

# COMMUNITY MAUSOLEUM PLAN

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE  
VANCOUVER, B.C.

Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Syllabus  
Diploma Program in Architecture  
Design Level 9: Thesis

Gerry Fox  
BC900001VAN

April 23, 2007

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## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	5
THESIS STATEMENT	7
CENTRAL ISSUE	7
PREMISE	7
PROPOSAL	7
BACKGROUND TO THESIS STATEMENT	8
DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE VANCOUVER	10
ORIGINS & DEVELOPMENT	10
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT	15
LIVING IN DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE	16
DIEING IN DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE	21
ENDNOTES	26
FUNERARY ATTITUDES	28
FOREWORD	28
DEATH	29
RITUAL	29
THE TOMB	30
THE AFTERLIFE	31
MODERN FUNERARY ATTITUDES	33
FUNERARY ATTITUDES IN VANCOUVER	36
ENDNOTES	38
FUNERARY SETTINGS & ARCHITECTURE	40
FOREWORD	40

<b>FUNERARY SETTINGS &amp; ARCHITECTURE</b>	<b>40</b>
FOREWORD	40
THE HETEROTOPIA	40
THE TOMB	41
THE TUMULUS & MAUSOLEUM	43
THE NECROPOLIS	45
THE CHURCH BURIAL	45
THE COMMUNAL TOMB	46
THE CEMETERY	46
THE POTTERS' FIELD	48
LIVING WITH THE DEAD	50
ABORIGINAL BURIAL CUSTOMS	53
MEMORIALS TO MARGINALIZED GROUPS	54
MEANING & EXPRESSION IN FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE	56
MODERN FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE	57
ENDNOTES	63
<b>SUMMARY &amp; CONCLUSION</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>PROGRAM &amp; DESIGN DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>74</b>
INTRODUCTION	74
CONTEXT	74
CONTENT	77
CONCEPT	80
<b>MODEL &amp; DRAWINGS</b>	<b>85</b>

## INTRODUCTION

This Thesis document is submitted as a component of the requirements for completion of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Syllabus Diploma Program in Architecture. The contents are a synthesis of material derived from existing publications together with observations encountered while investigating Vancouver's Downtown Eastside district and the local funerary industry and practices.

The Thesis begins with an initial Thesis Statement and supporting research material. Research consists primarily of literature searches within the Architecture and Social Sciences fields, relevant demographic information obtained from government and industry sources, and informal observation. This introductory component of the Thesis examines the urban geographic and sociocultural context of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside district together with society's attitudes, customs, rituals, and settings related to death and burial practices. The objective is to develop an awareness and understanding of historic and current conditions.

In the final component of the thesis a program and design concept are developed for settings within the Downtown Eastside community for funerary ritual, interment, and memorialization.

\* \* \*

Materials obtained from existing publications are acknowledged in the accompanying endnotes following each section of the document, and in the bibliography at the end of the research portion of the document. Direct transcriptions from publications are identified by quotation marks; page numbers of source publications are included in the endnotes where applicable; page numbers are excluded where the identified concept develops throughout the publication. The sources of images are identified with each image where possible.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sincere appreciation is extended to those who so generously contributed:

- advisors and mentors Bill Pechet, Nigel Baldwin, Jay Hiscox and Kevin Wharton for the tough questions, constructive criticism, enlightenment, encouragement, and support
- members of the Downtown Eastside community for candidly sharing time, territory, thoughts, and feelings toward developing an understanding of the community's culture and experiences with life and death
- representatives of the regional funeral service industry for sharing time and information toward developing an understanding of the role of the industry in society
- panelists from the Architectural profession and fellow students for participating meaningfully in presentation discussions as the project evolved
- RAIC Syllabus administration and faculty for keeping the lights burning
- my patient wife, children, family, and friends, for their understanding and support

## THESIS STATEMENT

## THESIS STATEMENT

### CENTRAL ISSUE

Deceased members of the Downtown Eastside Community are typically removed for funerary ritual and interment elsewhere. This action deprives the bereaved living, particularly those who are disadvantaged, of opportunities to assume stewardship of their dead through ritual and memorialization, and removes evidence of the existence of past generations.



*('GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN' - Fox, 2005)*

### PREMISE

There is a deeply ingrained human need for the living to assume stewardship of the dead; funerary rituals and interment sites that facilitate memorialization of community members from past generations are beneficial community elements.

### PROPOSAL

A place (or places) within the Downtown Eastside community for funerary ritual, interment, and memorialization.

## BACKGROUND TO THESIS STATEMENT

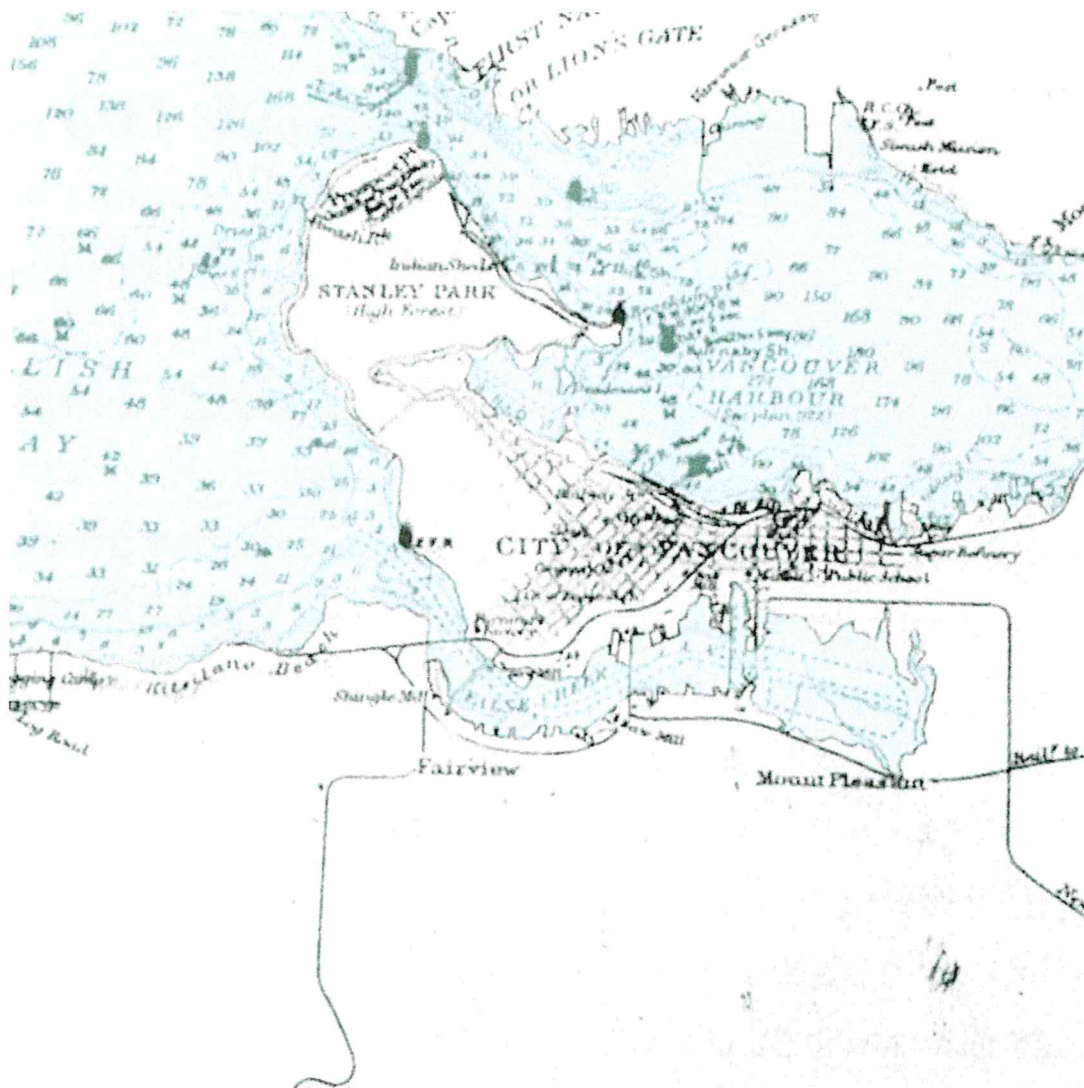
Although humankind consists of diverse populations and cultures, there is a shared tradition of the living taking care of their dead. There are multiple beliefs, feelings, and reactions toward death, and various funerary practices, but commonly shared primal mythological foundations result in similar prescribed ritualized burials of the dead within designated settings.

Inner-city urban districts, where the incidence of death among populations is relatively high, are typically lacking in both opportunity and settings for funerary practices. The district within the City of Vancouver designated as 'Downtown Eastside' provides rich territory for exploring this Thesis topic, as it presents the dual distinction of being the scene of Vancouver's origins as a City, and is reputedly home to the most impoverished and disadvantaged population in all of Canada with a death rate far greater than that of the general population.

## DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE VANCOUVER

## DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE VANCOUVER ORIGINS & DEVELOPMENT

Settlement of southwest British Columbia by non-aboriginal populations, fueled by European trading interests, began in the early 19th Century with the development of inland townships such as Fort Langley (1827) and New Westminster (1859) along the Fraser River, and Port Moody (1858) at the eastern extremity of Burrard Inlet. The area now incorporated as the coastal City of Vancouver was wilderness at the time.<sup>1</sup>



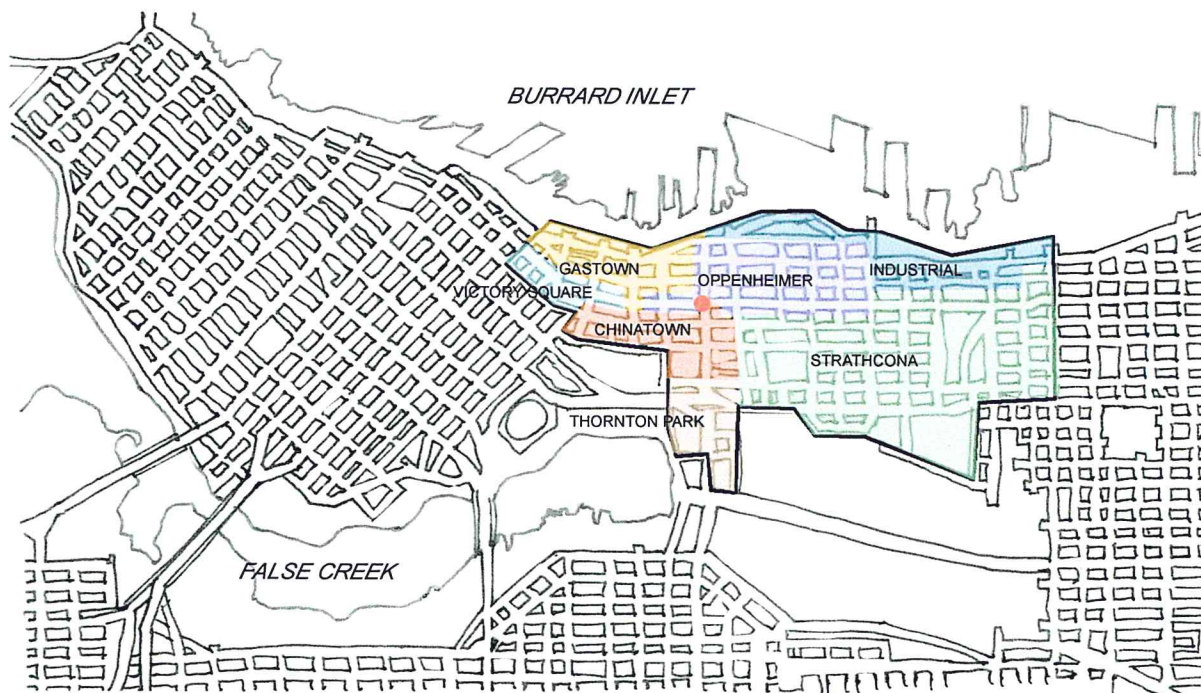
(map courtesy City of Vancouver Archives)

Vancouver's Downtown Eastside district is the historic area of the City's origins, consisting of several subdistricts adjacent to the present downtown core. The Hastings Mill subdistrict, currently an industrial area, originated as a sawmill operation in 1867, competing with others which had been previously established on the northern and eastern shores of Burrard Inlet.

Development of the Gastown area, incorporated as the Township of Granville in 1870, followed in the form of a modest commercial centre offering hotel rooms, entertainment, saloons, and trading operations serving transient and permanent workers of Hastings Mill, local and traveling merchants, and visitors. Strathcona became the working-class residential district for permanent residents, and Chinatown sustained a segregated Chinese population of labourers and merchants. Expansion enveloped the Victory Square portion of Hastings Street and the Thornton Park portion of Main Street.



*(photo courtesy City of Vancouver Archives)*



*(Fox)*

Hastings Street served as the arterial connector between the subdistricts, and became a major commercial strip and processional route. The prevailing subdivision pattern of land consists of increments of 25' x 122' lots, and the majority of buildings are relatively small-scale, with frontages of 100' or less and heights in the two to four-storey range in a variety of early 20th century Architectural motifs, both academic and vernacular.

Deadman's Island, adjacent to Stanley Park in Coal Harbour, was shared with the aboriginal population as the original burial ground for the area until development of Mountainview Cemetery in 1887, located well outside city limits and away from inhabited areas.

Incorporation of the area as the City of Vancouver in 1886 transpired concurrently with development of port facilities and extension of railway operations, with Vancouver as the terminus, to the West Coast, securing the city's position as a significant economic destination by the end of the 19th Century. Vancouver was thus founded on a base of industry and commerce with Downtown Eastside at its core.<sup>2</sup> While many people prospered under the prevailing social conditions at the time which favoured the predominant culture of youth, independence, and self-sufficiency, others proved to be less fortunate and origins of marginalized populations appeared within this early foundation. Workers displaced by injury, illness, economic shifts, and technological change easily fell into poverty and desperation, as did stranded and disappointed fortune-seekers. Racial and cultural tensions simmered to the disadvantage of immigrants and people of aboriginal and non-European descent.



*(photo courtesy City of Vancouver Archives)*



*(photo courtesy City of Vancouver Archives)*

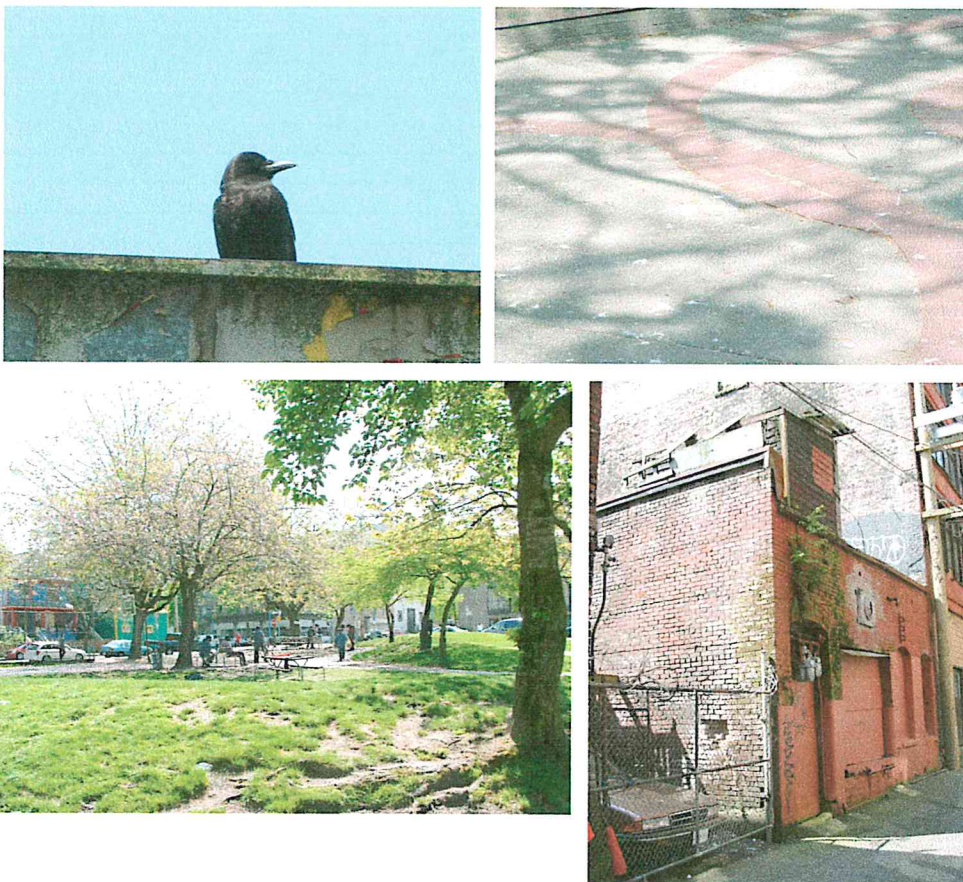
Alcohol and derivatives of opium were available to ease the pain, underground economic activities were often the only available sources of revenue for supporting subsistence-level needs. The Salvation Army installed its first centre of operations before the turn of the century<sup>3</sup>, offering care and religion to those who had fallen aside.

Two world wars and a major international economic depression during the 20th Century shattered the lives of many area residents. By the end of the 20th century the industrial base within the Downtown Eastside and adjacent False Creek had largely eroded while surviving commercial activities relocated to other areas of the downtown peninsula. Much of the area was slated for "urban renewal" including plans for a major extension of the regional freeway system that would have resulted in large-scale demolition. In fact some significant portions, notably the African American district of 'Hogan's Alley' and parts of Strathcona/Chinatown were demolished before the plan was abandoned as a result of the efforts of community activists. The area became designated worthy of preservation for its heritage value.<sup>4</sup>

A number of concurrent factors led to a rapid increase in the size of Downtown Eastside's marginalized population and established a cycle for its continuation. The abundance of vacant properties and derelict low-rent hotels due to disinvestment led to a gravitation of additional disadvantaged residents into the Downtown Eastside seeking affordable and available shelter as low-cost housing in other areas became depleted. Policy changes in provincial health-care led to a sudden release of hundreds of patients, unable to cope independently, from residential psychiatric facilities and into the network of social services established in Downtown Eastside. Restrictive structural changes to public assistance programs resulted in deep poverty for many more disadvantaged and disabled people. Growth and changes in the established drug-culture produced a more highly dependent and desperate population, and

disease associated with the drug and sex trades, notably HIV, AIDS, and hepatitis, became epidemic<sup>5</sup>.

Downtown Eastside, situated at the approach to the Downtown peninsula, now exists as somewhat of a transition zone between East Vancouver and the Downtown core. With its skewed street pattern, curious mix of places and activities, and unconventional population, Downtown Eastside exists noticeably as an 'other' place in the context of the City of Vancouver as a whole, a *heterotopia*.<sup>6</sup>



(Fox)

Viewed as a multidimensional landscape<sup>7</sup>, Downtown Eastside is expressed in a variety of contrasting forms. Nature and artifact coexist as the sky silhouettes built forms; random flora appear through cracks in roads and buildings; shadows of trees are cast onto sidewalks; birds perch on rooftops. Wealth and poverty, problems and opportunities, appear among conflicting ideologies of utilitarianism and socialism, secularism and religion. As a system, the area exists as a “dynamic equilibrium of interacting processes”. Downtown Eastside is a place of unique

characteristics, a piece of a larger mosaic. Each element acts as a reference to its origin and subsequent changes in history, together forming an exhibit of consequences. As a whole, there exists an artistic quality of place.

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Eastside and its subdistricts are designated by the City as official contiguous Heritage Areas, with the largest concentration of 19th Century and early-20th Century buildings remaining in the City. Current City Planning policies for the area consist of complementary initiatives that encourage general economic revitalization, retention and restoration of heritage buildings and facades, and substantial increases in the densities of a variety of residential types. The vision calls for “vibrant mixed-income inner-city neighbourhoods that retain and improve low-income housing and build on the strength of their heritage character”.<sup>8</sup>

Housing *categories* that are supported for Downtown Eastside.<sup>9</sup> include:

Market Housing: privately owned and managed, owner-occupied or tenant-occupied, variety of types

Social Housing: government-owned and managed or privately owned and managed by non-profit societies, subsidized by public funding for low-income residents, variety of types

The housing *types* that are encouraged for low-income residents<sup>10</sup> include:

Single Room Occupancy: small units with shared bath facilities

Small Suites: small self-contained suites under 400 square feet

Student Housing: SRO units or Small Suite units purpose-built for students

Supportive Housing: for residents who are able to live relatively independently but require some support services such as housekeeping, meal preparation, personal care, etc.

Special Needs Residential Facilities: for residents who are temporarily or permanently unable to live independently due to illness, disability, crisis, etc.

With reference to the Victory Square and Oppenheimer subdistricts, new developments are encouraged to be compatible with the current scale of development in the area - 70-foot maximum height and floor-space ratio of 6.0 (3.0 non-residential, 3.0 residential).

There are no provisions in planning for dealing with sites and rituals related to death. Further, it was pointed out by a member of a local residents' association that any large-scale use of

land as a cemetery, that could otherwise be used for housing, would be met with extreme conflict.

### LIVING IN DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE

The resident population of the Downtown Eastside totals in excess of 16,000 people and represents multiple cultural, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. Residents are statistically more inclined to be aged, impoverished, medically challenged, physically impaired, mentally unstable, inadequately sheltered, inadequately nourished, addicted to alcohol and hard drugs, and exposed to life-threatening situations than anywhere else in the city.

#### SOCIAL SERVICES AVAILABLE

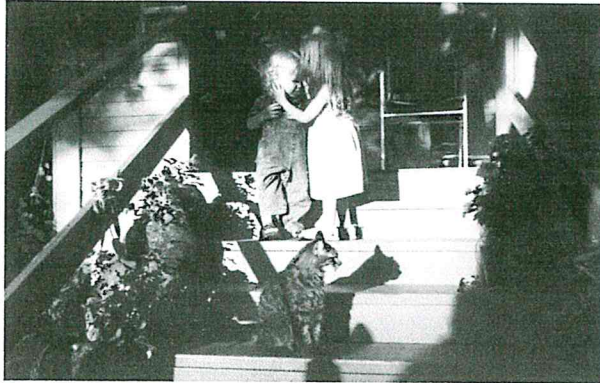
- groceries & meals
- crisis
- emergency shelter
- temporary shelter
- permanent housing
- medical & dental care
- psychiatric care
- detox
- rehabilitation
- advocacy
- legal services
- education
- counselling
- skills development
- recreation
- financial aid



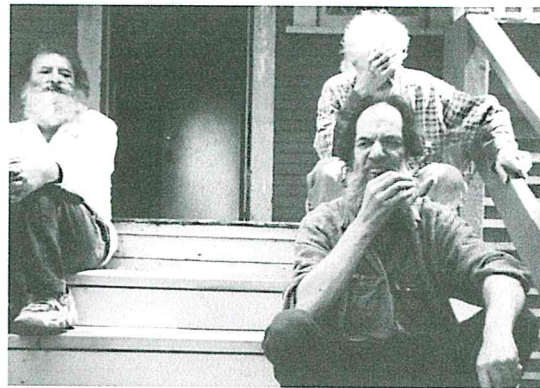
*(photos courtesy Vancouver Courier)*

Most are impoverished and institutionally dependent. The primary source of income for the majority of the population is public assistance, with supplementary income derived from other tenuous sources including low-wage employment, panhandling, and occasionally underground activities. Barriers to adequate employment include mental and physical disabilities, lack of education and skills, and lifestyles. Considerable assistance is available to the disadvantaged through over 200 social service agencies in the area providing help with shelter, food, clothing, medical care, counseling and other similar services. Access to external social support networks is rare for most residents of Downtown Eastside<sup>11</sup>.

