

Drifting Through Detroit: Conceptualizing the Shrinking American City

ROBERT M. ARENS
Kansas State University

INTRODUCTION

To conserve, to manage, to recycle the terrain vagues, the residual spaces of the city, cannot be simply to reorder them in order to incorporate them once again into the efficient mesh of the city, canceling out the values residing in their vacancy and absence. On the contrary, it is this vacancy and absence that must be preserved at all costs, and which must register the difference between the federal bulldozer and a sensitive approach to these places of memory and ambiguity.¹

There exists a growing fascination in those shapeless zones of forgotten spaces which exist in varying degrees in all cities. Residual spaces, industrial spaces, obsolete spaces, abandoned spaces, contaminated spaces, fringe spaces: all spaces which exist outside the needs and desires of the present inhabitants, but which nevertheless hold a spell over urban theorists and architects. Often described by the French as *terrain vague*, the nuanced multiplicity of meanings so appropriate for this complex urban condition are best described by Xavier Costa in his essay "Distracted City, Shapeless City," when he writes: "On the one hand, *vague* has the sense of vacant, void, devoid of activity, unproductive, in many cases obsolete; on the other hand, *vague* has the sense of imprecise, undefined, *vague*, without fixed limits, with no clear future in sight."²

This fascination in the nebulous space of cities can be traced back to the members of the Situationist International who saw the city as the vehicle for a radical critique of urban existence and site for urban experiments intended to draw its inhabitants into more active and participatory relationships. Their urbanism was inclusive and open-ended, as expressed by Guy Debord, one of the founders of the movement: "Architecture must advance by making emotionally moving situations rather than emotionally moving forms the materials it works with. And the experiments conducted with this material will lead to unknown forms."³ Their experiments would be targeted at those spaces which existed by chance rather than design, as Simon Sadler notes:

Situationism remained fascinated by buildings and places seemingly bypassed by religion, capitalism, and modernization. They served as physical reminders of the relentless process of history, of class struggle, of the contingency and impermanence of repressive regimes, destined to the same fate as any other socioeconomic arrangement.⁴

The emancipatory and revolutionary vision of the city being posited by the Situationists had a strong influence on a generation of architects who came of age in the socially-turbulent Europe of the 1960s. Prominent members of this group, among them Rem Koolhaas, Wolf Prix, and Bernard Tschumi, are now framing contemporary

urban theory which acknowledges a disjuncture between program and object in the city and attempts to make, in Koolhaas' words "urban voids at least one the principal lines of combat, if not the only line."⁵ Each has turned their attention to a more open architecture that not only accepts, but exploits the inevitable discontinuity that now defines many our cities, particularly the American variety. "Leave Paris and Amsterdam," Koolhaas says, "and go look at Atlanta, quickly and without preconceptions."⁶

As provocative as Atlanta is, and as promising as Lille or other recent projects by the aforementioned architects may be, each involves urban areas which are growing and their contribution must ultimately be to the list of strategies for conceptualizing the expanding city. In each example, the terrain vagues must be displaced not by the ephemeral constructed situations, but by permanent installations of new urban fabric. By necessity these projects must limit the experimentation so central to the Situationists' strategy and forsake Debord's call:

...to multiply poetic subjects and objects — which are now unfortunately so rare that the slightest ones take on an exaggerated emotional importance — and we have to organize games of these poetic objects among these poetic subjects. This is our entire program, which is essentially transitory. Our situations will be ephemeral, without a future; passageways. The permanence of art or anything else does not enter into our considerations.⁷

In a number of urban centers in the US, however, a far different phenomenon has been slowly occurring over the past several decades, something which few contemporary urban strategies address. In cities such as Detroit, St. Louis, Milwaukee and Baltimore urban populations are shrinking, leaving behind large concentrations of vacant buildings and impoverished families isolated in the remains of the once vibrant neighborhoods. It is in the loose and open urban landscapes of these cities where one may perhaps see the greatest potential for Situationist experimentation. The staggering extent of their terrain vagues invites study of what Alberto Perez-Gomez has called "the sites where technology may be cracked open by the imagination, the marginal and liminal spaces in our postindustrial culture, places where humanity may become aware of its capacity for true understanding in the dark and silent space of metaphor, yet also spaces within technology, revealing the actual presence of mortality, the imminence of being."⁸ If we look close enough at these contracting cities we may also see hints of the initial pieces to the puzzle of conceptualizing urban shrinkage.

