a continuation of movement in space, which contains episodes. Students are encouraged to



experience the city as framings of space and succession of sites organized as shots from different viewpoints. In this stage films become an important tool, which helps students to structure their perceptions and peripatetics.

As G. Bruno argues film spectatorship is a practice of space that is dwelt in as in the built environment. The itinerary of such a practice is similarly drawn by a visitor to a city who also engages the anatomy of the streets as he traverses different urban configurations. This multiplicity of perspectives resembles to a montage of “travelling” shots with diverse viewpoints

and rhythms. Changes in the height, size, angle and scale of the view, as well as the speed of the transport, are embedded in the very language of filmic shots, editing and camera movements. Travel culture is written in the techniques of filmic observationⁱⁱⁱ

During this stage students are walking for an hour in the city according to a set scenario (ie exploring the city as a flaneur, acquiring the role of a thief who seeks hiding places, assuming the role of a tourist trying to establish the identity of the city, etc).

Representing this process includes also stages of representation. First photographs and maps are used to describe the crucial points of the narrative. Then diagrams and abstract models are employed to define spatial elements and actions observed.

Project 4: Introducing programmatic limitations and design variations

Up to this stage students have been introduced to the idea of spatial narrative incorporated in the urban experience. Moreover they have been introduced to the notion that spatial narratives can be analysed in spatial elements and human actions and that the students can use a variety of abstract forms to represent them.

In this final phase students are asked to design a small architectural structure which will be based on the ideas they have developed through their analysis. First they are introduced to the idea that architecture is neither a static structure not simply just built. Like all tangible artefacts, it is actually constructed, imaged, lived and manipulated. Like a film architecture it is constantly traversed by the histories both of its inhabitants and its transient dwellers^{iv}. Seen in this way, architecture and the city reveal their ties. In both cases relations are established between places and events that form and transform the spatial narratives (of the city or of the building).

An architectural structure (as the city) becomes imaged as narrative as sites are

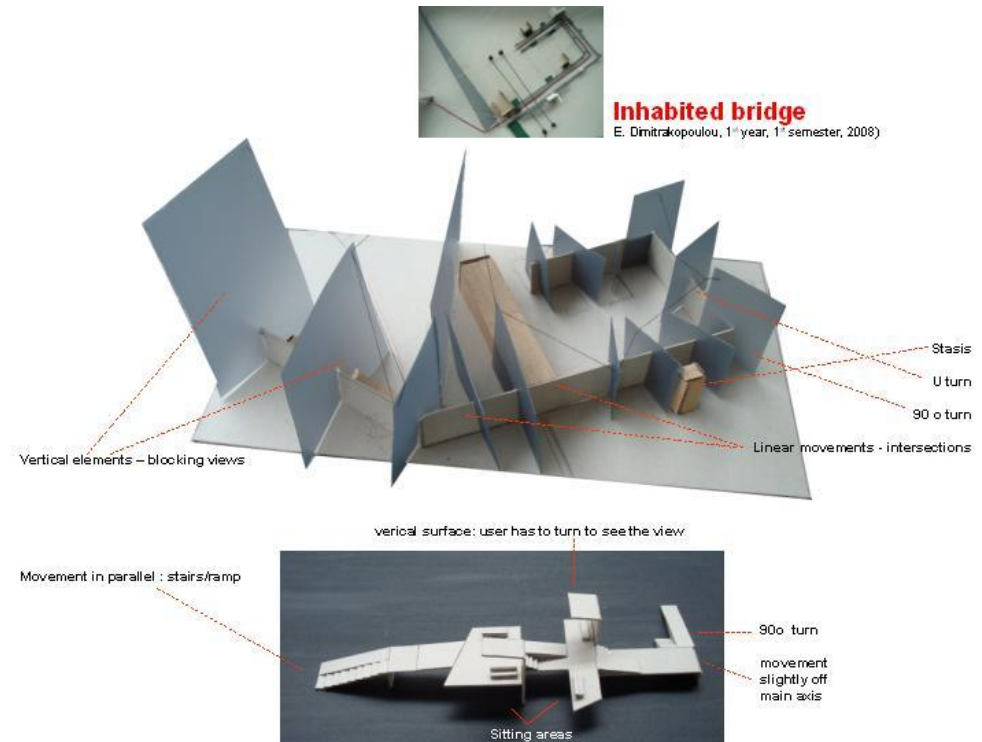
transformed by the sequence of movements of its traveller – dweller. In this sense the idea of “architectural programme” is extended to include all kinds of spatial practises. Activities and functions, rhythms of movement, explorations, points of view generated along the moving inhabitant’s route, are all-important programmatic elements.

For this final project students have to design an architectural structure up to 100 sq m which will incorporate functional, visual, or other kinds of elements (ie relation with the nature, light and shadow,

surprises, tensions and calms, scales, distances, etc) observed through the previous stages. This could be a small building, a landscape design, a structure in a playground, etc.

Each student is encouraged to develop his or her own programme for the new structure. In order to facilitate them using their previous observations we guide them towards projects where movement is an important programmatic element (ie exhibition spaces).

Example: Final Project I: The inhabited bridge (student: E. Dimitrakopoulou)



Information derived during the city walking is being used to produce a complex programme for a small bridge.

Observations mainly focused on the multiple ways the human body accustoms itself to the spatial context while walking. During the specific route high buildings were blocking the mountain and sea views. The observed had to turn his body (to turn his head or to move off axis, to stop etc) to be able to fulfil his desire.

The bridge project incorporates these observations. The movement of the body becomes a major programmatic component. The user is not allowed to go across straight away. He is forced to go slightly off route so that he can enjoy all kind of views while being provided with the opportunity to sit for a while.

Example: Final Project II: Small exhibition space (student: T. Dimitrakopoulos)

The observations of the previous stage focused on differentiations of accessibility during the night, when a place is not fully illuminated. The student commented on the magic that it is created by the interplay of darkness and light in a public square and he noticed the different ways people are navigating according to the time of the day.

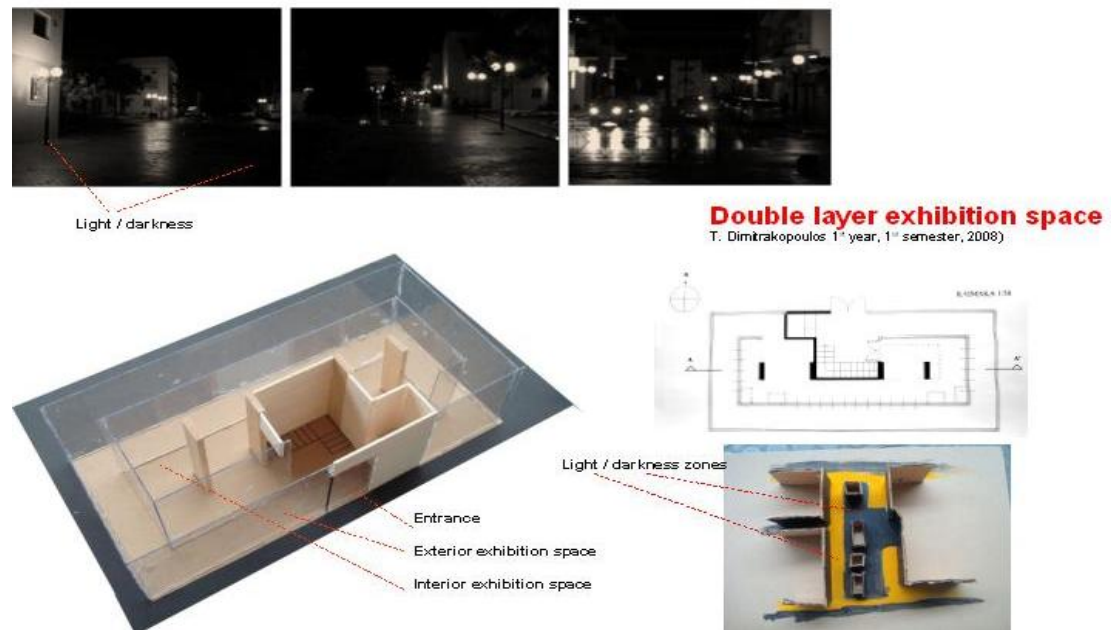
These observations led to the design of a small exhibition space with two zones. One is internal and it can be darkened if needed. The other one is external with a glass wall and it is always illuminated.

Depending on the exhibition these zones can function together (as in daylight) thus unifying the whole space or separately (as

6. Conclusions

For introducing students to architectural studies, the use of narrative grounded in lived experience, seems to offer an alternative to typological or formal approaches.

The idea of “urban narrative” is the spine line of the educational methodology



in darkness) providing different routes and views. The interplay of light and darkness and the possibilities of moving between the two have become the major programmatic elements of the new structure.

employed to introduce students to architectural studies during the first semester at the Dept. of Architecture, UTH. Lived experience and films are used as two educational strongholds which enable students to perceive and comprehend spatial qualities as well as the relation between human actions and space.

Urban narratives offer a crucial first step towards the understanding of the spatial qualities of architectural spaces. They present an easily handled parallel to architectural narratives and therefore to architectural design. Cities can be seen as series of *urban rooms* which are explored through the sequence of the visitor's movement and which have properties making them habitable or inhabitable.

Similarly to cities, architectural structures (be them buildings, objects or landscapes), are presented as places of experiencing life, places to be appreciated from inside out, through a complex process of moving, acting, exploring and discovering.

The process is not without difficulties. Students are impatient to enter the field of design straight away and they do not understand the value of the subsequent analysis and representation phases as a crucial part of the design process. On top of that they encounter difficulties in working with abstractions. They would prefer to be taught certain techniques so that they would have quick results instead of being asked to think and evaluate what they see. During the last four years that this approach has been implemented at UTH we think that certain points have been made.

First, it has been declared that innovative design ideas and abilities are not an inherent quality of some of the students but a knowledge which can be developed

through methodologies of education. It has been strongly argued that ideas are around us, in the real world ready to be perceived and reworked to produce something new.

Second, architectural design has been presented as a process instead of an outcome. Intermediate phases have been valued more than the final project. Ideally (if the studio lasted for a year instead of a semester) variations of a final project should replace the production of a single one. Within this process multiple representation techniques have been shown as of crucial importance as they have been used to formulate (and not to express) ideas.

Finally, the significance of the relation between the user and space has been stated. Architecture is not a work of art, perceived and enjoyed from a distance. On the contrary, it is space enveloping us, guiding our movements and forming our actions.

