

new city-making paradigms, partial visions for what our cities might be. If the city has come to be regarded as a reflection of society and its problems, it itself is a problem of unprecedented complexity. By focusing on the urban waterfront, we are able to isolate and view in focus specific responses to the problems of disorder and confusion mentioned previously.

Nan Ellin, exploring the idea of postmodern urbanism, notes that among anthropologists, cultural theorists, architects, and urban planners there has developed a fascination with notions of edge, a response "to the dissolution of traditional limits and lines of demarcation due to rapid urbanization and globalization" (Ellin, 1999:4). Among architects and planners, a great deal of attention is being paid to spaces considered interstitial, "terrains vagues," "no man's land," or "ghost wards" (Schwarzer, 1998). Ellin states that this is apparent

in the concern for designing along national borders and between ecologically-differentiated areas such as along waterfronts . . . The notion that the talents and energies of architects and urban planners should contribute to mending seams, not tearing them asunder, to healing the world, not to salting its wounds, has grown much more widespread in acceptance.

(Ellin, 1999:5)

It is in the spaces provided by the urban waterfront that planners and designers wrestle with the appropriateness of their intentions for the present, and for the future.

The time in which we live is often referred to as postmodern. The rise of postmodernism, in its many forms, is a general desire to reinvest meaning into various aspects of our lives. Today, meaning is central to discussions of the city. This, despite the fact that such discussions have become so contested. The crisis of the public realm that Davey speaks of is really a crisis of meaning. What does the public realm mean in an increasingly global and fragmented world? How do we as designers accommodate multiple meanings in the design of public space? The best types of public space allow for the inclusion of multiple meanings and all levels of society. As Rowe points out, the alternatives are too often exclusive, corporately or authoritarian dominated precincts (Rowe, 1997: 35).

In the articulation of urban waterfronts, these issues are critical. The visibility of these sites means the waterfront becomes the stage upon which the most important pieces are set. In doing so, the waterfront is an expression of what we are as a culture. The urban waterfront provides possibilities to create pieces of city, to paraphrase Davey, that enrich life, offer decency and hope as well as functionality, and can give some notion of the urban ways of living celebrated by Baudelaire and Benjamin, Oscar Wilde and Otto Wagner. In these possibilities, we remember that urban development is not just for profit, or personal aggrandizement, but for the benefit of humanity and the planet as well. It is on the urban waterfront that these visions of the city are finding form. These are the sites of post-industrial city space-making.

The reuse of obsolete industrial space along the waterfront is a major