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The Shifting Landscape

Faziawati Abdul Aziz

Jury Review

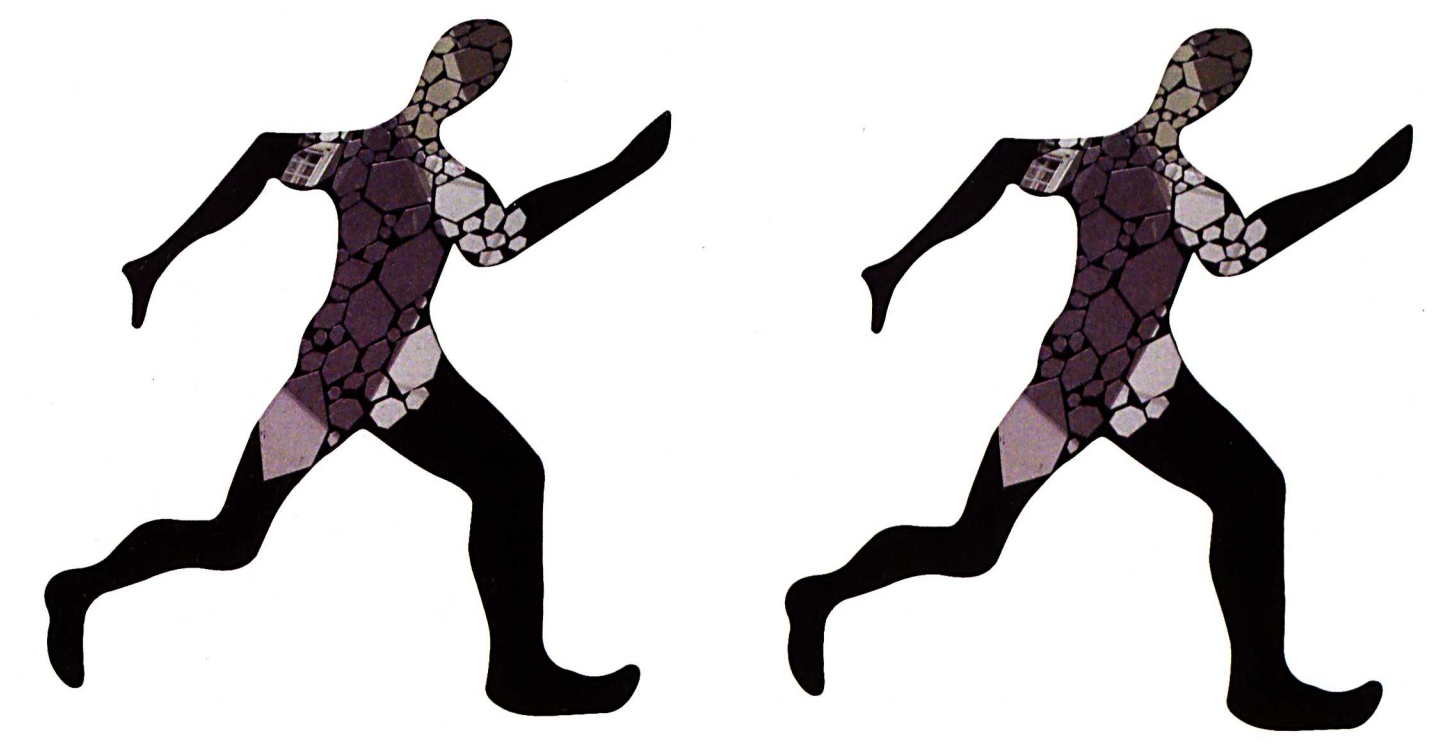
Sapura Mohamad & Norhalizah Hanifah

The Gift

Mohd Fairuz Shahidan, Mohd Fabian Hasna, Faziawati Abdul Aziz & Aini Jasmin Ghazali

Integrated Green Lifestyle

Mohd Fabian Hasna, Faziawati Abdul Aziz, Mohd Fairuz Shahidan & Aini Jasmin Ghazali



The Shifting Landscape: Environmental Art

Faziawati Abdul Aziz

Lets emphoric being able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue and so to make a few objects beautiful. Yet, it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look . . . To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts (Thoreau, 1966).