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- ² Eupalinos: L'ame et la danse: dialogue de l'arbre, Paris, Gallimard, 19443
- ³ G. Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film*, Verso, 2002, p.62
- ⁴ Op.cit. p.66

Source: <http://hdl.handle.net/1853/29135>

Enric Miralles: Architecture of Time

Luis Diego Quiros, Stefanie MaKenzie,
Derek McMurray

Introduction

There are, said Lichtenberg, two ways of prolonging life. The first consists in putting the maximum distance between the points of birth and death, and thereby extending the journey...The other way consists in walking more slowly, leaving the points where God desires them to be; this is the way of the philosophers, who have discovered that the best thing is to walk in a zigzag, botanizing and trying to jump a ditch here, and further on, where the ground is bare and nobody sees them, performing a somersault.¹

It is this zig-zag way that Catalan architect Enric Miralles chose to live and explore in his architecture. Through his career and partnerships with wives Carmen Pinos and, later, Benedetta Taglibue, Enric Miralles was concerned with the relation between life, time and architecture. Or, as this article states, with exploring an architecture of time.

In a *time architecture*, as Miralles called it, his work becomes a machine to collect time. Accordingly, a work of architecture does not exist forever as one specific entity, unchanged. Miralles' architecture

lives through constant additions and new variations, because as he stated

*To be permanent is contrary to existence. Things are forever changing.*²

Miralles also believed that throughout an architect's career, every aspect of his personal and professional life was influential to his own projects. For him, architecture is not about fixed theories or ideas. He understood and believed that philosophy is the search for wisdom, thus, his life and projects are not related to fixed models. Rather, as he said, he became an architect because of his curiosity to discover. As Miralles stated, he simply wanted to learn and change with knowledge:

*...architects work by assembling groups of ideas, images and requirements. No project can be produced in isolation. At various stages in an architect's career, each design, rather than simply existing as a project in itself is, therefore, also used experimentally by the architect, from which new ideas can be developed...*³

For Miralles, an architect's learning process can be divided into three stages. The first is seeing and studying a particular building. The second is one's actual interpretation and relationship with the building -which affects the way one absorbs architecture and how one applies this experience. These lead to a third stage, the moment when the architect can offer something in return.

This is an idea directly related to the project to be analyzed: The Igualada Cemetery and the regenerative process implicit in the work.

Through the analysis of the Igualada Cemetery the article intends to demonstrate that in an architecture of time, the journey -in life, time and space- is what matters. A journey that in Miralles architecture is conceived to be both experiential and referential at the same time. Experiential because one experiences the instant. Referential because this present experience is referred to previous or future events, thus bringing together different moments in time.

The Journey

Through history, many have referred to life as a journey. In this *voyage* everybody is free to take his own path; people experiment the world the way they want to. But two things will always be present: space and time. Architecture, according to Miralles, is a companion of mankind through this journey, consequently it should refer not only to the space we live in, but also, to time. For Miralles, the architect becomes a collector of time and space.

In the project for the Igualada Cemetery, in Barcelona, Miralles was presented with the opportunity to explore the concept of time in architecture. The first stage of the design process produced two decisions. First, to deal with the pre-existing conditions of the

site as a way of dealing with its past and with the memories embedded in it. Second, to study the history and meanings of *places for burials* and to apply them as part of the *collective memories* nurtured by generations. The Cemetery became a long man-made path, built as part of the landscape, through which people experience different spaces and instants while moving. Memories and meaningful places along the way make the users travel through time in their minds, remembering moments while at the same time experiencing the present. Experience of space and reference to other events are achieved at the same time.

Contemporary architectural settings are usually experienced as having their origin in singular moments of time. They evoke an experience of flattened or rejected temporality. Yet, the existential task of architecture is to relate us to time as much as to space... The mental roles of these two fundamental existential dimensions are curiously reversed. In terms of space, we yearn for specificity, whereas in our temporal experience we desire a sense of continuity. Consequently, architecture has to create a specificity of space and place, and at the same time, evoke the experience of temporal continuum.[4](#)

Miralles' architecture achieves this *specificity of space and continuum of time* incorporating both, time and space, through images, knowledge and experiences of the past, the present and

the future. Miralles believed that an architecture of time is composed of various and diverse ways of experiencing *layers of time*.

The Catalan architect believed that persons collect layers of time as they move through time and space. In this sense, the journey, became the most important element in Miralles's architecture. He suggests about his work:

In temporary architectures I explore the idea of the journey. Through the journey you arrive at the idea of variations and you learn that these are as important as the final results... The end result is no more than a more defined vibration that grows out of all changes that have been between the initial project and the final construction. In its very formation, architecture incorporates the idea of the journey, of the variable.[5](#)

It is movement through space in time (the journey) that reveals the arresting layers of space found in Miralles architecture. As one moves through his spaces, one collects instants in time. Each moment one experiences a different form, a different view, a different space.

This **layers** of time are also found in Miralles's drawings. In just a few drawings Miralles didn't draw human figures to represent the relationship between architecture and person. Instead, he drew a line representative of the human

experience of the place, his movement. For him, plans are the most important drawings because he is able to show the journey, the timely expression of how a person would experience that particular space:

The experience of walking may be seen as a kind of writing on the surface of the ground. It is a trace of movement which seem to discover a particular place. Fragments of various hypothetical movement patterns generate a geometry that becomes woven into reality in such a way that it is capable of engendering new shapes. These traces occupy the entire space.[6](#)

As one moves through the Igualada Cemetery, different spaces are reveal. Through procession of space and time the participant experiences the work of Miralles. Passing the threshold of the cemetery the descent along the journey begins. The entrance to the Cemetery is on a curved platform located at a higher level to the rest of the site. Visitors pass through two splayed strut's which have been likened to the crosses on Calvary. The Chapel is to the left. Rows of burial niches guide the visitor within and below the site, where the final space is revealed. For Miralles, each step of the way is related to an instant, each fragment of the journey is meaningful. In the Igualada project he achieved one of his ideas:

TIME becomes a precise place where to think about a form. [Z](#)

Referential and Experiential Time

In the Cemetery every space was designed to provoke thoughts, memories. As movement takes place, meaningful views are exposed. The spaces evoke recollections of past events and important moments. It is the relationship between the actual experience and its reference to something else, through which Miralles generates his Time Architecture. Time is presented in both experiential and referential ways. They both work together.

Experiential time is concerned with the present, with the actual events that take place while the person is in the Cemetery. It is the sensory experience the person undergoes while moving and being in the cemetery's spaces. These experiences produce bodily and mental processes that relate to the instant just lived. There is no deep reaction, it takes place in seconds. Different from the passing of thoughts and memories through the mind, it is an instinctive response.

Experiential architecture is about the path, about movement. It is the process from which the moments that are indicative of the referential elements in Miralles architecture appear. It is just through movement that one discovers the cemetery:

Although the design is one of fluidity with shapes that direct the viewer through the architecture, the actual feeling of movement that pervades it can only be truly experienced as one moves within the space itself. [8](#)

For the Igualada Cemetery Miralles designed different experiences for different moments. The journey starts at the top, where the whole project can be viewed. The procession starts here and then moves through different floor textures: gravel, wood, concrete and pavers. They all follow a natural order, as planting and soil would do in a mountain path (such as the one the cemetery is on.) The rough ground seems and feels as if eroded by the rain. The stillness of the paths allows the visitor to feel loneliness, privacy, as well as the sense that one is discovering a place that has been forgotten.

The openness at the end of the path, plus the changes in the floor textures, makes the visitor feel different. This final opening in the site, housing the mausoleums, forms a parallel with the chapel and the mortuary buildings located in the entrance. Its circularity re-shapes the existing contours of the land, and by using stone from the excavation, Miralles returned the material to the original site. The feeling is that of being embedded by the site, of being surrounded.

To show this layering of experiences, in his drawings for the cemetery, Miralles overlapped sections and plans as they would appear during the procession. Singular moments of time are emphasized; particular spatial experiences he wanted the person to go through are given more importance. His drawings didn't follow an orthogonal composition, he overlapped them in order to achieve a relationship between the path and the three dimensional-spatial experience. As he explained his design process also departed from this idea:

I believe that one of the most characteristic things about my work is that I never have a priori idea of the space I am trying to create; I always posit some kind of ground plan as a point of departure, rather than working from elevations or three-dimensional configurations I am much more attuned to the idea of a productive accumulation in plan rather than to working in section. [9](#)

Accumulation is what Miralles looked for. The actual experience of a building linked to a previous reference of meaning is what produces new discoveries, what generates the architect's knowledge. Experiential time is complimented by referential time, becoming one through the present journey.

Referential time is the way in which Miralles's projects allude to other instants in time: past and future made present. It is

how memories and meanings are brought to the actual moment. He does this in two ways: by making reference to his previous works and experiences (both his own and others) and by incorporating the historical and cultural past of the region and site where the project is located.

Referential architecture is made of instants and images that bring back memories and significance to the actual experience. It is the process of thinking and then reacting, it is a escape from reality to memory. This is why in all his projects metaphors and meanings are applied to architectural elements such as materials and site.

In the Iguale Cemetery everything is significant, every small detail is full of meaning. The idea of the passing of time is continuous throughout the project. From the initial concept, that of a project that blends with the site, not just by its design, but by the growing trees that will cover it in the future; to the materials used: layers of excavated soil held together by a mesh of steel that will rust through time, changing its color; wood on the floor meant to weaken and change its appearance; lamps and plaques designed to deteriorate: everything is changing in time. Miralles did not try to control time, but evolve with it and its ever changing characteristics:

Rather than intervening on the land, here is a built work that now awaits intervention by its changing natural environment. [10](#)

For Miralles, the Iguale project is referential to a metaphorical statement. The conceptual foundation of the cemetery lies in the framework of passing of time. But the challenge manifested itself not in the ideal of the passing of time, but in the avoidance of death closely associated with cemeteries as well as finality. The metaphysical relationship between the living and dead takes place as the *necropolis* or city of dead becomes place for the living and mortal time unfolds spatially.

Integrating the living, the procession adopts a social landscape involving street like form and communal spaces; relationships such as man-architecture, architecture-site, site-landscape and thus, man-landscape are forced to refine themselves within this valley of the dead, in which the cemetery emulates the path of life and landscape of time.

Ultimately, Miralles hopes for the cemetery to: display an acceptance of the cycle of life to enable a link between the past, the present, and the future [11](#) was achieved.

Conclusions: Miralles's Time Architecture

It seems, observe the architects (Miralles and his partner Benedetta Tagliabue), that who speaks last is right. It appears that the latest building is the only that can be spoken of. For this reason it's difficult to make a leap forward in time and act as

sensors of the future. Our solution is to always say the same thing, or almost the same. We propose small variations in a work which does not take that the building has a sense of finality, a temporal status, but which believes that a project is made of unconnected instants, which communicate things that are independent of each other, which are superimposed... but which appear equal. At times only the person who's capable of consistently starting and making the same movement seems to advance. This small vibration may say something about the future. [12](#)

An architecture of time incorporates not just present sensory and mental experiences, but makes present instants in past or future times. With his architecture Miralles related time and space, to create an eternal and real present by remembering the past and making the future of his work become the basis for a continuous time experience.