Statistics aside, the population of the Downtown Eastside consists of a relatively close community of vital human beings, unique personalities, diverse talents, compassion<sup>12</sup>. There are multiple generations, extended families, close friendships. Care for children and pets is often a communal effort.



*"Kiss on Steps"*  
photo by Hannah Walker - age 14  
courtesy Pivot Legal Society  
Downtown Eastside Portrait Calendar



*"Sitting on Steps"*  
photo by Aurora Johnson - age 12  
courtesy Pivot Legal Society  
Downtown Eastside Portrait Calendar

Social contact can be observed as tending to occur in the streets and public places, most commonly as spontaneous encounters through procession and gathering. Through procession and gathering, information, resources, feelings and experiences are shared - what's going on in the "system", where's the best place to find available shelter, who has died. Parks, streets, lanes, intersections, lineups, bars, and community facilities serve as common points of contact. Hastings Street between Gore Avenue and Cambie Street appears to be the most heavily trafficked of pedestrian thoroughfares, with several major gathering nodes along the way.



(Fox)

At Gore Avenue are several religious institutions, with the First United Church being the most active in the community in terms of extending services to the disadvantaged. A substantial area of public green space also exists at the south end of the street, a remnant of the

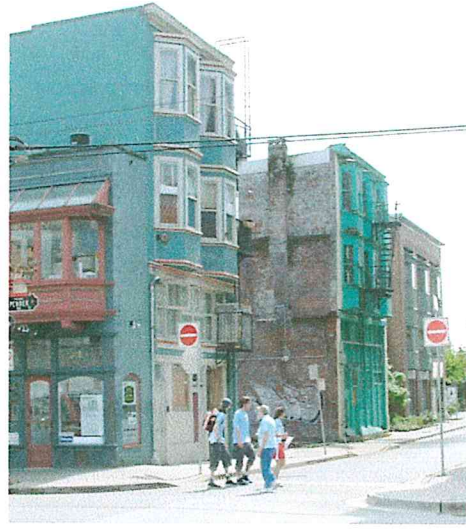
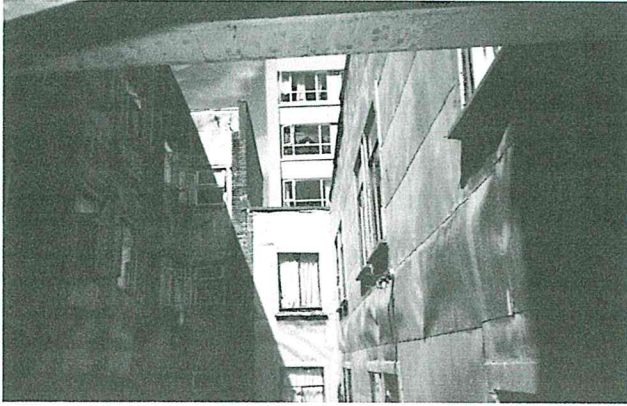
abandoned urban renewal and freeway plans. Main Street is home to the Carnegie Centre - an early public library, then museum, and now a hub of community activity that includes education services, a library, low-cost cafeteria, gymnasium, theatre, information centre, and social gathering space. Hastings Street at Columbia Street has a popular coffee shop and clinic operated by the Portland Hotel Society, the 'United We Can' recycling depot, and an open-air flea market. Carrall Street has a community arts centre (also operated by the Portland Hotel Society), Pigeon Square Park on abandoned railway property, and the nearby Funky Winkerbean Pub.

In addition to ever-present parked and moving automobiles, there exists a noticeable use of wheeled vehicles of necessity intermixed with pedestrian activity in the area's streets and lanes. Shopping carts, pushcarts, wagons, strollers, wheelchairs, bicycles, and skateboards contain and transport worldly possessions, young children, the physically challenged, and the reasonably mobile in various combinations and degrees of urgency. Obstacles such as stairs, curbs, and doorways impede motion and access for those who are dependent on the use of wheeled transport, while clear passageways and gentle ramps facilitate their progress.

Of all the difficult issues experienced by residents of Downtown Eastside, a shortage of housing ranks among the most pressing. Demand for available and affordable housing for the disadvantaged is far greater than its availability, and much of what is available is substandard. Homelessness is a significant and chronic problem, with as many as 1500 people sleeping in the streets each night. The most consistently urgent need is that of emergency short-term housing where access is available to temporary shelter, shower and washroom facilities, laundry facilities, and meals, to accommodate those who are immediately "between homes" and would otherwise be left exposed to the elements.



*'Every Building On 100 West Hastings' (upper left)  
photo by Stan Douglas*



"View from the Avalon"  
photo by Linus Malik - age 31  
courtesy Pivot Legal Society  
Downtown Eastside Portrait Calendar



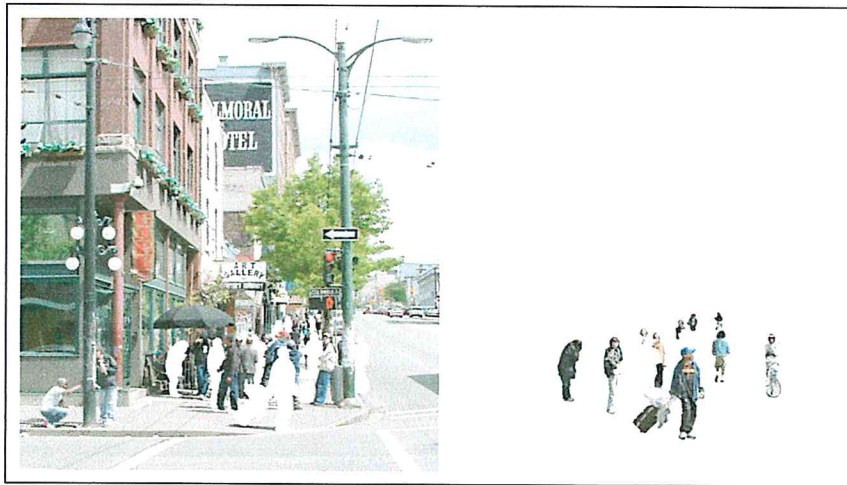
- cellular
- grouped
- identifiable
- territorial
- temporary / transient
- scarce
- valued
- threatened
- substandard

Much of the available housing is cellular in nature, densely organized compartments as found in the numerous single room occupancy hotels<sup>13</sup> in the area. The presence of alternative shelter can be observed among exterior spaces created by the recesses and canopies of built forms such as benches, transit stops, doorways, loading bays, and road supports, or among a variety of temporary tent-like constructions. Expressions of territoriality and personal space appear in both available and alternative housing types through displays of personal artifacts and other belongings that signify occupancy.

### DIEING IN DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE

The central issue forming the basis of this thesis is the alarming rate at which death occurs among the population of Downtown Eastside, and surrounding circumstances.

MORE THAN 10 PEOPLE  
DIE EACH WEEK  
IN THE  
DOWNTOWN EAST SIDE



DEATH RATE - D.E.S.:  
34 PER YEAR PER 1000 POPULATION  
(552 PER YEAR)

DEATH RATE - CITY:  
7 PER YEAR PER 1000 POPULATION  
(3900 PER YEAR)

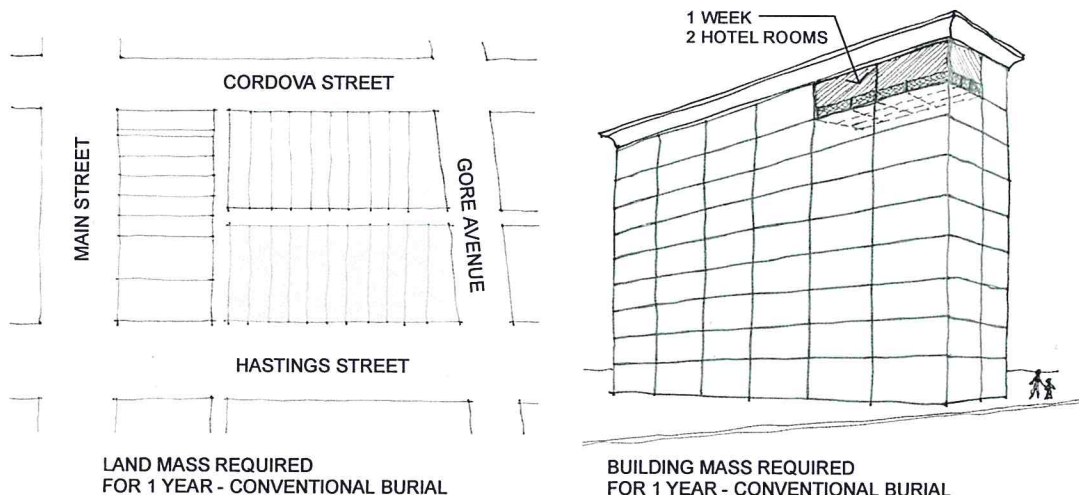


(Fox)

In the coming year, over 500 people will die in Downtown Eastside - more than 10 people per week. Of a population in excess of 16,000 people this statistically represents a death rate of 35 per 1000 population per year, or five times the rate for the City of Vancouver as a whole.<sup>14</sup> The majority of deaths (90%) are due to natural causes. While statistical details aren't readily available, it can be reasonably assumed that underlying factors are associated with living conditions - malnutrition, exposure, absence of medical and dental care, and so on. Following is accidental poisoning (3.4% - primarily due to drug and alcohol overdose), suicide (3.3%), drowning (2.1%), falls (1.3%), motor vehicle accidents (0.5%), and homicide (0.4%).<sup>15</sup> Surroundings and circumstances in death, as in life, are typically less than idyllic.

According to a representative of the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR), approximately 400, or 70%, of deaths among Downtown Eastside residents are referred annually to their 'Indigent Burials Office'. Modest funerary services are contracted from a private mortuary outside the immediate area through which interment is arranged at a cemetery located in Surrey, a community approximately 35 km east of Vancouver. Mountainview Cemetery in Vancouver, the only cemetery in the City, no longer has interment sites available although the contracted mortuary owns and operates a crematorium located there; the contracted mortuary does not have interment rights at any cemetery in closer proximity to Downtown Eastside.

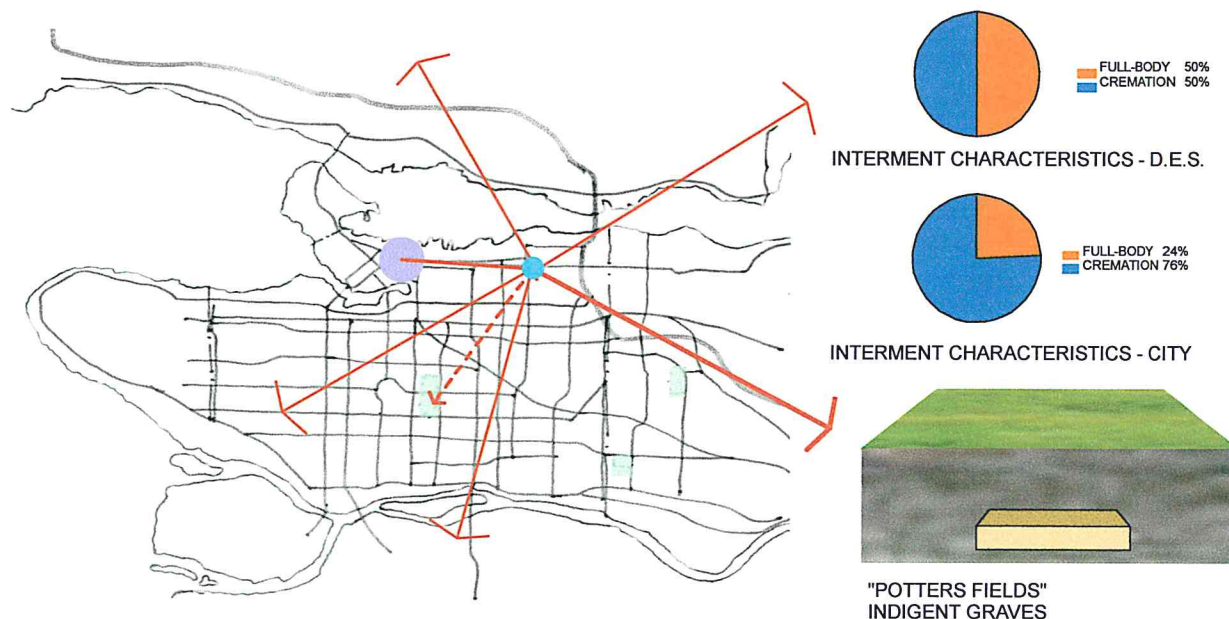
Disadvantaged members of the community typically do not have the resources necessary to travel or make other arrangements due to poverty and mobility issues. As a consequence the bereaved are faced with a difficult and often insurmountable challenge when hoping to participate in funerary rituals or visit interment sites. This can only be perceived as a demoralizing scenario where the community is further invalidated.



(Fox)

Prior to 2005, the Ministry of Human Resources policy was to arrange only for full-body earth burials unless a family member requested cremation. Approximately 50% of deaths resulted in burial, 50% in cremation. That policy has since been reversed, where the Ministry now arranges only for the less costly option of cremation unless a family member objects and requests burial. It is anticipated that most deaths, if not all, will now result in cremation, which is in line with current regional trends.

When members of this community die, all traces of their existence typically disappear as family members or public trustees remove their remains and possessions for disposition in other locations. The MHR representative also noted that their office is almost never called upon to handle cases of residents who originate from cultural groups that provide strong external social support networks such as local Jewish and Islamic communities. Deaths of Aboriginal residents are handled by the Federal Government's Ministry of Indian and Northern Affairs and are most often referred to the individual's home band.



(Fox)

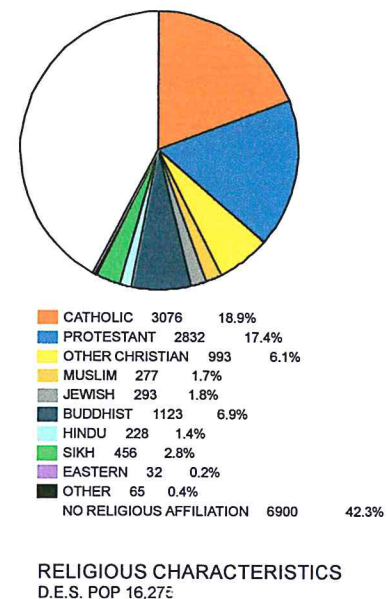
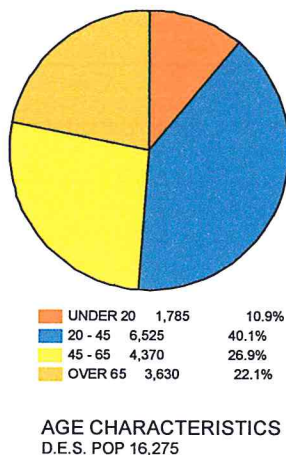
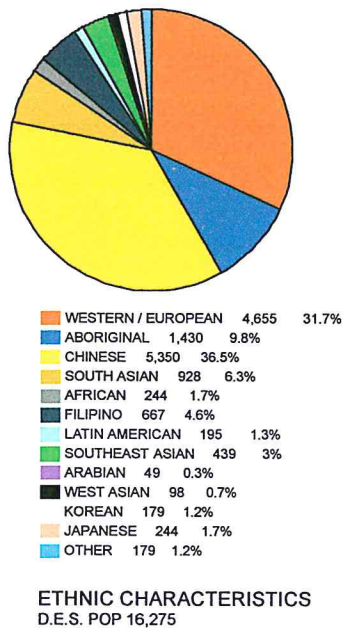
A representative of the Carnegie Centre advised that people close to a deceased member of the community will occasionally organize impromptu ceremonies with the help of volunteer service workers if time and space are available at Carnegie Centre, First United Church, or some other favoured meeting place. Services are typically secular or loosely Christian with ethnic modifications. Aboriginal residents are almost always returned to their home-bands for ceremony and burial following death, but memorial services have been held in addition by the Downtown Eastside community that are Christian in nature but also include traditional

Aboriginal rituals of chanting, dancing, and burning herbs. Attendance at these impromptu ceremonies can vary from a dozen or so to a few hundred. There are no dedicated places however for the cultural necessities of ritual, interment, and memorialization of the dead.

A few examples were provided of personalities recently honoured by well-attended ceremonies at Carnegie Centre.

- *JW*, a familiar likable scoundrel and seasoned fence, died in his early sixties from cancer. He was notable for his outworn business attire (hat included), briefcase filled with product, and disdain for the police after being brutally arrested for possession of a toy gun among his wares.
- *D*, a popular local musician, had died of liver failure in his early forties after struggling with alcoholism most of his adult life.
- *G*, who died in his late fifties following his eighth heart attack, was a disabled labourer, having lost an arm in an industrial accident; a volunteer at a local charity kitchen, he joked about needing help to tie his apron.
- *S*, a prostitute and single mother, had died at twenty-seven from a drug overdose.

All were described as well-regarded members of the community who are deeply missed by many.



(Fox)

With reference to possible factors influencing personal choice surrounding ritual and interment, it is interesting to note that in terms of religious affiliation the largest single demographic (42%) claims to have none, followed by adherents to various Christian sects, and Buddhist. The largest ethnic group (49%) consists of European descendants, followed by Asian and Aboriginal.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Davis - *"The Greater Vancouver Book"* pp 3 - 26, p 324

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> Davis - *"The Greater Vancouver Book"* pp 264 - 270

<sup>4</sup> City of Vancouver - *"Draft Housing Plan For The Downtown Eastside"*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

<sup>6</sup> Foucault - *"Rethinking Architecture / Of Other Spaces: Utopia And Heterotopia"* pp 350 - 356

<sup>7</sup> Meinig - *"The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes"* pp 34-48

<sup>8</sup> City of Vancouver - *"Victory Square Concept Plan"*

<sup>9</sup> City of Vancouver - *"Draft Housing Plan for Downtown Eastside"*

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> Allen - *"Someone To Talk To"*

<sup>12</sup> City of Vancouver - *"Draft Housing Plan for the Downtown Eastside"*

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*

<sup>14</sup> Province of B.C., Ministry of Health, Department of Vital Statistics

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*

## FUNERARY ATTITUDES

## FUNERARY ATTITUDES

### FOREWORD

For the purpose of this Thesis, the funerary practices and Architecture of Western Europe and North America are the primary focus of study as established traditions in Vancouver are most commonly derived from those sources. It should be noted at this point however that similar beliefs, practices, and settings seem to have also occurred among the cultures of Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and the aboriginal cultures of North and South America.



(illustration courtesy [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), artists unknown)

Funerary practices throughout history have corresponded to prevailing societal attitudes - what the people believe to be true, how it makes them feel, and how they behave - toward death, influenced by mythological and religious tradition.

## DEATH

Death appears to have been universally perceived through history and prehistory as a natural event in the cycle of life, generating complex beliefs, feelings, and behaviours. The definition of death itself can vary between cultures tremendously. In secular thought death is final and permanent, occurring at the instant biological functions cease. In religious and mythological thought death can be a process that begins as biological functions begin to decline and continues until interment or beyond. Either way, the death itself instills feelings of grief among the bereaved. Either way, the once-living body becomes a corpse - a powerful symbol charged with multiple meanings. The corpse brings to our attention the reality of the death, of decay, a threat to social order, a sense of mystery and fear, a sense of our own mortality. Something must be done with it.<sup>16</sup>

## RITUAL

In every human society the living assume stewardship, care for body and soul, of the dead. The earliest evidence of ritualized care and disposition of the dead coincides with the earliest evidence of mythological sentiments<sup>17</sup> that appear among human remains found buried at Neanderthal archaeological findings dating from approximately 60,000 BC<sup>18</sup>.

Inside a cave among the Zagros Mountains of Iraq the remains of a man laid to rest on a reed mat<sup>19</sup> were found together with an orderly distribution of several species of flowers known to have medicinal properties. Subsequent findings in caves, pits, and mounds revealed weapons, personal possessions, and animal and human sacrifices together with buried human remains appearing to have been returned to the womb of Mother Earth for rebirth<sup>20</sup>. Agricultural societies directed their burial rituals inward toward the heart of the community; hunting cultures directed them outward into the natural world<sup>21</sup>. A sense of self-awareness is suggested here together with a concern for the human spirit and man's relationship with nature<sup>22</sup>.

Ritual appears to have several original purposes in responding to death. There is the altruistic effort on the part of the living to protect the body and soul of the deceased from the influence of unwelcome spirits, with the intention of ensuring a successful journey to and duration in the afterlife. There is also the preventative effort toward protecting the soul of the deceased from remaining earthbound to haunt the living. Ritual additionally offers the bereaved a channel for dealing with grief by formally and publicly parting company with the deceased, that is,

mourning - the behaviours and activities observed by the bereaved following a death. It signifies a shift in relationship with the living to relationship with the dead.

Ritual care for the corpse involves watching over it (and looking for signs of life, just in case), cleansing it, wrapping it, dressing it, speaking to it, praying over it, lavishing praise on it, offering it food and material goods, and finally containing it for transport and burial, or cremating and disposing of it. Ritual facilitates the journey of the deceased to the tomb and the afterlife. The continuous presence of light is common, as darkness breeds fear and acts as a catalyst for the materialization of demons; sound, in the form of music, chimes, and water combat silence.<sup>23</sup>

Mourning may continue for weeks, months, even years beyond interment of the deceased as a relationship continues between the living and the dead. Prescribed annual “days of the dead”, coinciding with the seasons, are traditional among both Western and Eastern cultures as those close to the deceased gather at sites of interment to offer food, artifacts, flowers and prayer to the dead to sustain them in the afterlife. It is also common for the bereaved to take part in the ongoing caretaking of interment sites<sup>24</sup>

## THE TOMB

In mythological and religious convention, the resting place of the corpse or cremated remains is a sacred place serving as the point of departure for the deceased into the afterlife. It can also be the point of return to an earthly presence of departed souls and a point of contact between the living and the dead, so serves as a setting for ongoing ritual.

*return  
to the womb  
of Mother Earth  
for rebirth*



(Fox)

NEANDERTHAL BURIAL  
30,000 - 60,000 BC



(Corpses, Coffins, and Crypts)

EARLY NEOLITHIC BURIAL GROUND  
UNDATED

Tombs purposely constructed to accommodate ritualized burial first appeared during the Neolithic era<sup>25</sup> with human remains and associated grave-goods and sacrifices being placed within the walls of megalithic stone chambers<sup>26</sup>. Some tombs appear to have been oriented to allow the light of sunrise at the winter solstice into the entry. Such tombs were reserved for a privileged few however as common members of society continued to be buried in inauspicious caves, pits, and mounds. The location of both tombs and graves were often marked by a vertical shaft apparently connecting the site to a cosmic source of spiritual power<sup>27</sup>. Those among the lower end of the social scale were buried unceremoniously in unmarked graves or left unburied and exposed to the elements.

Placing the deceased in a coffin, occasionally in combination with wrapping, embalming, or mummification, is intended to ease or extend transportation and transition to the tomb in addition to providing a further protective shield against unwanted influences. It also isolates the living by another level from direct contact with the corpse. If the deceased is to be on display in ceremony or procession, a more elaborate furniture-like casket is often used.

The practice of cremation appears to have originated during the late Neolithic period as a purification rite. It became an increasingly common method of disposing of human remains during the spread of the Roman Empire, but was considered by Jewish and early Christian cultures to be offensive to the sanctity of the human body, the temple of the soul. It was forbidden within the Roman Empire following adoption of Christianity as the state religion. Cremation is currently the most common means of disposing of human remains in some geographic regions, Vancouver being one of them.

