HISTORY PARK-MUSEUM-
ARCHITECTURE AS EXPLICATORS OF MEMORY

by

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ABSTRACT
Representation in architecture
This thesis is an attempt to probe the limits of architectural representation. It seeks to demonstrate how memories can be surfaced, emotions aroused and imaginations evoked in built form - architecture, urban intervention, public sculpture and landscape, giving therefore meaning and value to built forms within their setting, and enriching those who engage with it.

Design approach to History Park-Museum
Duxton Plain Park, a luxuriant 650m long green strip cutting across the Chinatown urban landscape is the location of the History Park-Museum. The design approach of this History Park-Museum is based upon the renunciation of museums as self-contained, inward-looking institutions set up by elite groups for the elite. It therefore seeks to open itself to and engage with the general public.

The park, which is a palimpsest lurking with layers of historical texts, is treated as a repository of memories in the landscape. Strategically located along the entire length of this 'repository' are 8 objects, starting from the main museum building at one end, which serve as 'artefacts' that explicate history and evoke memories associated with old Chinatown. All these 8 objects in the park make up the History Park-Museum, and each of them perform dual functions. Besides individually injected with an architectural program, like functioning as a museum or a resting pavilion or a shaded court, each of them makes reference to a past, leading people to the awareness or the recollection of certain memories or emotions.

Design of main building
The main museum building, which is the introduction to the whole park-museum experience, occupies a series of lots left behind by previously demolished shophouses. This thesis takes up the design of the main museum building as its primary emphasis.

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