DETROIT IS EVERYWHERE

To look at Detroit is to look at all of our cities, but with the symptoms of our urban decline enhanced.⁹

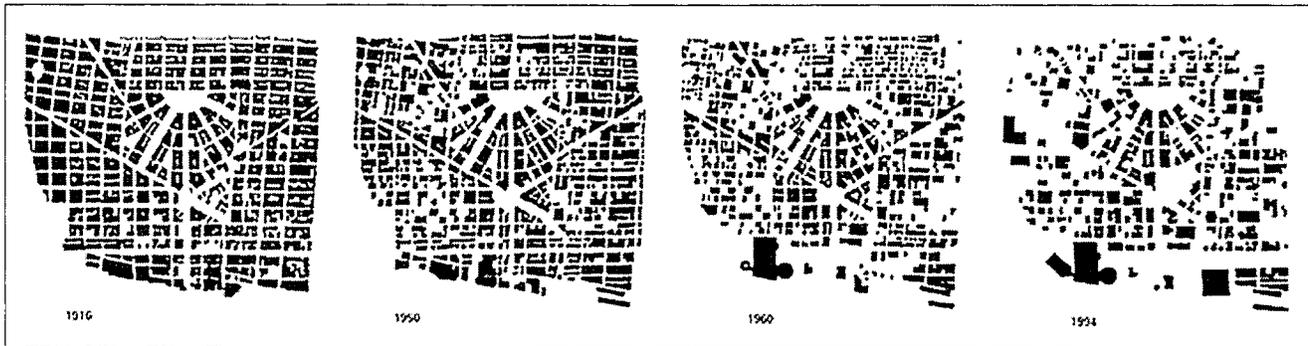


Fig. 1. Figure/ground of downtown Detroit.

Of the contracting rustbelt cities, perhaps Detroit is the most notorious example. Its advanced state of decay and defiance of renewal have been widely and dramatically documented in the press, so much so that it has become a poster child for the decline of the American city after Richard Plunz observed that "Detroit Is Everywhere"¹⁰. Detroit has alternately (and accurately) been portrayed in the press in various guises: the victim of racially-motivated suburban flight resulting in a population loss of nearly one million since 1950; the industrial dinosaur decimated by the decentralization of the auto industry and related industries; the socioeconomic skeleton left in the wake of the flight of both residential and industrial tax base; the murder capital, home to soaring crime and unemployment rates; the site of the annual Devil's night ritual in which hundreds of vacant houses are torched and neighbors in the vicinity of the fires frantically spray their houses with garden hoses to prevent the fire's spread; the new urban game preserve where pheasants and other wildlife have reestablished a habitat in the acres of greenfields which had previously been the city's built fabric.

This last characterization is an important one. Not only is Detroit's population shrinking, its fabric is dissipating at an equal rate: vacant blocks in nearly all areas of the city, including the downtown, are a grim reminder of the thriving industrial giant Detroit once was. Until recently Detroit was slowly unbuilding itself through attrition of its devastated fabric, but its generation of greenfields (a variation of brownfield used to denote a cleared site which remains vacant) will soon increase due to new resolve by the city government to address condemned or vacant properties. In November 1998 the city managed to raise a reported \$30 million to demolish the Hudson Department store, which until it closed in 1983, was the physical heart and commercial soul of Detroit's downtown. Months later the smoldering rubble and twisted remains of the 2.2 million square foot building are still being cleared from the Hudson's site, yet that enormous demolition project is a mere prelude to much bigger things to come. The city was recently promised a US Department of Housing and Urban Development loan to fund the demolition of every abandoned house in the city. Although the survey of abandonment is incomplete, it is estimated that 10,000 houses will be demolished, the largest such bulldozing by any US city.¹¹

