



Drawings adapted from various sources by Thanong Pongteerakul; with courtesy of the Olin Partnership, Philadelphia

Figure 5.12 Three proposals for Pershing Square, Los Angeles. (a) The SITE proposal, (b) the second Legoretta and Olin scheme and (c) the final Legoretta and Olin scheme.

planted with tropical trees in order to create mini-environments that would attract people. The design was, however, an independent object that ‘turned the park on its surroundings’. Construction was supposed to begin in 1988 but the surrounding property owners protested. They would have had to make up much of the shortfall between the public funds available (\$6 million from the Los Angeles Redevelopment Authority and other contributions from the Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Board of Public Works) and the expected construction cost.

The design that was implemented was a product of the collaboration of architect Ricardo Legoretta, landscape architect Laurie Olin and artist Barbara McCarran (see Figures 5.12b–c and 5.13). Maguire Thomas Partners, the leading property developers in Central Los Angeles, hired them. One of the design goals was to have a park that represented both the Latino and Anglo populations of the city. The design

went through several iterations but the final one the team produced was never fully implemented. Legoretta aspired to create a *zócalo*, the heart of many a Mexican city, but it is difficult to see the connection in the design.

An orange grove marks the centre of the park as a reminder of the importance of orange farming in Los Angeles County. At the southern end of the park is a sculpted court with a fountain, pool and a reminder, in the form of a jagged line cutting across the park, of the fault line on which Los Angeles is located. The park also contains a ‘Mayan’ style amphitheatre, benches in which images of Los Angeles are embedded, works of art and mementoes of the past (e.g. a canon). A Star Walk paving pattern resembles a constellation visible in the winter and the summer sun. Despite these varied components, the park is a still lifeless place. The former inhabitants have been chased away by the police but users to replace them are few and those that are there tend to be similar to the ones who were there before the changes took