"we are more or less healed psychotics"-Octave Mannoni

This thesis deals with the issue of drug addictions in the society. Drug addicts are amongst us and are one of us. And we can easily slip into the darkness and vastness of drug abuse, only to be labelled and typecast as one of the "fallen angels". How many of us have heard their story? Do we care as we hurry along with our own agendas? Many just appear as occasional stories that are splashed over the papers or as the cold, grey statistics of those caught, caned or hung. And many more are walking amongst us, under the same sky...and their stories speak of the tales of apparent deviation in the society.

Drugs is a cultural artifact and a social fabrication as defined by society. In this society, drug use and trafficking are crimes and as such, much have been overcast with a haze of fear of punishment and death. This project aims to bring the marginalized culture of drugs and drug addiction into the mainstream city- provoking public awareness as well as make accessible detoxification/counselling facilities for drug addicts and their families. Hence, "healing in the shadows" of the giant concrete jungle.

The vehicle chosen is a gallery of drug addictions that incorporates a detoxification centre for drug addicts. The architecture is slipped within the marginal leftover space in-between two buildings along the shopping street of Orchard Road; a selected site of which is deemed to be the "diseased site" frequented by targeted high-risk youths in the city.

"para-SITE" describes the concept of the "building" as one that derives its site or form by virtue of where it attaches itself to and how it taps its target audience/users. The gallery is translated here as a "shear" (grey area) between that of the clinic and the public commercial spaces. Spatially, the architecture addresses the inherent paradox between the programmatic intentions of public awareness versus that of extending clinical help.

Architecture driven by a social agenda is indeed difficult. Inevitably, many obstacles have been met in the course of this thesis, some left unanswered and yet some provoking further questions. As well-put by Maki, "architecture in the end is always a social art", and it is in this spirit of experimentation and exploration that this thesis has been dealt with. It does not attempt to search for the solution per se, but the construction of a consciousness through a process of continual testing and provocation.