

TEAM 6

HOMO URBANUS: INTERPRETING A LO-FI ECOLOGY

Like vernacular architecture, customs, and geographical variances, the sounds of a particular locality - keynotes and soundmarks - communicate a community's identity, such that neighbourhoods can be identified and characterised by their acoustical environments. Both auditory and olfactory responses to environmental stimuli hold considerable weight in determining our experiences of place - sense of space and position, and connection with one's home. In addition, it is the ephemeral and serendipitous encounters with soundmarks and situated aromas that engrain in our memories the true essence of a particular place, and our unwillingness or desire to return. These stimuli emerge with ordering power out of a complex and chaotic configuration of sound signatures and pheromonic compositions. From this, our concept of dwelling is partially derived, contributing to specific place attachments - an existential insideness experienced through repeated interaction.

Soundmarks and keynotes are understood not only in their current context, but also trans-temporally. The "hi-fi" urban environments of the past are increasing in both their level and complexity. The newly emergent "lo-fi" urban environments of contemporary society are abundant and continue to contribute to the fragmentation of the built world. It is important that we, as designers and planners of the future, stop and observe the implications this evolution has on our life experiences, relationships, and our concept of dwelling.

If we interpret the city as a monochromatic fabric, it is the physical and ephemeral human-natural elements that give colour and life to the city's quilt. The physical fabric of the city reveals the ephemeral and temporal qualities of urban life. It is these ephemeral qualities of the landscape that make its austerity vivid, reminding us that our sense of place prevails even as the experience is passing.

I try to listen to the still, small voice within but I can't hear it above the din

Eliza Ward

Ephemeral Map Description

“People live immersed in a sea of sounds, their ears buffeted by road noise, elevator music, electronic beeps, and other acoustic assaults. They also seek sound—in the enjoyment of music, the pleasure of conversation, and the sighing of the wind through bare branches.”

Barry Truax

Auditory source recognition and our experience of place are defined by the interaction of environmental constraints with the individual’s goal-oriented activity. This activity not only takes place at the level of auditory processing, it is also related to interactions among other sensory modalities, particularly smell. These sensations take place within a specific cultural context. The individual, through their sound-producing and sound-listening activities, modifies and is modified by his environment. The actions of the individual on the environment and the influences of the environment on the individual determine a process of pattern formation. This pattern ultimately manifests itself within, and upon the landscape.

“The sense of hearing cannot be closed off at will. There are no earlids. When we go to sleep, our perception of sound is the last door to close, and it is also the first to open when we awaken.”

R. Murray Schafer

claiming space.the formation of urban identity

The continuity of green space is a physical feature communicating a greater cohesion of community. A closer look at the flourishing private landscapes uncovers a strong community spirit that is further displayed in the high use of public spaces. The many beautifully landscaped yards provide essential pathways for urban wildlife and birds moving between larger natural landscapes. This is a feature that is emulated in the community fabric that seems to spill over from private gardens and homes, to public sidewalks, streets, schools and parks where the neighbourhoods gather and a strong sense of community identity is reinforced.



Mapping: Team 6

claiming space, the formation of urban identity



Mapping: Team 6

The red tile roofs and white stucco arches stand next to the craftsmans of the 1920s

The sound of church bells dunes with the aroma of incense seeping from the temple

A silhouette of a figure on the hill, makes tai chi forms against the sunrise

Vines from the grape grow in the gardens, soon to be for eating in barrels for wine

Cluck, cluck the hens for to be raised with the laughter in the race

The lucky red envelopes, the breechings and hot shot

at dusk in this landscape

the voices shouting, crying, silent, singing

all at once the voices form the identity of this space