The Iguale Cemetery is an example of his proposals, and the construction of its chapel could even be read as a metaphor for the whole work; it seems to summarize the concept for the project, remaining unfinished even today. The cemetery is a place that blends with the site, not just spatially but temporally, renewing its memories and past. A project that expresses the changing of time through its materiality and which puts the visitors in contact with the meaning of their very personal journeys their lives.

Many questions may arise from his approach to architecture, from his way of relating everything to a time experience. What about timeless experience? Isn't there moments where you felt that an instant was eternal? Or instants that last in time in your head? But overall, what is found in Miralles architecture is his philosophy of life: a search for wisdom through the journey, through life. Miralles architecture shows his own understanding of what life is: an experience in both time and space.

In the year 2000, Miralles was buried in the Igualada Cemetery, becoming part of its history, part of the space, but more important, part of its changing time.

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Other Readings

> **The Death of American Cities_Jane Jacob** **Cities as Ecosystems**

Jacobs approached cities as living beings and ecosystems. She suggested that over time, buildings, streets and neighbourhoods function as dynamic organisms, changing in response to how people interact with them. She explained how each element of a city - sidewalks, parks, neighbourhoods, government, economy – functions together synergistically, in the same manner as the natural ecosystem. This understanding helps us discern how cities work, how they break down, and how they could be better structured.

The Death and Life of Great American Cities Book: *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* is her single-most influential book and possibly the most influential American book on urban planning and cities. Widely read by both planning professionals and the general public, the book is a strong critique of the urban renewal policies of the 1950s, which, she claimed, destroyed communities and created isolated, unnatural urban spaces.

Jacobs advocated the abolition of zoning laws and restoration of free markets in land, which would result in dense, mixed-use neighborhoods and frequently cited New York City's Greenwich Village as an example of a vibrant urban community.

Robert Caro has cited it as the strongest influence on *The Power Broker*, his Pulitzer-winning biography of Robert Moses, though Caro does not mention Jacobs by name even once in the book despite Jacobs' battles with Moses over his proposed Lower Manhattan Expressway.

Beyond the practical lessons in city design and planning that *Death and Life* offers, the theoretical underpinnings of the work challenge the modern development mindset. Jane Jacobs defends her positions with persuasive common sense and undeniable anecdote.

> **Framing Places_Kim Dovey**

"Framing Places" investigates how the built forms of architecture and urban design act as mediators of social practices of power. The author contends that the nature of architecture and urban design lend them to practices of coercion and seduction, thus legitimizing authority and control over civilian populations.

The book draws from a broad range of social theories and deploys three primary analyses of built form: analysis of spatial structure; interpretation of constructed meanings; and, interpretation of lived experience. These approaches, to program, text and place, are woven together through a series of narratives on specific places and types of environment, such as Berlin, Beijing and Canberra.

> **Christopher Alexander**

Book: *The Timeless Way of Building* described the perfection of use to which buildings could aspire.

There is one timeless way of building. It is a thousand years old, and the same today as it has ever been. The great traditional buildings of the past, the villages and tents and temples in which man feels at home, have always been made by people who were very close to the center of this way. It is not possible to make great buildings, or great towns, beautiful places, places where you feel yourself, places where you feel alive, except by following this way. And, as you will see, this way will lead anyone who looks for it to buildings which are themselves as ancient in their form, as the trees and hills, and as our faces are.

Book: *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction* described a practical architectural system in a form that a theoretical mathematician or computer scientist might call a generative grammar. The work originated from an observation that many medieval cities are attractive and harmonious. The authors said that this occurs because they were built to local regulations that required specific features, but freed the architect to adapt them to particular situations.

The book provides rules and pictures, and leaves decisions to be taken from the precise environment of the project. It describes exact methods for constructing practical, safe and attractive designs at every scale, from entire regions, through cities, neighborhoods, gardens, buildings, rooms, built-in furniture, and fixtures down to the level of doorknobs.

A notable value is that the architectural system consists only of classic patterns tested in the real world and reviewed by multiple architects for beauty and practicality.

> **Bernard Tschumi**

Tschumi's winning entry for the 1982 Parc de la Villette Competition in Paris became his first major public work and made possible an implementation of the design research and theory which had been rehearsed in *The Manhattan Transcripts* and *The Screenplays*. Landscaping, spatial and programmatic sequences in the park were used to produce sites of alternative social practice that challenged the expected use values usually reinforced by a large urban park in Paris.

Tschumi has continued this design agenda in a variety of competitions and built projects since 1983. The 1986 Tokyo National Theater and Opera House project continued the research that Tschumi began in *The Manhattan Transcripts*, importing notational techniques from experimental dance and musical scores, and using the design process itself to challenge habitual ways of thinking about space, in contrast to earlier static, two dimensional representational techniques which delineated the outline of a building but not the intensity of life within it. At a local scale in his 1990 Video Pavilion at Groningen, transparent walls and tilted floors produce an intense dislocation of the subject in relation to norms like wall, interior and exterior, and horizon. At the urban scale in such projects as the 1992 Le Fresnoy, Studio National des Arts Contemporains, in Tourcoing, France, and the 1995 architecture school at Marne la Vallée, France (both completed 1999), larger spaces challenge normative program sequence and accepted use. The Le Fresnoy complex accomplishes this by its use of the space between the roofs of existing buildings and

an added, huge umbrella roof above them which creates an interstitial zone of program on ramps and catwalks. This zone is what Tschumi calls the in-between, a negation of pure form or style that had been practiced in the 1989 ZKM Karlsruhe competition project, where a large atrium space punctuated by encapsulated circulation and smaller program episodes developed a more local network of interstitial space.

The capacity of an overlap of programs to effect a reevaluation of architecture on an urban scale had also been tested in the 1988 Kansai Airport competition, Lausanne Bridge city, and 1989 Bibliothèque de France competition. In the Bibliothèque de France, a major aspect of the proposed scheme was a large public running track and sports facility on the roof of the complex, intersecting with upper floors of the library program so that neither the sports program nor the intellectual program could exist without an impact on the other.

With these projects Tschumi opposed the methods used by architects for centuries to geometrically evaluate facade and plan composition. In this way he suggested that habitual routines of daily life could be more effectively challenged by a full spectrum of design tactics ranging from shock to subterfuge: by regulating events, a more subtle and sophisticated regime of defamiliarizations was produced than by aesthetic and symbolic systems of shock. The extreme limit-conditions of architectural program became criteria to evaluate a building's capacity to function as a device capable of social organization.

Tschumi's critical understanding of architecture remains at the core of his practice today. By arguing that there is no space without event, he designs conditions for a reinvention of living, rather than repeating established aesthetic or symbolic conditions of design. Through these means architecture becomes a frame for "constructed situations," a notion informed by the theory, city mappings and urban designs of the Situationist International. Responding to the absence of ethical structure and the disjunction between use, form, and social values by which he characterizes the postmodern condition, Tschumi's design research encourages a wide range of narratives and ambiances to emerge and to self organize. Although his conclusion is that no essentially meaningful relationship exists between a space and the events which occur within it, Tschumi nonetheless aligns his work with Foucault's notion that social structures should be evaluated not according to an apriori notion of good or evil but for their danger to each other. In this way, Tschumi's work is ethologically motivated, in the sense that Deleuze uses the term to propose an emergent ethics that depends on a reevaluation of self/identity and body.

Freedom is thus defined by the enhanced range of capacity of this extended body/self in conjunction with an extended self awareness. By advocating recombinations of program, space, and cultural narrative, Tschumi asks the user to critically reinvent him/herself as a subject.

- > **Manuel Castells**
The sociologic work of Prof. Manuel Castells Oliván synthesises empirical research literature with combinations of urban

sociology, organization studies, internet studies, social movements, sociology of culture, and political economy. About the origins of the network society, he posits that changes to the network form of enterprise predate the electronic internet technologies (usually) associated with network organisation forms (cf. Castells and Organization Theory). Moreover, he coined the (academic) term "The Fourth World", denoting the sub-population(s) socially excluded from the global society; usual usage denotes the nomadic, pastoral, and hunter-gatherer ways of life beyond the contemporary industrial society norm. In the 1970s, following the path of Alain Touraine (his intellectual father), Castells was a key developer of the variety of Marxist urban sociology that emphasises the role of social movements in the conflictive transformation of the city, (cf. post-industrial society). He introduced the concept of "collective consumption" (public transport, public housing, et cetera) comprehending a wide range of social struggles — displaced from the economic stratum to the political stratum via state intervention. Transcending Marxist strictures in the early 1980s, he concentrated upon the role of new technologies in the restructuring of an economy. In 1989, he introduced the concept of the "space of flows", the material and immaterial components of global information networks used for the real-time, long-distance co-ordination of the economy. In the 1990s, he combined his two research strands in *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, published as a trilogy, *The Rise of the Network Society* (1996), *The Power of Identity* (1997), and *End of Millennium* (1998); two years later, its world-wide,

favourable critical acceptance in university seminars, prompted publication of a second (2000) edition that is 40 per cent different from the first (1996) edition. *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture* comprehends three sociologic dimensions — production, power, and experience — stressing that the organisation of the economy, of the state and its institutions, and the ways that people create meaning in their lives through collective action, are irreducible sources of social dynamics — that must be understood as both discrete and inter-related entities. Moreover, he became an established cybernetic culture theoretician with his Internet development analysis stressing the roles of the state (military and academic), social movements (computer hackers and social activists), and business, in shaping the economic infrastructure according to their (conflicting) interests. The *Information Age* trilogy is his précis: "Our societies are increasingly structured around the bipolar opposition of the Net and the Self"; the "Net" denotes the network organisations replacing vertically-integrated hierarchies as the dominant form of social organization, the Self denotes the practices a person uses in reaffirming social identity and meaning in a continually changing cultural landscape.

- > **Genius Loci_Christian Norberg-Schulz**
Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture
- > **Aldo Rossi**
The Architecture of the City (*L'architettura della città*, 1966) and *A Scientific Autobiography* (*Autobiografia scientifica*, 1981).
- > **Lebbeus Woods**

The majority of his explorations deal with the design of systems in crisis: the order of the existing being confronted by the order of the new. His designs are politically charged and provocative visions of a possible reality; provisional, local, and charged with the investment of their creators. He is best known for his proposals for San Francisco, Havana, and Sarajevo that were included in the publication of *Radical Reconstruction* in 1997.

