MINIMAL MEANS OF MAKING PLACE

In the Western Cape Landscape

S Swanepoel

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DISSERTATION TITLE

Minimal Means of Making Place

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Figure 1: Breakwater platform in Kleinmond harbour

ABSTRACT

This dissertation introduced a minimal means approach to architectural interventions in the landscape of the Western Cape. Learning from land artists such as Robert Smithson and Robert Morris, an intervention is powerful when experienced in isolation. The intervention super-charges the landscape, enabling the participant to notice things they might have overlooked otherwise. Simultaneously, when there are too many interventions, the dialogue they have with their surrounding environment becomes diluted.

It proposed the idea that architecture is a means with which people interact with their environment. People make place by using what the land has to offer and curate a place in relation to the surrounding landscape. Looking at the way people lay claim to the land, and in particular make place with boundaries, lies at the heart of the research. The place-making theories of Martin Heidegger and Christian Norberg-Schulz were not negated,

but rather reconsidered in the landscape of the Western Cape, outside of the metropole.

This research focuses on Kleinmond, a small-scale fishing town along the Western Cape coastline, which originated with fishermen settling along a small indent in the coastline, where conditions invite fishing activities. It was suggested that the land could only be exploited to a certain extent that is determined by the constitution thereof.

The manner in which the urban fabric in Kleinmond has developed over the years has deprived civilians of a dialogue with the ocean. The project sought to redefine this relationship by making place through physical and implied boundaries with minimal means of intervention. The existing rhythms present in this environment: the fishermen's daily routine, the rhythm of the tides, the seasonality of the wetland water as well as the coming and going of visitors, were informants to the approach to the site. It was sought to redefine Kleinmond as a place worth dwelling in by proposing a building that acts as an end towards

the harbour, as well as an edge for the slipway while offering amenity to an under-utilised site.

Figure 2: James Turrell, Afrum (White), 1966

PREFACE

This dissertation originated with my interest in minimal art. What intrigues me about this work is that it does not necessarily symbolise anything. It merely is what it is. While being stripped from all representation, it still evokes a powerful experience when interacting with it. The artwork takes on a new dimension in its relationship with the beholder. It is no longer confined to the extent of the canvas. The range of the artwork is now extended from the realm between the beholder and the artwork to the beholder and the landscape. With minimal means, the artwork makes a place. The beholder of the art serves as an essential element in the realisation of the fabricated place. Without the participation of the beholder, there would not have been a place. Michael Fried confirms this in his paper Art and Objecthood by stating that “it is just this distance between object and subject that creates a more extended situation, because physical participation becomes necessary.” A noteworthy example of

such art is the work of James Turrell. He makes place by the mere use of light in a dark space. He fabricates place with the essential and places the beholder in relation to the place, making a new place.

It is only after studying the literature of place-making and looking at the work of land artists such as Robert Smithson and Robert Morris that I realised that what makes minimal art generate such impact is that it lives in solitude. It is so powerful, because it stands alone in its environment. Its presence would not have been as striking when situated within a cluttered landscape. The focus is on the artwork as the sole intervention in the landscape.

Outside of the metropole in the Western Cape, architecture is rooted in similar conditions, given the naked landscape. It allows any intervention to be significant. It is with this understanding that I make the proposition of intervening in the Western Cape landscape with minimal means.

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GLOSSARY

Boundary

The extent of a place determined by elements within the landscape, whether a tree or a wall

Breakwater

A barrier built out into the sea to protect a coast or harbour from the force of waves

Edge-environment

The periphery of the land where it meets the water which is subject to particular ecological conditions

Harbour

A place along the coast where ships may moor in shelter, especially one protected from rough water by piers, jetties, and other manufactured elements

Inhabitation

To live or dwell in a place

Landscape

The platform in which architecture takes place

Locality

Somewhere that doesn't have particular relationships to anything else

Manufactured elements

Built fabric that is made use of to soften the collision between water and land

Natural elements

Systems that contribute to the constitution of a place

Place

An area that allows for dwelling to take place in and has a relationship to other elements within the landscape

Slipway

A slope built leading down into water, used for launching and landing boats and ships or for building and repairing them

Space

The realm that accommodates place which extents is indefinite to our understanding

Urban intervention

Built fabric intended to ameliorate the environment to accommodate people

Valency

The charge a minimal intervention in isolation provides a landscape with

Figure 3: Heidegger drawing water in front of his hut in Todnauberg, Black Forest, Germany

EPIGRAPH

"Let us think for a while of a farmhouse in the Black Forest, which was built some two hundred years ago by the dwelling peasants. Here the self-sufficiency of the power to let earth and heaven, divinities and mortals enter in simple oneness into things, ordered the house. It placed the farm on the wind-sheltered mountain slope looking south, among the meadows close to the spring. It gave it the wide overhanging shingle roof whose proper slope bears up under the burden of snow, and which, reaching deep down, shields the chambers against the storms of the long winter nights."

-Martin Heidegger, Building, Dwelling, Thinking, (1954)[1]

1 Heidegger, M. 1993, pp361-362

Figure 4: Hermanus coast

“There, twice in every twenty-four hours, the ocean’s vast tide sweeps in a flood over a large stretch of land and hides Nature’s everlasting controversy about whether this region belongs to the land or to the sea. There these wretched peoples occupy high ground, or manmade platforms constructed above the level of the highest tide they experience; they live in huts built on the site so chosen and are like sailors in ships when the waters cover the surrounding land, but when the tide has receded they are like shipwrecked victims.”

-Pliny the Elder from The Natural History (1855)[2]

2 Dronkers, J. 2005, p.v

Figure 5: Overberg coast

INTRODUCTION

Making is man's first-hand engagement with the landscape. What we make with the resources the land provides us with is our elemental interaction with our environment. There are various ways in which people lay claim to the landscape. Making place is a way of laying claim to the land. But what is place? Is it somewhere to reside, as Martin Heidegger suggests in Building, Dwelling, Thinking?[3] Is it perhaps a bounded area? Or is it where the landscape invites inhabitation? Places are linked to locality, but there is more to a place than its position within the landscape. They have a relationship with the elements surrounding them –a 'situatedness' within the landscape.