## THE AFTERLIFE

A common belief shared among most cultures is that death is not the end of the human story<sup>28</sup>, but rather that some form of existence continues beyond death<sup>29</sup>. Sectarian cultures anticipate that one's deeds and attitudes will be judged after death and will be rewarded or punished accordingly through passage to a world of Heaven or Hell, influencing the behaviours of the living and finding expression in moral codes<sup>30</sup>. The further possibility exists for some of a future bodily resurrection on Earth. Animate reincarnation, human or otherwise, is considered to be the destination for others. Fear surrounds the possibility of failure in transcending to a desired afterlife and being instead relegated to eternal punishment or oblivion. For secular populations perceiving a finality to death, the afterlife may consist only of decomposition and eternal oblivion, with matter and energy simply dispersed into the natural world.

The Roman Empire maintained belief in an afterlife but no guiding formal doctrine existed, resulting in a variety of interpretations regarding the nature of the afterlife. Belief that the afterlife is material and begins in the tomb was commonly accepted, and the practice of burial with grave-goods prevailed. It was also widely believed that the dead were able to escape from the afterlife through the tomb for return to their previous earthly domain at specific times, requiring ceremony at regular intervals in perpetuity<sup>31</sup>.

In contrast to the polytheistic and pagan beliefs and practices of the majority of the Roman Empire, the monotheistic Jewish subjects maintained their cultural traditions. Jewish funereal practices included prescribed unostentatious rituals and burial. The body was considered to be the temple of the soul, so any interferences with natural processes such as embalming or cremation were considered to be a sacrilege and were prohibited. The soul returns to its source upon burial of the body, the body simply transforms to earthly matter. To purify and protect the body and soul prior to burial, the deceased remains surrounded by the bereaved in prayer during which time the body is bathed, wrapped in cloth, and placed in a simple coffin for transportation and transference to the grave. Burials took place in consecrated ground and graves were marked by inscribed headstones.

Early Christianity, as a derivative of Judaism and a somewhat marginalized group within Roman territory, chose to bury their dead among catacombs beneath Roman cities rather than risk contamination from burial among non-believers. Ritual ceremonies were held within the subterranean cemeteries at regular intervals in honour of martyrs, those who had died for the cause<sup>32</sup>. The Roman emperor Constantine eventually adopted Christianity, blended with established pagan traditions, as the official state religion (precursor to the Roman Catholic church and its Eastern Orthodox and Anglican counterparts). Martyrs were granted divine status, and temples near their remains, believed to be sources of spiritual power, were erected. The temples evolved as places for religious growth and their walls, floors, and grounds became coveted settings for burial for the privileged - clergy, heads of state, military heroes, and benevolent patrons of the Church. Followers believed that a life lived in compliance with church doctrine assured access to an afterlife of eternal bliss in heaven; defiance led to an extended period of judgment in a state of purgatory or eternal suffering in Hell. Reunification of the soul and body in a future time on Earth was believed possible through resurrection. A place in heaven through consecrated burial could also be bought with a substantial donation to the church or the establishment of an enduring financial legacy in favour of the poor. Burial of common citizens was limited to the eastern and southern

exposures of church grounds, the least desirable areas of which were the destiny of the poor themselves, several layers deep. Burial of society's "misfits" - heathens, foreigners, criminals, suicides, the insane - was relegated to the northern exposure of church grounds.

By the 18th Century intellectual changes following the Enlightenment increasingly led toward secular sentiments, delivering funerary practices into the hands and expertise of private mortuaries and funeral homes. Further, highly densified burials within the walls, floors, and grounds of churches had proved to be a public health disaster in times of plague. The churchyard was replaced by the public cemetery distanced away from inhabited areas, and the necropolis experienced a reappearance.

#### MODERN FUNERARY ATTITUDES

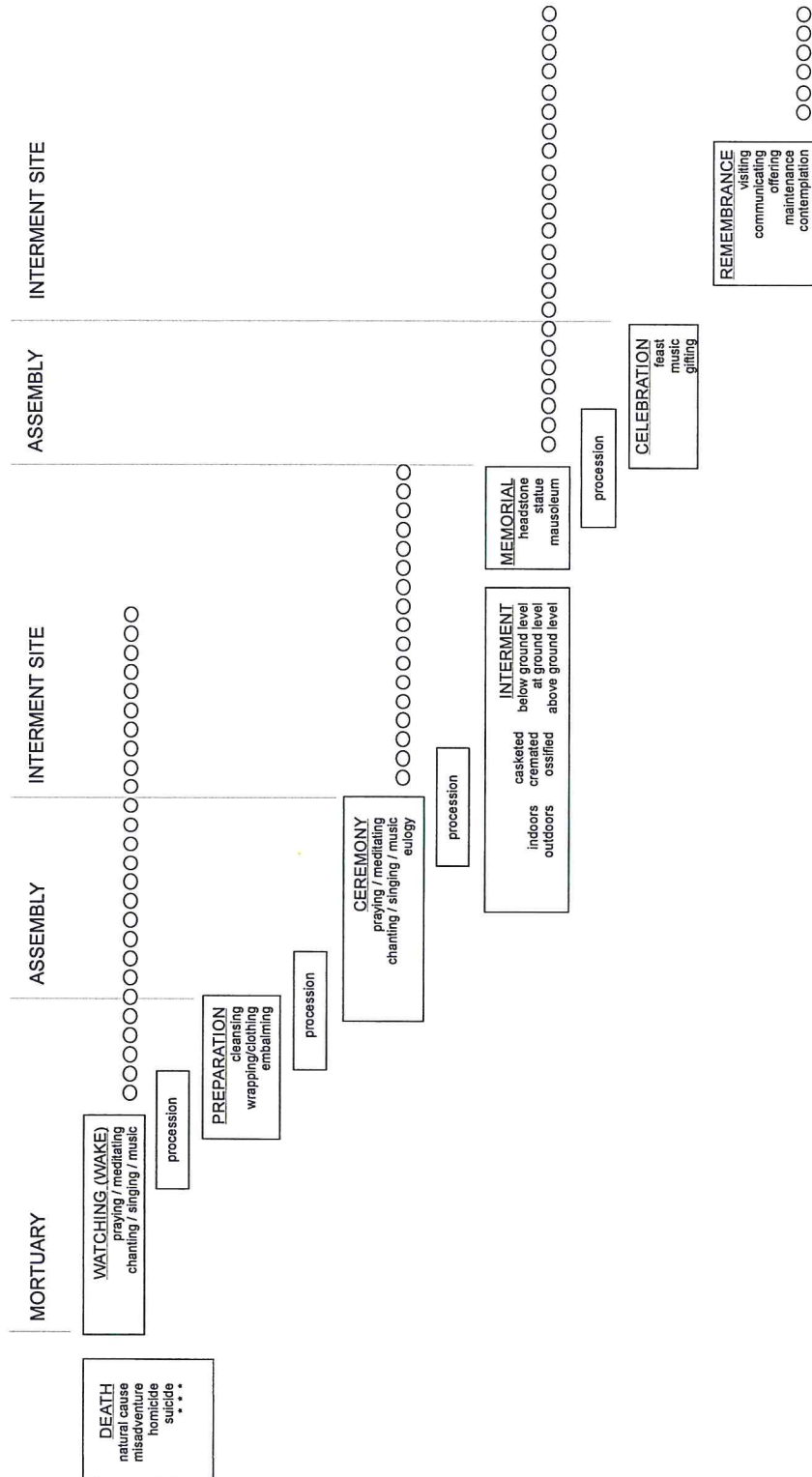
*"The perceived gulf between primitive and advanced societies disappears when faced with the prospect of death."*

*Edwin Heathcote<sup>33</sup>*

Modern society's attitudes toward death are complex, but the roots of current funerary and interment practices can be traced back to humankind's earliest thoughts and perceptions about death 60,000 years into the past. Societal attitudes toward funerary customs derive largely from those religious and ancestral traditions, influencing the nature of ritual and interment and in turn the nature of built-form memorialization.

For some, living in ritual for the benefit of a noble death and glorious afterlife continues to exist, although more recent considerations favour emotional and psychological closure for the survivors and community of the deceased, together with the pragmatic issues of simply how and where to dispose of human remains in the most efficient hygienic manner. For many, youth and self-sufficiency are treasured and death has no place<sup>34</sup> - tremendous effort and resources are expended toward delaying or defeating death through lifestyle shifts and medical science. Others defy death through participation in life-threatening lifestyles and activities.

# funerary practices elements of ritual



But as always, death comes eventually regardless of efforts to the contrary and the ritual process of transition, disposition, and grieving begins. In traditional cultures, the process is clearly defined and strictly observed. Within secular and individualistic populations such processes aren't clearly defined, however the freedom exists to orchestrate the occasion to suit the individual. The solemnity of a formal and morose funeral is often balanced, or even replaced, by a more festive and often whimsical memorial service. In both traditional and non-traditional funerary events, common ancient practices continue to be observed - preparation of the corpse, public ceremony, burial, and periodic visiting of the burial site. The presence of flame or other sources of light; music or other forms of sound; smoke from incense or burning herbs; shared food; offerings of flowers, stones, notes, or other gestures are also common both before and periodically after burial.



("Six Feet Under" image courtesy HBO)



"Relax. I've come for your toaster."

(Arnie Levin cartoon courtesy The New Yorker)

There also exists a 'pornography of death' where death becomes a source of nervous amusement. Library shelves are filled with literature wherein death and bereavement are central themes; the "Grim Reaper" appears regularly in comic art; films such as *Weekend At Bernie's* or *The Living Dead: Part II*, and television series like *Six Feet Under* or *Family Plots* find cult followings. While Timothy Leary's remains circled the Earth encapsulated in a satellite, a cremated Hunter S. Thompson was blasted out of a cannon, scattered into the Colorado sky. Minor celebrities find international posthumous fame as their autopsy results and final journeys endlessly occupy the broadcast media.

## FUNERARY ATTITUDES IN VANCOUVER

Established funerary practices in the Vancouver region are based largely upon European and North American traditions of Judeo-Christian origin; Asian practices are also prevalent. There are numerous funeral service providers, primarily commercial enterprises, in Vancouver and the surrounding region offering flexible arrangements to a multicultural population with pluralistic traditions, both religious and secular.

A survey of recent trends among cemeteries in the region has revealed that most are substantially increasing their interment capabilities to a degree that has not occurred since the mid-20th Century. While previous developments and expansions consisted primarily of lawn-cemeteries with full-body in-ground burial plots, current expansions consist of a variety of interment options in response to a number of societal shifts:<sup>35</sup>

.1 Land Shortage - higher density / lower land-consumptive interment options and infill developments such as columbaria and mausolea are being provided in response to increased demand upon limited existing available land bases

.2 Cremation - columbaria and scattering gardens are being increasingly provided in response to B.C. having one of the highest levels of cremation in North America (70% - 85%); this trend is associated with philosophical shifts toward increased consciousness of land conservation and reconsidered notions of ancestral permanence, rather than economics (West Vancouver has the highest cremation rate in the Vancouver region along with the highest concentration of wealth). With cremation as a growing choice, the tradition of scattering remains into nature is also increasing, although technically not lawful and in any large-scale consideration carries potential environmental risks.

.3 Multiculturalism - varying options are being provided to serve the needs of increasing populations of diverse cultures and their traditions of ritual and burial

4 Demographics - increased densities are being provided by cemeteries in response to growing numbers of deaths among the aging population of "Baby Boomers", and due to increases in the general population

.5 Multi-choice Society - multiple options are also being provided in response to a society which values ideas of choice and individualism across age, gender, religious, and cultural boundaries; in addition to conventional burial plots there are now double-depth plots, varieties of mausolea, varieties of columbaria, courtyards, and shared facilities

Mountainview Cemetery, the City of Vancouver's only cemetery, was established in 1887<sup>36</sup> and is owned and operated by the City. The cemetery was forced to cease sales of burial plots in 1986 as it reached its maximum capacity with interment of approximately 145,000 residents. Current plans call for expansion by 100,000 over the next century in the form of increased mausoleum and columbarium facilities. The City's lone crematorium, located within Mountainview's grounds, is privately owned and operated in conjunction with its funeral chapel. Mountainview, as with most other cemeteries in the region, is non-denominational and egalitarian.

According to advice from a representative of cemetery operations for a city within the region that owns and operates several of its own cemeteries, there are three forms of cemetery ownership and operation - private, municipal, and religious. Private and municipal operations in the region are portrayed as non-denominational and egalitarian. They don't officially have a specific area for 'indigents'. In practice however an open market prevails - "... there is no such thing as a free burial" - with the result that cemeteries become segregated by default. Religious groups, fraternal organizations, and memorial societies can and do purchase blocks of burial plots within cemeteries for use by their own members. As a consequence cemeteries are partially composed of exclusive sections - Presbyterian, Jewish, Masonic, Veteran for example. Additionally, more desirable locations command higher prices than less desirable locations. 'More desirable' relates often to symbolic references to sources of spiritual power - prominence, proximity to a religious icon, tree, water feature, east or south orientation, mountains, views. 'Less desirable' relates to locations that are low-lying, poorly drained, difficult to access, have poor orientation, possess no redeeming features. Due to their lower cost, the 'less desirable' locations become dominated by the interment of indigent residents, defacto Potters' Fields.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>16</sup> Prothero - *"Purified By Fire"* p 1

<sup>17</sup> Campbell - *"The Power of Myth"* p 71

<sup>18</sup> Leaky & Lewin - *"Origins"* p 128

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*

<sup>20</sup> Campbell - *"The Power of Myth"* p 216

<sup>21</sup> Campbell - *"The Power of Myth"* p 102

<sup>22</sup> Leaky & Lewin - *"Origins"* p 125

<sup>23</sup> Prothero - *"Purified By Fire"* p 1

<sup>24</sup> Sheridan - *"Heaven And Hell"* p 109

<sup>25</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 2

<sup>26</sup> Kostof - *"A History of Architecture: Settings And Rituals"* p 30

<sup>27</sup> Proshansky et al - *"Environmental Psychology: People And Their Physical Settings"* pp 444 - 447

<sup>28</sup> Leaky & Lewin - *"Origins"* p 125

<sup>29</sup> Sheridan - *"Heaven And Hell"* p 83

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*

<sup>31</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 56

<sup>32</sup> Kostof - *"A History Of Architecture: Settings And Rituals"* p 248

<sup>33</sup> Heathcote - *"Monument Builders: Modern Architecture And Death"* p 6

<sup>34</sup> *ibid*

<sup>35</sup> Pechet & Robb Studio / District of North Vancouver 2005

<sup>36</sup> Vancouver Sun- November 18, 2004

## FUNERARY SETTINGS & ARCHITECTURE

## FUNERARY SETTINGS & ARCHITECTURE

### FOREWORD

Places for interment of the dead throughout history have corresponded to prevailing societal attitudes and rituals surrounding death, and have been influenced largely by mythological and religious beliefs and traditions. As with the preceding study of funerary beliefs and practices, the focus here is toward developments in Western Europe and North America noting that similar developments have occurred elsewhere in other cultures.

### THE HETEROTOPIA

Social theorist Michel Foucault <sup>37</sup> observes that the cemetery, having always been present in Western civilization, is by its very existence and nature one of several types of heterotopia, a place that exists not only as a type of host place for particular behaviour, but also as an ordering principle. "Heterotopias are present in all societies, typically as heterotopias of crisis and heterotopias of deviance. Heterotopias have the power to juxtapose different, incompatible places in a single place. They can be linked to fragments of time. They have illusory systems of opening and closing, making them both penetrable and impenetrable at the same time." Finally, heterotopias, in a single space, "reveal the fragmentation of all space while forming another space". The writings of both Foucault and Porphyrios<sup>38</sup> suggest that a heterotopic, or 'other', space such as a cemetery exists physically, functionally, and socially in contrast to its context. By doing so, the heterotopia establishes its own presence and signifies the presence of its host environment. Connecting different, often distant, times and spaces is rendered achievable.

Heterotopian sensibility<sup>39</sup> achieves cohesion through adjacency of seemingly unrelated elements. Heterotopian composition can be found in primitive and medieval spaces. "The extremities of one element denote the beginnings of another, and in the hinge between two things an unstable unity appears." In contrast to the homotopic ordering sensibility of continuity found in early 20th century Modernism, "heterotopic ordering allows for discontinuity in all spatial dimensions, commemorating the singularity of parts, mending them together in a manner that does not quite approach chaos. There can exist a unity composed of distinctly different elements as grids, axes, planes, and spaces converge."

Heterotopian precepts are relevant to the premise of this thesis as guiding principles for introducing a cemetery - a socially constructed "other" place - into an existing environment. The presence of a heterotopic place has the potential to achieve a sense of unity among

otherwise contradictory, incompatible places, and to provide a sense of stability within destabilized areas.

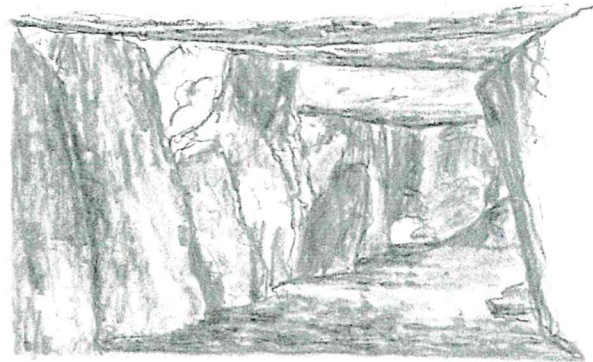
## THE TOMB

The early tombs of prehistory consisted of caves, pits, or mounds, marked occasionally with large stones. Constructed monuments as markers first appeared in the form of vertical quarried stone shafts, or menhirs, found among Neolithic burial sites<sup>40</sup>. Such monuments were objects in mid-space, visual representations of individual centers of the universe, an early means of organizing space visually by directional and rotational focus. Primitive sites for the ritualized disposal of human remains, individually and collectively, were considered as sacred space. Establishing and consecrating sites as being sacred required boundaries separating them from the horizontal expanse of other spaces and connecting them to the heavens and deities, sources of spiritual power, through vertical cosmic axes<sup>41</sup>.



*(A History of Architecture: Rituals and Settings)*

NEOLITHIC MENHIR  
2000 BC



*(Fox, from Architecture and the Afterlife)*

LATE NEOLITHIC MEGALITHIC TOMB  
Wales, 2000 BC

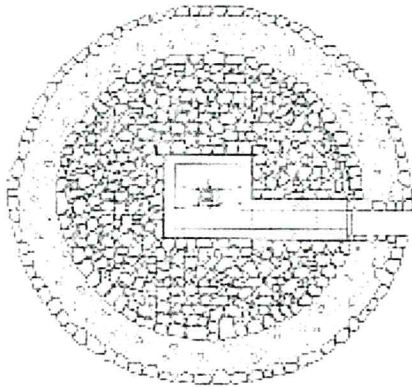
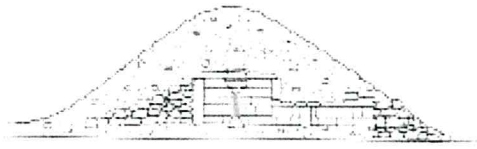
The earliest remaining constructions recognizable as Architecture were the monumental stone tombs found among the ruins of late Neolithic (3000 BC) agricultural settings<sup>42</sup>. Unlike menhirs, Neolithic stone tombs were designed to enclose interior space, consisting of assemblies of quarried megalithic stone components in relationships of vertical and horizontal elements standing in defiance of the force of gravity, celebrating the act of lifting<sup>43</sup>. The Dolmen, a simple box-like chamber, consisted of vertical stone pillars supporting horizontal slabs. The Gallery Grave was similarly constructed but larger, forming a stone corridor. The Passage Grave was constructed of boulder masonry forming a cylindrical arched corridor. The gallery and passage types contained multiple residents, a sort of precursor to future burials in group vaults, mausolea, and medieval churches. The tombs were covered with earth, making them subterranean. Remains of the dead were buried in the walls along with artifacts and sacrificial companions for the afterlife, forming a capsule of primitive culture<sup>44</sup>. These tombs were often situated in conspicuous locations within the community, houses of the dead defining the territory of the living. Tomb entrances defined the threshold between the sacred and profane worlds<sup>45</sup> and for access to spiritual power were often additionally marked by a menhir and faced east to capture the light of sunrise at the winter solstice<sup>46</sup>.



*(Corpses, Coffins, and Crypts)*

## **TOMB**

Egypt, 2000 BC



*(Architecture and the Afterlife)*

## TOMB

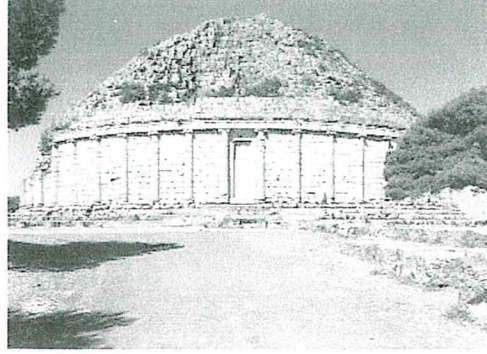
Spain, 2000 BC

### THE TUMULUS & MAUSOLEUM

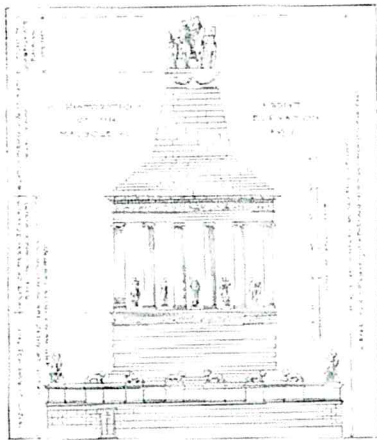
In antiquity, heroes, heads-of-state, and their families and close associates were often elevated to semi-divine status and upon death were assigned to elegant and prominent tombs constructed increasingly in the manner of temples of the gods<sup>47</sup>. Their purpose was to protect the deceased and entourage from disturbance and to address the public, preserving memory as well as remains<sup>48</sup>. For some citizens of established public greatness, construction of their tombs began in advance of their deaths. One of the earliest was the Mausoleum of Halicarnassos (320 BC) in honour of King Mausolus. The mausoleum of Augustus, in an expression of political ambition, was constructed in advance of achieving a position of greatness in addition to preceding death<sup>49</sup>. The private mausoleum at a smaller scale found its return grouped among public cemeteries and necropolii during the 16th and 17th Centuries<sup>50</sup>, and has remained a familiar typology.