Architecture and war are not incompatible. Architecture is war. War is architecture. I am at war with my time, with history, with all authority that resides in fixed and frightened forms. I am one of millions who do not fit in, who have no home, no family, no doctrine, no firm place to call my own, no known beginning or end, no "sacred and primordial site." I declare war on all icons and finalities, on all histories that would chain me with my own falseness, my own pitiful fears. I know only moments, and lifetimes that are as moments, and forms that appear with infinite strength, then "melt into air." I am an architect, a constructor of worlds, a sensualist who worships the flesh, the melody, a silhouette against the darkening sky. I cannot know your name. Nor you can know mine. Tomorrow, we begin together the construction of a city.

> **Henri Lefebvre**

Lefebvre dedicated a great deal of his philosophical writings to understanding the importance of (the production of) space in what he called the reproduction of social relations of production. This idea is the central argument in the book *The Survival of Capitalism*, written as a sort of prelude to *La production de l'espace* (1974) (*The*

Production of Space). These works have deeply influenced current urban theory, mainly within human geography, as seen in the current work of authors such as David Harvey and Edward Soja, and in the contemporary discussions around the notion of Spatial justice. Lefebvre is widely recognized as a Marxist thinker who was responsible for widening considerably the scope of Marxist theory, embracing everyday life and the contemporary meanings and implications of the ever expanding reach of the urban in the western world throughout the 20th century. The generalization of industry, and its relation to cities (which is treated in *La pensée marxiste et la ville*), *The Right to the City* and *The Urban Revolution* were all themes of Lefebvre's writings in the late 1960s, which was concerned, amongst other aspects, with the deep transformation of "the city" into "the urban" which culminated in its omni-presence (the "complete urbanization of society").

In his book *The Urban Question* (translated into English very early, in contrast with Lefebvre's works), Manuel Castells heavily criticizes Lefebvre's theoretical arguments contained in the books published in the 1960s about the contemporary city from a Marxist standpoint. Castells' criticisms of Lefebvre's subjective approach to Marxism echoed the structuralism school of Louis Althusser, of which Lefebvre was an early critic. Many responses to Castells are provided in *The Survival of Capitalism*, and some may argue that the acceptance of those critiques in the academic world would be a motive for Lefebvre's effort in writing the long and theoretically dense *The Production of Space*.

In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre contends that there are different levels of space, from very crude, natural space ('absolute space') to more complex spatialities whose significance is socially produced ('social space').

Lefebvre's argument in *The Production of Space* is that space is a social product, or a complex social construction (based on values, and the social production of meanings) which affects spatial practices and perceptions. As a Marxist philosopher (but highly critical of the economicist structuralism that dominated the academic discourse in his period), Lefebvre argues that this social production of urban space is fundamental to the reproduction of society, hence of capitalism itself. Therefore, the notion of hegemony as proposed by Antonio Gramsci is used as a reference to show how the social production of space is commanded by a hegemonic class as a tool to reproduce its dominance.

"(Social) space is a (social) product [...] the space thus produced also serves as a tool of thought and of action [...] in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power."

Lefebvre argued that every society - and therefore every mode of production - produces a certain space, its own space. The city of the ancient world cannot be understood as a simple agglomeration of people and things in space - it had its own spatial practice, making its own space (which was suitable for itself - Lefebvre argues that the intellectual climate of the city in the ancient world was very much related to the social production of its spatiality). Then if every society produces its

own space, any "social existence" aspiring to be or declaring itself to be real, but not producing its own space, would be a strange entity, a very peculiar abstraction incapable of escaping the ideological or even cultural spheres. Based on this argument, Lefebvre criticized Soviet urban planners, on the basis that they failed to produce a socialist space, having just reproduced the modernist model of urban design (interventions on physical space, which were insufficient to grasp social space) and applied it onto that context:

"Change life! Change Society! These ideas lose completely their meaning without producing an appropriate space. A lesson to be learned from soviet constructivists from the 1920s and 30s, and of their failure, is that new social relations demand a new space, and vice-versa."

> **Life Between Buildings_Jan Gehl**

Gehl first published his influential *Life Between Buildings* in Danish in 1971, with the first English translation published in 1987. Gehl advocates a sensible, straightforward approach to improving urban form: systematically documenting urban spaces, making gradual incremental improvements, then documenting them again.

Gehl's book *Public Spaces, Public Life* describes how such incremental improvements have transformed Copenhagen from a car-dominated city to a pedestrian-oriented city over 40 years. Copenhagen's [Strøget](#) carfree zone, the longest pedestrian shopping area in Europe, is primarily the result of Gehl's work. In fact, Gehl often uses the phrase '[copenhagenize](#)' to describe his vision of how urban centres

can embrace bicycle culture and urban cycling.

> **Kevin Lynch**

Lynch's most famous work, *The Image of the City* published in 1960, is the result of a five-year study on how users perceive and organize spatial information as they navigate through cities. Using three disparate cities as examples (Boston, Jersey City, and Los Angeles), Lynch reported that users understood their surroundings in consistent and predictable ways, forming mental maps with five elements:

- *paths*, the streets, sidewalks, trails, and other channels in which people travel;
- *edges*, perceived boundaries such as walls, buildings, and shorelines;
- *districts*, relatively large sections of the city distinguished by some identity or character;
- *nodes*, focal points, intersections or loci
- *landmarks*, readily identifiable objects which serve as reference points

In the same book Lynch also coined the words "imageability" and "wayfinding". *Image of the City* has had important and durable influence in the fields of urban planning and environmental psychology.

> **Charles Landry**

Charles Landry coined the term *the creative city* in the late 1980s in response to the dramatic economic and social changes happening at that time. He argues that in such changing circumstances creativity at every level is required to address and adapt appropriately. He posits that conditions need to be created for people to think, plan and act with imagination in harnessing opportunities or addressing seemingly intractable urban problems. This means a

city needs to embed a *culture of creativity* in the way it operates and to infuse how all of its organizations operate. Initially there was a focus on the contribution of the arts and the creative industries in driving innovation in cities and helping to make them distinctive. Increasingly he has emphasized how the organizational culture needs to change to unleash the potential, resources and assets of a city. Traditional hierarchical structures restrict ideas generation and rethinking.

He contrasts the urban engineering approach to cities with creative city making. In the former there is a focus on the physical infrastructure or the hardware of the city, in the latter equal attention is paid to both hardware and software issues. *Software* is the human dynamics of a place, its connections and relationships as well as atmosphere.

In his follow up book *The Art of City Making* he discusses "the sensory landscape of cities" and how creativity needs to change its focus and be linked to an ethical foundation. This he calls being creative "for the world" so cities give something back to the wider community. He argues that the popularity of the term *creativity* is in danger of hollowing out the concept and making it meaningless. A main focus of creativity should be on addressing global issues and behavioral issues such as climate change or the balance between rich and poor. In addition a role of creativity is to help make cities more distinctive given the danger of homogeneity and global branding.

Address book



Curtin University [Bentley Campus]
Kent Street, Bentley
<http://www.curtin.edu.au/>

Curtin Corporate Risk & EduSafe
<http://corporaterisk.curtin.edu.au/>
Corporate Risk Manager
Phone: 08 9266 3951

The Curtin Corporate Travel insurance policy covers staff for domestic and international travel and students for international travel (excluding student exchange and study abroad arrangements) on authorised University business.
http://corporaterisk.curtin.edu.au/travel_risk_management/

Frequently asked questions with regards to Curtin insurance:
<http://travelinsurance.curtin.edu.au/viewFAQ.cfm?subjectID=149>



Partner University in Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Space [HKU Space]
11/F, Fortress Tower, 250 King's Road, North Point, HK.
<http://hkuspace.hku.hk>



Accommodation in Hong Kong: Courtyard by Marriott Hong Kong
167 Connaught Road West, Hong Kong [0.48km to HKU SPACE]
Phone: +852 3717 8888
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www.courtyardhongkong.com



Malaysian Airlines' Perth:
56 William Street **Perth**, Western Australia 6000. Phone (08) 9263 7007. Reservations 132 627.
Arrival & Departures (08) 9344 1688
www.malaysiaairlines.com

Malaysian Airlines' Hong Kong:
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Admin: +852 2916 0066
Fax: +852 2868 4080
Business Hours: Mon – Fri, 0830-1730
www.malaysiaairlines.com



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<http://www.hkia.net/en/Home/Index.htm>



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23/F Harbour Centre
25 Harbour Road, Wan Chai
Hong Kong -China (People's Republic of China)
Telephone: +852 2827 8881
Fax: +852 2585 4457
Website:
<http://www.hongkong.china.embassy.gov.au/>



Hong Kong Designers Association
Unit 216A, InnoCentre,
72 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon Tong,
Kowloon, Hong Kong
Telephone 2527 3968
Facsimile 2527 5468
Email info@hongkongda.com

The Australian Government's travel advisory and consular assistance service

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

Summary

- We advise you to be alert to your own security in Hong Kong.
 - Exercise common sense and look out for suspicious behaviour, as you would in Australia.
 - Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 has spread throughout the world. The World Health Organisation (WHO) provides useful information for individuals and travellers on its <http://www.who.int/en/>. For further information and advice to Australians, including on possible quarantine measures overseas, see our http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/TravelBulletins/Health-Swine_Influenza on Pandemic (H1N1) 2009.
 - Be a smart traveller. Before heading overseas:
 - I. organise comprehensive http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/travel_insurance.html and check what circumstances and activities are not covered by your policy
 - II. <https://www.orao.dfat.gov.au/orao/weborao.nsf/homepage?Openpage> your travel and contact details, so we can contact you in an emergency
 - III. <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/accounts> to this travel advice to receive free email updates each time it's reissued.
- 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre:
1300 555 135 within Australia (local call cost) or
+61 2 6261 3305 from outside Australia.
- Top Ten Travel Tips:
1. **Check the latest travel advice** for your destination and subscribe to receive free e-mail notification each time the travel advice for your destination is updated.
 2. **Take out appropriate travel insurance** to cover hospital treatment, medical evacuation and any activities, including adventure sports, in which you plan to participate.
 3. **Before travelling overseas register your travel and contact details online** or at the local Australian embassy, high commission or consulate once you arrive, so we can contact you in an emergency.
 4. **Obey the law.** Consular assistance cannot override local laws, even where local laws appear harsh or unjust by Australian standards.
 5. Check to **see if you require visas for the country or countries you are visiting or transiting**. Be aware that a visa does not guarantee entry.
 6. **Make copies** of your passport details, insurance policy, traveller's cheques, visas and credit card numbers. Carry one copy in a separate place to the originals and leave a copy with someone at home.
 7. **Check with health professionals** for information on recommended vaccinations or other precautions and find out about overseas laws on travelling with medicines.