This dissertation aims to arrive at an understanding of what constitutes place, rather than mere location in the Kleinmond harbour -a small slipway along the Overberg coastline. It will discuss the distinction between space and place.

3 Heidegger, M, 1993, p348

While this dissertation does not negate the place-making theories of Martin Heidegger and Christian Norberg-Schulz, it reconsiders what place-making means in the landscape of the Western Cape. It will argue that there are only minimal means necessary to make place within this landscape. The work of land artists such as Robert Smithson and Robert Morris, introduces an approach where the intervention brings a valency to the land. These interventions were predominantly in a pristine landscape, similar to the conditions of the Western Cape, outside of the metropole.

The natural landscape provides places along the coast that invite access to the water. Historically, people have settled where there is water: along a river, along a lake or along the coast. Water is host to resources that could be capitalised by access to the water. These access points serve as the interface between the landscape and the seascape. This dissertation will consider the appropriate way to mediate the relationship that people have with the ocean in this edge-environment.

The project aims to negotiate an end for the urban fabric in Kleinmond harbour that sustainably ameliorates the interface with the sea as well as an edge for the slipway that celebrates the natural systems present in this environment: water, rock and vegetation. Kleinmond has a rich history that needs to be understood sensually to intervene appropriately.

This dissertation departs from the position that the landscape provides a certain extent of exploitation that is determined by the constitution thereof. Kleinmond harbour is limited to small-scale fishing, but the opportunity remains for the slipway to become host to supporting activities. This harbour is also subject to various rhythms -ocean tides washing in and out, fishermen going out to sea and returning, holiday-goers that fill the restaurants and curio shops, and then the ever-returning memory of what the harbour once used to be and the desire to return it to its prior state.

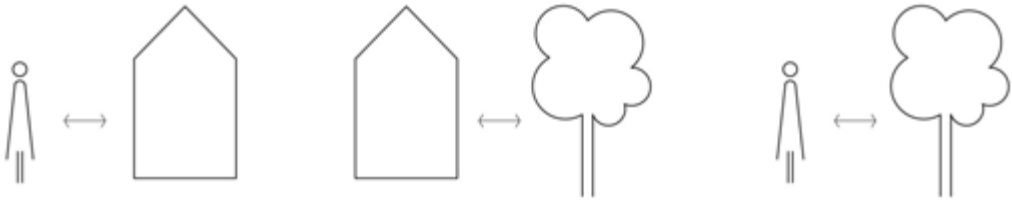


Figure 6: Diagram indicating the relationships prevalent in the process of making

ARCHITECTURE AS A PROCESS OF MAKING

Architecture will be referred to as a process of making. It is the product of our continuous relationship with the landscape. It serves as the means with which we establish this relationship. It is the medium we employ to engage with our environment. The land then serves as the object in which our interventions take place and the inhabitants serve as the subject.[4] Fellingham states in Architecture as Medium, Environment as Object, User as Subject that "architectural significance lies in the relationship between the subject and the medium, the medium and the environment and the intended relationship between the subject and object –the person and the natural environment."[5] The success of the process of making originates in a profound understanding of the needs of the user, the extent of the environment, the limits of

4 Fellingham, K, 2011, pp45-47
5 Fellingham, K, 2011, p47

architecture, and ultimately the relationship between them.

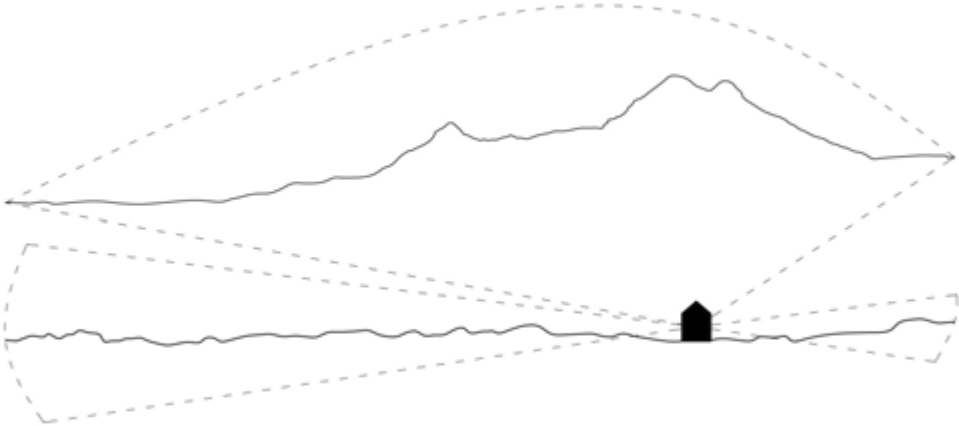


Figure 7: Diagram indicating a building in relation to the Western Cape landscape

LAND SPECIFICITY

The land provides resources that are specific to their position within the land. Certain landscapes allow for certain kinds of produce. In The Valley Plan of Civilization, Geddes talks about “the colonization range of Greek civilization [having been] at once invited by the olive-regions, and limited to them.”[6] History establishes that people settle where the land can be exploited and resources are plentiful. The positioning of these resources is, to an extent, limiting in the way that they determine where people settle. The land naturally creates places for civilisations to be bound in. Architecture seems to be dependent on what the land provides in terms of locality and the specificities of a location would necessarily dictate the architecture.

In the Western Cape, outside of the metropole, the landscape is relatively bare and the prevailing vegetation is rather low in height. There is also a

6 Geddes, P, 1925, p289

low-density of built fabric. The predominant defining elements of the landscape are the mountain ranges that serve as a point of reference for locating oneself within this landscape. Along the Western Cape's coastline, when at a high enough elevation or in a sparsely built area, the ocean's horizon too serves as a point of reference. Like the mountains, the ocean becomes the extent or limit of the place. This landscape provides a platform for intervention that allows the architecture to be the focus point. It is precisely this observation that makes built interventions executed with minimal means within the Western Cape landscape so significant. If the built fabric were to increase in density, the more diluted the dialogue between architectural interventions and the mountain will become.