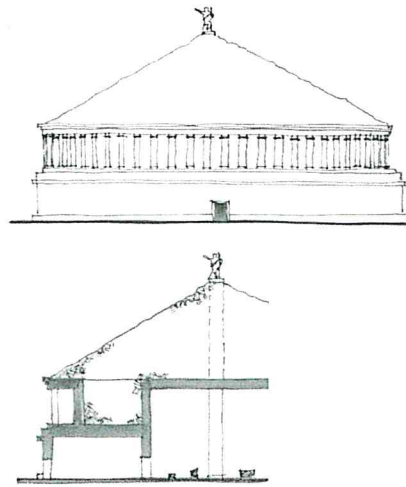
*(Last Landscapes)*  
**TUMULUS**  
 Etruria, 600 - 700 BC



*(Architecture and the Afterlife)*  
**TUMULUS**  
 Algeria, 300 - 400 BC



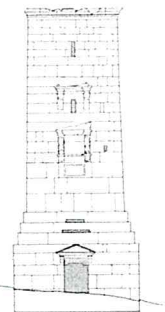
*(A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals)*  
**MAUSOLEUM OF HALICARNASSOS**  
 Turkey, 350 BC



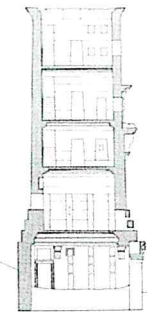
*(Fox, from Architecture and the Afterlife)*  
**MAUSOLEUM OF AUGUSTUS**  
 Rome, 28 BC



*(Architecture and the Afterlife)*  
**GROUP TOMB**  
 Palmyra, 83 AD



*(Architecture and the Afterlife)*  
**GROUP TOMB**  
 Lycia, 400 BC



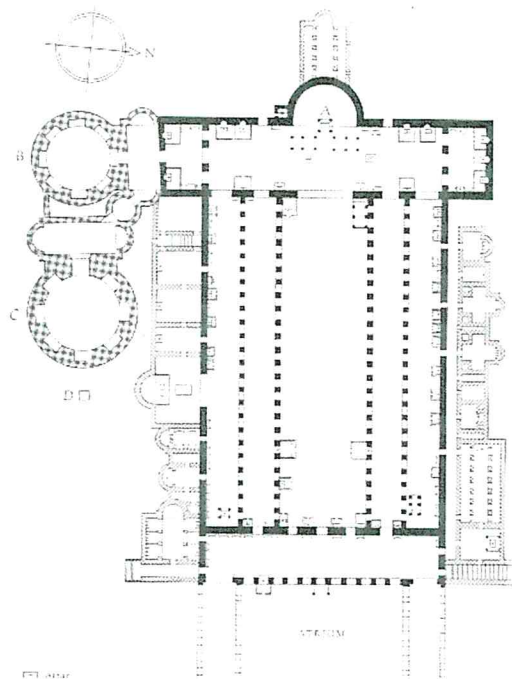
*(Architecture and the Afterlife)*  
**GROUP TOMB**  
 Rome, undated

## THE NECROPOLIS

It was decreed in 28 BC that burials, and therefore the construction of even the most limited of tombs, could no longer take place within Roman city limits (although inner-city memorials could be erected for a deserving few) with the consequence that roads leading to cities became lined with gardens surrounding various types and sizes of tomb and grave, sites for recurring festivals of the dead. Assemblies of houses of the dead effectively became cities of the dead (necropolii) where, in addition, travelers found shelter among the tombs and merchants of goods for rituals and the grave found a captive market<sup>51</sup>.

## THE CHURCH BURIAL

When the Roman Empire adopted Christianity as the state religion, the burial sites of Christian martyrs - subterranean cemeteries among catacomb mazes - were declared sacred and temples in their honour (martyrium) were erected as places of religious growth and access to spiritual influence. It was around these temples that the basilican church typology took form. For the 'worthy' (primarily clergy, heads-of-state, and benevolent patrons) burial chambers in the form of niches and chapels, and mausolea were provided along the walls, together with subfloor crypts. Outdoor burial grounds of monumental graves and mausolea also appeared.



*(Architecture and the Afterlife)*

OLD ST. PETER'S - CHURCH BURIAL

Rome, 330 AD

Old St. Peter's in Rome is an early example. Smaller scale private family churches, affiliated with central diocese as sites of sacred ritual, became established as places of sacred ritual and therefore sources of personal spiritual influence<sup>52</sup>.

### THE COMMUNAL TOMB

Architectural settings for communal burial, perhaps traceable back to the Neolithic Gallery Graves, have appeared throughout ancient and modern history. An early example was the Roman columbarium or group-mausoleum (1st Century BC), erected for the poor by benevolent wealthy citizens<sup>53</sup>. The Palmyrian Tower tomb (83 AD) which reached up to six storeys in height contained as many as 200 burial chambers fitted into the larger towers with access by internal staircase<sup>54</sup>. More recent examples can be found among modern necropolii in the form of both outdoor memorial walls and enclosed interior spaces.

### THE CEMETERY

As dominance of the church eroded with the Enlightenment and the death-toll of plagues overloaded church burial grounds, private cemeteries assumed prominence. In Western civilization since the 18th Century, the disposition of human remains has been largely relegated to designated cemetery sites, located remotely from inhabited areas for reasons of public hygiene and urban land economics. Interestingly, it can be observed that areas surrounding isolated cemetery sites eventually become substantially developed and inhabited. In addition to cemetery types consisting of graves in settings of lawn, garden, and forest, there occurred a return of necropolii, cities of the dead with parallels to cities for the living with paths, edges, nodes, landmarks, and districts. Examples are to be found in Paris, Glasgow, and New Orleans.



*(Famous and Curious Cemeteries)*

TRINITY CATHEDRAL - CHURCHYARD CEMETERY  
New York, 19th C



*(Last Landscapes)*

PERE-LACHAISE CEMETERY  
Paris, 19th C



*(Going Out In Style)*

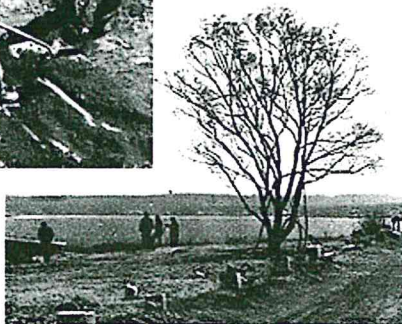
ST. LOUIS CEMETERY  
New Orleans, 19th C

The building typologies found within cemeteries tend to reflect society's attitudes about death and prescribed rituals and underlying mythology. Attitudes surrounding individuals and their status within society can be observed in memorial structures ranging from simple markers to elaborate tombs and mausoleums. While iconic religious themes persist, the architecture has become increasingly secular. In addition to serving as eternal resting places for the dead,

cemeteries intend to accommodate eternal evidence of the dead's existence together with the periodic presence of living visitors coming together in environments of solace and peaceful repose.

## THE POTTERS' FIELD

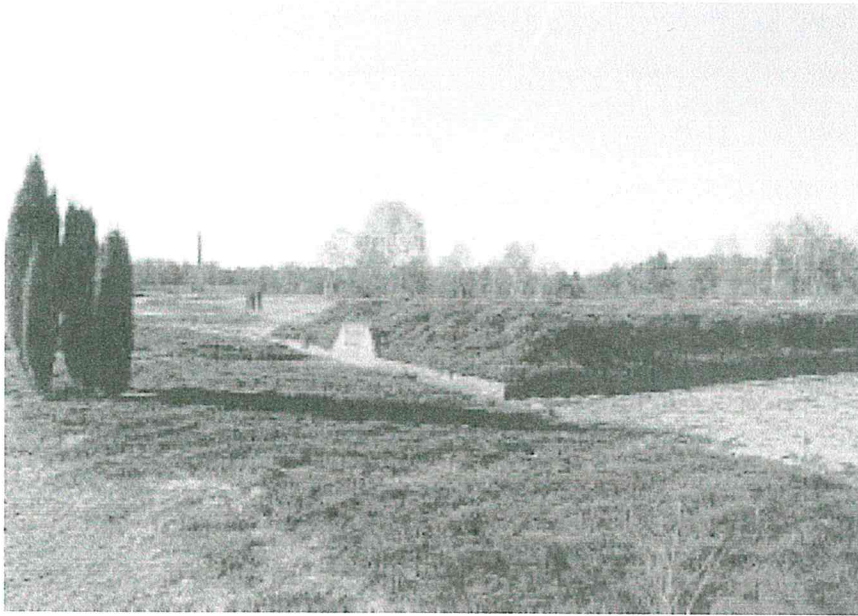
Since the beginning of ritualized burial practices, society's elite have been the recipients of the most prominent and monumental settings. Even in societies considering themselves to be egalitarian, some people have been more equal than others. Interment sites with special features such as proximity to or views toward a source of spiritual power (iconic statue, tree, ocean, river, cosmos) are more highly valued than those with no redeeming qualities. Commoners and lesser members of society - peasants, indigents, deviants, criminals, heathens and foreigners alike - have typically found their final destinations in the form of unpretentious and unmarked graves among the least desirable and least valued peripheries of burial grounds - 'potters fields'. The term derives from the Biblical fable wherein Judas Iscariot sold information regarding the whereabouts of Jesus of Nazareth, leading to his ultimate capture and execution. In a wave of guilt Judas returned the money to the captors which they then used to purchase land, useless for any purpose other than as a source for potters' clay, as a burial ground for the poor. There Judas later took his own life and was buried. The term 'potters field' (Aramaic *Aceldama* - field of blood) has become one of general use applied to any burial ground for the poor and unidentified.



(images courtesy [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), sources unknown)

*HART ISLAND POTTERS FIELD*  
New York, 20th C

*ORANGE COUNTY POTTERS FIELD*  
New York, 20th C



*(Last Landscapes)*  
**MASS GRAVES**  
 Germany, 20th C

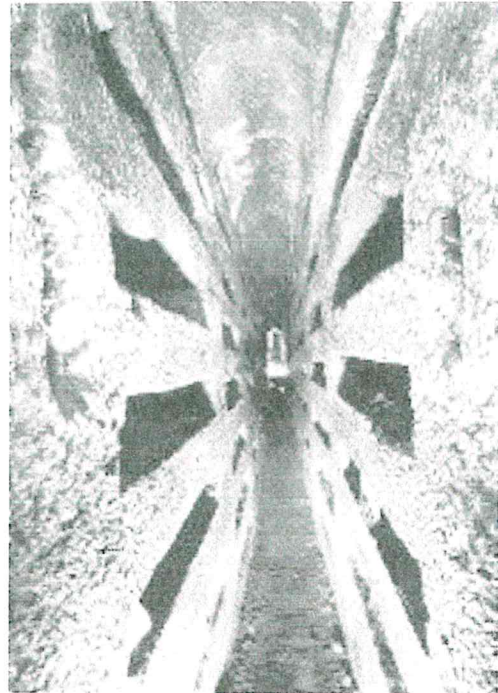
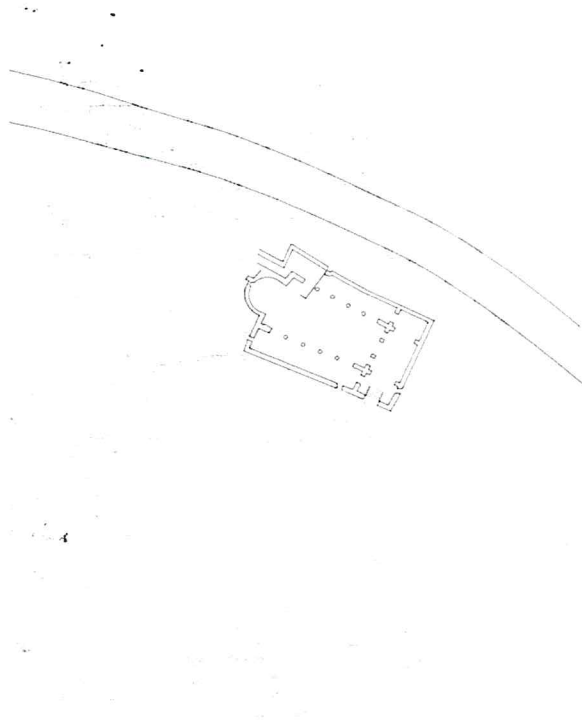


*(Fox)*  
**INDIGENT GRAVES**  
 Vancouver, 20th C

The tradition of 'Potters Fields' has persisted throughout Europe and North America in the form of paupers' graves, indigent burial grounds, and generally the least desirable area of burial plots within cemetery limits.

## LIVING WITH THE DEAD

In some cases the boundary between places for the dead and places for the living have become blurred. The catacombs of ancient Rome and medieval Paris were examples, as were the the early Roman necropolii, where individuals chose to live, temporarily and unofficially, among the remains of the dead.



*(A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals)*

**CATACOMBS**

Rome, 200 AD

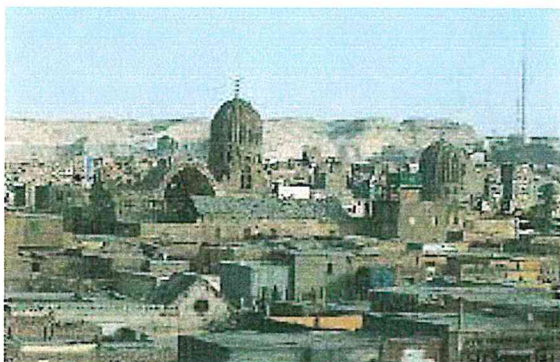


(Guide to Underground Rome)  
**DOMUS FAUSTAE**  
 Rome, 350 AD



(Guide to Underground Rome)  
**DOMUS TRANSITORIA**  
 Rome, 350 AD

Similarly in present Cairo, Egypt there exists an extensive centuries-old two-storey complex of intermixed dwellings and burial chambers, housing hundreds of families.



(images courtesy [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), sources unknown)

**CITY OF THE DEAD**  
 Cairo, 18th - 20th C

In land-scarce Hong Kong where cremation is standard practice, densely developed cemeteries in difficult terrain intervene between roadways and housing.

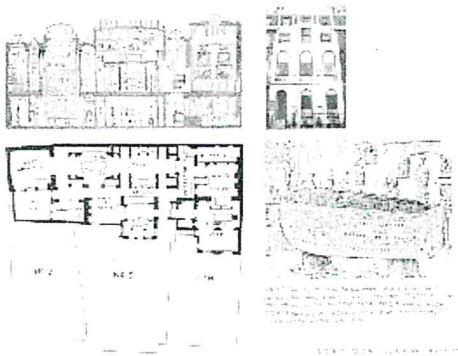
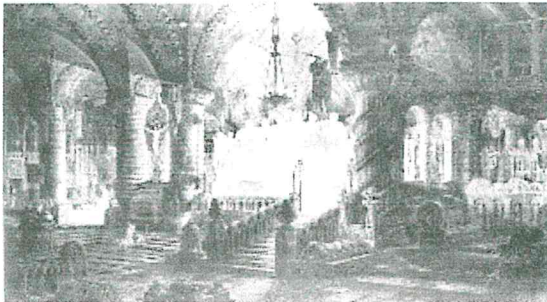


(image courtesy [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), source unknown)

## ROADSIDE CEMETERY

Hong Kong, 20th C

At a more intimate level, the home of British Architect Sir John Soane (1815) is an extreme example, conceived almost as an inhabited mausoleum, built in a sepulchral manner as the setting for the burial of his wife and of his dog.<sup>55</sup>



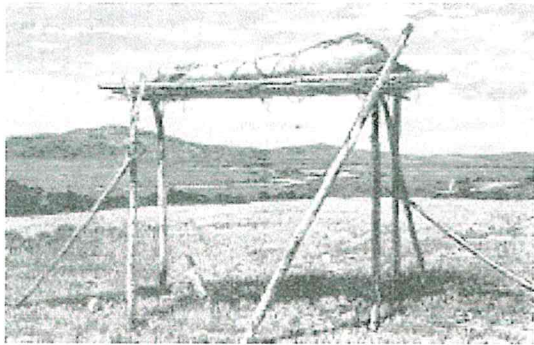
(Famous and Curious Cemeteries)

## SIR JOHN SOANE HOUSE

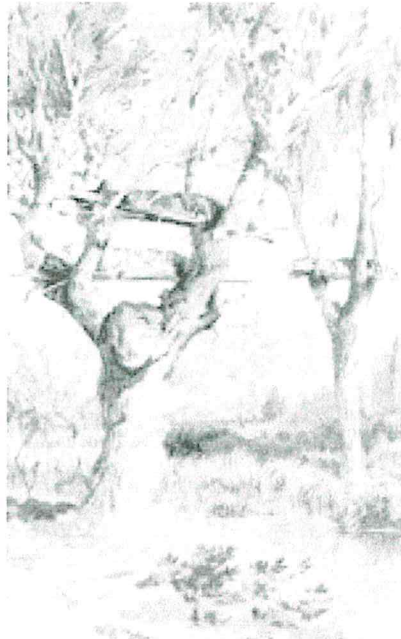
London, 19th C

## ABORIGINAL BURIAL CUSTOMS

Prior to the widespread eradication of North American Aboriginal culture by European/Christian influences in the 19th Century, a number of burial customs were observed by early settlers. In these, the dead were entombed in a variety of ways, above, upon, or below the ground plane.



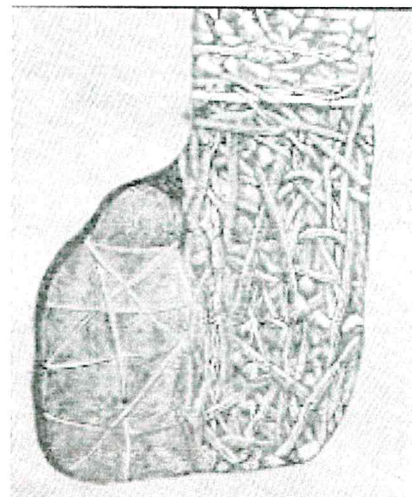
AERIAL SEPULTURE



TREE BURIAL



BURIAL HOUSES



GROUND BURIAL

*(North American Indian Burial Customs)*  
ABORIGINAL BURIAL TRADITIONS  
North America, 19th C

## MEMORIALS TO MARGINALIZED GROUPS

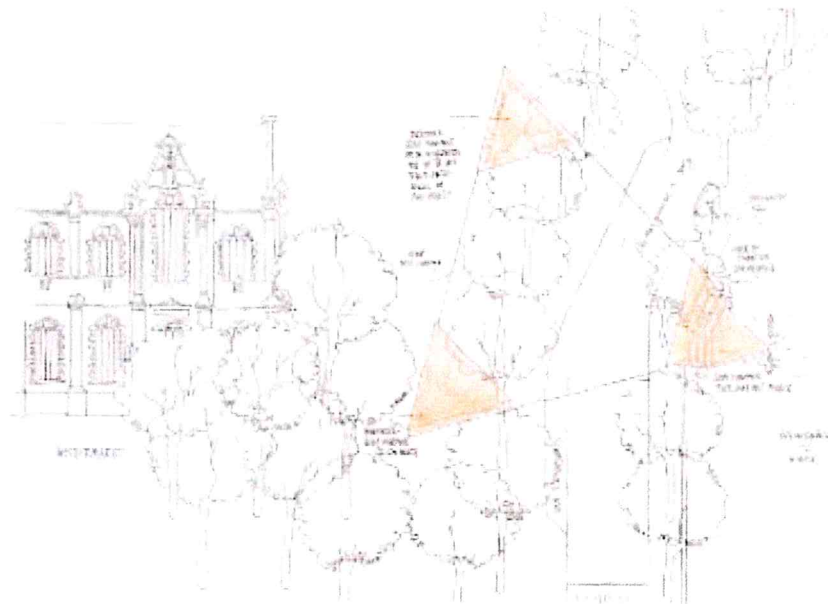
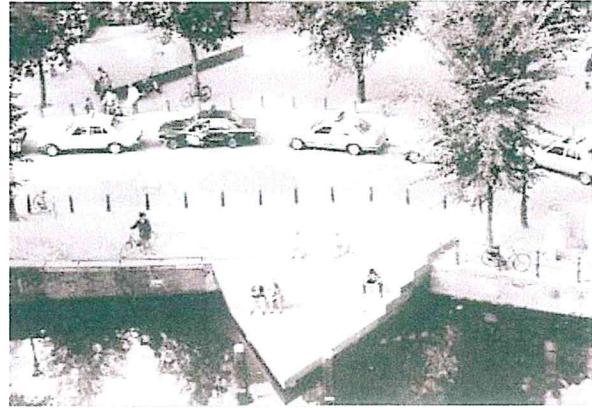
Public memorial structures in honour of the deceased among great explorers, founders of nations, prominent citizens, noble war heroes, and accomplished athletes are abundant in society. Public remembrance of marginalized groups through Architecture remains notably absent however until an outrageous and remorseful consequence of marginalization occurs to such a degree that public awareness and reaction leads to a monument being commissioned.



(Monument Builders: Modern Architecture and Death)  
**HOLOCAUST TRANSPORT MEMORIAL**  
Jerusalem  
Moshe Safdie Architect 1994

Among these are memorials to victims of The Holocaust, in reference to Nazi Germany's program of genocide during the Second World War directed most extensively against those of Jewish heritage. The *Holocaust Transport Memorial* in Jerusalem (Moshe Safdie 1994) represents an irreparable break in the fabric of Western civilization, symbolized by a fragmented cantilevered railway bridge and car poised on a journey into the abyss.<sup>56</sup>

A less familiar group targeted by the same ideology were those convicted or suspected by the authorities of Nazi Germany of being homosexual, forced to wear pink triangle badges (as the Jewish were forced to wear Stars of David). The *Homo-Monument* in Amsterdam (Karin Daan 1987) is a subtle triangular composition of pink stone that forms a place of contemplation, linking land, water, and sky, embracing sculpture, architecture, landscape, and urbanism.<sup>57</sup>



(Monument Builders: Modern Architecture and Death)

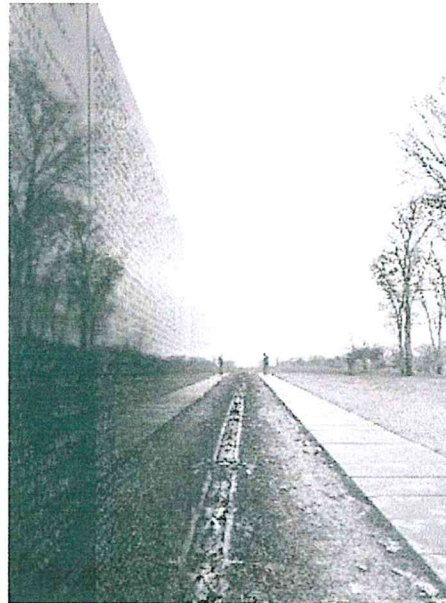
## HOMOMONUMENT

Amsterdam

Karin Daan 1987

The United States of America's involvement in the Second World War (1939-1945) was considered to be a victory, leading to heroes' monuments in honour of military survivors and casualties both. In contrast, the Vietnam War (1959-1975) was divisively unpopular and an embarrassing disaster from which returning survivors were often met with apathy and contempt, and the dead were best forgotten. The *Vietnam Veteran Memorial* (Maya Lin 1982) in the US capital city of Washington DC is composed of horizontal polished black stone, in stark contrast to the vertical white context. The names of the dead are inscribed in order of the dates of their deaths, forming a chronological journey through the semi-mythical period.

The reflections of onlookers are superimposed, forming a bond between the living and the dead, the past and the present.<sup>58</sup>



(Monument Builders: Modern Architecture and Death)

#### VIET NAM VETERAN MEMORIAL

Washington DC

Maya Lin 1982

### MEANING & EXPRESSION IN FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE

*"graveyards reveal the tender mercies of a nation"*  
(William Gladstone, statesman)

*"a cemetery anchors the space of the living to a particular location  
and sacralizes it"*  
(Edwin Heathcote, Architect & author)

*"houses of the dead demark the territory of the living"*  
(Howard Colvin, Architect & author)

*"places of the dead are pivotal landscapes where past and future  
values and beliefs are held in balance"*  
(Ken Worpole, urban policy author)

The individual tomb is the final resting place of the deceased, the place of interment for whole or cremated remains. In mythological thought it is the place of return to the womb of Mother Earth for rebirth or the place of return to animal spirit and the natural world<sup>59</sup>. In religious thought the tomb is the point of passage to the afterlife, a point of periodic return, and a point of interface with the living. The tomb serves as a metaphor for the final home<sup>60</sup>.