8. **Ensure** your passport has at least six months' validity from your planned date of return to Australia. Some countries will refuse entry on arrival and some airlines will not allow passengers to board flights if their passport does not meet this requirement. Before travelling, you should contact the Embassy or High Commission of each country you intend to visit to confirm the entry requirements.
9. **Leave a copy of your travel itinerary** with someone at home and keep in regular contact with friends and relatives while overseas.
10. Before departing Australia check whether you are regarded as a national of the country you intend to visit. **Research whether holding dual nationality has any implications for your travel.**

Safety and Security

Terrorism

Terrorism is a threat throughout the world. You can find more information about this threat in our General Advice to Australian Travellers.

Crime

There is little violent crime in Hong Kong. There have been reported incidents of drinks being spiked, particularly in bars in the Wanchai area, with the intent of robbery and identity theft. You should ensure that anything you drink cannot be tampered with.

Petty crime, such as pick pocketing and bag-snatching occurs, particularly in crowded shopping areas and on public transport.

Emergency Helpline

Since December 2008, there have been a small number of incidents in various areas of Sai Yeung Choi Street, Mong Kok, where small amounts of acid, similar to drain solvent, were dropped onto pedestrians from nearby buildings. Travellers should exercise caution when visiting those areas.

Robberies of and attacks on tourists have increased in Shenzhen, a popular destination for day shopping trips from Hong Kong, located in neighbouring Guangdong province in mainland China. If your passport is lost or stolen while in Shenzhen, you must obtain a replacement passport (the nearest Australian Consulate-General is in Guangzhou) and a Chinese visa in order to exit the Chinese mainland and return to Hong Kong. This could delay your return to Hong Kong by up to five working days. When travelling to Shenzhen, you should keep some cash and photocopies of your passport and other documents identifying you separate from other personal belongings. There have been robberies and assaults on hiking trails in Hong Kong's parks. You are more vulnerable to robbery or assault if you walk alone or venture off marked trails.

Airline Safety

Passengers on international flights to and from Australia are only allowed to carry a small amount of liquids (including aerosols and gels) in their carry-on baggage. You can find out more information at the [Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government](#) website. Similar restrictions apply to flights in an increasing number of countries. Passengers travelling through the International Airport in Hong Kong may be asked to surrender duty-free alcohol, perfume and cosmetics and other items exceeding 100ml in their carry-on baggage. Contact your airline for further information.

If you have concerns about the safety standards of a particular airline or aircraft, we recommend you research the airline or aircraft through organisations such as Australia's [Civil Aviation Safety Authority](#) and the [International Civil Aviation Organisation](#) (ICAO). The [Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government](#) has published fact sheets on security for air travellers. When staff at Australia's overseas missions are advised not to use particular airlines due to safety concerns, this will be included in the travel advisory.

The [European Union](#) (EU) has published a list of airlines that are subject to operating bans or restrictions within the EU. The [United States Federal Aviation Administration](#) (FAA) through its foreign assessment program focuses on a country's ability, not the individual airline, to adhere to international standards and recommended practices for aircraft operations and maintenance established by ICAO.

Natural Disasters, Severe Weather and Climate

Typhoon season is usually from June to September. The direction and strength of typhoons can change with little warning. In the event of an approaching typhoon, you should identify your local shelter. Flights into and out of affected areas may be delayed or suspended. Available flights may fill quickly. You should contact your airline about flight information. The typhoon could also affect access to sea ports in the region. In some areas, adequate shelter from a severe typhoon may not be available to all who may choose to stay. You should familiarise yourself with your hotel or cruise ship evacuation plans. You should carry your travel documents (e.g. passports, photographic IDs) or secure them in a safe, waterproof location. You should also keep

friends and family in Australia advised of your welfare and whereabouts.

A well-developed weather alert and monitoring system is available from [the Hong Kong Observatory](#). Monitor local media reports and follow the instructions of local emergency officials. For further information, see our [Travel Bulletin: Severe Weather – Cyclones, Hurricanes and Typhoons](#).

Wildlife

Australians are advised to respect wildlife laws and to maintain a safe and legal distance when observing wildlife, including marine animals and birds. You should only use reputable and professional guides or tour operators and closely follow park regulations and wardens' advice.

Money and Valuables

Before you go, organise a variety of ways to access your money overseas, such as credit cards, travellers' cheques, cash, debit cards or cash cards. Australian currency and travellers' cheques are not accepted in many countries. Consult with your bank to find out which is the most appropriate currency to carry and whether your ATM card will work overseas.

Make two photocopies of valuables such as your passport, tickets, visas and travellers' cheques. Keep one copy with you in a separate place to the original and leave another copy with someone at home.

While travelling, don't carry too much cash and remember that expensive watches, jewellery and cameras may be tempting targets for thieves.

As a sensible precaution against luggage tampering, including theft, lock your luggage.

Information on luggage safety is available from Australia's [Civil Aviation Safety Authority](#).

Your passport is a valuable document that is attractive to criminals who may try to use your identity to commit crimes. It should always be kept in a safe place. You are required by Australian law to report a lost or stolen passport. If your [passport](#) is lost or stolen overseas, report it [online](#) or contact the nearest [Australian Embassy, High Commission or Consulate](#) as soon as possible.

You are required to pay an additional fee to have a lost or stolen passport replaced. In some cases, the Government may also restrict the length of validity or type of replacement passports.

Local Laws

When you are in Hong Kong, be aware that local laws and penalties, including ones that appear harsh by Australian standards, do apply to you. If you are arrested or jailed, the Australian Government will do what it can to help you but we can't get you out of trouble or out of jail. Information on what Australian consular officers can and cannot do to help Australians in trouble overseas is available from the [Consular Services Charter](#).

Laws prohibiting demonstrations without government approval are strictly enforced. If arrested, you could be imprisoned or deported.

Hong Kong has strict laws regarding the import and/or possession of weapons and items that may resemble weapons, including replicas, antiques or toys. The laws apply to individuals in Hong Kong as well as those simply transiting Hong Kong airport on their way to another destination. The laws apply to items in hand-carried luggage or checked luggage, including

luggage in transit. Items including genuine, replica, antique or toy guns and firearms, bullet casings or shells, knuckle-dusters, ninja throwing stars, nun chucks, flick knives and jewellery or fashion accessories that resemble such items are strictly illegal unless permits for their import and possession have been obtained from local authorities beforehand. Travellers found in possession of such items will be subject to arrest and, if found guilty, may face a fine of up to HK\$100,000 or 14 years imprisonment or both.

Penalties for possession of illegal drugs, including 'soft-drugs', include heavy fines and imprisonment. You should avoid taking photographs of military installations.

Some Australian criminal laws, such as those relating to money laundering, bribery of foreign public officials, terrorism and child sex tourism, apply to Australians overseas. Australians who commit these offences while overseas may be prosecuted in Australia.

Australian authorities are committed to combating sexual exploitation of children by Australians overseas. Australians may be prosecuted at home under Australian child sex tourism laws. These laws provide severe penalties of up to 17 years imprisonment for Australians who engage in sexual activity with children under 16 while outside of Australia.

Information for Dual Nationals

Under Chinese law, dual nationality is not recognised. However, Hong Kong's basic law allows dual nationals of Chinese descent to register their Australian nationality with the Hong Kong Immigration Department, if they wish to be considered as a national of Australia. Doing so would ensure access to Australian consular service, if required. If you are an Australian/Hong Kong dual national, you are

advised to seek further information on completing a Declaration of Change of Nationality, and the consequences of this, from the [Hong Kong Immigration Department](#). Our brochure on [Travel Information for Dual Nationals](#) provides further information for dual nationals.

Entry and Exit Requirements

Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region (SAR) and has separate immigration regulations from those of the People's Republic of China. Visa and other entry and exit conditions (such as currency, customs and quarantine regulations) change regularly. We strongly encourage you to seek information from the [Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Immigration Department](#) well in advance of your intended travel date. Currently, three-month visas for Hong Kong are issued to travellers with Australian passports on arrival.

Before travelling, you can obtain visa information at the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Level 1, Hong Kong House, 80 Druiett Street, Sydney (tel: 02 9283 3222) and online at www.hketosydney.org.au. If you are already in Hong Kong and have enquiries about Hong Kong visa matters, you can visit the Hong Kong SAR Immigration Department at 7 Gloucester Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong, (tel: (852) 2824 6111) or online at www.immd.gov.hk

If you are entering the Hong Kong SAR from the People's Republic of China, you may be required to obtain a new visa to re-enter the People's Republic of China.

If you plan to enter mainland China from Hong Kong, you should do so on your Australian passport. If you travel on other documents, we may not be able to provide you with consular assistance as China does not recognise dual nationality. You are strongly encouraged to

contact the nearest Chinese embassy or consulate for detailed information. We strongly recommend you get an appropriate visa for China before leaving Australia. You should also read our travel advice for [China](#).

As a preventative measure against Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), avian influenza and Pandemic (H1N1) 2009, local quarantine measures on entry into Hong Kong include a body temperature check. Depending on results, further medical examinations may be required.

Make sure your passport has at least six months' validity from your planned date of return to Australia. You should carry copies of a recent passport photo with you in case you need a replacement passport while overseas.

Health Issues

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 has spread throughout the world. The World Health Organisation (WHO) provides useful information for individuals and travellers on its [website](#). For further information and advice to Australians, including on possible quarantine measures overseas, see our [travel bulletin](#) on Pandemic (H1N1) 2009.

We strongly recommend that you take out comprehensive [travel insurance](#) that will cover any overseas medical costs, including medical evacuation, before you depart. Confirm that your insurance covers you for the whole time you'll be away and check what circumstances and activities are not included in your policy. Remember, regardless of how healthy and fit you are, if you can't afford travel insurance, you can't afford to travel. The Australian Government will not pay for a traveller's medical expenses overseas or medical evacuation costs.

Your doctor or travel clinic is the best source of information about preventive measures, immunisations (including booster doses of childhood vaccinations) and disease outbreaks overseas. The [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) provides information for travellers and our ['Travelling Well' brochure](#) also provides useful tips for travelling with medicines and staying healthy while travelling overseas.

Hong Kong has a wide range of medical services and facilities of a high standard. Costs can be considerably more expensive than in Australia. Private hospitals will insist on confirmation of insurance cover, guarantee of payment or an up-front deposit before admitting patients.

The levels of air pollution in Hong Kong may aggravate bronchial, sinus or asthma conditions. People with existing heart or respiratory illnesses should reduce physical exertion and outdoor activities on days when very high pollution levels are recorded. The [Hong Kong Environmental Protection Department](#) provides up-to-date air quality reports on its website.