Hidden in the midst of the analysis of Detroit's dramatic fall from grace and buried beneath the grim statistics are several provocative projects which are curiously (but unintentionally) aligned with Situationist theory due to their radical critique of Detroit's tendency to eradicate obsolete urban fabric and their experimental attempts to reprogram this devastated fabric with art or poetry. Camilo Jose Vergara's American Acropolis proposal and Tyree Guyton's Heidelberg Project are both aimed at restoring vitality to the most bewildering zone of space in Detroit and cities like it: the ever-expanding zone of abandoned structures and vacant land that is equally dysfunctional as the private space it formerly was and as the unintended public space it has become.

THE AMERICAN ACROPOLIS PROPOSAL

Is this a collection of irrelevant symbols, icons of a dead civilization? Their powerful forms in constant flux indicate that we are in the presence of something momentous.¹²

Camilo Jose Vergara, a New York writer and photographer, began making observations and photographs of Detroit in 1992 as research for his book *The New American Ghetto*. Like others who confront Detroit beyond its image, he was appalled by the extent of the city's socioeconomic problems and its advanced state of decay. In soliciting views and opinions from Detroiters, he recorded anger, blame and resignation but all were underscored with a toughness to survive. "People are running; there is nothing to do here; there is no jobs here," said a retired carpenter, but he followed with "I am not leaving; I am a Detroitier." A local priest lamented that "we are just holding on. You have lots of good people left," but then added "why not stay and make it better?" A university official, when asked why black families who can afford to move choose not to leave the predominantly black city answered with an analogy of a poor family being left a large mansion and struggling with its upkeep. "They cannot heat it, or paint it or keep up the grounds.... but as long as they stay, they prevent the fixtures from being stolen, and the pipes from freezing. If they manage to preserve it, it would be for those who stay."¹²

Vergara found the grittiness of Detroit's inhabitants almost as evocative as its forsaken urban landscape. The physical environment, much of it abandoned, both contributed to and resulted from the despair he had recorded in his interviews, yet he was moved by its power derived from horror, yes, but also hope. "The powerful spell of this magnificent skeleton city by the river forces us to go beyond the issues of blame, anger and hopelessness; to ask questions about our national goals. Visits to Washington and New York City, our imperial capitals, should be followed by a visit to Detroit, a place for reflection."¹³

Vergara focused his interest on Detroit's downtown where he was struck by the concentration of pre-Depression skyscrapers (the world's third largest) built during the city's boom. He found scores of buildings empty or suffering from threateningly low occupancy, the result of tenants having been lured to newer downtown buildings, or, in most cases, the suburbs. He also noted that a cottage industry of salvagers had picked many structures clean, thus hastening the downward spiral of these buildings' decay and decline. He was drawn to the sheer beauty and sublime power of the abandoned buildings which had outlived their former use, and which stood silent and forlorn waiting for salvation or salvage crew, which ever came first. "Shadowy structures, silhouetted against the sky, loom like huge, undefined forms. Yet immense aspirations remain embodied in these monumental old edifices,"¹⁵ Vergara wrote.

Within the current socioeconomic climate, the fate of these structures was obvious to Vergara. There was much more commer-



Fig. 2. Threatened downtown skyscrapers.

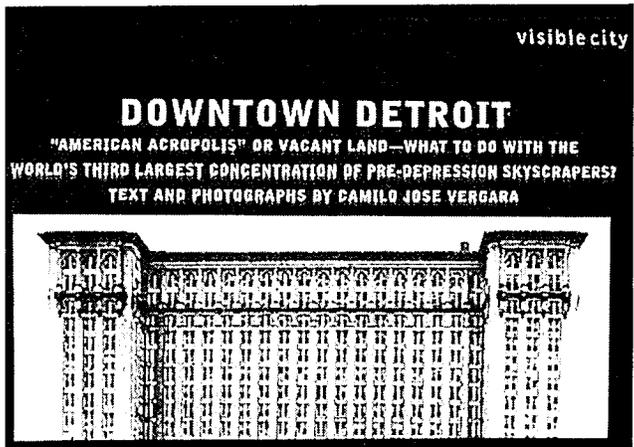


Fig. 3. Vergara's proposal in *Metropolis*.