In funerary Architecture, a number of defining qualities can be observed<sup>61</sup> through which meaning and expression are perceived:

- *Situation* is the intended experience, the orientation and relationship between landscape and sky, the arrangement and strategic placement of the funerary setting within a specific context so that the sacred is differentiated from the profane.
- *Repose* is the sense of composure and being at rest, of being in a place of contemplation and meditation.
- *Mnemonics* trigger memory and awareness of heritage and chronology.
- *Ritual* instills a sense of arrival and procession, accommodating interment, gathering, and ceremony along with ongoing visitation and caretaking. Pathways and nodes, rhythms of colonnades and openings.
- *Minutiae* consist of symbology in details, materials, forms, and scale. Contrasts of presence/absence, opening/closing, solid/void, shadow/light are examples, along with contrasts in scale of, say, houses for the dead as distorted and exaggerated compared to houses for the living.
- *Ephemera* communicates a sense of change, transition, impermanence, commonly expressed through the cycles of plant-life, shifting light and shadow, development of patina, and moving water

## MODERN FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE

From the 19th and 20th Centuries through to the present, expression in funerary Architecture has both embraced and diverged from past traditions. Observances of the timeless fundamental beliefs surrounding death, the afterlife, and ritual remain consistent in both secular and sectarian modern funerary Architecture as the life and death of the individual is celebrated and solemnized. Strict adherence to standardized forms and elements however has been replaced by a greater freedom toward expressing the nature of unique individuals and pluralistic cultures.



*(Monument Builders: Modern Architecture and Death)*  
**MAUSOLEUM, ZALE NECROPOLIS**  
 Ljubljana, Slovakia  
 Joze Plecnik Architect, 1940



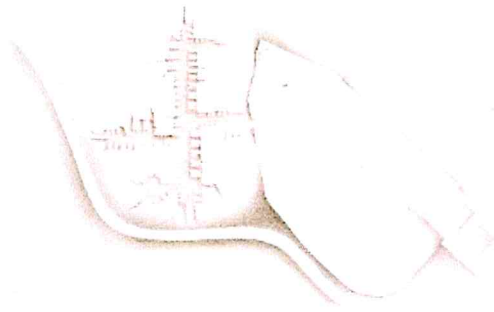
*(Going Out In Style)*  
**TOMB, FOREST LAWN CEMETERY**  
 New York, 19th C



*(Going Out In Style)*  
**TOMB, GRACELAND CEMETERY**  
 Chicago 1902



*(Stories In Stone)*  
**OSCAR WILDE'S TOMB - PERE LACHAISE CEMETERY**  
 Paris 1909

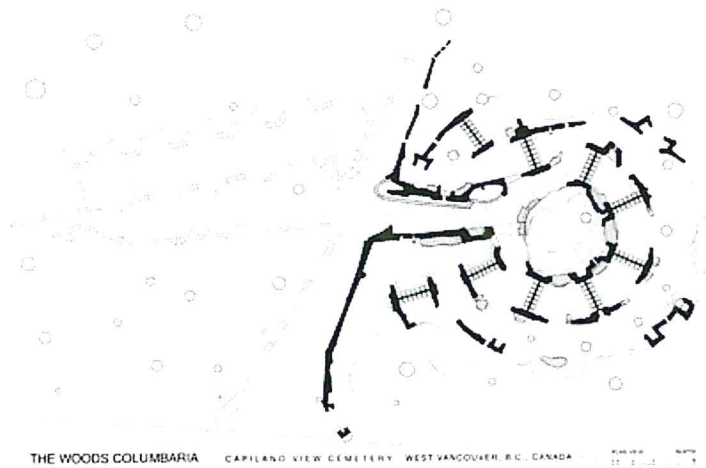


*(Monument Builders: Modern Architecture and Death)*

## NECROPOLIS EXTENSION

San Bernadino, Italy

Arnaldo Pomodoro Architect, 1974



THE WOODS COLUMBARIA CAPILANO VIEW CEMETERY WEST VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA



(Fox / Pechet & Robb Studios)  
**WOODS COLUMBARIUM, CAPILANO VIEW CEMETERY**  
 West Vancouver  
 Pechet & Robb Studios, 1994

The walled Cemetery of San Cataldo in Modena, Italy (Aldo Rossi Architect, 1972) is a relatively current example of funerary Architecture in an urban setting. An extension to an existing cemetery adjacent to the city, this could have been presented as any other familiar 20th Century lawn-cemetery, however rather than being an arrangement of typical memorial markers and structures in a grassed landscape there appears instead a varied composition of multi-storey mausolea, smaller-scale mausolea and columbaria.



*(Monument Builders: Modern Architecture and Death)*

#### CEMETERY OF SAN CATALDO

Modena, Italy

Aldo Rossi Architect 1972

The arrangement is simultaneously connected to and separated from the city. The composition as a whole sits horizontally in a state of repose in contrast to the actual height of the larger buildings of the city, and is compared to the surrealistic paintings of Giorgio de Chirico. The project is constructed in the manner of habitation for the living, yet consists of houses of the dead and remains in a seemingly unfinished state, where fundamental elements of human shelter - roof and window panes - are missing in areas revealing an emptiness inside. This layering of "otherness", discontinuity, and contextual contrast expresses the

heterotopic nature of the project. The monumental and skeletal structures with repetitive articulation suggest the presence of graves and the solemnity of a sacred place. Its seeming incompleteness suggests an abandoned life, yet exposed detail suggests life in progress. An access gate, pathways, and colonnaded corridors offer a sense of arrival, procession, and ritual - ultimately "streets of memories". Colonnades also act as shelter for the grounds-keepers and the sellers of grave-goods, the "living who inhabit the city of the dead".<sup>62 63</sup>

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>37</sup> Foucault - *"Rethinking Architecture / Of Other Spaces: Utopia And Heterotopia"* pp 350 - 356
- <sup>38</sup> Porphyrios - *"Heterotopia: A Study in the Ordering Sensibility of the Work of Alvar Aalto"* pp 2 - 18
- <sup>39</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>40</sup> Kostof - *"A History of Architecture: Settings And Rituals"* p 30
- <sup>41</sup> Proshansky et al - *"Environmental Psychology: People And Their Physical Settings"* pp 444 - 447
- <sup>42</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 2
- <sup>43</sup> Kostof - *"A History of Architecture: Settings And Rituals"* p 32
- <sup>44</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 15
- <sup>45</sup> Proshansky et al - *"Environmental Psychology: People And Their Physical Settings"* pp 444 - 447
- <sup>46</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 3
- <sup>47</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 21
- <sup>48</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 15
- <sup>49</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 43
- <sup>50</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>51</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 28
- <sup>52</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* pp 152 - 190
- <sup>53</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 59
- <sup>54</sup> Colvin - *"Architecture And The Afterlife"* p 78
- <sup>55</sup> Heathcote - *"Monument Builders: Modern Architecture And Death"* pp 26-29
- <sup>56</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>57</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>58</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>59</sup> Campbell - *"The Power Of Myth"*
- <sup>60</sup> Worpole - *"Last Landscapes"*
- <sup>61</sup> UBC School of Architecture - *"The Valhalla of Everlasting Peace"*
- <sup>62</sup> Heathcote - *"Monument Builders: Modern Architecture And Death"* pp 183 - 191
- <sup>63</sup> UBC School Of Architecture - *"The Valhalla Of Everlasting Peace"*

## SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

## SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

### DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE

Vancouver's Downtown Eastside district has had a brief but dynamic history, one that has left a legacy rich and diverse in historical and Architectural content, and a culturally pluralistic society. The district's legacy also includes a contingent of abandoned places and abandoned people following several decades of disinvestment and neglect in combination with a growth of marginalized populations. The district can be perceived as heterotopic, an anomaly in the context of the larger Downtown peninsula and broader city, containing within its boundaries the presence of individually heterotopic settings which serve those with unconventional behaviours and lifestyles, periods of crisis and deviance.

Considerable effort and resources have been expended in recent years by both the public and private sectors toward sustaining the residents and revitalizing the social and physical environments of the community. The population size has remained relatively static while the proportionate demographic of disadvantaged residents has increased. Recent gentrification and proposed future developments and revitalization plans suggest that the residential population will increase with a more varied demographic mix, however it seems likely that the presence of a substantial marginalized and disadvantaged population will remain as part of the sociocultural fabric.

Members of the community continue to die at a higher than normal rate, often with little acknowledgment. There is, and will likely continue to be, a demonstrated need for settings within the community where this pluralistic society can celebrate and memorialize the dead of past, present, and future generations, and which are accessible to the largely disadvantaged and marginalized residential population. Facilities presently exist where funerary and memorial gatherings can and do take place, however mortuary and interment settings are not currently available. A funerary context of ceremonial and interment settings can be woven into the existing fabric of the community. The challenge is in accommodating interment, which conflicts with the need for a variety of available and affordable housing types - using a large-scale land parcel for a cemetery in any conventional sense, land that could otherwise be used for housing, would be poorly received.

### FUNERARY ATTITUDES & SETTINGS

Since prehistoric human existence, societies have observed ritualized burial of their dead, seemingly predicated on universal fundamental mythological beliefs regarding death - *there is*

*an afterlife; access to the afterlife requires ritual; passage to the afterlife is through the tomb.* While details surrounding belief and ritual vary between cultures and have evolved over time, the influence of these basic premises on funerary practices and Architecture continues into the present.

The 'afterlife' can be an alternate corporeal realm, a spiritual existence, or eternal oblivion; resurrection or reincarnation may or may not apply. The processes of 'ritual' involve ceremonial stewardship of the deceased toward the afterlife, with extended returns to the tomb with offerings of remembrance - ceremony; contemplation; gifts such as flowers, stones, mementos; burning candles, incense, currency, correspondence; maintaining perpetual lighting. The 'tomb' accommodates a full corpse or cremated remains, taking the form of a designated grave, crypt, cremation niche, or place in open nature; accompanying memorializing might take the form of a simple marker, an artifact, a statue, or a building.

Secular traditions tend toward condensed and symbolic gestures where direct involvement with the remains of the deceased is avoided, and ceremony is focused toward celebration honouring the individual's life. Religious traditions can tend toward total care of the deceased up to interment or entombment and beyond.

Collective settings for burial and memorial monuments among human settlements have followed, together with an evolution of funerary Architecture. Funerary settings in their multiple forms have become sacred places of solace, sanctuary, and contemplation, providing a sense of cohesion and perpetuity within a community. The cemetery and its variations are heterotopic in nature, 'other' places that exist in contrast to the host community, yet demarcate and anchor the community in time and space and evoke a sense of compassion and reverence. The presence of memorialized entombed remains and the opportunity to attend their settings are important elements in the immediate cause of dealing with grief, and the long-term cause of sustaining and validating a community.

Common qualities can be found in the Architecture of funerary settings which infuse a setting with meaning and sanctity. *Situation* is the intended experience, the orientation and relationship between landscape and sky, the arrangement and strategic placement of the funerary setting within a specific context so that the sacred is differentiated from the profane. *Repose* is the sense of composure and being at rest, of being in a place of contemplation and meditation. *Mnemonics* trigger memory and awareness of heritage and chronology. *Ritual*

instills a sense of arrival and procession, accommodating interment, gathering, and ceremony along with ongoing visitation and caretaking. Pathways and nodes, rhythms of colonnades and openings. *Minutiae* consist of symbology in details, materials, forms, and scale - contrasts of presence/absence, opening/closing, solid/void, shadow/light are examples, along with contrasts in scale. *Ephemera* communicates a sense of change, transition, impermanence, commonly expressed through the cycles of plant-life, shifting light and shadow, development of patina, and moving water.

## PROPOSAL

To serve the funerary needs of the Downtown Eastside community, the assumed scenario for this Thesis project has a hypothetical community-based memorial society occupying a currently-vacant Buddhist temple at Hastings Street and Gore Avenue in operation as a coordinating service with mortuary, crematorium, and ceremonial chapel. That, together with other existing formal and informal venues, can be considered as adequate for community-based pre-interment funerary and ceremonial facilities.

The memorial society would concurrently develop and operate several separate small-scale sites along Hastings Street between Gore Avenue and Cambie Street. Potential residential densities from those sites could be transferred to other developments to ameliorate any conflict with demands for housing (integrating housing and cemetery functions was initially considered as an option but dismissed as being a potentially awkward social condition; adjacency of the two functions however has been demonstrated as acceptable in other areas where the presence of housing in the direct vicinity of cemeteries occurs).

The project is intended to take form as mixed high-density interment settings, interconnected by the network of streets and lanes, allowing processions to arrive from the ceremonial sites. Intended for use by all members of the community, particular consideration is required for the more disadvantaged of the population. The cultural diversity of the community suggests that a degree of flexibility will be appropriate in accommodating ritual and interment. Of greatest importance is that opportunities exist for Downtown Eastside residents to be involved in the ritualized interment of their dead, and that a setting exists within the community for interment, memorialization, and ongoing ritual observances.

The Architecture for a place of entombment in Downtown Eastside is able to capitalize on heterotopic precepts due to the pre-existing condition of both the setting and the context being

'other' places. The qualities of funerary space and form will be essential to creating a sacred public setting.

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## PROGRAM & DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

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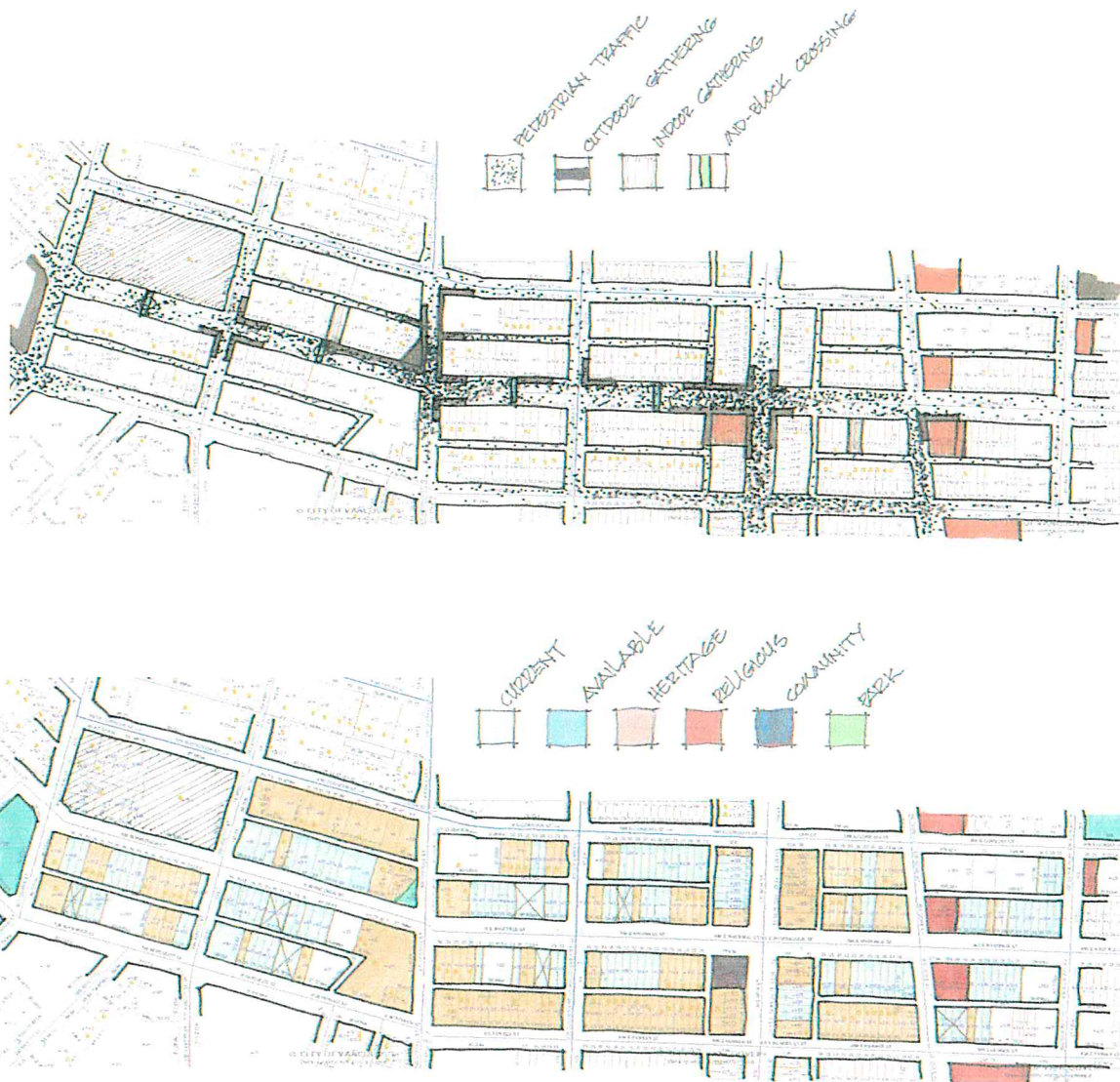
### INTRODUCTION

This final Thesis component consists of developing a program to serve the funerary needs of the Downtown Eastside community, and developing a design concept for an interment setting within the community. The dual processes of program development and conceptual design development evolved concurrently in the initial stages out of necessity in determining spatial needs relative to demand and land availability. Final design development is related to a specific site.

### CONTEXT

The context for the overall plan to provide funerary services and settings in the Downtown Eastside district consists of the extent of Hastings Street from Cambie Street to Dunlevy Street. This Hastings Street corridor has served historically as a link between the area's subdistricts, and presently serves as a vital environment of informal, casual procession and social interaction for area residents. The tree-lined street heavily and continuously serves both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Activities in the street range from simple and innocent travel and interaction to open drug, contraband, and sex trades.





The Architectural content of this corridor is varied with a range of buildings the origins of which span the late-19th Century and 20th Century. Heights range from single-storey to nine storeys, consisting of commercial and mixed commercial/residential occupancies, the character of some being curious. The physical condition of the Architecture ranges from vacant and derelict to new or recently renovated construction; there are a few new mixed-use projects under construction, notably the 'Woodwards' redevelopment consisting of mixed housing, commercial, educational, and recreational functions.

Near the eastern extremity of this portion of Hastings Street are several existing facilities which are intended to be retained for funerary purposes. The principal facility is an existing vacant former Buddhist temple at the northeast corner of Hastings Street and Gore Avenue, to be adapted for use as the central mortuary, crematorium, and ceremonial gathering site. Also present are existing churches and the Carnegie Centre which are currently used on occasion for both religious and secular ceremonial gatherings. Oppenheimer Park on Gore Avenue north of Hastings Street and informal parkland on Gore Avenue south of Hastings Street can accommodate outdoor ceremonial gatherings. At the western extremity is Victory Square, a war-veteran memorial park which also accommodates outdoor ceremonial gatherings.



BUDDHIST TEMPLE

West of Main Street along Hastings Street are four small (50' x 122') existing vacant properties which, for the purpose of this Thesis, are intended to be developed as interment sites. The intention is for the interments sites to be linked to the mortuary and ceremonial sites by the street, and for the interment sites to be interconnected by the network of streets, lanes, and internal passageways extending through the sites. This distribution of functions allows both funerary ritual and funerary Architecture to occur as relatively unintrusive integrated interventions within the existing fabric of the community.

The Thesis concentrates on developing the program and design for an interment setting at one of these four sites (noting that as a concept it can be adapted to the other sites). The selected vacant site is on the north side of Hastings Street, approximately mid-block. The site dimensions are 50' x 122', and the property slopes down gradually from east to west. It is situated between a designated two-storey commercial/residential heritage building to the east and an unoccupied single-storey commercial building to the west. Across Hastings Street to the south are two-storey commercial/residential buildings, which allows substantial sunlight penetration to the site. Across the lane to the north are one-storey and two-storey commercial buildings. Close to the site, at the northeast corner of Hastings and Columbia Streets, is a four-storey designated heritage building that has recently been renovated to accommodate a clinic and a cafe that is widely used by the full spectrum of the area's society.

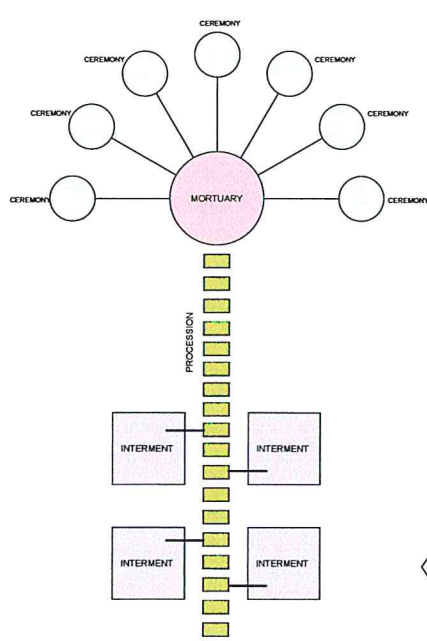
## CONTENT

The proposed settings are intended to accommodate the interment and ritual needs of the Downtown Eastside community, with particular emphasis toward use by and accessibility for the more disadvantaged members of the population. In addition, the settings are to be available as informal places of sanctuary and contemplation.

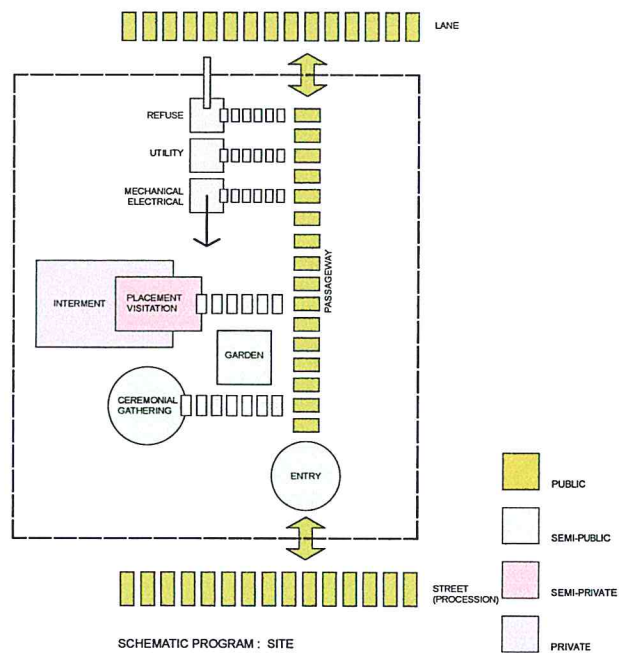
Current trends suggest that demand for most if not all interments will be in the form of disposition of cremated remains, however consideration is given to the possibility that there will be some demand for interment of intact remains. Accordingly, interment space includes niches for single contained cremated remains, shared niches for groups of single contained cremated remains, and common vaults for uncontained cremated remains. Additionally, garden and water features accommodate scattered uncontained cremated remains. Cremated remains cast into plaques, and memorial plaques in honour of individuals whose remains are located elsewhere, are accommodated with substantial available wall surfaces. Floor and wall crypts accommodate casketed intact remains. Ceremonial gathering space is provided for interment ritual, memorial ritual, and festival activities.

