Synopsis

Forgetting is a possible consequence of an affluent society characterised by an influx of rapid changes. The Singapore River is important to Singapore's national heritage. Efforts to capture and tell that history have been confined to the conservation of river shophouses. The Singapore River Masterplan calls for the adaptive reuse of these shophouses for entertainment purposes thereby leaving little to allude to their historical significance. The intention of this thesis therefore is to educate and remember through a museum showcasing two different aspects of the River's history; its economic history and its social history. Both aspects are expressed as two different museums linked by the River. This allows the River and its surroundings to become part of the museum experience. Together, they form the Singapore River Museum.

This thesis examines how the river narrative can be expressed through architecture. A prescribed narrative organises a sequential array of gallery spaces and dictates the circulation for each museum. A larger narrative links both museums together. To further provide a continuity of experience, a conceptual template is applied to both museums. This is expressed as similar design strategies that when applied, result in certain features that are common to both museums. Variations in expression are due to the consideration of other factors like site, context and the respective narratives.