cial space than was needed in the downtown, and businesses predictably chose newer buildings clamoring for their leases, relegating older buildings to low tenancy. The viability of fringe buildings had to be weighed by their owners against the biggest business in the core: surface parking, though with parking lots already blanketing the downtown, many of them parked to well below capacity, even this has become less of an option. Most telling of the future of the core skyscrapers was a 1994 recommendation to the mayor by the Land Use Task Force calling for the demolition of "structures which are functionally obsolete and have no viable reuse."¹⁶ Ironically, it was the lack of private and public resources for demolition that saved the buildings long enough for them to serve as Vergara's muses.

Comment

Is saving Detroit 'ruins' truly absurd?

By Thomas Strat

Some have been misled, some have not, and some face the prospect of spin. (With apologies to William Shakespeare.)
 New York City writer Camilo Vergara has argued many Detroiters with his suggestion that we declare part of downtown an "All-American Ruins." To many, this is another outside's insult to the city. But Vergara's idea is not so foreign, indeed, it seems strangely familiar.
 Vergara would preserve 12 blocks of Detroit's downtown — mostly skyscrapers and all — and allow them to get used. Buildings would be reinforced for safety, signs would point toward vandalism and independent contractors — through "contractors" — would be sent to demolish. They would be encouraged to visit Detroit's "American Acropolis," a tribute to the "Midwest Age."
 The first job of Vergara's respect is not to demolish. Might he mean we should declare Detroit a "Great Society Theme Park" where visitors to corporate food engineering could be taught to follow procedures? That's not to say, and I'm not a conspiracy theorist, but I wonder about the city.
 Vergara says we're in the "Midwest" and poetic. We should recognize that through time and neglect, a large part of Detroit has become a park, a "Garden City." We should have a national park in the heart of a space of wonder, comparable in significance to the great ruins of the world.¹⁷



Fig. 4. *Detroit News* editorial.

In 1995 Vergara made a somewhat quixotic but not entirely naive proposal in *Metropolis* magazine calling for a twelve square-block area in the downtown core to be declared a national park. He reasoned that the pre-Depression skyscrapers could be stabilized at a far lower cost than demolition or renovation and could be left standing as ruins, allowed to persist in the splendor of continual decay. He offered the proposal, which he called the American Acropolis, as "a tonic for our imagination, as a call for renewal, as a place within our national memory,"¹⁷ and a "memorial to a disappearing urban civilization."¹⁸

Not surprisingly, Vergara's proposal angered many Detroiters and was seen as an easy insult and a cheap shot by an outsider. Residents viewed the ruins as evidence of the city's persistent social and economic problems and as the root cause for Detroit's tarnished image. Business owners insisted that the ruins deflated commercial property values and inflated crime. In the ruins neither group could see power and allure, only neglect. "It's an insult to America, to what America stands for,"¹⁹ said an owner of one of the buildings included in the park. "Buildings represent an economic structure, not a romantic evocation of the past," responded an architectural historian. "Buildings have to be retrofitted for another used that creates a tax base and produces some form of employment," noted a journalist.²⁰

Dismayed by the inability of Detroiters to look beyond negative associations of ruins, worried by their insistence on waiting for businesses to return, troubled by the ease with which the city would raze the skyscrapers given the resources, Vergara argued for both the poetry and pragmatism of his proposal. "A memorial to a disappearing urban civilization is a realistic alternative. Costing little in comparison with the expense of rehabilitating or demolishing the old downtown, a ruins park would occupy only a minuscule fraction of the city's idle space, estimated at more than 15 square miles. Not a firm basis on which to rebuild the local economy, but it preserves a wonderful space, a key to understanding an essential part of our recent past. If visitors come, new signs of life might appear with them."²¹

THE HEIDELBERG PROJECT

See the rhythm? It's positive and negative, it's got a beat. That's what it's all about.²²

