WEAVING THE URBAN FABRIC

EXAMINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY

"A slum is not a chaotic collection of structures; it is a dynamic collection of individuals who have figured out how to survive in the most adverse of circumstances." *(Rediscovering Dharavi by Kalpana Sharma 2000)*

A I M

Informal settlements have dense social networks which are sustained by rich and frequent interaction. This heightened sense of community continues to underpin the spontaneous and resilient development of slum cities, and prompts further examination of the vibrant nature and idiosyncratic complexities of slum living. This investigation offers a shift from conventional interpretations of the slum as only a breeding ground for discontent and disease, instead looking to unravel the lessons we can learn from the strong sense of community that binds these informal settlements.

Humans are social creatures , therefore when examining urbanism, it is not adequate to consider the built environment as a single entity, instead we should seek to understand the intricacy of the dynamic social networks that have evolved . Rather than imposing independent architectural interventions upon the urban fabric, it is necessary to weave a response amongst the existing social typographies.

The aim of this study therefore unfolds in three parts ;

(a) Analyse how a sense of community is preserved in informal slum settings, and how these actions can be implemented in the modern city.

(b) Observe the socially complex nature of the slum environment

(c) Understand the significance of introduced interventions in the urban fabric.

The intent of this study is to examine community, how it can be preserved, encouraged and fostered. This will develop as a) photographic documentation b) independent survey and c) proposal for built scenarios. It is not my intention to romanticise the slum, however this exists as a formative study into the relationship between community, the built environment and the urban fabric.

M E T H O D

The fieldwork will be carried out over 14 days at each location , from June through to October 2016 . This work will consist of architectural drawings, photographical information and the distribution of public surveys. These surveys are employed as a method to gather information specific to each settlements, with attention given to the demographical and socio-cultural makeup. Information gathered will go towards creating localised criteria to inform possible building scenarios within each of the six independent settlements examined.

PHASE 1 : ABSORB

Day 1 - 4). Upon arrival it is necessary to observe, discover and learn. This initial stage will involve making preliminary sketches, recordings (audio and visual) as well as location mapping through the orientation of significant nodes.

PHASE 2 : ENGAGE

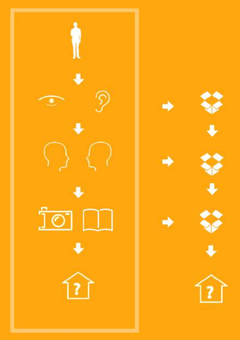
DAY 4- 9) In this stage it is my intent to focus on documenting personal accounts and conduct interviews. It is hoped that the social organisation of the area can be better understand through such an anlysis.

PHASE 3 : DOCUMENT

DAY 9-14)As ideas of progress and developement vary from one culture to another it is necessary to understand the local context. A survey will be used to inform the creation of a criteria for possible building scenarious in the area.

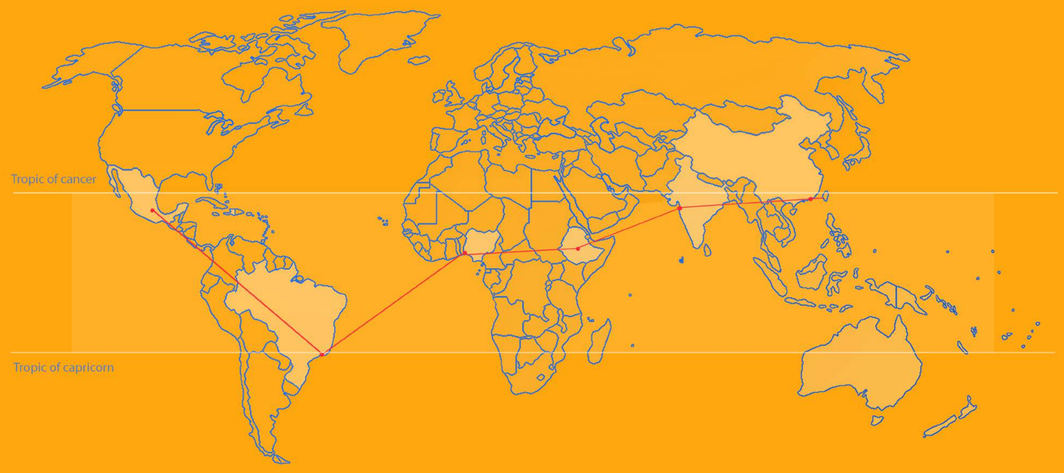
PHASE 4 : SHARE

During the process of actively gathering information . My statistical and study material will be made available live on open source media. It is hoped this will inform others of the dailogue that can exist between the city and slum. All content will be methodically updated to open source publishing platforms (ie. Dezeen, Archdaily) as well as a website dedicated to the journey.



Personal examination and public circulation

June - October 2016



P E R S O N A L M O T I V A T I O N

My interest in this topic comes from the experience of having stayed in the informal settlements of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. While staying with family members, the strong sense of community and expression of identity that exists within such settlements became apparent. The solidarity of members in the community and the reassurance found in the communal presence, expresses a strong sense of unity, one which I have not observed in the 'developed' western city I live. It is from this perspective that the 'slum' becomes educational.

12 Weeks **6** Cities **4** Continents

LOCATIONS

CHINA
Shenzen

China's rapid urbanisation and the movement from rural to urban areas can be seen in the phenoma of the 'urban village' particularly in Shenzen.

SHENZHEN

Population: 7 009 000
City Area : 1 991.64 km²
Density : 7 500 /km²

GUANGXI URBAN VILLAGE

Population: 10000
City Area : 0.5 km²

INDIA
Mumbai

Dharavi is home to more than 1 million resident, and is Asia's largest slum.

MUMBAI

Population: 12 442 373
City Area : 603 km²
Density : 21,000/km²

DHARAVI

Population: 700 000
City Area : 2.17 km²

ETHIOPIA
Addis Ababa

Due to the implementation of the new Addis Ababa master plan the cities relationship with its informal dwellings are under intense scrutiny.

ADDIS ABABA

Population: 3 384 569
City Area : 603 km²
Density : 5 165.1/km²

MERKATO

Population: 300 000
City Area : 7.41 km²

NIGERIA
Lagos

Nigeria is Africa's most populous nation. It is amongst this context of high economic performance that inequality remains.

LAGOS

Population: 16 060 303
City Area : 999 km ²
Density : 13 712/km ²

MAKOKO

Population: 80 000
City Area : 0.72 km²

MEXICO CITY
Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl

Mexico is the second largest economy in Latin America. 4 million people reside in Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl .

MEXICO CITY

Population: 8 851 000
City Area : 1 485 km²
Density : 6 000/km²

CIUDAD NEZAHUALCOYOTL

Population: 1 110 565
City Area : 63.74 km²

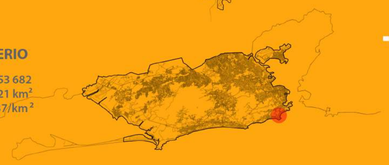
BRAZIL
Rio di janerio

Brazil is the largest economy in South America.

7.4 % of Brazillians live below the national poverty line - *The World Bank, 2014*

RIO DE JANERIO

Population: 6 453 682
City Area : 1 221 km²
Density : 5 337/km²



ROCHINA

Population: 230 000
City Area : 603 km²