The quantified distributions of cremation niches and crypts are assumed, based on estimated needs over a 50-year period:

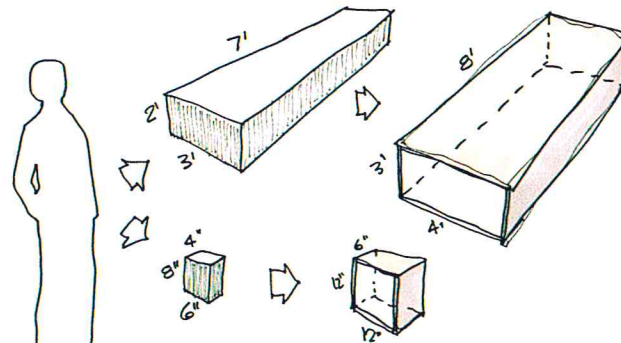
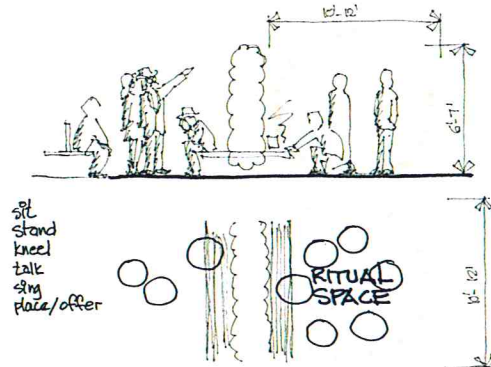
	ONE YEAR		50 YEARS		
DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	SITE	TOTAL	SITE	COMMENT
total deaths	550	137	27,500	6875	
interment	350	87	17,500	4375	remains interred within community
memorial only	200	50	10,000	2500	remains interred outside of community



SCHEMATIC PROGRAM : DOWNTOWN EAST SIDE DISTRICT



SCHEMATIC PROGRAM : SITE



PROGRAM FUNCTION	QUANTITATIVE CONSIDERATIONS	QUALITATIVE CONSIDERATIONS
entry	single	identifiable street access lane access open accessibility public semi-sacred
circulation • street/lane passage • stair • ramp	6' width minimum (passage) casket/gurney maneuvering wheelchair access	identifiable ceremonial accessibility semi-public sacred
ceremonial gathering • interment ceremony • visitation ceremony • festival	50-75 persons	identifiable liturgical ceremonial semi-public sacred
interment • cremation - niche • cremation - shared niche • cremation - common • cremation - water • cremation - garden • cremation - castings • crypt • • memorial plaque only	925 925 925 600 600 500 65  subtotal 4475 subtotal <u>2500</u> total 6975	memorialization identifiable visiting ceremonial ventilation private sacred
atrium		semi-public sacred
utility • electrical • mechanical • maintenance		secured private non-sacred

## CONCEPT

### *Situation*

The intention of the mausoleum's design is that it may exist as an extension of its context - a heterotopic space within a heterotopic district, a dwelling place of past generations among dwelling places of the of the present living.

The mausoleum consists of four levels - one below-street level, one at-street level, and two above-street levels. Circulation between levels occurs by way of an integrated passageway/stair/ramp system within a central treed atrium. The central pillars also serve as planters containing a series of trees above the upper level.

The street level entry is an extension of the street itself, connecting directly to the lane through a passageway. Immediately adjacent to the entry is a ceremonial gathering space with perimeter seating to accommodate interment services and festival activities. When not being used formally, this space is available for the public as a contemplative place of solace and informal gathering. From the passageway are access points to the lower and upper levels of the mausoleum by way of a system of interconnected processional stairways and ramps. Adjacent to the lane is a small chamber containing utility functions for lighting controls, mechanical water circulation controls, and maintenance equipment.

The lower level, below the street level, contains a sheltered scattering garden, an adjacent columbarium space, and a passageway of floor crypts that extends under the Hastings Street sidewalk and leads to a columbarium space containing both crypts and cremation niches. Adjacent to the columbarium space is a seating area and a tranquil scattering pond, fed by a series of gentle waterfalls, that extends under the ramp system. Cremation niches also occur integrated with the structure along the horizontal passageway.

The level immediately above street level is an internalized space overlooking the streetscape and circulation atrium. Columbarium spaces occur at the street and lane frontages, and cremation niches occur integrated with the structure along the horizontal passageway.

The uppermost level, also overlooking the atrium and streetscape, is open to and oriented toward the sky. Columbarium spaces occur at the street and lane frontages, and cremation niches integrated with the structure occur along the horizontal passageway. At this level are the tops of the central pillars planted with trees, and the upper extremities of the columbarium assemblies extend as vertical elements toward the sky.

Throughout the composition, continuous low-levels of indirect lighting are integrated within the structural elements creating an environment that is never in total darkness.

Interface between the living and the dead occurs subtly at the street and lane frontages where the columbarium assemblies provide separation between the two realms.

### *Repose*

The interior circulation, gathering, and interment spaces provide peaceful and sacred settings. Screened from the activity of the streets, they overlook trees and foliage, water and sky. Tranquil sound is generated from the waterfalls, rustling leaves, and visiting birds. Shafts of sunlight and ambient light from above penetrate the spaces generating reflections and shadows on to the interior surfaces.

### *Mnemonics*

Connection to the ancient past is reflected in the design references to ancient funerary Architecture. Local heritage is addressed by the setting's presence within its context, and its visual connections to the streetscape and adjacent buildings. At the

intimate and individual scale, awareness of past generations occurs at both the exterior frontages, where individual tombs are visible, and from the interior where they are accessible and individually identified.

### *Ritual*

A sense of ritual is a significant component of the design. Entry, the rhythmic placement of structural elements, and the processional ordering of horizontal and vertical circulation through hierarchies of privacy and sanctity denote ceremony and celebration. The ceremonial gathering space accommodates public ritual, and areas immediately adjacent to the interment spaces accommodate intimate ritual. The assemblies of niches and crypts include integrated ledges for placement of candles, incense, flowers and similar 'grave gifts'.

### *Minutiae*

Several symbolic funereal gestures are expressed in the architectonics of the design.

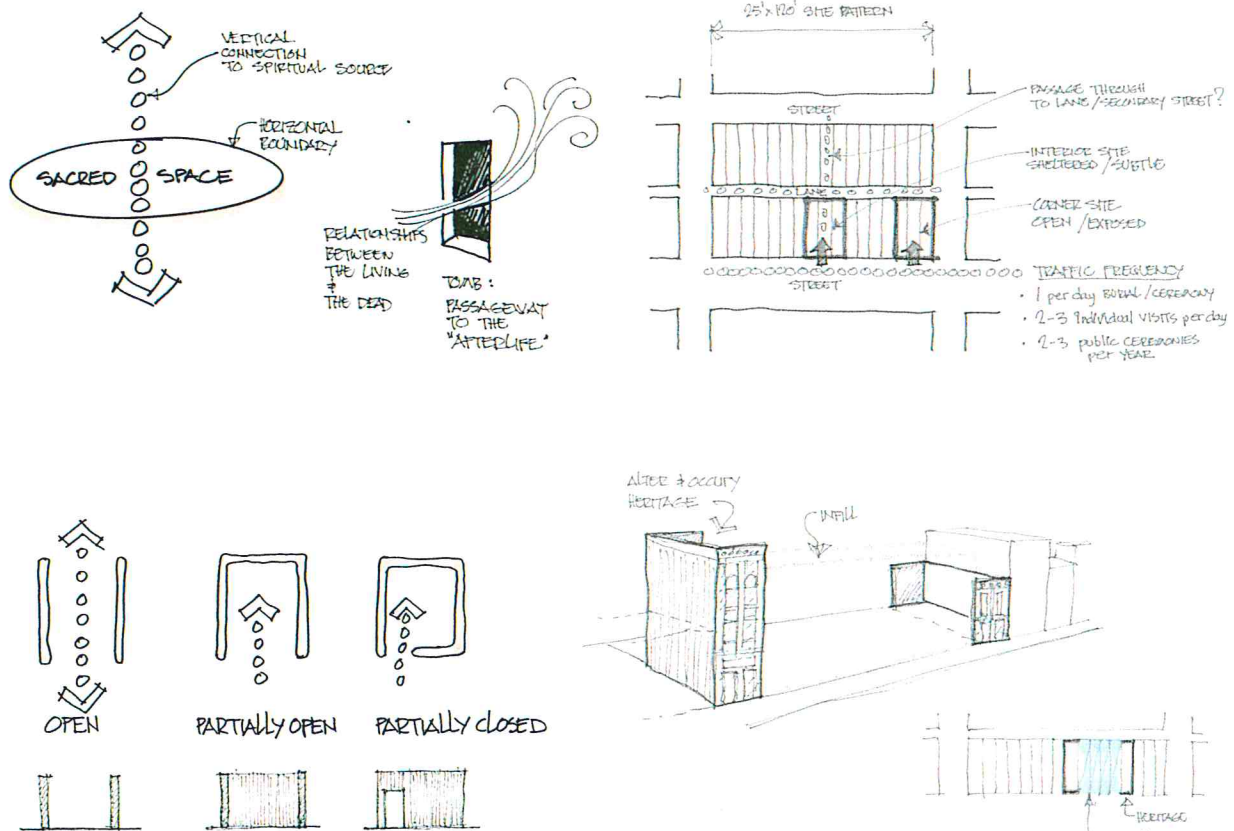
There is first a reference in the design to the primal Architecture of ancient stone tombs, descending and ascending into other worlds. The principal construction material is tinted reinforced concrete, a compound of materials of the earth and closely associated to stone, invoking a sense of permanence. Overt modern technological elements are absent.

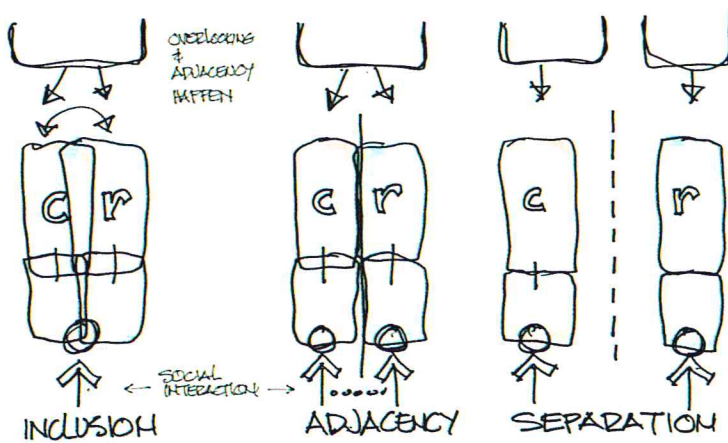
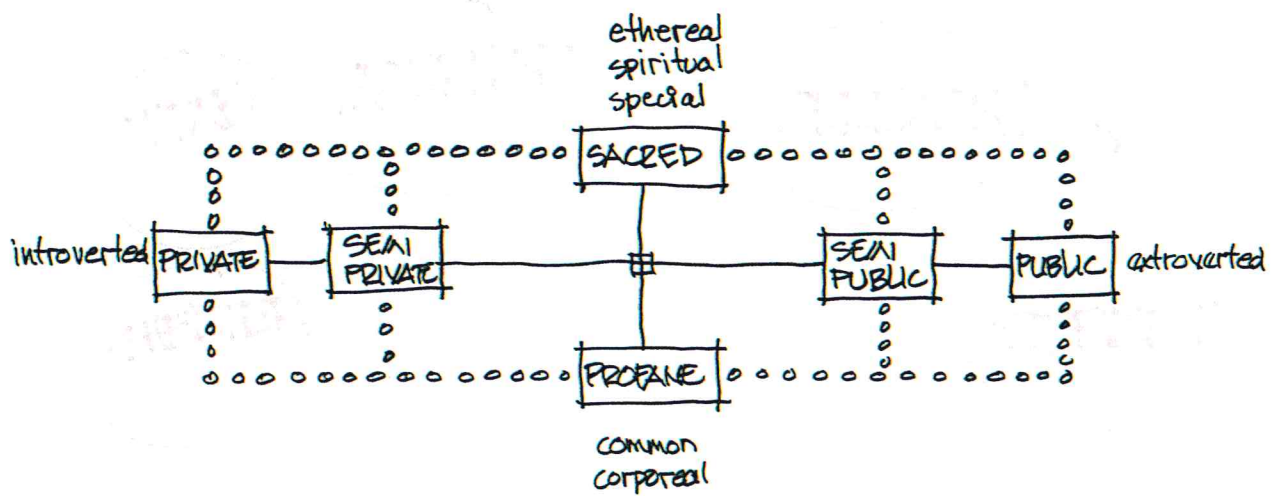
The composition, with an absence of doors, windows, and roofs suggests that the building is incomplete and in a state of transition. Contrasting solids and voids represent the contrasting states of presence and absence. The circulation system, cantilevered from massive pillars, creates a sense of being suspended between multiple interconnecting planes.

The open frontages and atrium, together with the water feature, trees, and plants, invite the entry of urban wildlife such as birds and squirrels which are common to the area.

### *Ephemera*

The transitory and cyclical nature of life are expressed with the introduction of several elements. Deciduous flowering trees and low foliage will change form and colour, and together with shifting light, moving reflective water, and views of the sky will mark the passing of moment to moment, day to night and back to day, season to season. Additionally, the structure and adjacent building faces will develop a changing patina over time.

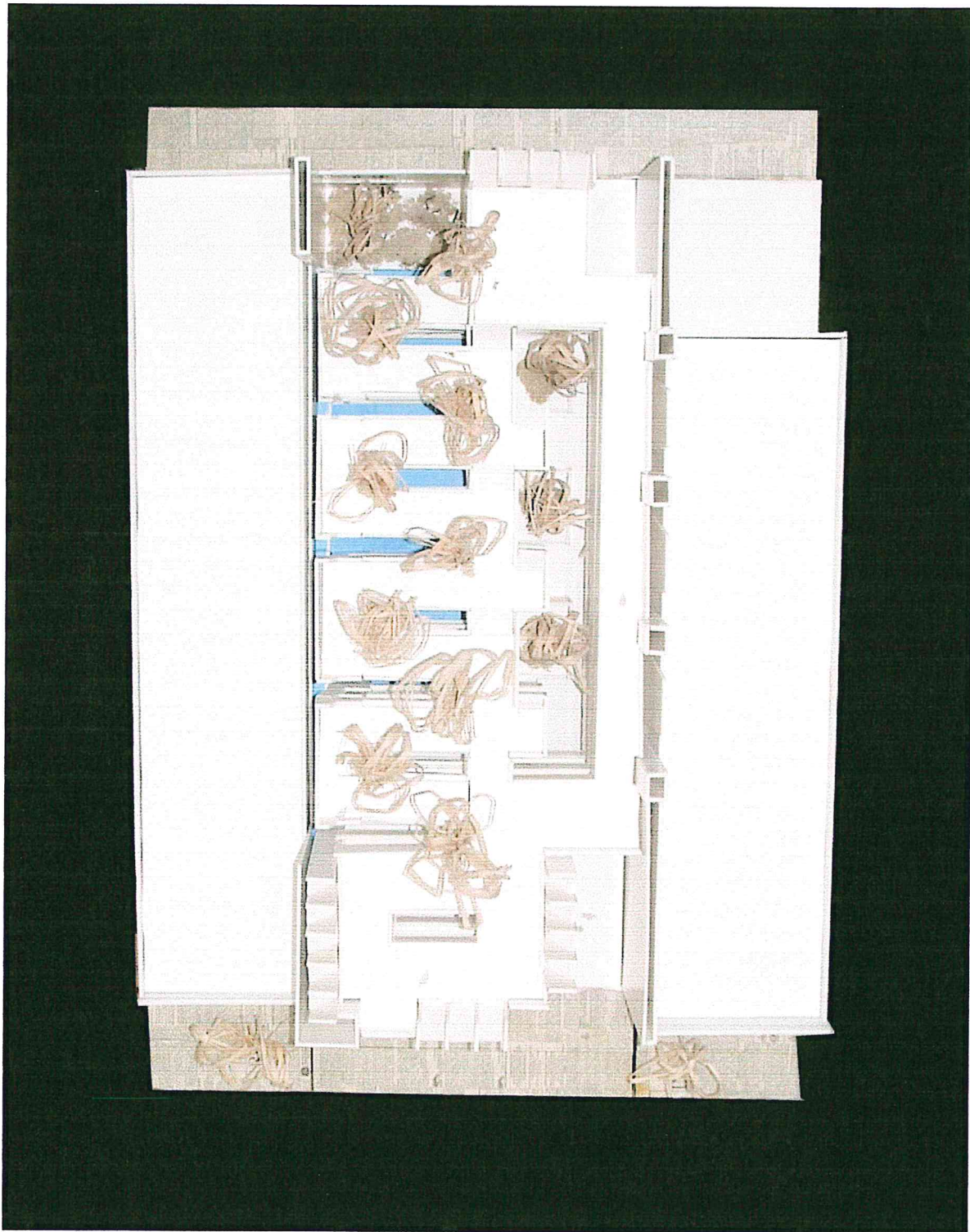




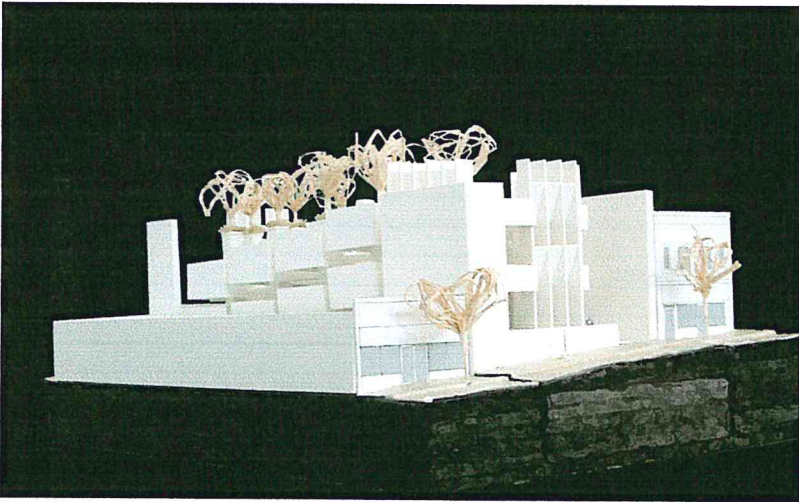
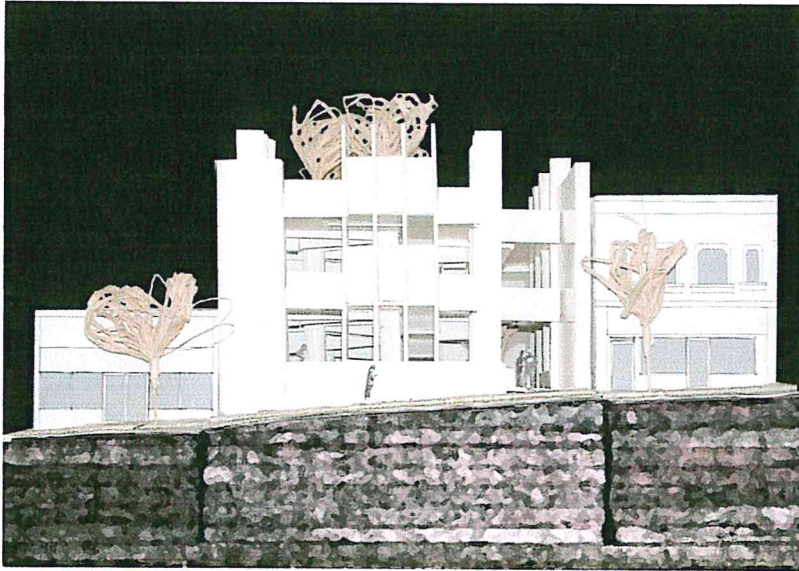
unsettling?  
vs  
comforting?

type of shelter  
state of resident.

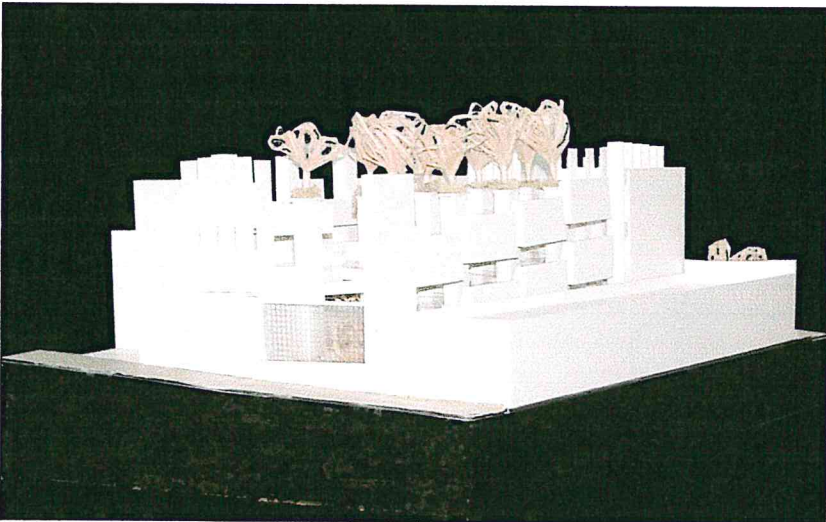
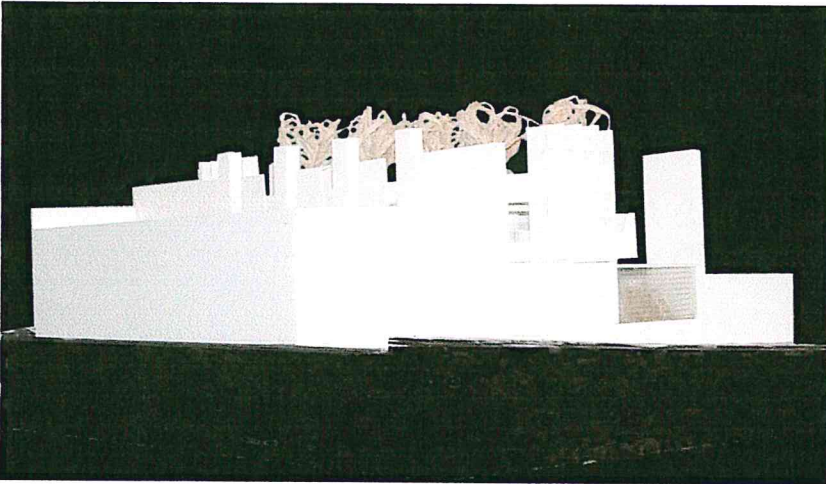
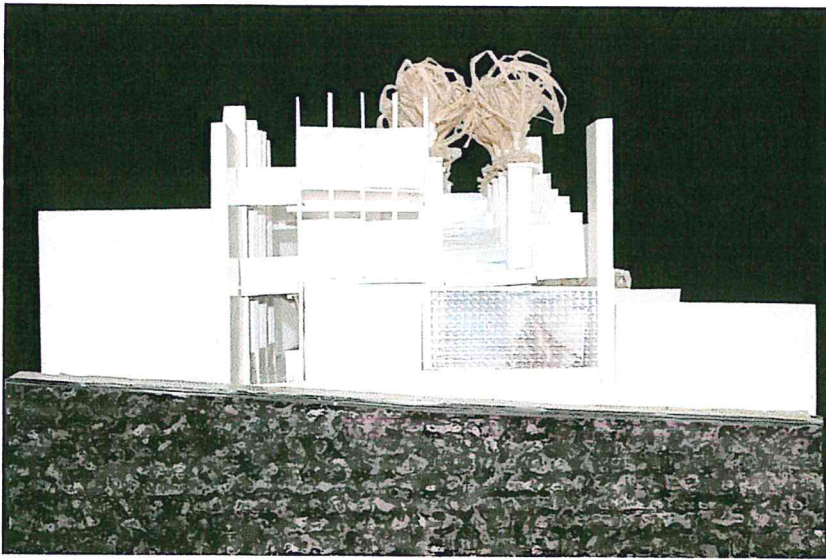
## MODEL & DRAWINGS