An interesting counterpart to Vergara's proposal began ten years earlier on the east side of Detroit, although several distinctions must be noted. First, the project targeted a residential neighborhood rather



Fig. 5. The Numbers House on Heidelberg Street.

than the downtown. Second, this project was implemented beginning in 1986 and continues to this day. And finally, the response was provided by an insider rather than an outsider, a native son who developed his vision in the very place it took shape.²³

Tyree Guyton, an African-American artist, was dismayed by the abandoned houses on Heidelberg, the street where he grew up. Furthermore, he was infuriated by the use of these houses by crack cocaine dealers and the inability of the city to curtail this threat to the neighborhood. He responded as any artist would, though his art. Guyton appropriated the vacant houses, and claimed them as the starting point in giant assemblages which he created with found objects hauled in with the help of his wife and grandfather. Guyton's use of obsolete everyday objects, trash to many of his neighbors, began as a young boy when given castoff items by his mother to reassemble as art projects and later became a conscious decision as a mature artist to give new life and meaning to domestic elements.²⁴

With the Baby Doll House, the third work, Guyton made two major developments which would figure prominently in subsequent aspects of the project. The first was the exploration and expression of social themes in the assemblages, in this case the tainted innocence of children growing up on the turbulent streets of Detroit. The second was the inclusion of the neighborhood, especially its children, in the execution of the project in an attempt to trigger community involvement and interaction. "People from all over participated. City workers would leave me signs. Little kids would bring me toys. It was art that everybody took pride in."²⁵ Later came the Dotty Wotty House, owned by and dedicated to Guyton's grandfather, which was a celebration of color inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King's statement that "we are all the same color on the inside." Obstruction of Justice, sometimes referred to as the OJ House, mocked the media attention given to the OJ Simpson trial given the pervasiveness of injustice surrounding us all. The Numbers House, occupied by a neighbor supportive of Guyton's efforts, is a reference to the numbers games that are a part of everyday life on the streets of Detroit.

As the project grew, so did the reaction to it. The art community was solidly in support of Guyton. "Artists relate to Tyree's work. It's very exciting to see such fresh vision, such awesome talent,"²⁶ said a local artist. The Detroit Institute of Arts recognized the work by awarding Guyton a one-man show in its Ongoing Michigan Artists Program.²⁷ A curator at the museum observed "the message in his work is very complex. It ranges from the humorous to the sober to the very serious to the enlightening. His work is very positive even when it's dealing with difficult and negative issues."²⁸ Word spread of the sheer visual energy that could be found on Heidelberg, and mostly white outsiders from all over the world, could be seen slowly driving down the street, doors locked, of course.



Fig. 6. The OJ House (detail).

But the project had numerous detractors as well. "What Mr. Guyton is calling art is what residents are calling garbage," said a member of the McDougall-Hunt citizens group who felt it was difficult enough for black neighborhoods to present a positive image without additional trash parading as art. The group's chairman added, "People around the country see what he's doing on the news and think that's the way we live. Detroit's not like that."²⁹ "I'm not against his work, but how would you like this next to your home?"³⁰ asked a neighbor of the Numbers House. "Junk is junk is junk,"³¹ wrote a resident in a letter to *The Detroit News*. A city spokesperson was quoted as saying the city received complaints daily.

In the fall of 1991 Guyton began a new project, titled Street People, that sharpened criticism against his work. He scattered hundreds of discarded shoes in the street, with the intention that they be run over by cars and pummeled by the elements, the plight of homeless people as he saw it. This initially resulted in a littering ticket, but may have forced the city's hand to curb the growing media attention for the Heidelberg Project and its physical and conceptual statements about Detroit's shortcomings. "When complaints come through, whether we like it or not, we have to act on them."³² said an official for the Department of Public Works. On a Saturday morning a month later, Guyton was given fifteen minutes notice that city bulldozers were on their way. They arrived, escorted by six police cars, by order of the mayor who "didn't really consider it art."³³ By the end of the day four houses had been flattened and removed. "A shame?" responded Guyton, watching six years of effort being summarily erased. "There's three crack houses the city left standing right behind here. That's the shame."³⁴ A supportive neighbor lamented, "That man was making something out of this neighborhood. Now that it's gone, we really do live in a ghetto."³⁵

But the project wasn't gone for long as Guyton began again, this

Guyton Project: Was it art, or junk?