Outbreaks of the mosquito-borne illnesses dengue fever and Japanese encephalitis occur from time to time. We recommend you take measures to avoid mosquito bites, including using insect repellent.

The mosquito-borne disease Japanese encephalitis is found throughout many regions of North, South and South-East Asia and Papua New Guinea. A Japanese encephalitis vaccine is registered for use and is currently available in Australia. For further details please consult your travel health doctor.

Water-borne, food-borne and other infectious diseases (including tuberculosis, hepatitis and Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease) occur

sporadically. We encourage you to consider having vaccinations before travelling. We recommend that you avoid raw and undercooked food. In rural areas, it is recommended that all drinking water be boiled or that you drink bottled water, and that you avoid ice cubes. Seek medical advice if you have a fever or are suffering from diarrhoea.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is common in Hong Kong with more serious outbreaks occurring from time to time. In Asia, outbreaks of HFMD usually start in March/April and peak in May but can continue until August to October each year. It mostly affects children under the age of 10 years but adult cases (particularly young adults) are not unusual. The illness is characterised by fever as well as blisters and rashes on the hands, feet and buttocks. HFMD is spread by direct contact with nose and throat discharges and faeces of infected people. Normal hygiene precautions should be taken including careful and frequent hand washing.

Avian influenza: There have been human deaths from avian influenza in mainland China since October 2005. Outbreaks of avian influenza amongst wild birds in Hong Kong have been reported. The Department of Health and Ageing advises Australians who reside in Hong Kong for an extended period to consider, as a precautionary measure, having access to influenza antiviral medicine for treatment. Long term residents are at a greater risk of exposure to avian influenza over time. You should seek medical advice before taking antiviral medicines. Australians intending to travel to Hong Kong for shorter periods are at much lower risk of infection but should discuss the risk of avian influenza with their doctor as part of their routine pre-travel health checks.

If the avian influenza virus mutates to a form where efficient human-to-human transmission occurs, it may spread quickly and local authorities could move quickly to impose restrictions on travel. Australian travellers and long-term residents in Hong Kong should be prepared to take personal responsibility for their own safety and well-being, including deciding when to leave an affected area and ensuring they have appropriate contingency plans in place. Australians in Hong Kong should monitor the travel advice and [bulletin](#) for updated information and advice, and ensure that their travel documents, including passports and visas for any non-Australian family members, are up to date in case they need to depart at short notice.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) has confirmed cases of avian influenza in birds in a number of countries throughout the world. For a list of these countries, visit the [OIE website](#). For information on our advice to Australians on how to reduce the risk of infection and on Australian Government precautions see our [travel bulletin](#) on avian influenza.

Where to Get Help

In Hong Kong, you can obtain consular assistance from the:

Australian Consulate General
23/F Harbour Centre, 25 Harbour Road
Wanchai, Hong Kong
Telephone: (852) 2827 8881
Facsimile: (852) 2585 4457
Website:

<http://www.hongkong.china.embassy.gov.au/>

If you are travelling to Hong Kong, whatever the reason and however long you'll be there, we encourage you to register with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. You can register [online](#) or in person at any [Australian Embassy](#).

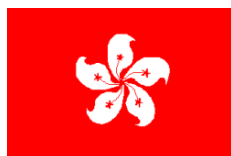
[High Commission or Consulate](#). The information you provide will help us to contact you in an emergency-whether it is a natural disaster, civil disturbance or a family issue.

In a consular emergency if you are unable to contact the Consulate-General you can contact the 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre on +61 2 6261 3305 or 1300 555 135 within Australia. In Australia, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra may be contacted on (02) 6261 3305.



<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/china/hong-kong/>

Introduction to Hong Kong



Rumours of Hong Kong's demise have been greatly exaggerated. More than 10 years after its handover from Britain to China, this entrepreneurial, irrepressible and singular trading city is booming again.

After plagues real, financial and political, normal service has resumed. This tiny territory is punching well above its size and weight once more, only these days with a self-confidence it never had under its former masters. Hong Kong has never been busier. Nor has it ever felt as comfortable with its status, as a part once again of its original motherland but separate, too, largely governing its own affairs and much better off for it. Almost 7 million people call a territory of 1100 sq km home, squeezing onto only 10% of the available land space. A flood of mainland and international visitors, meanwhile, crowds in to see what all the fuss is about. Multitudes seek standing or sitting room here, bringing with them smog, odour, clutter and clatter.

Hong Kong means different things to different people. For some it is the view from the Peak by

day or Hong Kong Island's skyline by night as the skyscrapers flush their neon rainbows, competing like tetchy cuttlefish to out-display each other. It can be about a lingering morning of tea and bite-sized dim sum, or a multidish Chinese banquet. Others – hikers, birders, climbers – say nothing beats the Hong Kong countryside for its beauty, facilities and accessibility.

It is all these things, of course; a city of teeming streets and empty wilderness, dazzling modernity and traditional observances. Brash, buccaneering and Westernised, yet conservatively minded and Chinese to its core, Hong Kong surprises, delights and confounds with its cheerful contradictions and energetic inconsistency.

Both Hong Kong and Macao have a subtropical climate characterised by hot, humid summers and cool, relatively dry winters.

October, November and most of December are the best months to visit. Temperatures are moderate, the skies are clear and the sun shines. January and February are cloudy and cold but dry. It's warmer from March to May, but the humidity is high, and the fog and drizzle can make getting around difficult. The sweltering heat and humidity from June to August can make sightseeing a sweaty proposition, and it is also the rainy season. September is a grand month if you like drama; the threat of a typhoon seems to loom every other day.

The very informative **Hong Kong Observatory** (2926 8200; www.hko.gov.hk; 134A Nathan Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui) issues weather reports on 1878 200 and on its website. The hotline for cyclone warnings is 2835 1473.

Bus & tram

Bus

You can reach virtually any major destination in neighbouring Guangdong province by bus from Hong Kong. With KCR East Rail services so fast and cheap, however, few buses call on Shenzhen proper, though most of the big hotels run minivans to and from that destination for around \$100 one way. One-way fares from Hong Kong to other mainland destinations include Changsha \$280, Dongguan \$70 to \$100, Foshan \$100, Guangzhou \$80 to \$100, Huizhou \$100, Kaiping \$130, Shantou \$180 to \$200, Shenzhen's Huangtian airport \$150, Xiamen \$370 and Zhongshan \$100 to \$150.

Buses are run by a multitude of transport companies and depart from locations around the territory; the list that follows is only a sampling. Schedules vary enormously according to carrier and place, but buses leave throughout the day and departures are frequent.

CTS Express Coach (2764 9803, 2365 0118; ctsbus.hkcts.com) Buses depart from locations throughout Hong Kong, including the CTS **Wan Chai branch** (2832 3888; Southorn Centre, 130-138 Hennessy Rd) on Hong Kong Island and from just south of the CTS **Mong Kok branch** (2789 5888; 62-72 Sai Yee St) in Kowloon.

Eternal East Cross Border Coach (3412 6677, 3760 0888; 13th fl, Kai Seng Commercial Centre, 4-6 Hankow Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui; 7am-8pm) Buses leave from just outside the Hang Seng Bank next door.

Motor Transport Company of Guangdong and Hong Kong (GDHK; 2317 7900) Buses bound for destinations throughout Guangdong leave from the **Cross-Border Coach Terminus** (2317 7900; Ground fl, Hong Kong Scout Centre, 8 Austin Rd,

Tsim Sha Tsui; 6.30am-7pm), which is entered from Scout Path.

Trans-Island Chinalink (2336 1111; www.trans-island.com.hk) Buses depart from Prince Edward MTR next to the Metropark Hotel. Cars and vans leave from Portland St opposite the Hotel Concourse Hong Kong.

In addition, at Chek Lap Kok buses run by **CTS Express Coach** (2261 2472), **Eternal East Cross Border Coach** (2261 0176) and **Trans-Island** (2261 0296; www.trans-island.com.hk) link Hong Kong International Airport with many points in southern [China](#), including Dongguan (\$100), Foshan (\$150 to \$220), [Guangzhou](#) (\$100 to \$200) and Shenzhen (\$100 to \$180).

Air

Competition of sorts is driving prices down slightly but expect to pay a premium to fly between Hong Kong and [China](#) as the government regulates the prices. Depending on the season, seats can be difficult to find due to the enormous volume of business travellers and Chinese tourists, so book well in advance. Some sample adult return fares valid for a year from Hong Kong are [Beijing](#) \$2520, [Chengdu](#) \$1970, [Kunming](#) \$1890 and [Shanghai](#) \$2200. One-way fares are a bit more than half the return price.

You should be able to do better than that, however, on both scheduled and charter flights, especially in summer. If you plan to fly to a destination in [China](#) from Hong Kong, you can save at least 30% on the above fares by heading for Shenzhen by bus or ferry and boarding the aircraft at Huangtian airport there.

Departure tax

The \$26 departure tax levied when leaving Hong Kong by sea is usually included in the ticket price.

Land

The only way in and out of Hong Kong by land is to cross the 30km border with mainland [China](#). The options for surface travel to and from [China](#) have increased dramatically since the handover, with buses and trains departing throughout the day to destinations as close as Shenzhen and as far as [Beijing](#). Travelers' should be aware that, although the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) is an integral part of [China](#), visas are still required to cross the border to the mainland.

The border crossing at Lo Wu opens at 6.30am and closes at midnight. The crossing at Lok Ma Chau is open round the clock. The terminus of the new KCR spur line connects to the new Shenzhen Metro system at Huanggang station via a pedestrian bridge across the Shenzhen River.

Sea

Regularly scheduled ferries link the **China ferry terminal** (Canton Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui) in Kowloon and/or the **Macau ferry pier** (200 Connaught Rd, Sheung Wan) on Hong Kong Island with a string of towns and cities on the Pearl River Delta – but not central [Guangzhou](#) or Shenzhen.

TurboJet (2921 6688, 2859 3333; www.turbojet.com.hk) runs high-speed ferries (\$200, one hour) leaving the [China](#) ferry terminal for Fuyong ferry terminal (Shenzhen airport) five to seven times a day between 7.30am and 6pm. There are five return sailings from Fuyong (\$185) starting at 9am, with the last at 4.30pm. One boat a day leaves the [Macau](#) ferry pier in Central at 8am. Return sailings are at 5.50pm and 7.30pm.