SPACE AND PLACE

A distinction needs to be made between space and place. In this dissertation, space will be referred to as the realm that accommodates place. Place cannot exist without space. Place evokes the feeling of having arrived at a destination or within a location. It creates a realm. Place is bounded, whereas space extends beyond it. Mentally, we can grasp place, but the extent of space is limitless to our perception. Place can be measured, whereas space is immeasurable. Even though place can be measured, it does not eliminate the probability of place being as immense as a country, for example, or even a continent. In all instances, place is understood as one entity.[7] According to Christian Norberg-Schulz, place essentially has an "environmental character" that is "made up of concrete things having material substance, shape, texture and colour."[8] Place then is more than a 'situatedness'

7 McCarter, R & Pallasmaa, J, 2012, p404
8 Norberg-Schulz, C, 1976, p273, 274

within the landscape. It also embodies characteristics that is synonymous with its location. Norberg-Schulz refers to this as the genius loci of a place. He states that “character is determined by how things are, and gives our investigation a basis in the concrete phenomena of our everyday life-world.” He continues by stating that “the concept of genius loci denotes the essence of place.”[9]

Places are locations within which people can dwell. It is where people feel at home. It is not necessarily inside a building or under a shelter. It does not pertain to any particular built form, although “we attain to dwelling, so it seems, only by means of building.”[10] Heidegger explains that a taxi driver can feel at home on the road, but he does not take shelter there. Place is not achieved by just any building and nor do only buildings constitute dwelling.

9 Norberg-Schulz, C, 1976, p276
10 Heidegger, M, 1954, p347

NATURAL AND MANUFACTURED PLACES

Place is not necessarily constructed or manufactured. Nature too makes place –for example a tree makes a place for congregation or a river, on the other hand, separates two places. Without the tree –or the shadow that it casts– an open field would not welcome assembly and without a river, would there even have been a place? The tree and the river, which will be referred to as elements establish that what surrounds these elements is a place. These articulations of the land are in effect boundaries. These two examples are natural elements that constitute implied place.

To elaborate on boundaries making place, I will discuss implied as well as physical boundaries along the Western Cape coastline. Boundaries can be natural or manufactured. I will thus look at natural implied boundaries, manufactured implied boundaries as well as natural physical boundaries and manufactured physical boundaries.

Figure 8: Manufactured implied boundary, colonnades lining the West Coast highway

IMPLIED BOUNDARIES

Implied boundaries are suggestive limits or parameters which inform a particular place. An example may be the adhesive tape on the floor at an automatic teller machine. One tends to remain behind the line when another customer is occupying the machine. Even if there is no material that physically separates one from the machine, one tends not to venture past the line. There is a perception of a zone that is different to the one that one is currently occupying. Other conditions of implied boundaries include a change in level, a change in surface texture or material, and a relationship between two elements.

Examples of manufactured implied boundaries are: a public square that has been elevated or sunken in, a floor surface changing from smooth concrete to concrete mixed with an aggregate and the concrete colonnades that line the West Coast highway. These elements all signify a boundary to a place.

Figure 9: Natural implied boundary, change in surface texture along Betty's bay beach

In terms of natural implied boundaries, examples are: a shallow hill or a change in ground cover on a surface or even two rocks positioned at the entryway to a remote farm. In the last example there is no fence defining the extent of the property. The implication is that whatever lies beyond the two rocks is another territory.

Shadows also signify a natural implied boundary. The shade that a tree casts creates place. It provides an extent that is not tangible. Seeing that the shape of shadows changes with the time of the day, it could be said that place is not necessarily fixed to a particular position. Place is to a certain extent mobile.

Figure 10: Manufactured physical boundary, low wall at Camps Bay tidal pool

PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

Physical boundaries are tangible boundaries which prohibit a person from passing. It has a materiality. These boundaries are what separates countries or on a smaller scale neighbours, and they can keep people in or keep people out. They are obstacles. An effort would have to be made to overcome them. Essentially they hinder easy access. Examples of manufactured physical boundaries are fences and walls. These boundaries are man-made and constructed for a particular purpose. They physically define an area.

Figure 11: Natural physical boundary, Silver Sands beach, Betty's Bay

Natural physical boundaries could be hedges, and at a larger scale mountain ranges. Rivers and the sea create a natural boundary. These boundaries are subject to change, given natural phenomena, similar to the shadow cast by a tree. Rivers and the sea are both subject to changes that occur visibly. The rise and fall of water levels continuously redefine these boundaries. There is no fixed line that determines where the one ends and the other begins.

Figure 12: Kleinmond shoreline

EDGE - ENVIRONMENT

The edge-environment is where the landscape meets the seascape. It is an environment of fluid boundaries and undefined edges. The point at which the one environment becomes the other is continuously transforming. When thinking about inhabitation in close proximity to water, it is important to understand that it is subject to change shape. The line between water and land is constantly changing according to the forces that act on it such as winds and tides. By nature, water is "formless and passive and only shows its particular qualities when interacting with its surroundings."[11] Not only is the line where water meets the land continuously changing, but also, over time, the land is shaped by the way the water moves over it. The relationship between the landscape and the seascape and the way they form one another is an ever-changing condition.

11 Dreiseitl, H, Grau, D & Ludwig, K, 2001, p61

Figure 13: Original fishermen's house in Visbaai

VISBAAI

Coastal populations have settled in “sedimentary coastal plains, which have been shaped by land-sea interaction.”[12] Kleinmond, previously called Visbaai, is a small-scale fishing town along the Overstrand coastline. The town was discovered by fishermen who settled at the harbour in 1915. The land makes a natural indent in the coastline that invites a slipway. A natural sandstone barrier, that lines this coastline, provides a sheltered environment that calms conditions for launching and landing boats in the harbour.

This environment can be particularly harsh with rough waves and unforgiving winds. A testament to this are the lost lives of small-scale fishermen fighting for their livelihood. Some days this environment can be blissful with fishermen going out to sea with ease, visitors strolling towards the breakwater platform with ice creams in hand while seagulls flock around recently gutted fish.

12 Dronkers, J, 2005, p11

On other days it can be a relentless environment with gusts of wind-driven rain that would deter the bravest fisherman from venturing out to sea.