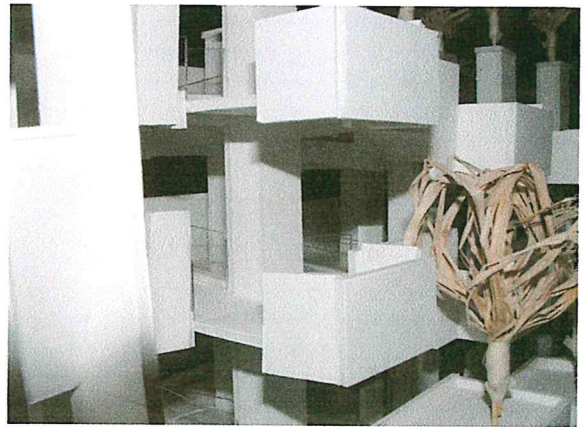
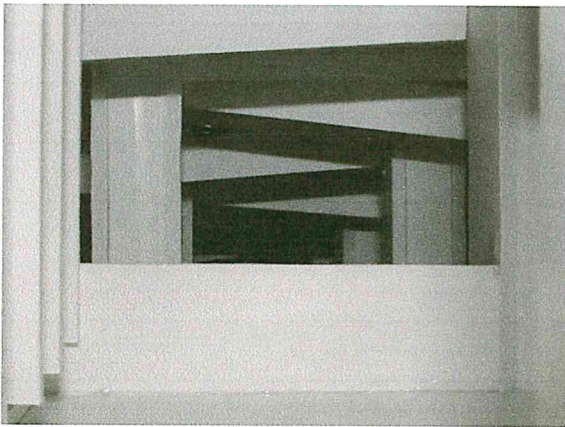
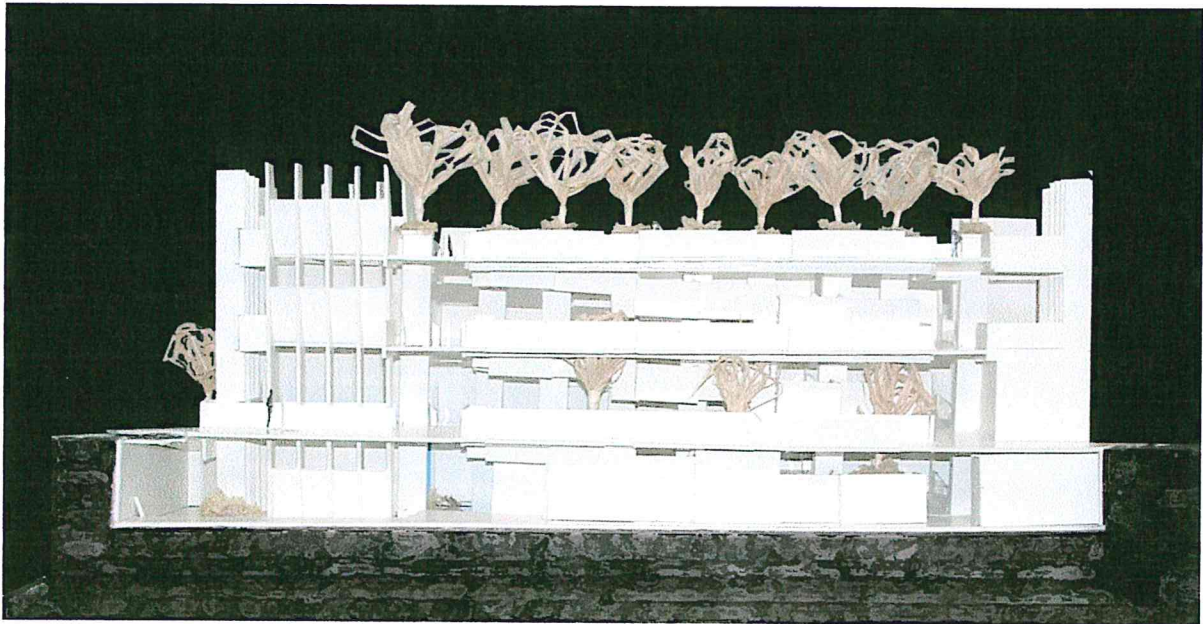
PLAN



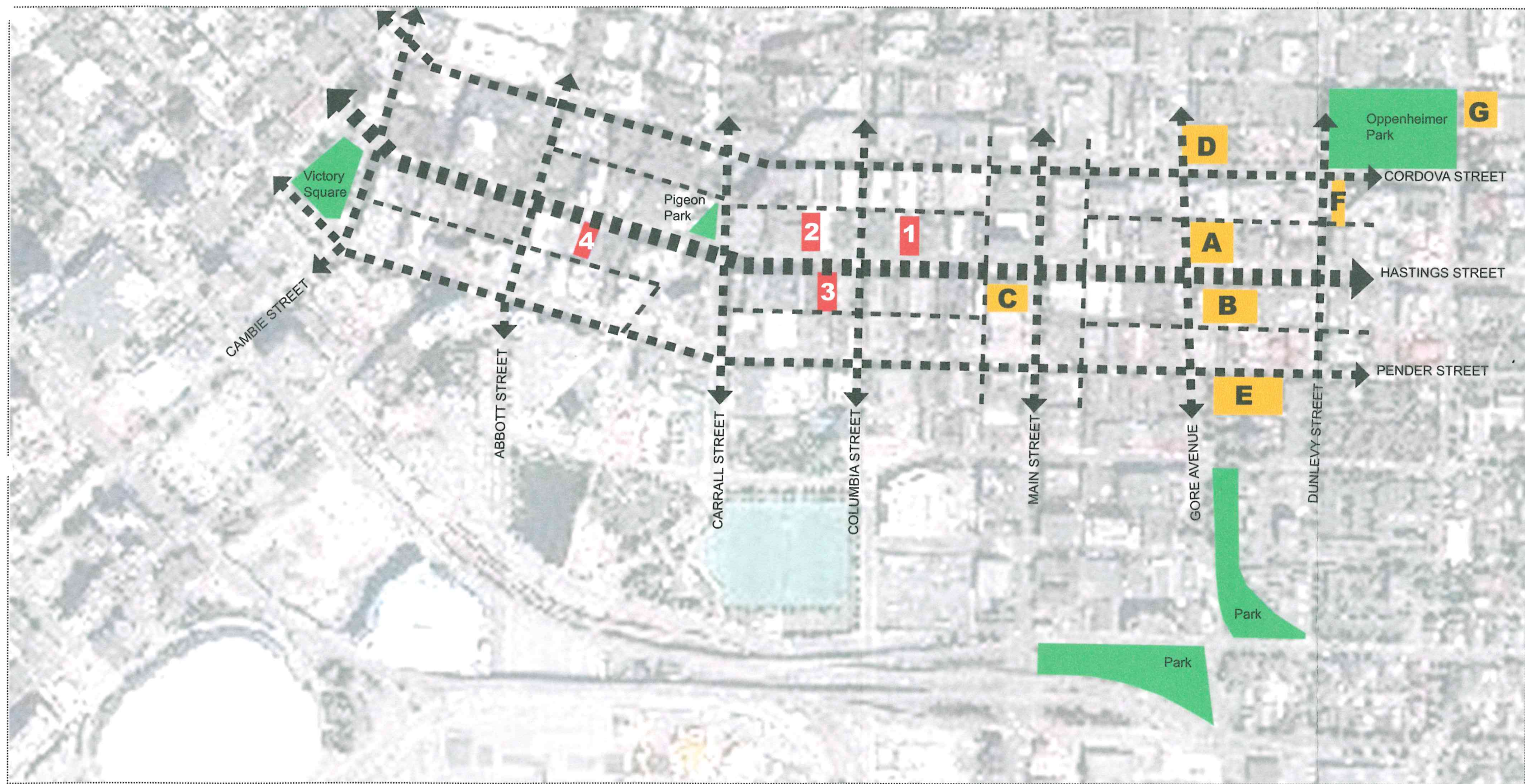
HASTINGS STREET



LANE



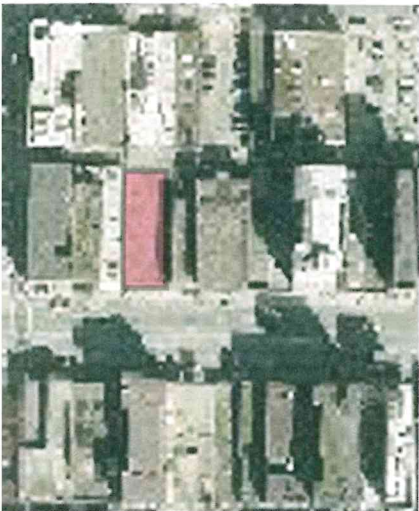
INTERIOR



- <---> PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY - HASTINGS STREET  
 <---> PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY - SECONDARY STREETS  
 - - - - - PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY - LANE

- 1 PROPOSED MAUSOLEUM SITE (DEMONSTRATION)  
 2 PROPOSED MAUSOLEUM SITE  
 3 PROPOSED MAUSOLEUM SITE  
 4 PROPOSED MAUSOLEUM SITE

- A PROPOSED MORTUARY / CREMATORIUM  
 B FIRST UNITED CHURCH  
 C CARNEGIE CENTRE  
 D ST. JAMES ANGLICAN CHURCH  
 E VANCOUVER CHRIST CHURCH OF CHINA  
 F EXISTING MORTUARY  
 G BUDDHIST TEMPLE



early 1900's

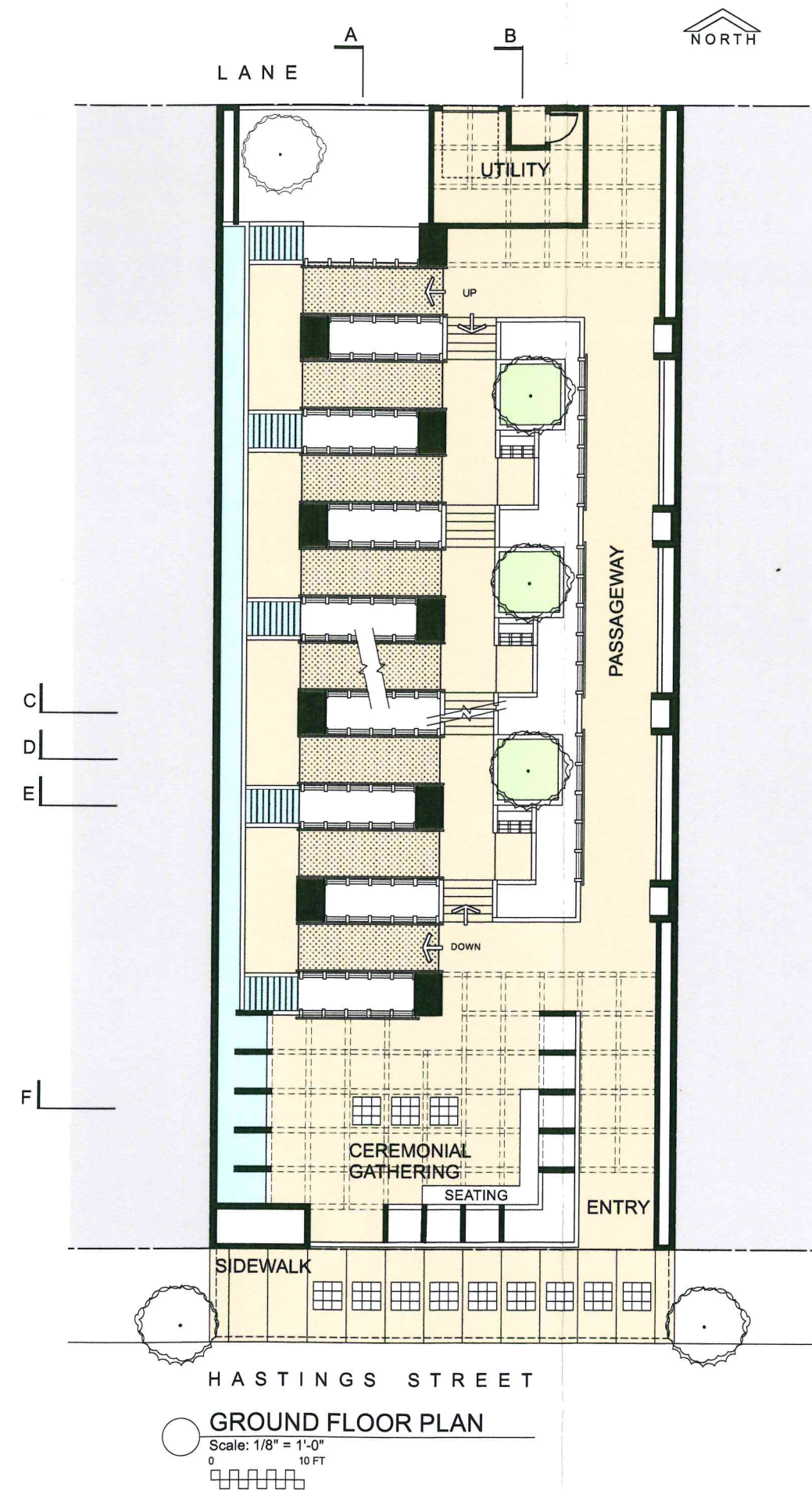
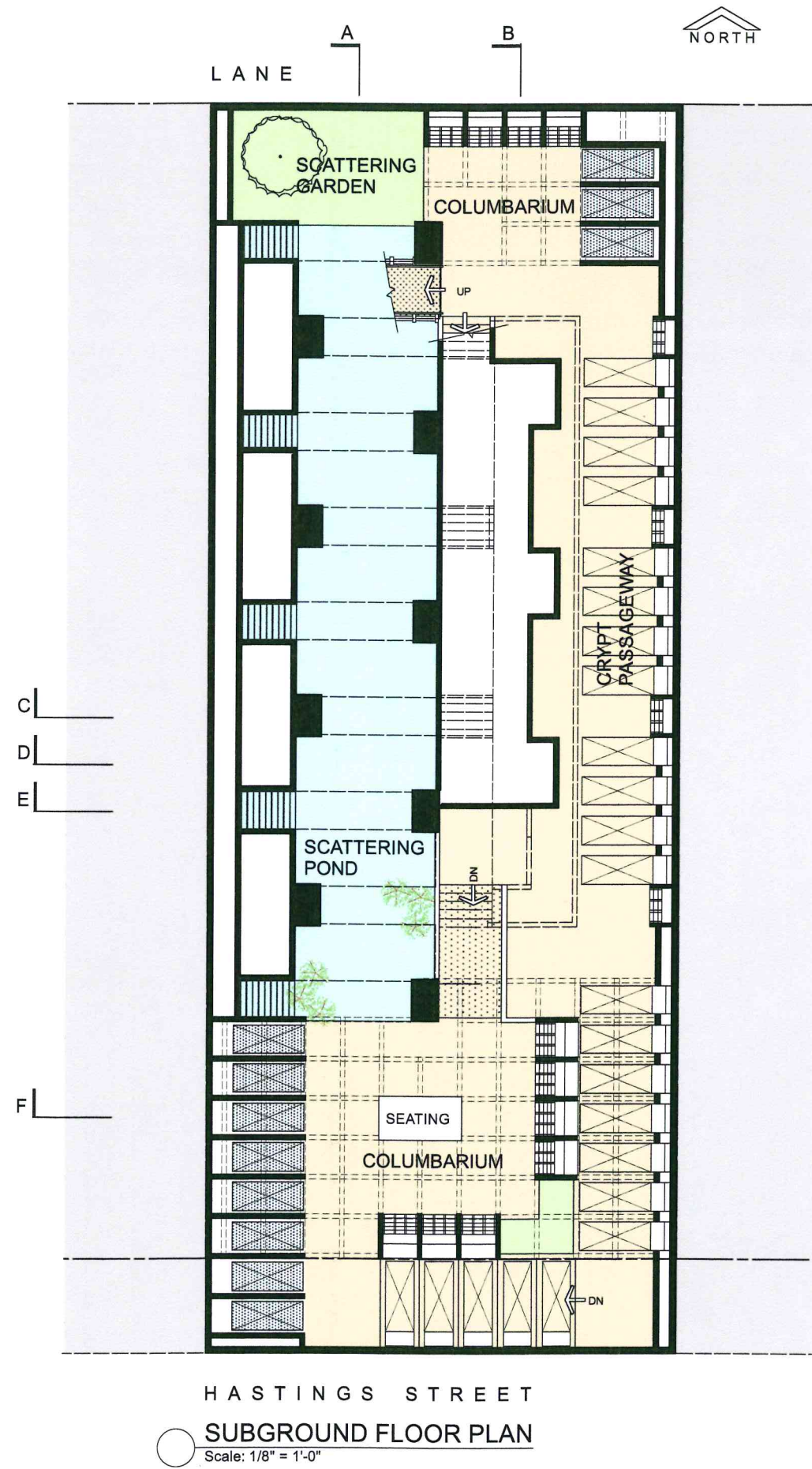