CMSE Passenger Transport (2858 0909) runs some 13 Jetcats (day/night sailing \$110/145,

one hour) that link Hong Kong with Shekou, a port about 20km west of Shenzhen town and easily accessible by bus or taxi to the town centre, from 7.45am to 9pm daily. Seven of these (between 7.45am and 7pm) leave from the [China](#) ferry terminal in Kowloon, while the rest (9am to 9pm) go from the [Macau](#) ferry pier on Hong Kong Island. Return sailings from Shekou are from 7.45am to 9.30pm.

Zhuhai can also be reached from Hong Kong on seven ferries a day (\$177, 70 minutes) from the [China](#) ferry terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui (from 7.30am to 5.30pm) and on the same number from the [Macau](#) ferry pier in Sheung Wan (8.40am to 9.30pm) on ferries operated by the **Chu Kong Passenger Transportation Company** (2858 3876; www.cksp.com.hk). The 14 return sailings from Zhuhai (\$158) run between 8am and 9.30pm.

Chu Kong also has ferries from the [China](#) ferry terminal in Tsim Sha Tsui to a number of other ports in southern [Guangdong](#) province, including Humen (Taiping; \$177, 90 minutes, three a day at 9am, 1.45pm and 5.30pm), Kaiping (\$212, four hours, daily at 8.30am), Shunde (\$185, 110 minutes, six sailings between 7.30am and 6pm) and Zhongshan (\$196, 90 minutes, eight or nine sailings from 8am to 8pm).

Ferries run by **Expert Fortune** (2375 0688, 2517 3494) link the [China](#) ferry terminal with Nansha (\$138, five sailings daily) between 8am and 3.30pm, with return sailings (\$100) between 9.30am and 5pm or 5.30pm. One daily ferry departs from the [Macau](#) ferry pier at 8.20am.

Train

You can now book cross-border train tickets online via the website of **KCR** (www.it3.kcrc.com). You have to sign up, but it's a useful service. Reaching Shenzhen is a breeze.

Just board the KCR East Rail at East Tsim Sha Tsui station (1st/2nd class \$73/36.50) or at any other KCR East Rail station along the way (such as Hung Hom, Kowloon Tong or Sha Tin) and ride it to Lo Wu; [China](#) is a couple of hundred metres away. The first train to Lo Wu leaves East Tsim Sha Tsui station at 5.28am, the last at 11.05pm, and the trip takes about 40 minutes.

The most comfortable way to reach [Guangzhou](#) by land is via the Kowloon–[Guangzhou](#) express train (usually via Dongguan), which covers the 182km route in approximately 1½ hours. High-speed intercity trains leave Hung Hom station for [Guangzhou](#) East train station 12 times a day between 7.28am and 7.20pm, returning from that station the same number of times from 8.18am to 9.32pm. One-way tickets cost \$230/190 in 1st/2nd class for adults and \$115/95 for children aged five to nine. Adults/children are allowed one piece of luggage, weighing up to 20/10kg. Additional bags cost \$3.90 per 5kg.

There are also direct rail links between Hung Hom and both [Shanghai](#) and [Beijing](#). Trains to [Beijing](#) West train station (hard/soft sleeper from \$574/934, 24 hours) depart on alternate days at 3pm and travel via [Guangzhou](#) East, Changsha and Wuhan, arriving at 3.18pm the following day. Trains to [Shanghai](#) (hard/soft sleeper from \$508/825, 23 hours) also depart on alternate days at 3pm and pass through [Guangzhou](#) East and Hangzhou East stations, arriving at 1.38pm the following day.

There is one daily departure to Zhaoqing (adult/child \$235/117.50) via Dongguan, [Guangzhou](#) East and Foshan at 12.30pm, arriving in Zhaoqing at 4.27pm. The train departs Zhaoqing at 4.56pm, reaching Hung Hom at 8.53pm.

Immigration formalities at Hung Hom are completed before boarding; you won't get on the train without a visa for [China](#). Passengers are required to arrive at the station 45 minutes before departure. To reach Hung Hom station from Tsim Sha Tsui by public transport, take the KCR East Rail for one stop, bus 5C from the Star Ferry pier, or the green minibus 6 or 8 from Hankow Rd.

One-way and return tickets can be booked 60 days in advance through CTS, including at **CTS Hung Hom station branch** (2334 9333; 6.30am–8pm) and at KCR East Rail stations in Hung Hom, Mong Kok, Kowloon Tong and Sha Tin. Tickets booked with a credit card via the **Tele-Ticketing Hotline** (2947 7888) must be collected at least one hour before departure.

A cheaper but much less convenient option is to take the KCR East Rail train to Lo Wu (or to the Shenzhen Metro via Lok Ma Chau), cross through immigration into Shenzhen and catch a local train from there to [Guangzhou](#). There are frequent local trains (Y70, two hours) and high-speed trains (Y80, 55 minutes) throughout the day.

Costs

Hong Kong is a relatively pricey destination. Accommodation is the biggest expense, followed by drinking in Hong Kong's bars. On a very tight budget you could survive on, say, HK\$300 a day, but it would require a good deal of self-discipline. Better to budget something along the lines of HK\$600 if you want to stay in the better class of guesthouse or cheaper midrange hotel and do more than just eat bowls of noodles. If you want to sample the finer hotels and restaurants, you'll be paying the equivalent of most leading world cities. The real bargain compared to the likes of London and

even [New York](#) is the incredibly cheap taxi fares; in fact, transport generally is excellent value.

Prices here are quoted in Hong Kong dollars (\$). For current exchange rates see www.xe.com.

Tipping

Hong Kong isn't particularly conscious of tipping and there is no obligation to tip, say, taxi drivers; just round the fare up or you can throw in a dollar or two more. It's almost mandatory to tip hotel staff HK\$10–20, and if you make use of the porters at the airport, HK\$2–5 a suitcase is normally expected. The porters putting your bags on a push cart at Hong Kong or Kowloon Airport Express station do not expect a gratuity, though; it's all part of the service.

Most hotels and many restaurants add a 10% service charge to the bill. Check for hidden extras before you tip; some midrange hotels charge HK\$3–5 for each local call when they are actually free throughout the territory, and some restaurants consistently get the bill wrong. If using the services of a hotel porter, it's customary to tip them at least HK\$10.

Economy

Hong Kong finally began booming once again after a wretched, posthandover slump that saw property prices and the stock market tank and everyone from rich to poor become uncharacteristically bearish. The talk was that [Shanghai](#) was the new Asian world city and Hong Kong was doomed to remain a mere backwater.

It took several unexpected body blows to create this gloomy mood – a 1997 run on Asian currencies, September 11 2001 and the deadly SARS epidemic that virtually shut the place down.

You can't keep the irrepressible and hard-working citizens of Hong Kong down forever, though. As [China's](#) epoch-making rise continues, entrepreneurial Hong Kong rides its surging wave. It is once again [Asia's](#) preeminent city state, taking a fat tithe from its mainland trade in goods and finance. Its container port is busier than ever and its booming stock market continues to underwrite a historic series of mainland public flotations, its unique status and clear rule of law attracting significant deals and, increasingly, investment from the mainland away from [Shanghai's](#) exchange.

Hong Kong's Stock Exchange is the seventh largest in the world, with a market capitalisation of about US\$1.71 trillion. In 2006, the value of initial public offerings handled here was second highest in the world after London. The easing of travel restrictions from [China](#) to Hong Kong hasn't hurt either. Visitor numbers from the mainland have surged by half.

The fact remains, however, that while Hong Kong proudly trumpets its laissez faire economic policies, considerable sections of the economy, including transport and power generation, are dominated by a handful of cartels and monopolistic franchises. Nonetheless, Hong Kong's economy is by far the freest in [Asia](#), enjoying low taxes, a modern and efficient port and airport, excellent worldwide communications and strict anticorruption laws.

Critics would say that while Hong Kong's annual per capita GDP of US\$38,000 – the highest in [Asia](#), ranking fifth worldwide (compared to \$7600 in [China](#)) according to IMF figures – is less impressive than it looks. The distribution of such wealth is far from even. Hong Kong has more billionaires than most other countries, but many more people who struggle to meet much more than fairly basic levels of subsistence.

Hong Kong has moved from labour- to capital-intensive industries in recent decades – service industries employ about 85% of Hong Kong's workforce and make up more than 88% of its GDP. Telecommunications, banking, insurance, tourism and retail sales have pushed manufacturing into the background, and almost all manual labour is now performed across the border in southern [China](#). The shift from manufacturing to services has not been without problems.

The change may have seen a dramatic increase in wages, but there has not been a corresponding expansion of the welfare state. On the other hand generous personal tax allowances mean only a little more than 40% of the working population of 3.54 million pays any salaries tax at all and a mere 0.3% pays the full 16%.

Hong Kong has traditionally suffered from a labour shortage. Most of the manual work (domestic, construction etc) is performed by imported labour, chiefly from Southeast Asia. The labour shortage is most acute in the high-tech and financial fields, prompting the government to consider further relaxing restrictions on importing talent from the mainland, a move deeply unpopular with Hong Kong's working class.

Money ATMs

Hong Kong Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) can be found almost everywhere and are usually linked up to international money systems such as Cirrus, Maestro, Plus and Visa Electron. Some HSBC so-called Electronic Money machines offer cash withdrawal facilities for Visa and MasterCard holders; American Express (Amex) cardholders have access to Jetco ATMs and can withdraw local currency

and travellers cheques at the Express Cash ATMs in town.

Changing money

One of the main reasons why Hong Kong has become a major financial centre is because it has no currency controls; locals and foreigners can bring/send in or take out as much money as they like.

Banks in Hong Kong generally offer the best rates, though two of the biggest ones – Standard Chartered and the Hang Seng Bank – levy a \$50 commission for each transaction on nonaccount holders. Avoid HSBC where this charge is \$100. If you're changing the equivalent of several hundred US dollars or more, the exchange rate improves, which usually makes up for the fee.

There are licensed moneychangers, such as Chequepoint, abundant in touristed areas, including Tsim Sha Tsui and the Shun Tak Centre, from where ferries depart for [Macau](#). While they are convenient (usually open on Sunday and holidays and late into the evenings) and take no commission per se, the less-than-attractive exchange rates offered are equivalent to a 5% commission.

These rates are clearly posted, though if you're changing several hundred US dollars or more you might be able to bargain for a better rate. Before the actual exchange is made, the moneychanger is required by law to give you a form to sign that clearly shows the amount due to you, the exchange rate and any service charges. And try to avoid the exchange counters at the airport: they offer some of the worst rates in Hong Kong. The rates offered at hotels are only marginally better.

One moneychanger that we've been using since the ink was still wet on the Treaty of Nanking is **Wing Hoi Money Exchange** (2723 5948; Ground fl, shop No 9B, Mirador Mansion Arcade, 58 Nathan Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui; 8.30am-8.30pm Mon-Sat, 8.30am-7pm Sun). It will change just about any currency as well as travellers cheques. No foreign currency black market exists in Hong Kong. If anyone on the street does approach you to change money, assume it's a scam.