What is the world coming with the leaders of Detroit that... Guyton Project... art or junk?

There has been a... Donald Sargent... Guyton Project...

What is the world coming with the leaders of Detroit that... Guyton Project... art or junk?

They told me that they have been contacted by the... Guyton Project... art or junk?

It would be hard to... Guyton Project... art or junk?

It would be hard to... Guyton Project... art or junk?

Denis Papayan... Guyton Project... art or junk?

It was an... Guyton Project... art or junk?

It would be... Guyton Project... art or junk?

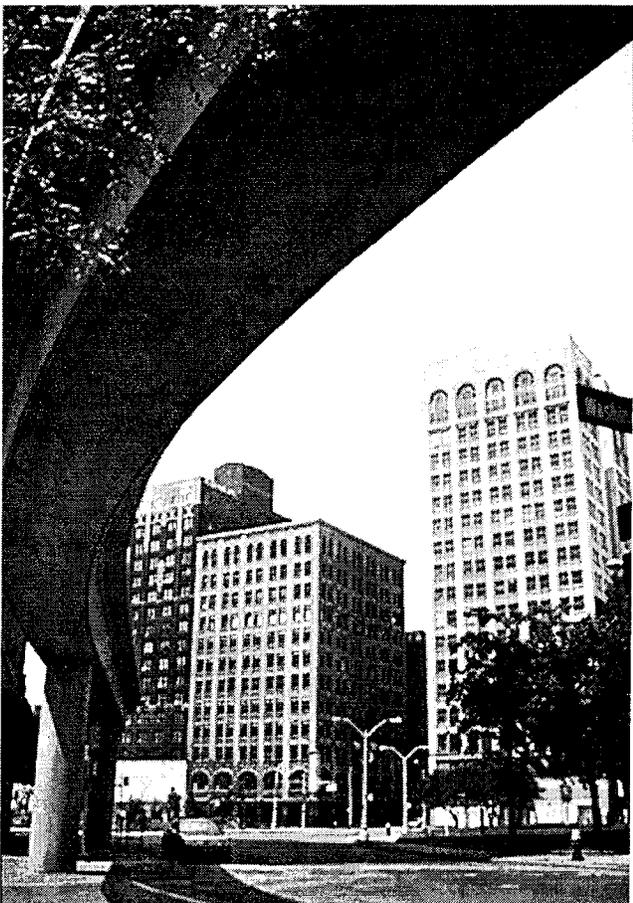


Fig. 8. Forsaken downtown buildings.

Fig. 7. Letters to the editor of The Detroit News.

time targeting the vacant lots left in the bulldozers' wakes and the trees on the street. Until recently you could drive down Heidelberg and see the People's Tree, a memorial to the first phase of the project assembled with objects salvaged from the wrecker's piles, Tithes and Offerings with its handbags twisting in the breeze as symbols of portable vaults of resources which continue to flee the city, a tribute to Rosa Parks called The Bus created with a bus manufactured in the same year as her historic bus ride, and Faces in the Hood which comments on abandoned autos littering Detroit's streets by using their hoods for the site of smiling self-portraits. But the bulldozers returned by order of the city council, and efforts to save the project finally failed in February 1999. Now the only work remaining is Field of Grasshoppers, a lot deliberately left overgrown like countless vacant lots in the city as a testimony to the desolation which could creep in if not for the Heidelberg Project.

CONCLUSION

We Europeans change within changeless cities, and our houses and neighborhoods outlive us; American cities change faster than their inhabitants do, and it is the inhabitants who outlive the cities... That is why they see their cities without vain sentimentality... For us a city is, above all, a past; for them it is mainly a future; what they like in the city is everything it has not yet become and everything it can be...³⁶

Vergara and Guyton's embrace of the widening gaps in the city's fabric and their attempts to radically reprogram rather than replace Detroit's obsolete urban fabric may have aligned the projects with the Situationist strategies of derive and detournement, but on a more immediate level they alienated Detroiters who view abandonment and ruins as visible evidence of the city's failure and the cause of its troublingly tarnished and widely publicized image.