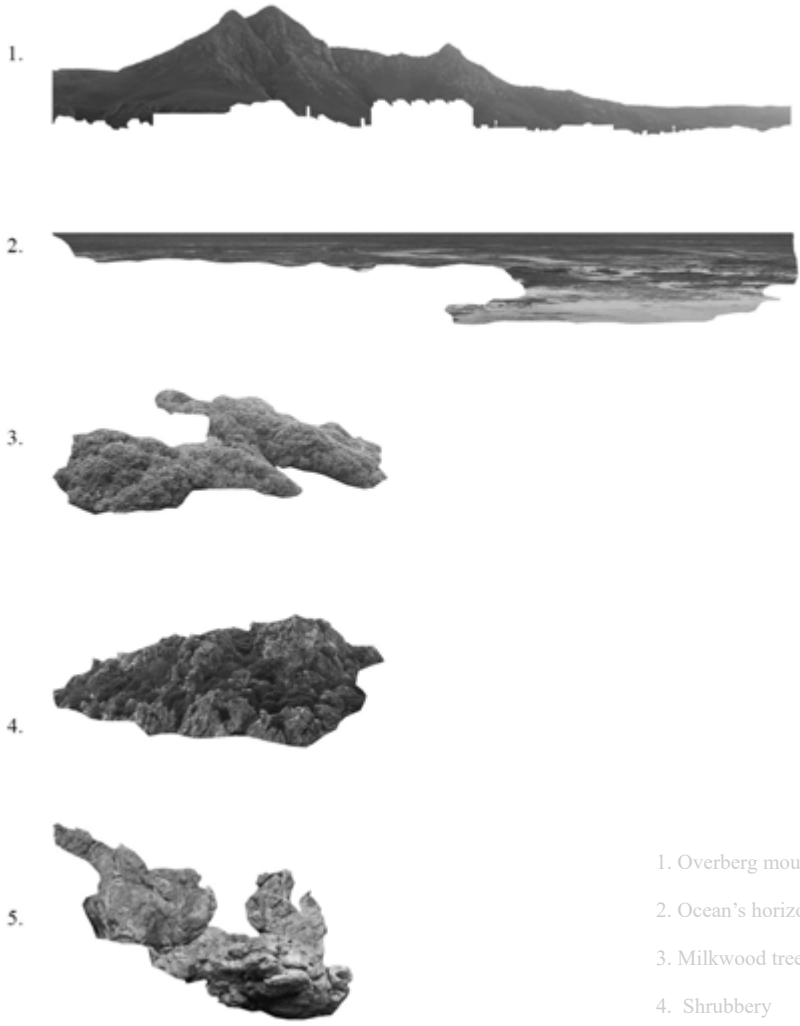
LANDSCAPE

The original fishermen's house was situated where the harbour parking lot lies today. The fishermen were relocated according to the Group Areas Act of 1950 from the harbour, to settle in Proteadorp a few kilometers away towards the Kogelberg mountain range. Church gatherings were originally held in a hollowed out part of the coastal sandstone barrier that lies on the eastern side of the slipway. Today, a timber boardwalk leads visitors along the wetland to the site on the north eastern side of the slipway in memory of this event.

The Kogelberg mountain range that lies to the north of the slipway serves as a natural physical boundary. Visually it establishes an end to Kleinmond. The ocean's horizon too, serves as a limit to the place. On approaching Kleinmond by car, the ocean seems to have dragged the mountain by the foot to melt into the sea. The setting is

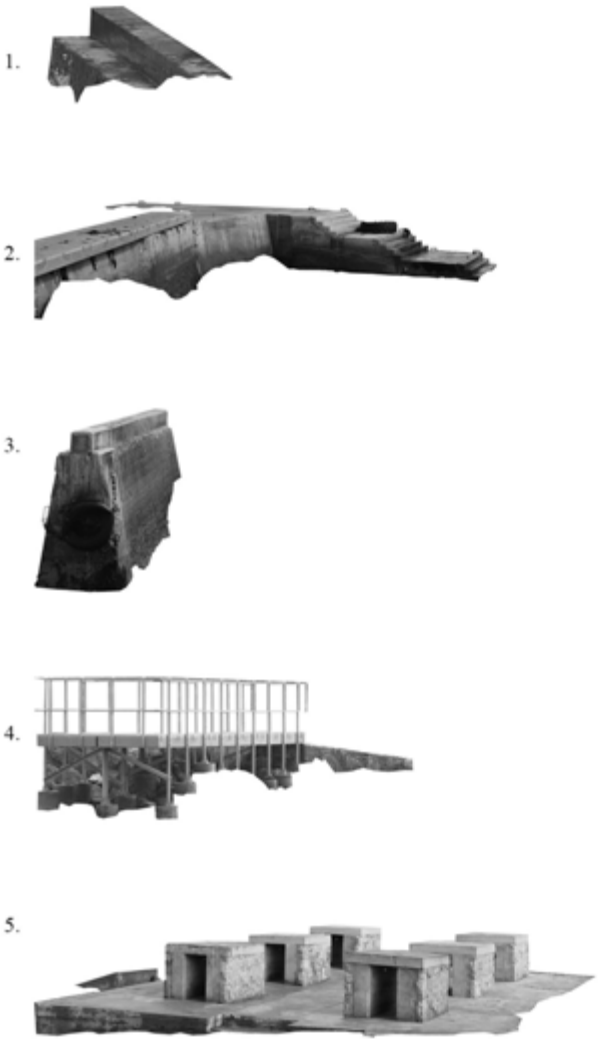
dramatic. The surrounding natural landscape contributes significantly to its popularity among visitors. A rich biodiversity can also be found along this coastline.

The natural sandstone barrier sets the residential development back by 100m. Narrow walkways have evolved along the densely, yet low in height, vegetated coastal plain. Two wetlands lie at the northern corners of the slipway, acting as two lungs, which results in the site's fertility. The concrete slipway seems to have hindered the natural process that filters storm water as it makes its way down to the sea. A small stream that flows in a shallow valley on the eastern side of the slipway prompted the construction of a little bridge, enabling a connection to the shade cast by the Milkwood trees. Besides the concrete surface that define the slipway implicitly, the surrounding rock and vegetation establish the harbour's natural physical boundaries. These natural elements are also what brings about the character of the site. It is made up of natural and manufactured boundaries, both physical and implied.