It is human nature to seek for new, exciting and the unexpected that would break the bonds from the ordinary and the known. At the same time, we seek beauty and balance within ourselves and of our environment. At the intersection of these two values, the radical emerges— an evolution that changes our landscape. In relation to our environment, the art movement shifted from the traditional displays in galleries and museum to the natural environment. Environmental art, land art, earth art, earthworks or art in nature, in whichever name we want to call it, emerges in the 1960s as “a release from the theoretical arguments concerning abstract expressionism, minimalism, and theatricality” (Thornes, 2008). The outcome from critiques of the conventional arts that it was deemed as out-dated and not in harmony with the natural environment. Unlike paintings, environmental art is more about human experiences, engaging with art and its environment. It is what that links the aesthetics and the environment which impacts upon our feelings and our everyday experience of our environment that is often taken for granted (Ibid).

The term environmental art is generally used to describe an artwork where the artist actively engages with the environment. It is art that helps improve our relationship with the natural world. It is the integration of art into the outdoor environment (Mohd Fabian, Osman et al, 2012). Hal Foster (1996) describes environmental art as “site-specific sculptural projects that utilise the materials of the environment to create new forms or to adjust our impressions of the panorama: programs that import new, unnatural objects into the natural setting with similar goals: time – sensitive individual activities in the landscape; collaborative, socially aware interventions.”

However, not all arts in nature are accepted and considered in line with the natural environment. Some argued that monumental environmental art such as the Spiral Jetty by Smithson in the Great Salt Lake in Utah was a violation to earth as it heightens the fragility of the land. It involved major alteration to the earth and displacement of natural resources: the movement of 6783 tonnes of rock, earth and salt crystals (Thornes, 2008).

Nevertheless, this form of art has long been replaced with a more environmental friendly approach of art works. It involves minimal alteration to the landscape, using natural resources from area of work, and one even involved the simple movement of walking. Richard Long, an environmental artist hailing from Bristol, England is famously known for his ‘walks’ temporarily imprinted on the landscape and captured through photographs.

Environmental art is not only confined to the work of artists, but is part and parcel of the Landscape Architectural profession as their scope of work involves designing outdoor spaces be it in urban areas or the natural settings. In line with that, the final project for the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture First Year students required them to produce six live environmental art works in selected sites that demonstrates their understanding of site contexts and the application of basic design principles and theories in their works.

The Course

This course covers the introduction to design and basic design principles, design theories, idea and concept development and processes in creating a design. Firstly, students were required to create a monochromic model that displays the design of spaces using planes and demonstrates their knowledge of concept development, design principles and form, space and order. The course also trains students to present their design ideas professionally. Apart from that, the course also covers a site specific environmental art project that focuses on the students’ ability to create designs that are sensitive and responsive towards the chosen site.

A study trip to Singapore was carried out to expose the students to public arts, its relation to the site and the impact it has to the public. The students would then have a clearer

picture of designing space in urban areas and botanical garden, understand the connections between space and street furniture, as well as experiencing landscape architectural design in detail. After the study trip, three inventory and analyses were conducted at the Faculty of Design and Architecture, and another three at Sri Serdang Lake. All six sites were chosen by the students based on issues that they would like to highlight. The inventory and analytical plans were produced in groups as well as the final environmental art project.

Critiques and Suggestions

Overall, the students have shown their abilities to design and present their ideas, as well as construct their art works on site through this environmental art project. They have managed to grasp the understanding of design processes, idea developments, the importance of understanding the site when designing, and see for themselves the impact their art works have on users. However, the scale of some of the art works became an issue in which the works were out of scale in context to the site. This was due to as most of them were constructed at the studio and later brought to the site. Suggestively, all future art works are constructed on site during the eight weeks duration similar to what has done by The Graffiti of Spiral group led by Muhammad Fikri. The group and other two groups artefacts namely the Gift and Integrated Green Lifestyle were selected for future references.

Jury Review

THE GIFT

Sapura Mohamad

It is an interesting attempt to create public art which should response to the environment. Furthermore, the site appreciation seems to be quite fairly translated into the design concept. Overall design idea of the public art is commendable. However, the placement of the subject matter as the public art should be looking into more detail such as the scale and proportion and location should be within the vicinity of the public access.

Norhalizah Hanifah

Good effort in thoughts and studies were given by students in their design process. However, certain scopes or preparation of studies and images of site, for example the cross-section and perspective drawings, were not taken into design process at certain stage such as at concept stage. The site analysis and inventory did not relate with the overall design process that was done for the project. The scale of the artwork placed at site was out of proportion when compared to the actual size of site. The site chosen was very good for displaying public arts, making the public to better understand and appreciate public arts.



