



Photograph by Susannah Lang

Figure 3.6 Pedestrian ways as objects in space, Battery Park City, New York in 2003.

Miscellaneous: Individual Objects in Urban Space

There are two types of objects apart from buildings that get awards for urban design. The first is comprised of works of art, usually sculptures but also murals that are often introduced to give some focus and interest to a dull space or to enliven a blank wall, or as an element of civic or corporate boosterism. The second category is primarily comprised of individual elements of the city, such as monuments, fountains, clock towers and street furniture. The design of such objects falls outside the scope of this book although when included as part of a larger scheme they are discussed in passing.

Monuments are of particular importance. They have a special significance as preservers of collective memories and as symbols of the identity and the self-worth of nations or smaller groups of people. They can sometimes be the foci of the collective life of a people. Clock towers, obelisks and fountains are used as visual focal points in many urban design schemes, particularly those imbued with City Beautiful, or Baroque, overtones (Robinette, 1976). They act as landmarks and reinforce the nodes of urban life (Figure 3.6).

Urban Design Paradigms

Another way of classifying urban design is by the major paradigm used as the basis for design. Paradigms are models regarded as exemplars of good practice. Much