1. Overberg mountain
2. Ocean's horizon
3. Milkwood trees
4. Shrubbery
5. Rock

Figure 14: Natural elements in Kleinmond harbour



1. Primary breakwater
2. Breakwater platform
3. Secondary breakwater
4. Lookout boardwalk
5. Concrete platform

Figure 15: Manufactured elements in Kleinmond harbour

Figure 16: Manufactured elements in Kleinmond harbour

Manufactured elements, such as a large concrete breakwater that extends between the mainland and a protruding rock in the water, create a more hospitable environment for boats to access the water. In addition, another two short breakwaters were constructed closer to the slipway. One of them creates a platform for walking on. A concrete platform with six tables was also introduced to facilitate the gutting of fish on site. While the Kleinmond harbour invites fishing activities, given its natural setting, it is unlikely to accommodate a more industrial harbour. The nature of the site limits such prospects. As harbours are often the generator of a town's economy, in Kleinmond the likelihood to enlarge it is improbable and will most likely not be sustainable. Yet supporting recreational activities in the harbour ought to sustain the commercial activity of the town.

Figure 17: Breakwater platform in Kleinmond

1. Yzerfontein Pier
2. Cape Town Harbour
3. Camps Bay Tidal Pool
4. Hout Bay Harbour
5. Simon's Town Harbour
6. Gordon's Bay Harbour
7. Betty's Bay Harbour
8. Kleinmond Harbour
9. Hermanus Old Harbour

Figure 18: Western Cape coastline indicating where harbours take place

SEASCAPE

The diagram to the left of the Western Cape coastline supports the idea that the constitution of the natural landscape determines the locality of urban development. Here it can be seen that harbours have been constructed in places along the coastline that are sheltered to a greater extent from the natural elements –in particular from rough waves. The harbours which are encircled with red have been positioned in an embayment. The scale of the bay mostly determines the scale of the urban intervention in that area. The black encircled areas along this coastline indicate where smaller urban developments have unfolded. Kleinmond harbour is encircled with blue.

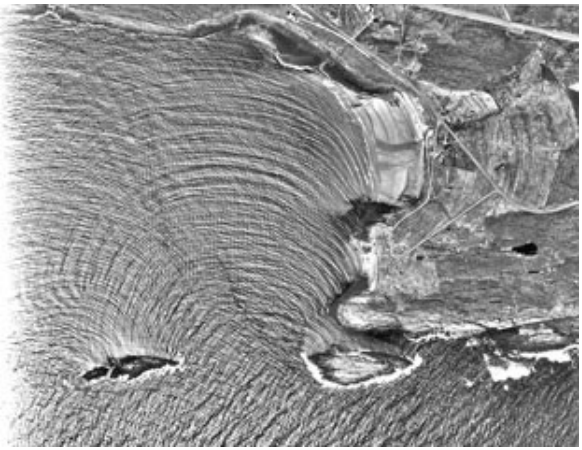


Figure 19: Diffraction of a wave around an object

As water is fluid, it responds to interactions with objects, such as manufactured systems like a breakwater in a harbour, by diffraction. The image to the left indicates the effect of how an object in water influences the direction of a wave.

When a body of water passes around the corner of an object, it bends and continues along a new direction that is aligned at an angle towards the object. When the object is surrounded by water and wave fronts coming from both sides intersect, an interference pattern is formed. In the instance of water passing through a gap, whether in a parallel succession or in a concentric succession, the curvature of the new wave is determined by the size of the gap. The larger the gap, the less the curvature. The curve occurs at the corners where the wave passes the object.

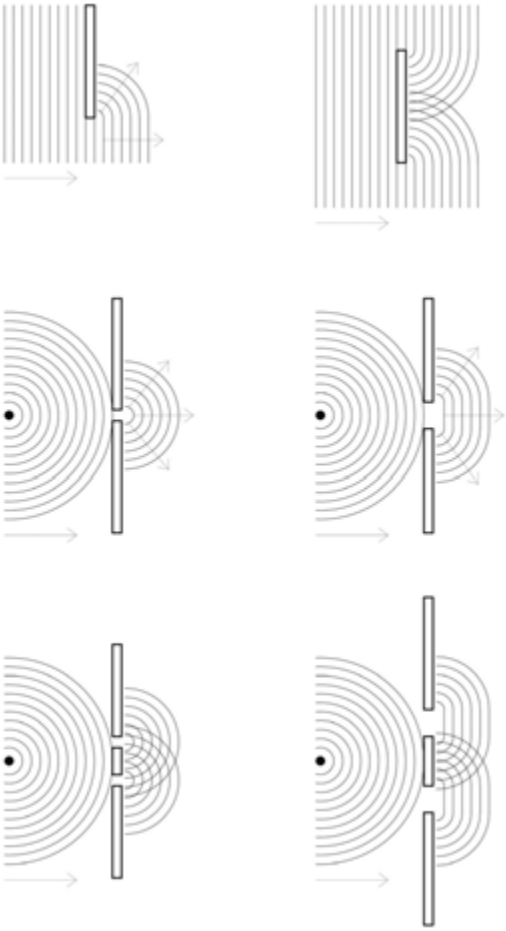


Figure 20: Diffraction of water diagrams

In the diagrams to the left, it is clear that water waves take on a new direction when coming into contact with an object. This is relevant in the process of identifying hospitable environments for harbours and to consider the degree of accommodation in order to construct a more favourable condition with manufactured elements. Harbours are designed to moor boats and host industries such as fishing and tourism. Harbours are usually positioned where the conditions of the natural landscape are most favourable, but in most instances, provision needs to be made to improve these conditions.

When looking at the natural landscape, the bathymetry of the shore would dictate which kinds of boats or ships can be launched there. The shape of the shoreline prescribes the hospitability in terms of how calm the sea is. The size of the natural bay also demands a certain proportionality in terms of its development to sustain itself.

