abstract

The motivation for this thesis stems from a rather personal concern about the working condition in the city. It attempts to deal with a fundamental yet often overlooked problem of stress in the city. The socio-psychological needs of workers in the urban environment is often hemmed by the intense presence and pressure of the urban condition - the mad rush, the overcrowding, and the highly stimulating environment. To reaffirm the need for this thesis, it is imperative to acknowledge the fact that professionals in Singapore are among the most stressed people - 81% as compared to the national average of 76% (according to Straits Times May 98).

To aggravate the situation, in the city centre, 'green lungs', Singapore's answer breathers and pocket parks, or simply relief spaces is limited and is slowly becoming an endangered prototype with more of them being replaced by commercial buildings - what the authorities feel are more appropriate for such prime land.

Coupled with the fact that there are currently very few places for relaxation and rejuvenation within the city, stressed workers are not able to effectively de-stress within the confines of the city. Many accumulate these emotions or alternatively take the trouble to retreat all the way to offshore islands to seek their peace.

This thesis is a search for a more articulated landscape, a new prototype, an outlet where people at work can relax within the confines of the city. The fact that nature or abstractions of it is what we seek or look forward to in search for that moment of peace and silence, the thesis attempts to examine and explore how architecture should begin to work with nature to achieve the objective of de-stressing in the city.