This reaction reveals several aspects of Detroit's complex collective psyche. Though global redeployment of industry and commerce has stripped the Motor City of its nickname, it maintains a strong belief in progress, an uncanny faith in modern technologies, and favors replacement over repair. Instead of rejecting the consumption at the core of the auto industry, Detroit clings to this value and applies it to its built environment thus forsaking the possibility of collective memory. Alex Krieger observed this tendency in noting that the Renaissance Center set a precedent for razing the tattered downtown

fabric rather than renewing it: "The newness of the development challenges the ruinous fabric of the surrounding city not to rebuild itself but to be replaced. Maybe this is expected of Detroit, the automobile-made city, where last year's models command little attention."³⁷

Detroit's reaction to the projects may also be colored by a temporal and spatial proximity to its ruins that does not allow the detachment necessary for its appreciation of what Perez-Gomez calls "the prosaic and relatively inhuman spaces of our cities, ... sites that have a greater potential to escape the hegemony of panoptic domination and technological control, ... fractured sites that have been torn from the seeming continuum of progress and that reveal chasms and wounds..."³⁸ Detroiters' short-term memories of impotence seemingly eclipse long-term memories of its powerful past. Vergara admits the limitations of Detroiters' associations with its ruins when he writes: "Our very closeness to them prevents us from seeing them clearly, from meditating upon their significance, while a strong taboo, marked by rage, impotence and despair, keeps us from admiring their evocative power."³⁹

But if Plunz is correct that "Detroit Is Everywhere," then perhaps these reactions unmask a frustration and anger with the urban condition that faces all cities. Overwhelmed by problems and shrinking resources, city governments struggle with day-to-day matters and can generate few if any large-scale solutions to urban problems. Residents who are inundated with their own personal problems feel powerless and frustrated by the unresponsiveness of city institutions to their needs. One of those needs is a voice in the struggle for social and cultural control, yet if there are no actions taken and no proposals offered, debate about the urban public sphere remains unfocused and can do scant discussion. Herein lies the true



Fig. 9. Guyton's homage to Rosa Parks.

value of the American Acropolis Proposal and the Heidelberg Project to Detroiters: the specificity of these projects gave substance to issues that could be identified and discussed. They generated participation and action on the part of the community which previous planning proposals could not. They stirred debate, which although painful in the short-term proved ultimately healthy for the vitality of civic engagement.

On a more general level, the projects were valuable for their blurring of boundaries between artistic, social, cultural, economic and political forces that have formerly contributed to the expansion of the industrial city and now must come to bear on the contraction of the post-industrial city. It is this dimension, an urbanism which recognizes the confluence of forces which are more complex in the contemporary city than ever before, that relates these projects with Situationist theory. If viewed not as full-blown permanent solutions but rather as ephemeral, yet emotionally-charged constructed situations these projects may serve as Debordian "passageways" to a long-term transformation of the city, particularly of those cities which are contracting rather than expanding.

NOTES

- ¹ Italo Calvino, "The Gods of the City," *Harvard Architectural Review* IV, (1984), p. 9.
- ² Xavier Costa, "Distracted Cities, Shapeless Cities," in *Present and Futures: Architecture in Cities*, edited by Ignasi de Solà-Morales, (Barcelona: Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, 1996), p. 22.
- ³ Guy Debord, "Report on the Construction of Situations," reprinted in Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, editors, *Art In*

Theory (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1992.), p. 693.