Figure 21: Small-scale fishermen in Kleinmond harbour

As harbours are generators of an economy of a town, it is important to capitalise on the resources in the ocean. In order to do so, it is essential to understand the edge-environment to intervene in a sustainable way. Architecture serves as the medium with which the environment is approached.[13] Fellingham states in Architecture as Medium, Environment as Object and User as Subject, that architects ought to "understand and operate within the natural environment, to read the landscape, and the patterns of growth of fauna…in order to make productive use of the environment". The way harbours are designed –concerning their type and size– has a fundamental impact on the level and rate at which a town's marine resources could be exploited. Sciortino states in Fishing Harbour Planning, Construction and Management that: "By its very nature, an ill-conceived port or fish landing structure has the potential to place a disproportionately large demand on both the local

13 Fellingham, K, 2011, pp48-49

physical and biological resources."[14]

In studying manufactured landscapes along the Western Cape coastline, it became clear that the more industrial a harbour is, the less accessible it is. The slipways, piers and tidal pools along this coastline enable a relationship between people and the water where the conditions are rough. It accommodates the ocean's rhythms and bridges the gap between a vulnerable person and the open water.

14 Sciortino, J, 2010, p11

RHYTHMS

The Kleinmond harbour is subject to various rhythms. When the weather is favourable, fishermen set out to sea early in the morning and return to shore after a successful catch. A visiting community come to revitalize in the holiday season and the ocean tides suggest a rhythm that contribute to the continuous changing nature of the site. These rhythms are what generate the town's momentum. They recur in a pattern that is mostly unpredictable as they are composed by natural phenomena.

The occupation of the harbour for fishing purposes is dependent on the seasonality of the fish stock. June to August is known to be months with plentiful Snoek. The fishermen are often only present in the harbour for a short time: before their boat is launched and afterwards to sell their daily catch to locals. One only gets a glimpse of this activity. The boats are not parked in the harbour, but fill up the backyards of the boat owners who live in close proximity to the harbour. In recent years, with the

depletion of ocean resources, catches have been too small to supply local restaurants. On a customer's request, the fish are gutted by the fishermen's wives on the concrete platform adjacent to the slipway. The guts are fed to seagulls that flock together on the slipway's wet surface.

Activity in the area peaks over long-weekends and school holidays when visiting communities arrive to escape the city and indulge in Kleinmond's omnipresent natural setting. This activity reaches a low when the visitors return and the harbour is left to its original routine. The memory of what the harbour once used to be is an ever-recurring suggestion manifested in the patina of the built fabric on the site.

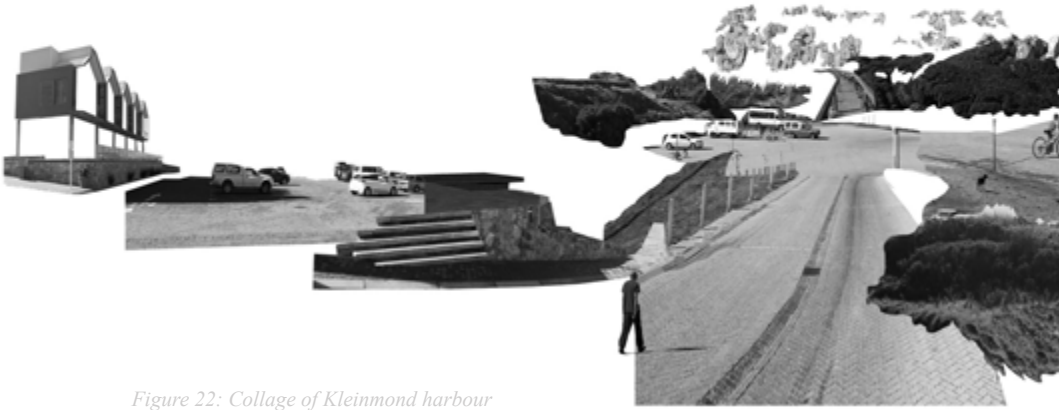
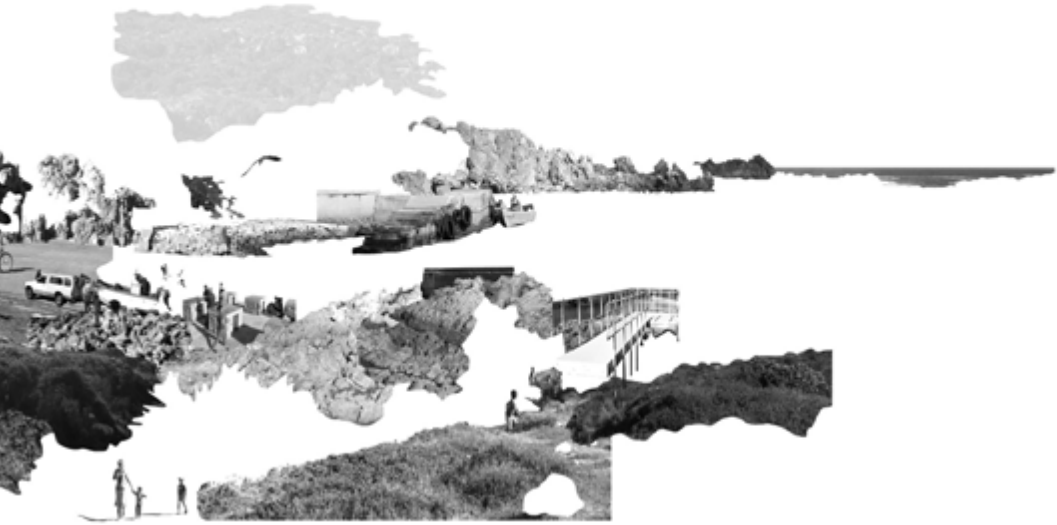


Figure 22: Collage of Kleinmond harbour



ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFIERS

All the users that contribute to the rhythms that drive Kleinmond: fishermen, inhabitants and visitors, negotiate their relationship with the sea through the harbour. This is where they have comfortable access to the water. There is a dire necessity in mending this relationship as it is currently indistinct. The road that leads from the main road in Kleinmond towards the harbour slipway disappointingly ends in a parking lot. Below it lies the slipway concealed. The road has developed significantly over the past decade. Today it is lined with curio shops and restaurants. The floor surface of the road is black cobble stones which contributes to the slow atmosphere. Due to the natural setting of the site, the slipway is not visible from the road above, unless one walks to the ridge of the embankment that holds the slipway. Very few move past the edge of the parking lot. At the edge, the slipway access road subtly sweeps around towards the ocean. There is an undeniable potential to ameliorate

this dialogue between the town and the water.