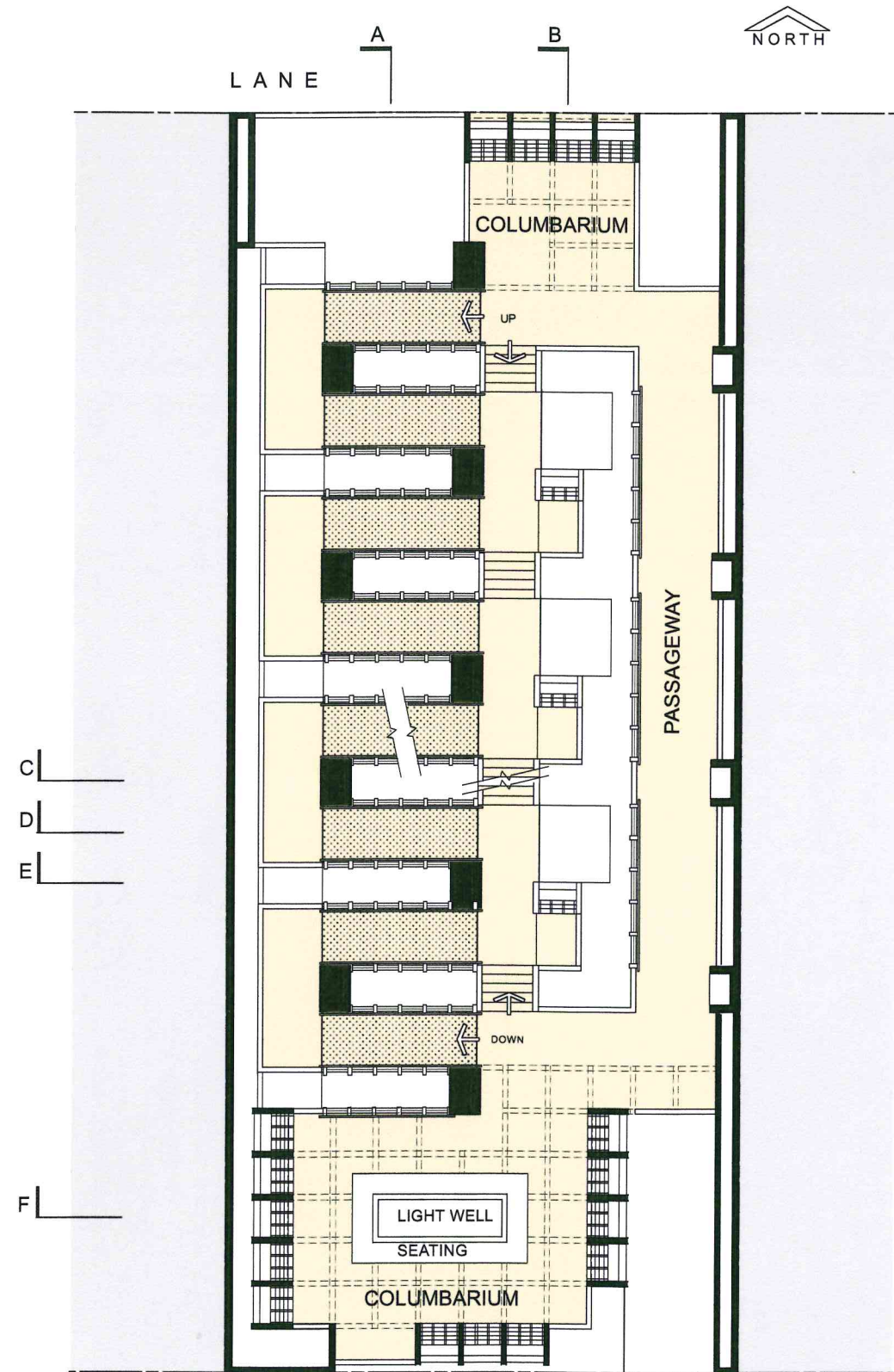
SITE 2



SITE 4



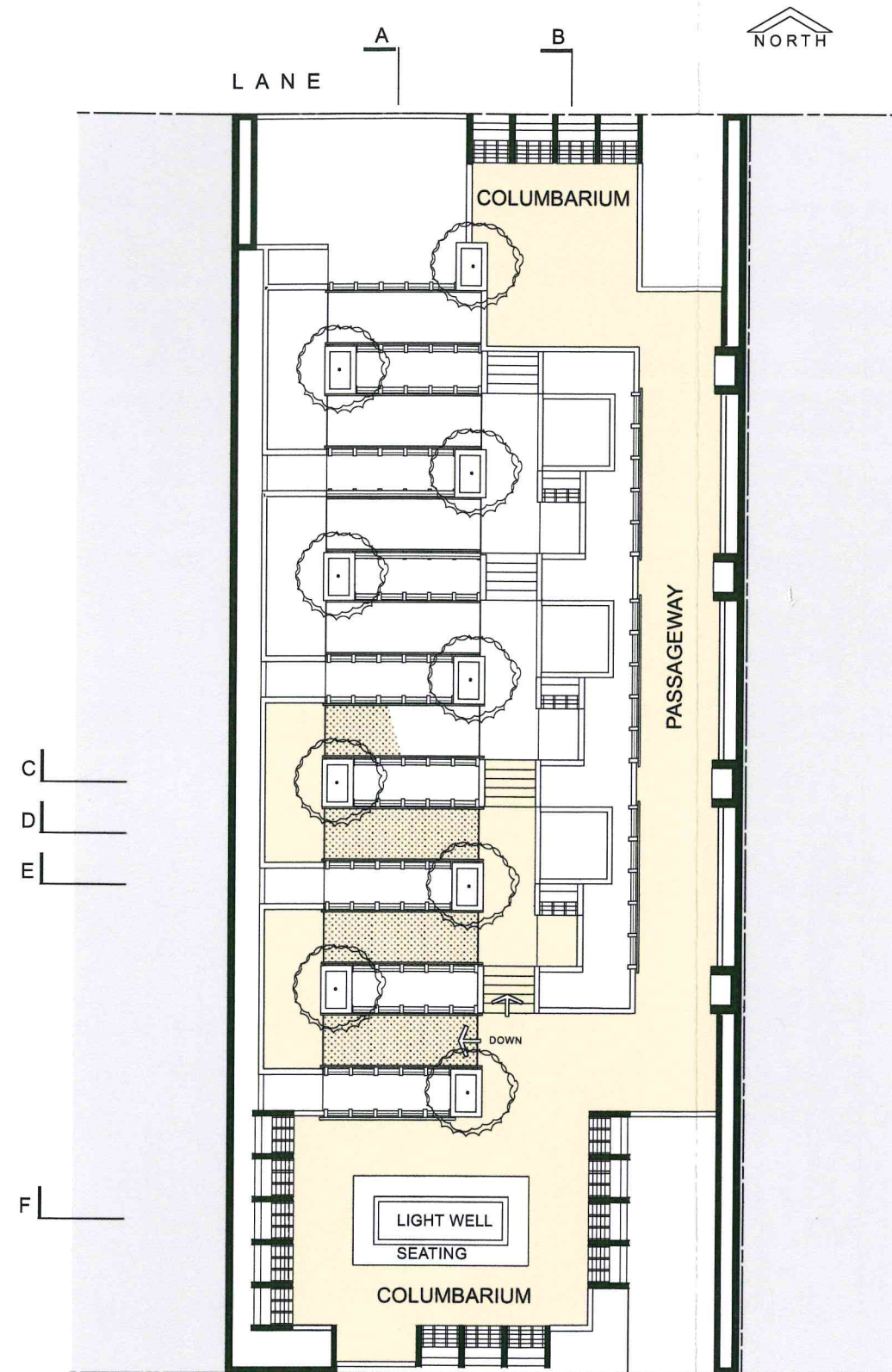




HASTINGS STREET

## SECOND FLOOR PLAN

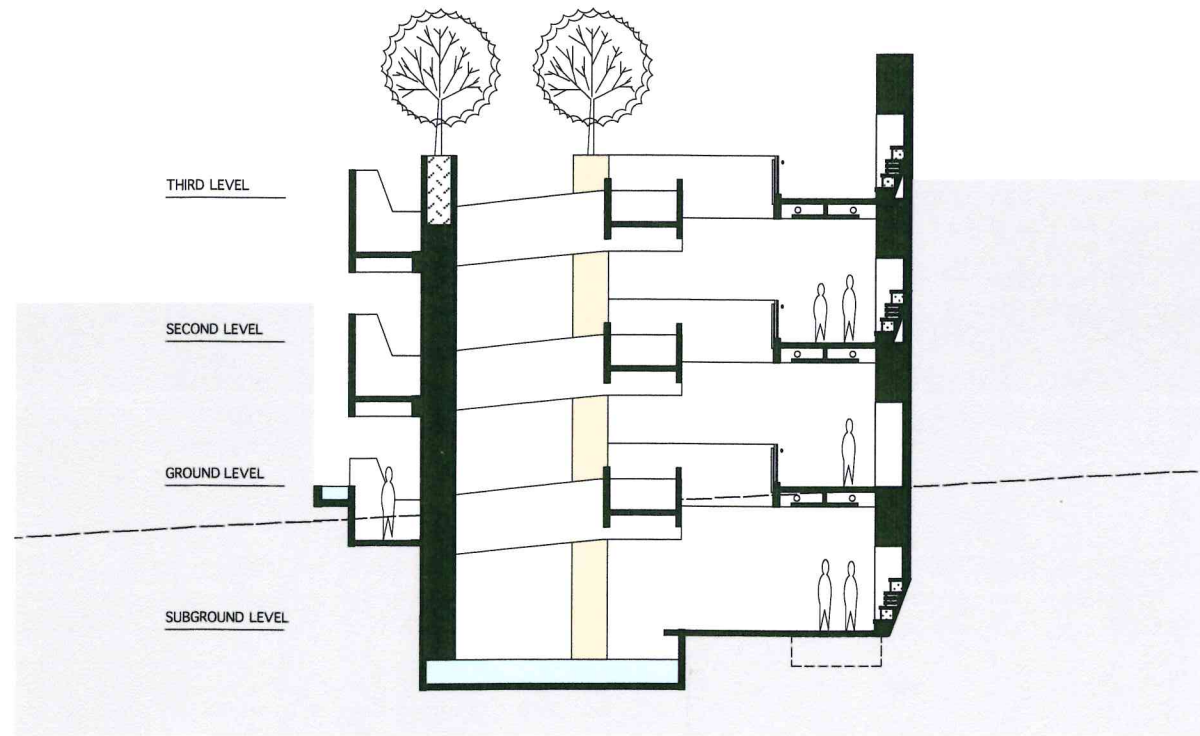
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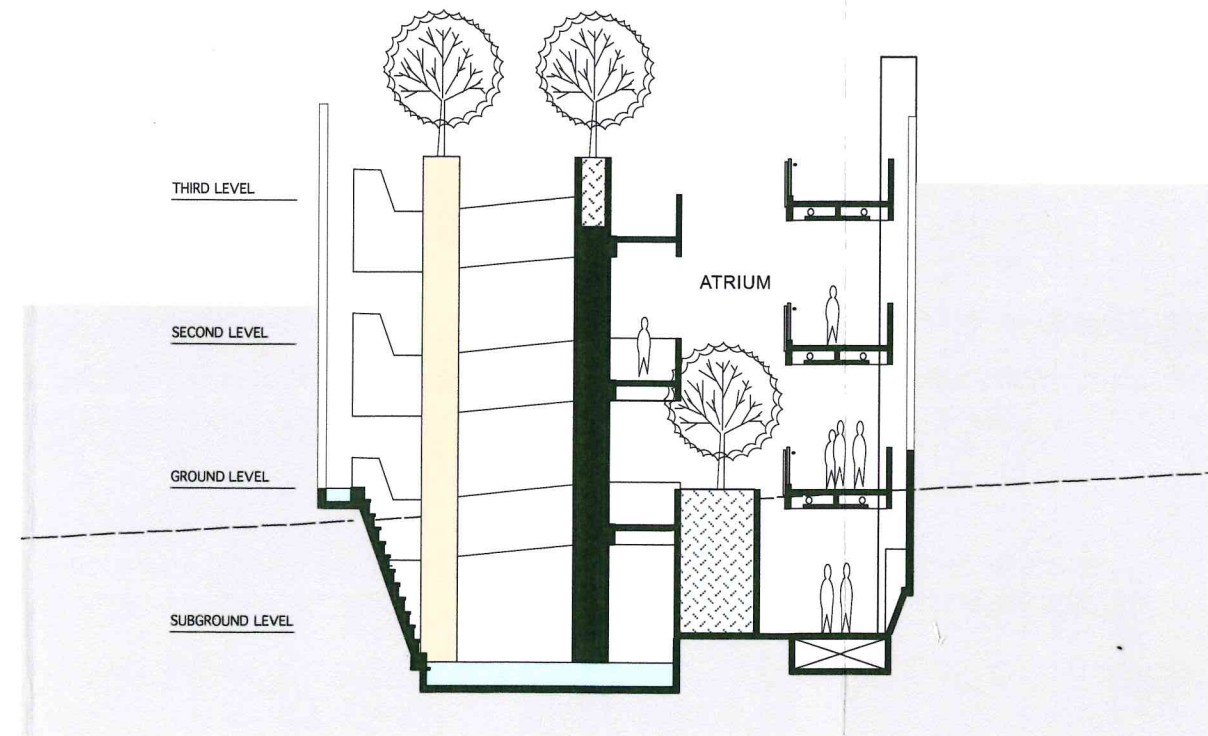
HASTINGS STREET

## THIRD FLOOR PLAN

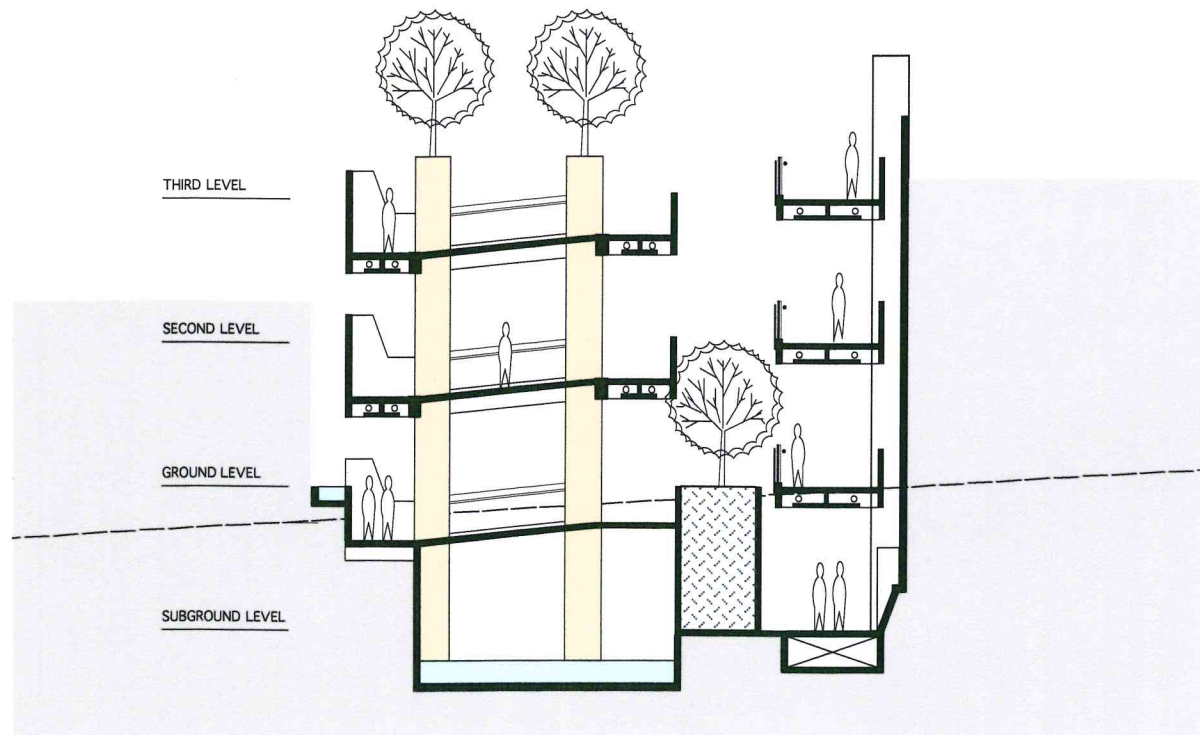
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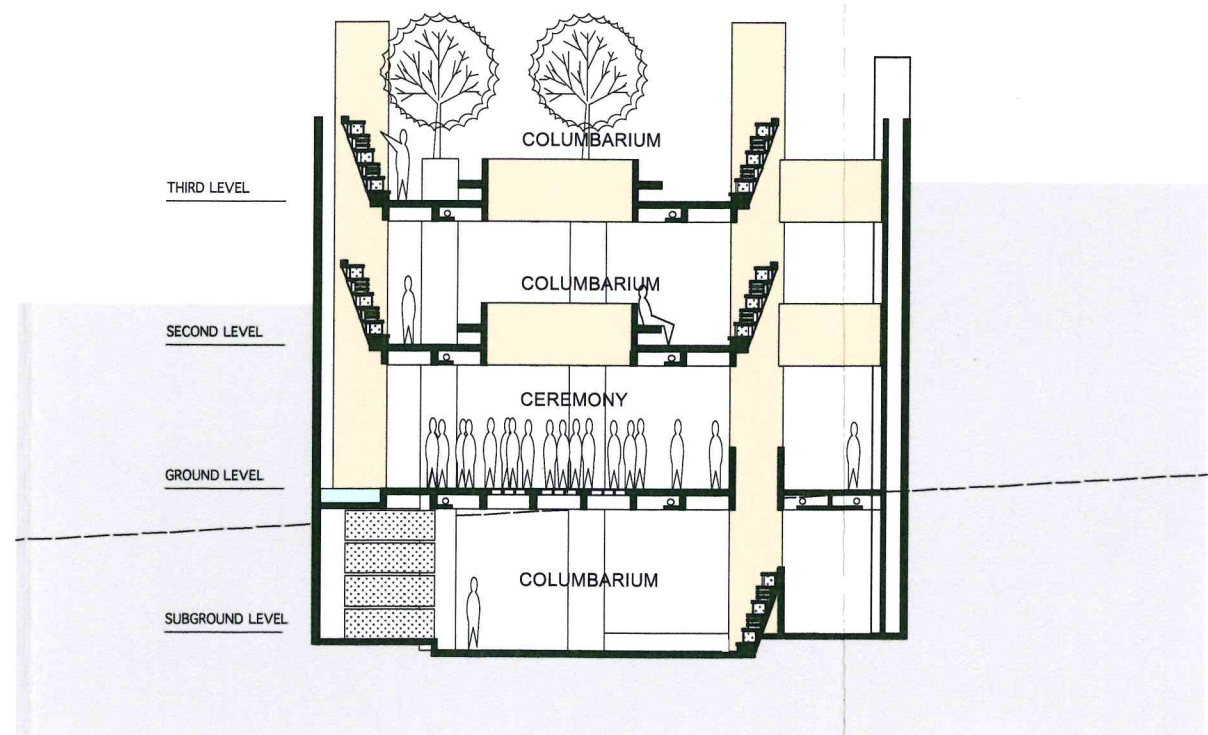
**C SECTION**  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



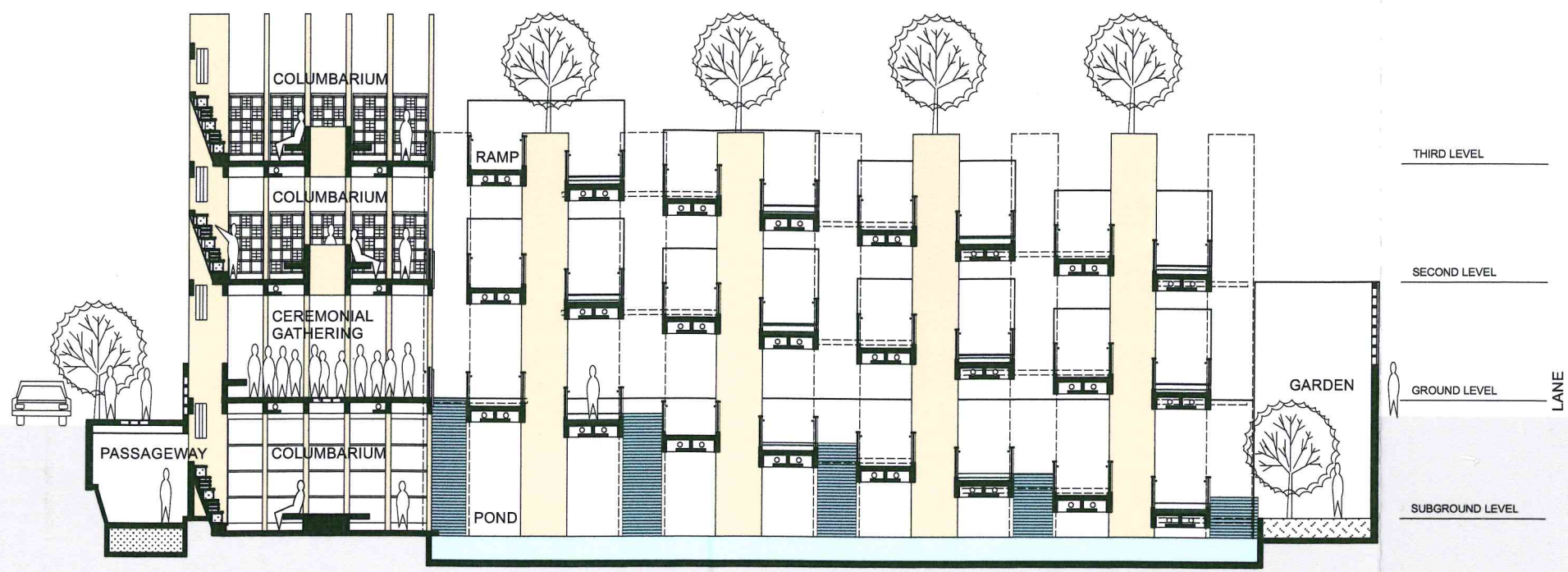
**E SECTION**  
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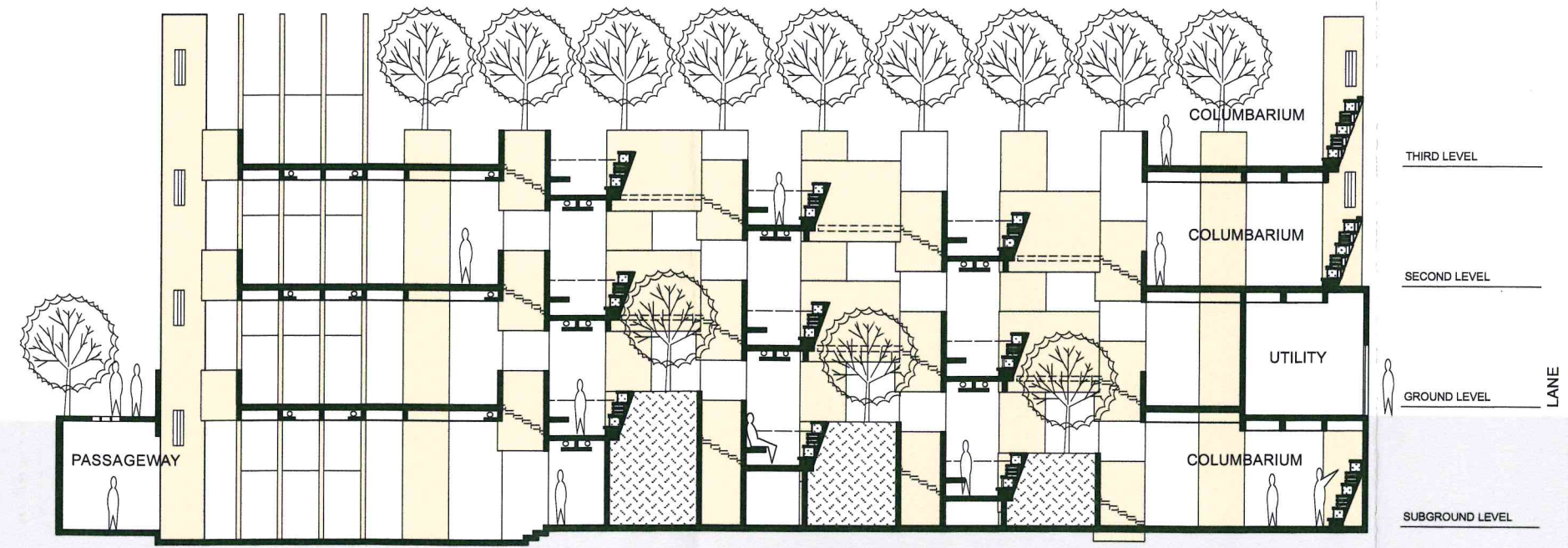
**D SECTION**  
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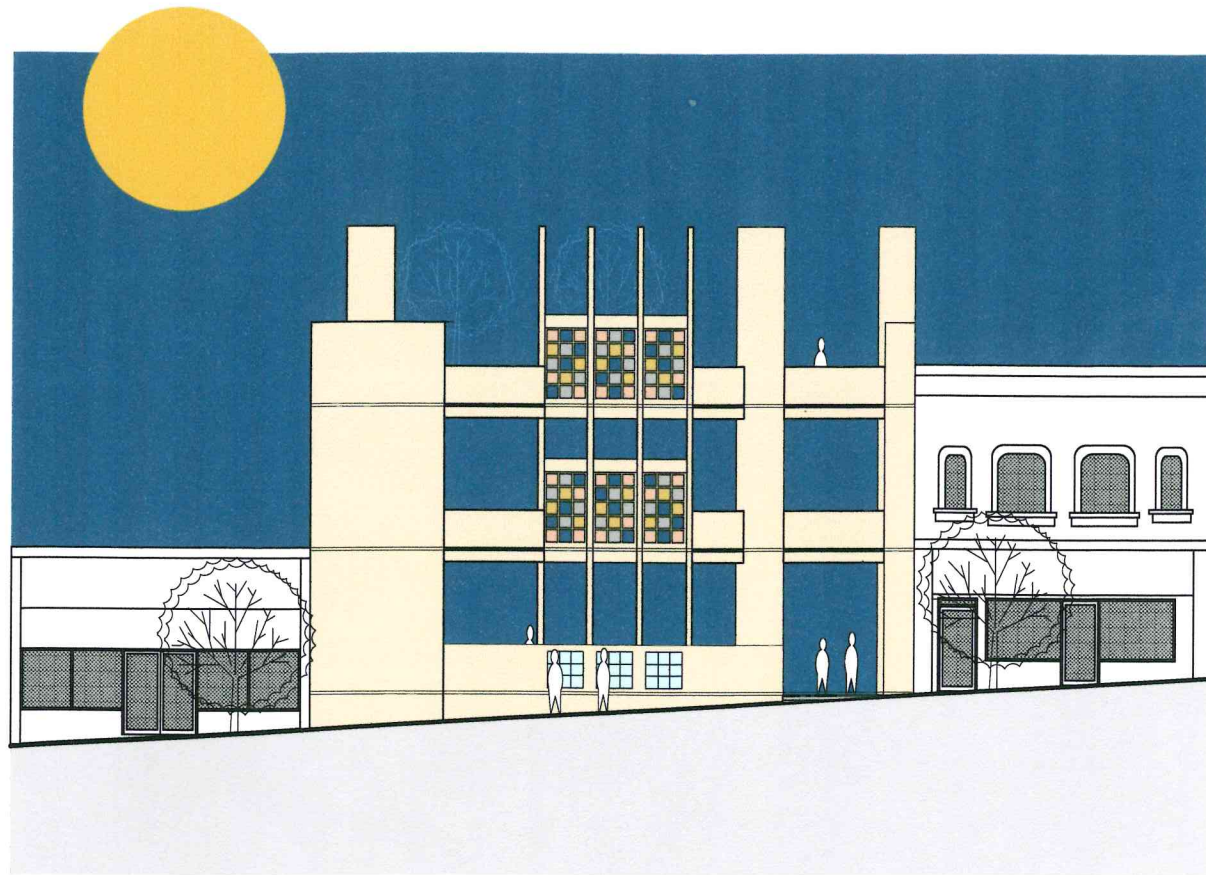
**F SECTION**  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



**A** SECTION  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



**B** SECTION  
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"



HASTINGS STREET ELEVATION



STAIRWAY TO UPPER COLUMBARIUM



UPPER PASSAGEWAY



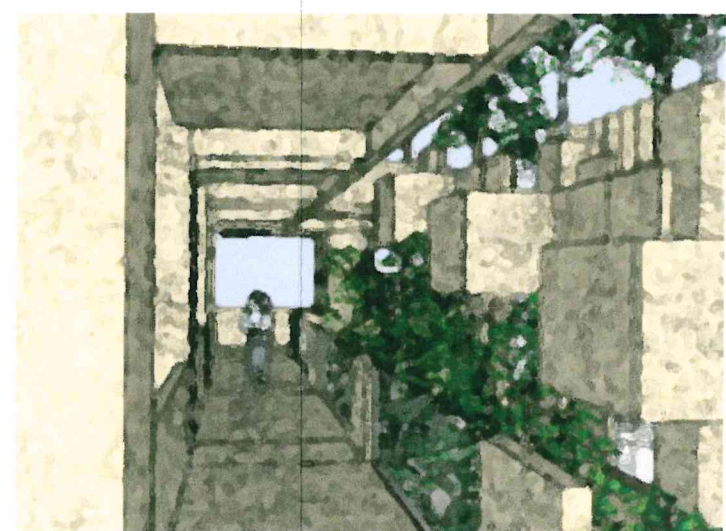
LOWER COLUMBARIUM & POND



PROCESSIONAL RAMP



CEREMONIAL GATHERING SPACE



INNER PASSAGEWAY & ATRIUM