Credit cards

The most widely accepted credit cards in Hong Kong are Visa, MasterCard, Amex, Diners Club and JCB – and pretty much in that order. When signing credit card receipts, make sure you always write 'HK' in front of the dollar sign if there isn't one already printed there. If you plan to use a credit card, make sure you have a high enough credit limit to cover major expenses such as car hire or airline tickets.

Alternatively, leave your card in credit when you start your travels. And don't just carry one card, go for two: an Amex or Diners Club card with a MasterCard or Visa card. Better still, combine cards and travellers cheques so you have something to fall back on if an ATM swallows your card or the bank won't accept it.

Some shops in Hong Kong may try to add a surcharge to offset the commission charged by credit companies, which can range from 2.5% to 7%. In theory, this is prohibited by the credit companies, but to get around this many shops will offer a 5% discount if you pay cash. It's your call.

If a card is lost or stolen, you must inform both the **police** (2527 7177) and the issuing company as soon as possible; otherwise, you may have to pay for the purchases that the unspeakable

scoundrel has racked up on your card. Some 24-hour numbers for cancelling cards:

American Express (2811 6888)
Diners Club (2860 1888)
JCB (001 800 0009 0009 toll free)
MasterCard (800 966 677)
Visa (800 900 782)

The Visa number may be able to help you (or at least point you in the right direction) should you lose your Visa card but, in general, you must deal with the issuing bank in the case of an emergency. Round-the-clock emergency bank numbers:

Chase Manhattan Bank (2881 0888)
Citibank (2860 0333)
HSBC (2748 4848)
Standard Chartered Bank (2886 4111)

Travellers cheques

Travellers cheques offer protection from theft but are becoming less common due to the preponderance of ATMs. Most banks will cash travellers cheques, and they all charge a fee, often irrespective of whether you are an account holder or not. HSBC, Standard Chartered and Hang Seng banks all charge commissions, whether this be a flat amount or a percentage of the total exchanged. If any cheques go missing, contact the issuing office or the nearest branch of the issuing agency immediately. **American Express** (3002 1275) can usually arrange replacement cheques within 24 hours.

Taxes & refunds

There is no sales tax in Hong Kong. The only 'visible' tax visitors are likely to encounter is the 3% government tax on hotel rates.

The World Health Organization (WHO) publishes a superb book called **International Travel and Health**, which is revised annually and is available free online at www.who.int/ith.

Recommended immunisations

There are no required vaccinations for entry into Hong Kong or Macau unless you have travelled from a country infected with yellow fever. In this case, you will have to show your yellow-fever vaccination certificate. Hong Kong is a highly developed city and as such immunisations are not really necessary unless you will be travelling on to the mainland or elsewhere in the region.

Since most vaccines don't produce immunity until at least two weeks after they're given, visit a physician four to eight weeks before departure. Ask your doctor for an International Certificate of Vaccination (or 'yellow booklet'), which will list all of the vaccinations you've received.

If your health insurance doesn't cover you for medical expenses abroad, consider supplemental insurance.

While you're there **Dengue fever**

This is caught from mosquito bites. Until recently it was unheard of in Hong Kong, yet some 30 cases were reported in 2004 (the outbreak claimed no lives).

This viral disease is transmitted by mosquitoes but unlike the malaria mosquito, the **Aedes aegypti** mosquito, which transmits the dengue virus, is most active during the day, and is found mainly in urban areas, in and around human dwellings. Signs and symptoms of dengue fever include a sudden onset of high fever, headache, joint and muscle pains (hence its old name,

‘breakbone fever’), and nausea and vomiting. A rash of small red spots sometimes appears three to four days after the onset of fever.

You should seek medical attention as soon as possible if you think you may be infected. A blood test can exclude malaria and indicate the possibility of dengue fever. There is no specific treatment for dengue. Aspirin should be avoided, as it increases the risk of haemorrhaging. The best prevention is to avoid mosquito bites at all times by covering up, using insect repellents containing the compound DEET and mosquito nets.

Giardia

This is a parasite that often jumps on board when you have diarrhoea. It then causes a more prolonged illness with intermittent diarrhoea or loose stools, bloating, fatigue and some nausea. There may be a metallic taste in the mouth. Avoiding potentially contaminated foods and always washing your hands can help to prevent giardia.

Hepatitis A

This virus is common in Hong Kong and [Macau](#) and is transmitted through contaminated water and shellfish. It is most commonly caught at local island seafood restaurants. Immunisation and avoiding local seafood restaurants should prevent it.

Hepatitis B

Whilst this is common in the area, it can only be transmitted by unprotected sex, sharing needles, treading on a discarded needle, or receiving contaminated blood in very remote areas of [China](#).

Influenza

Hong Kong has a bad flu season over the winter months from December to March. Symptoms

include a cold (runny nose etc) with a high fever and aches and pains. You should wash your hands frequently, avoid anybody you know who has the flu and think about getting a flu shot before you travel.

Travellers’ diarrhoea

To prevent diarrhoea, avoid tap water unless it has been boiled, filtered or chemically disinfected (eg with iodine tablets); only eat fresh fruits and vegetables if they’re cooked or peeled; be wary of dairy products that might contain unpasteurised milk; and be highly selective when eating food from street vendors.

If you develop diarrhoea, be sure to drink plenty of fluids, preferably an oral rehydration solution containing lots of salt and sugar. A few loose stools don’t mean you require treatment but, if you start experiencing more than four or five stools a day, you should start taking an antibiotic (usually a quinolone drug) and an antidiarrheal agent (such as loperamide). If diarrhoea is bloody, or persists for more than 72 hours, or is accompanied by fever, shaking chills or severe abdominal pain, you should seek medical attention.

Insects

Mosquitoes are prevalent in Hong Kong. You should always use insect repellent and if bitten use hydrocortisone cream to reduce swelling. Lamma Island is home to large red centipedes, which have a poisonous bite that causes swelling and discomfort in most cases, but can be more dangerous (and supposedly in very rare cases deadly) for young children.

Mammals

Wild boars and aggressive dogs are a minor hazard in some of the more remote parts of the New Territories. Wild boars are shy and retiring most of the time but dangerous when they feel

threatened, so give them a wide berth and avoid disturbing thick areas of undergrowth.

Snakes

There are many snakes in Hong Kong and some are deadly, but you are unlikely to encounter any. Still, always take care when bushwalking, particularly on Lamma and Lantau Islands. Go straight to a public hospital if bitten; private doctors do not stock antivenin.

Water

Avoid drinking the local water as its quality varies enormously and depends on the pipes in the building you’re in. Bottled water is a safer option or you can boil tap water for three minutes.

Medical services

The standard of medical care in Hong Kong is generally excellent but expensive. Always take out travel insurance before you travel. Healthcare is divided into public and private, and there is no interaction between the two. In the case of an emergency, all ambulances (999) will take you to a government-run public hospital where, as a visitor, you will be required to pay \$570 for using emergency services. Treatment is guaranteed in any case; people who cannot pay immediately will be billed later. While the emergency care is excellent, you may wish to transfer to a private hospital once you are stable.

There are many English-speaking general practitioners, specialists and dentists in Hong Kong, who can be found through your consulate, private hospital or the **Yellow Pages**. If money is tight, take yourself to the nearest public hospital emergency room and be prepared to wait. The general enquiry number for hospitals is 2300 6555.

Hong Kong Island

Hong Kong Central Hospital (2522 3141; 1B Lower Albert Rd, Central) Private.

Matilda International Hospital (2849 0111, 24hr help line 2849 0123; 41 Mt Kellett Rd, The Peak) Private.

Queen Mary Hospital (2855 3838; 102 Pok Fu Lam Rd, Pok Fu Lam) Public.

Kowloon

Hong Kong Baptist Hospital (2339 8888; 222 Waterloo Rd, Kowloon Tong) Private.

Princess Margaret Hospital (2990 1111, 24hr help line 2990 2000; 2-10 Princess Margaret Hospital Rd, Lai Chi Kok) Public.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital (2958 8428; 30 Gascoigne Rd, Yau Ma Tei) Public.

New territories

Prince of Wales Hospital (2632 2415; 30-32 Ngan Shing St, Sha Tin) Public.

There are many pharmacies in Hong Kong and Macau. They bear a red-and-white cross outside and there should be a registered pharmacist available inside. Though many medications can be bought over the counter without a prescription in Hong Kong, you should always check it is a known brand and that the expiry date is valid. Birth-control pills, pads, tampons and condoms are available over the counter in these dispensaries, as well as in stores such as Watsons and Mannings.

Visas

The vast majority of travellers, including citizens of Australia, Canada, the EU, Israel, Japan, New Zealand and the USA, are allowed to enter the Hong Kong SAR without a visa and stay for 90 days. Holders of British passports can stay up to 180 days without a visa, but British Dependent

Territories and British Overseas citizens not holding a visa are only allowed to remain 90 days. Holders of many African (including South African), South American and Middle Eastern passports do not require visas for a visit of 30 days or less.

If you do require a visa, you must apply beforehand at the nearest Chinese consulate or embassy; for addresses and contact information consult the website www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/embassy.htm.

If you plan on visiting mainland China, you must have a visa, although American citizens must apply for their visas prior to crossing the border.

Visitors may have to prove they have adequate funds for their stay (a credit card should do the trick) and that they hold an onward or return ticket. Ordinary visas cost \$160 (or the equivalent in local currency), while transit visas are \$84.

Visitors are not permitted to take up employment, establish any sort of business or enrol as students while visiting on a tourist visa. If you want to work or study, you must apply for an employment or student visa beforehand. It is very hard to change your visa status after you have arrived in Hong Kong. Anyone wishing to stay longer than the visa-free period must apply for a visa before travelling to Hong Kong.

Visa extensions

In general, visa extensions (\$160) are not readily granted unless there are special or extenuating circumstances, such as cancelled flights, illness, registration in a legitimate course of study, legal employment, or marriage to a local.

For more information contact the **Hong Kong Immigration Department** (2824 6111;

www.immd.gov.hk; 5th fl, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Rd, Wan Chai; 8.45am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 9-11.30am Sat).

ⁱ The statement is cited in Kester Rattenbury, "Echo and narcissus", AD special issue "Architecture and Film" no 112, 1994, p.35

ⁱⁱ Eupalinos: L'ame et la danse: dialogue de l'arbre, Paris, Gallimard, 1944

ⁱⁱⁱ G. Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film*, Verso, 2002, p.62

^{iv} Op.cit. p.66