- ⁴ Simon Sadler, *The Situationist City* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 100.
- ⁵ Rem Koolhaas, "Toward the Contemporary City," *Design Book Review* no. 17 (Winter 1989), p. 16.
- ⁶ Koolhaas, "Toward the Contemporary City," p. 15.
- ⁷ Guy Debord, "Toward A Situationist International," reprinted in Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, editors, *Art In Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1992.) p. 695.
- ⁸ Alberto Perez-Gomez, "Spaces In-between," in *Present and Futures: Architecture in Cities* (Barcelona: Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, 1996), p. 278.
- ⁹ Richard Plunz, "Detroit Is Everywhere," *Architecture* (April 1996), p. 55.
- ¹⁰ See Plunz, "Detroit Is Everywhere," p. 55-61. An exhibit of student proposals held May 20-July 1, 1995 at New York's Storefront for Art and Architecture took the same title.
- ¹¹ Alyssa Katz, "Dismantling the Motor City," *Metropolis* (June 1998), p. 33.
- ¹² Camilo Jose Vergara, "Downtown Detroit—American Acropolis or Vacant Land—what to do with the worlds third largest concentration of pre-Depression skyscrapers?" *Metropolis* (April 1995), p. 36.
- ¹³ Al, a retired carpenter, Father Charles Denys, a local priest, and Arthur Johnson, vice president for community relations at Wayne State University quoted in Camilo Jose Vergara, "Detroit Waits for the Millennium," *The Nation* (May 18, 1992).
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ Vergara, "Downtown Detroit," p. 36.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 33.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.38.
- ¹⁹ Constantine Roumel quoted in James Bennet, "A tribute to ruin irks Detroit," *New York Times* (December 10, 1995).
- ²⁰ *Detroit Business* quoted in Vergara, Downtown Detroit, p. 37.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- ²² Tyree Guyton quoted in Greg Lopez, "Street surrealism," *The Detroit News* (August 24, 1988).
- ²³ An interesting precedent for Guyton's project was destroyed the year this began. Rosetta Archie began assembling a pile of junk seven feet high by a block long in the early 1970s claiming she was God's messenger and was creating a shrine. After a litany of littering tickets, the pile was hauled off by city workers in March 1986.
- ²⁴ Art critic Joy Hakanson Colby was an early and steady chronicler of the Heidelberg Project. See "Urban renewal—Tyree Guytons Heidelberg Project changes junk into jewels," *The Detroit News* (August 17, 1988), p. 1D.
- ²⁵ Guyton quoted in Ann Sweeney, "Art everyone took pride in... it's gone," *The Detroit News*, November 24, 1991, p. 1A.
- ²⁶ Colby, "Urban Renewal," p. 7D.
- ²⁷ Tyree Guyton's exhibit in the Ongoing Michigan Artists Program of the Detroit Institute of Arts was held June 30 through August 19, 1990.
- ²⁸ Patience Young, curator of education at the Detroit Institute of Arts quoted in Scott Walton, "Rising From the Razing," *Detroit Free Press* (December 18, 1991), p. 1E.
- ²⁹ Sentiments of the McDougall-Hunt Citizens District Council are expressed in William Kleinknecht, "Neighbors say Its not art, seek to end show in street," *Detroit Free Press* (November 5, 1991), p. 1A.
- ³⁰ Heidelberg resident Otila Bell quoted in Nancy Ann Jeffrey, "Flattened creation draws a crowd," *Detroit Free Press* (November 25, 1991), p. 1A.
- ³¹ Gerald P. Klosky, Detroit resident, in a letter to the editor, *The Detroit News* (November 25, 1991).
- ³² James Bledsoe, an official in the environmental control division

of the Detroit Department of Public Works quoted in Jim Schaefer, "Heidelberg down at the heels," *Detroit Free Press* (October 10, 1991).

³³ Joy Hakanson Colby, "Deconstructionism," *The Detroit News* (November 26, 1991).

³⁴ Heidelberg Street resident Teresa Woods quoted in Sweeney, "Art everybody took pride In," p. 10A.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Thomas Stull, "Is saving Detroit ruins truly absurd?," *The Detroit News* (December 24, 1995).

³⁷ Alex Krieger, "The American City: Ideal and Mythic Aspects of a Reinvented Urbanism," *Assemblage* no. 3 (1987), p. 47.

³⁸ Perez-Gomez, "Spaces In-between," p. 277.

³⁹ Vergara, "Downtown Detroit," p. 38