The Gift

Mohd. Fairuz Shahidan, Mohd. Fabian Hasna, Faziawati Abdul Aziz & Aini Jasmin Ghazali

'The Gift' emerges from a tale of storks that brought babies to houses in a town. It symbolizes fertility and is associated with birth. Thus, 'The Gift' represents the notion of bringing new life to the society, an exciting and joyful events. Storks frequented the area at Sri Serdang Lake therefore strongly relates to the concept and is appropriate as a subject matter. The wing of the stork is used to represent the bird and it epitomises the power of thought, freedom and speed. It is a means of trying to enliven the rubbish ridden area and it hopes that this breathe of fresh air would eventually transform the area into a cleaner,

livelier and attractive space. The colour white represents purity, perfection, innocence and completeness. Thus, a new beginning for the community. It creates contrast to the natural green setting whilst not being too harsh and therefore blending well. From afar, the art work exhibits a flock of wings flying away to the sky through the repetitions of different heights and movement of the wings of which is visually appealing and gives a sense of curiosity to the public. The wings were made out of impraboard and three sizes of feathers were cut out and arranged to replicate the movement of wings.



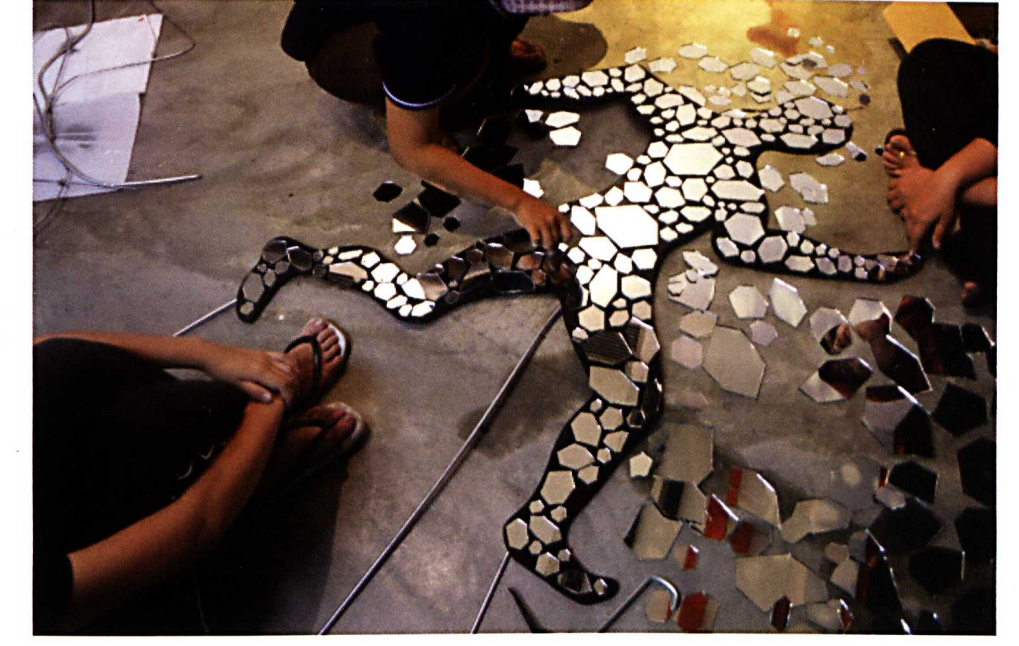
Tan Chee Cheat, Mohamad Raafiq Saiful Anuar, Nur Atikah Motridi, Nor Fadhilah Abd Aziz, Nur Asilah Idris, Nur Syahirah Mohd Kadis, Lau Wai Mun



Integrated Green Lifestyle

Mohd.Fabian Hasna, Faziawati Abdul Aziz, Mohd. Fairuz Shahidan & Aini Jasmin Ghazali

The site selected for this artefact in Sri Serdang Lake is frequented by the local community for workout related activities such as aerobics and jogging. Therefore, it is only natural that the art work represented and responded to the local activities here. 'Integrated Green Lifestyles' intends to convey the message on the importance of living a healthy lifestyle through a fun and artistic medium. Human-sized figures in performing three different sport's actions were constructed using plywood and mirrors. The mirrors were cut out into the shape of honeycombs to represent the sense of unity. The mirrored figures reflected the trees within the area. Therefore blending well with the natural setting thus not dominating the area itself. Simultaneously, from afar, the reflection of the sun flashes light into the mirrors which attracted attentions of the users. The only drawback of this art work was that the figures were dwarfed by its vast surrounding even though the figures were cut at human scale. Initially, only the glassed figures were placed on site. After critiques regarding the scale of the art work were voiced out, six white figures were added to the art work which gave a far bigger impact to the initial idea.



Jacky Leong Hoe Kit, Syaza Mohd Ridzuan, Chong Fei Pow, NurNaqibah Hawa, Najihah Mohamad Jais, Nurul Izati Ishak, Mohd Fadzli Othman @ Anan