Introducing an intervention that signifies the harbour as a destination, facilitates the suggestion of the slipway-environment as a place to spend time in. In addition, inviting commercial incentive that can propagate community growth, would bring about a positive interface between the ocean and the land. The fishermen and inhabitants are dependent on tourism of the visiting community to sustain the economy of the town. The intervention had to attempt to invite a more consistent presence on the site. The building's program thus had to accommodate not only small-scale fishing activities and recognise the origins of the place, but also to respond to the seasonal-nature of the town. Adding value to site, by bringing amenities such as a visitor's centre, World Wildlife Fund[15] museum, a tuck shop, wetland pool, tidal pool and change rooms may contribute in reviving the harbour. The museum would exhibit the work of the WWF to raise awareness of the fragility of marine resources.

15 The WWF is working with the Kleinmond community to manage marine resources

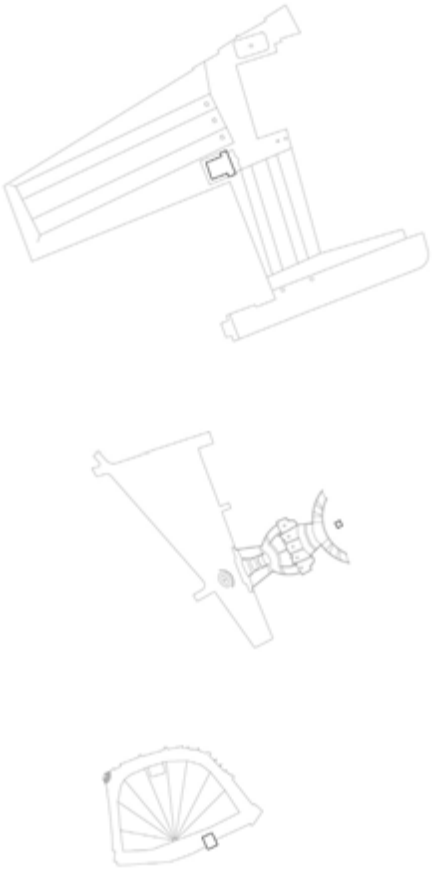


Figure 23: Piazza San Marco / Spanish steps / Piazza del Campo

The aim for the project is to bring people down to the site to spend more time there and experience the breathtaking natural setting it has to offer. Being at a more favourable vantage point, the Kogelberg mountain can be observed from the slipway much better than from the road above.

Because this mountain range lies to the north of Kleinmond, a limited period of sunshine reaches the town per day and even less so in winter. The harbour is in an advantageous location as it is the furthest away from the mountain and receives the most sunlight during the day.

Taking into consideration the rich and complex composition of the site, it had to be studied both analytically as well as qualitatively. The slipway was also compared to the scale of well-known Italian squares such as Piazza San Marco in Venice and Piazza del Campo in Sienna. The scale of the slipway is the closest in size to that of Piazza del Campo. In the design process, it became clear that the project is about curating the site: looking at the existing fabric and what the land has to offer as well

as the history that made the harbour what it is today,
while injecting amenity to sustain the site.

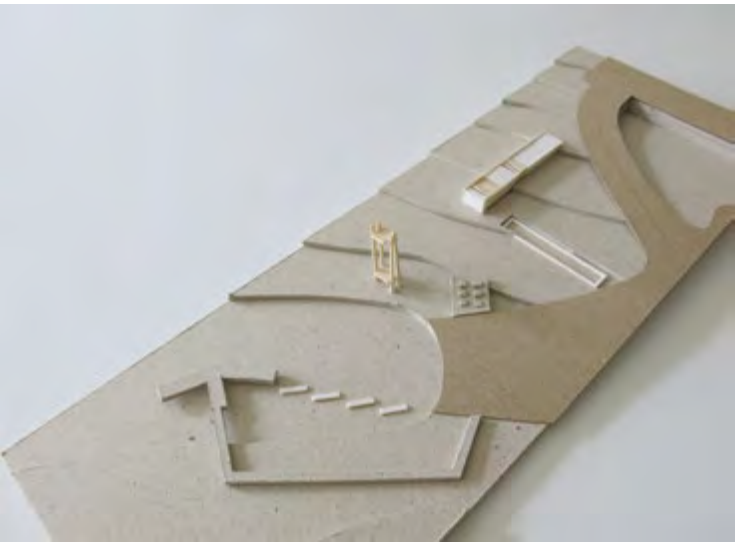


Figure 24: Site model experimenting with the tower being a timber structure that is more susceptible to the elements

Tower

The tower serves as a signifier of place: a natural implied boundary. It marks the harbour within its larger context. It also draws people towards the slipway, where they would previously have remained in the parking lot. Similar to a widow's walk[16], the tower provides a platform for the fish gutters to search the ocean's horizon for incoming boats. For fishermen out at sea, the tower reflects sunlight through two aluminium dishes. This makes it easier for them to return to land after a tiresome day of fishing.

16 A platform, usually on a roof with an unobstructed view of the ocean, originally found in New England houses in the 19th c.

Figure 25: Stone wall in Kleinmond

Wall

Two thick stone walls continue on the site as an extension of the road leading down to the harbour, creating an end for the built fabric. They serve as the manufactured physical boundaries of the building. The stone will be extracted from a quarry in the vicinity and compliment the sandstone found on the site.

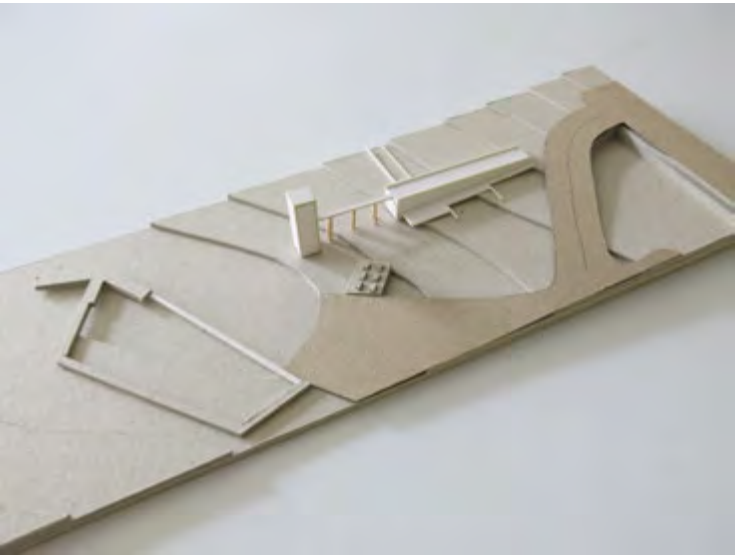


Figure 26: Site model experimenting with the continuation of the pathway as a pier as well as bleeding towards the slipway on the ground floor

Path

As a manufactured implied boundary, the path serves as a guide to follow. It is powerful in that it can direct the movement of people through the site, giving preference to certain areas, while leaving other areas untouched for nature to take its course. It leads people down the site on a route they would not normally have taken, guiding them to the water either via the natural pool or via the tower. The path sits next to the stone wall that indicates an edge for the slipway.

Figure 27: Natural water from the wetland in Kleinmond

Wetland pool

The wetland pool celebrates the constitution of the place as well as provide amenity for visitors to the site. To accommodate a more persistent presence on the site, the wetland pool will be heated, to attract visitors in winter months, when the weather allows for swimming. A wetland pool is low maintenance and seeing that the water is naturally filtered through the wetland, the only work needed to be done is the cleaning of the weir once a week. Water will be tapped from the wetland and realigned, following a pedestrian footpath towards the proposed wetland pool.

Figure 28: Breakwater platform's edge

Seawater pool

Swimming in seawater in this environment would be a rare activity due to the harsh weather conditions, but the breakwater arm presents an ideal opportunity to introduce an area with more calm conditions that would allow for swimming. Gabions positioned between the breakwater's concrete staircase and the mainland create a gentle environment for swimming.

Figure 29: Site plan 1:3000

The architectural intent of the project was to create an end for the town by inserting a building as one single entity into the site that harmonises the surrounding environment and super-charges the landscape to revive the harbour.

Poetically, the intervention aimed to evolve from solid to more delicate, with quick steps gradually turning into elongated strides as one moves towards the water, culminating in a tower that acts as the signifier of the place. The pathway also becomes more generous towards the water. As the one moves closer to the water, one is aware of one's vulnerability in this environment as well as of the feeling of relief that the vast ocean instils.

Figure 30: Kleinmond harbour

CONCLUSION

The Western Cape landscape, outside of the metropole, requests a minimal means approach to making place with architectural interventions. In the Kleinmond harbour, this approach allows the architecture to offer a valency to the edge-environment, while mediating a dialogue between the landscape and the seascape. By introducing a new built end for the town that facilitate the relationship civilians and visitors have with the water, the harbour embodies a new life that invites access from the town's side. The positioning of the building also acts as an edge for the slipway, creating a nurtured environment. It cultivates an environment that encourages dwelling in by introducing amenity in an under-utilised site. By recognizing the place-making elements that make up Kleinmond harbour and maintaining the inherit material quality of the site, the design becomes synonymous with the environment. In acknowledging the history of the site as well as

the rhythms present in this edge-environment, the design becomes associated with the place, rather than being foreign to it.

While the waves break rhythmically on the slipway's surface, she can hear the seagulls wailing in the distance. By noon the fishermen's wife is waiting patiently for the boats to land, observing visitors set for a swim in the seawater pool. Her grandson is running up the tower's staircase trying to spot the incoming boats. She takes out a sandwich se made at the break of dawn and calls for him to come down. Tomorrow she will experience these distinctive rhythms all over again.

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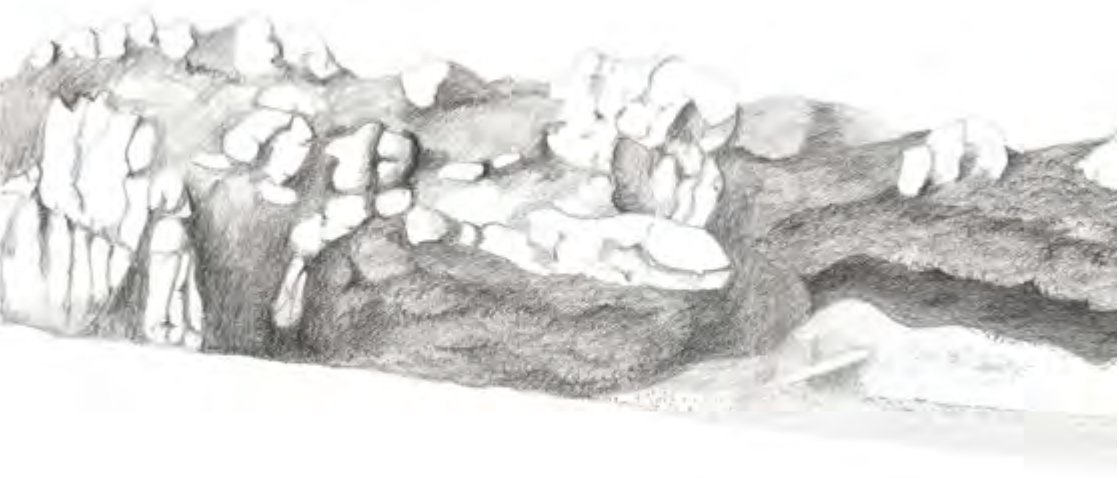

Figure 31: Pencil drawing of the rock and vegetation in Kleinmond harbour