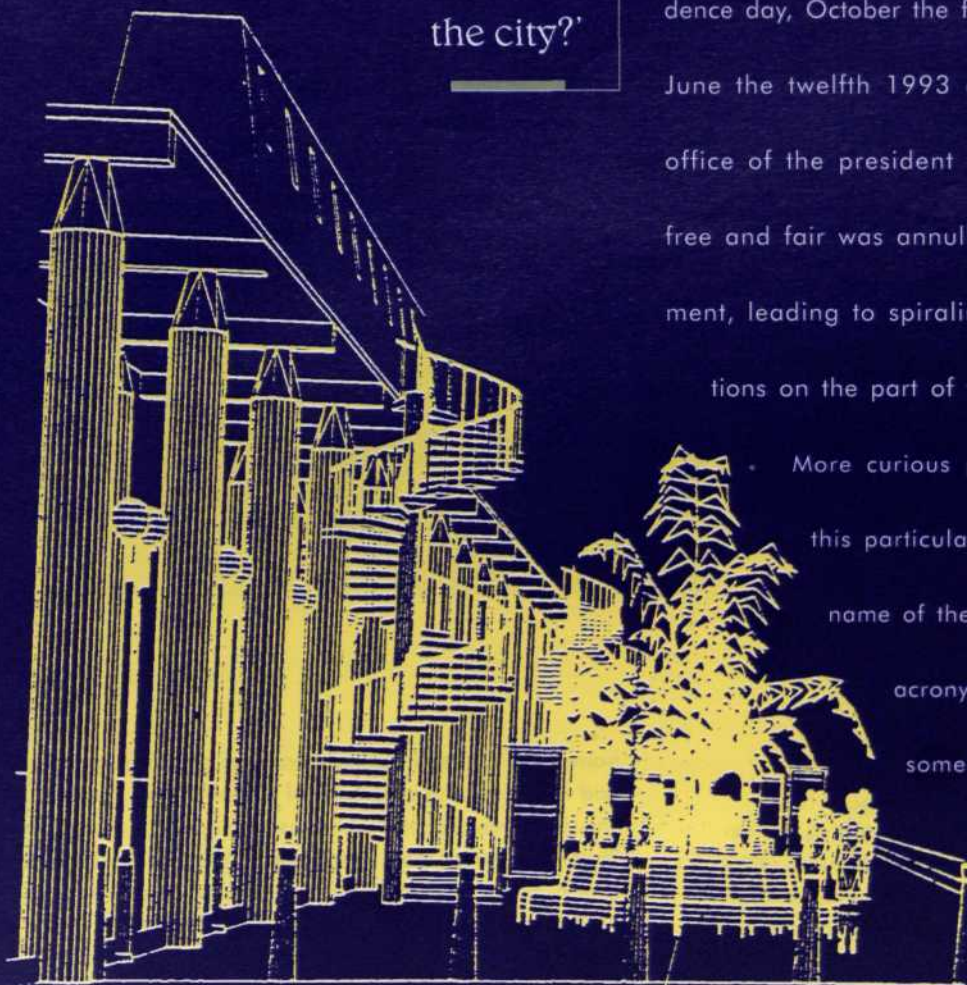


'We are a nation of traders.
How can this be a point of
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articulated within
the city?'



In the breakfast hall of the Nicoles Restaurant, Victoria Island, Lagos, were more than sixty members gathered. The day was June the twelfth, 1999, a day on the Nigerian calendar that five years previous, effectively deposed the original independence day, October the first, to a second place. On June the twelfth 1993 a national election to the office of the president that had been considered free and fair was annulled by the military government, leading to spiraling protests and recriminations on the part of the military establishment.

More curious perhaps than the choice of this particular meeting day was the very name of the organisation - The CIA, an acronym that immediately suggests some association with the American intelligence agency but actually means the >>

Dapo Adeniyi with Koku Konu & Uche Iroha

The CENTURY PROJECT

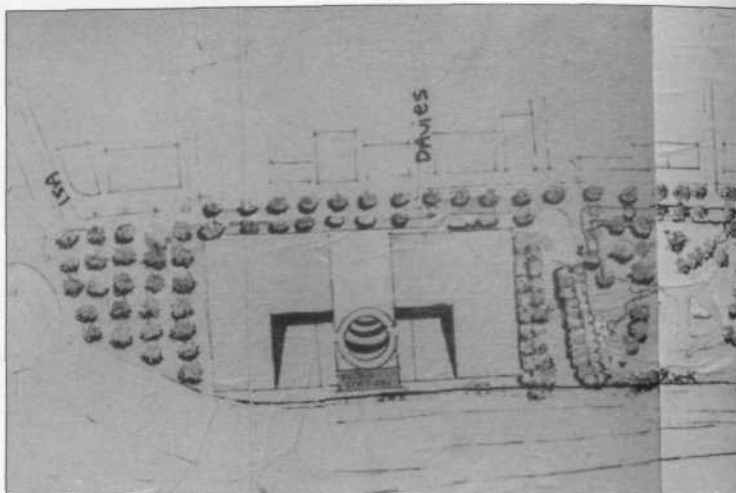
Creative Intelligence Agency. And its central motto states clearly that it is poised to creatively subvert the urban planning (dis)order of the city of its occupation, Lagos. The present company of more than three score 'collaborators' literally emerged out of the city's creativity professions - architecture, interiors, landscape, graphics and photography. The number of course includes students, predominantly from the university of Lagos and the Yaba College of Technology. And the usual mode of the CIA meetings, even before this date, had been to hubnub, chit-chat and then grub, proving that the election of a restaurant setting like the Nicoles, was no accident at all.

A front-runner in the CIA, Mr. Koku Konu, an architect (vehemently denies that there's any organisational structure but that they operate purely as a network), said, the idea from the outset was to blend

'fun with serious thought. Curious because there isn't the usual static organisational structure, fun because we take out gastronomy (food and drink) discourse and interaction seriously, and serious because we know that achieving what we want isn't going to be easy. It will require both time and money.'

The thought that had preoccupied not a few of the members, long preceding the CIA, was on how individuals, natives of the city, could professionally and creatively intervene to transform the urban planning chaos that has for long defined the Lagos metropolis. Even though other non-governmental organisations have also begun to conceive and initiate interventionist programmes for the Central Business District (CBD), the Onikan Conservation Society concerns itself with tree-planting and Legacy has achieved the renovation and preservation of key historical townhouses, including the recent launch of the Nigerian Railways Museum - the CIA's motivation is more compelling from other sources and factors such as the reinstallation of democracy in the country which this time sees the largest crop of young and the upwardly mobile professional class ever, penetrating the political party structures. Another related factor is the well-advertised metroline project proposed by the Lagos State Government to transform the mass transit system. Thirdly, there is the new millenium, whose spirit was already fashioning new ideas in business, entertainment, fashion and broadcasting. Consequently the CIA got all the more resolved that Lagos Central at the least, must be invested with a new dressing and thorough face-lift, in the new century.

On the twelfth of June, submissions were received



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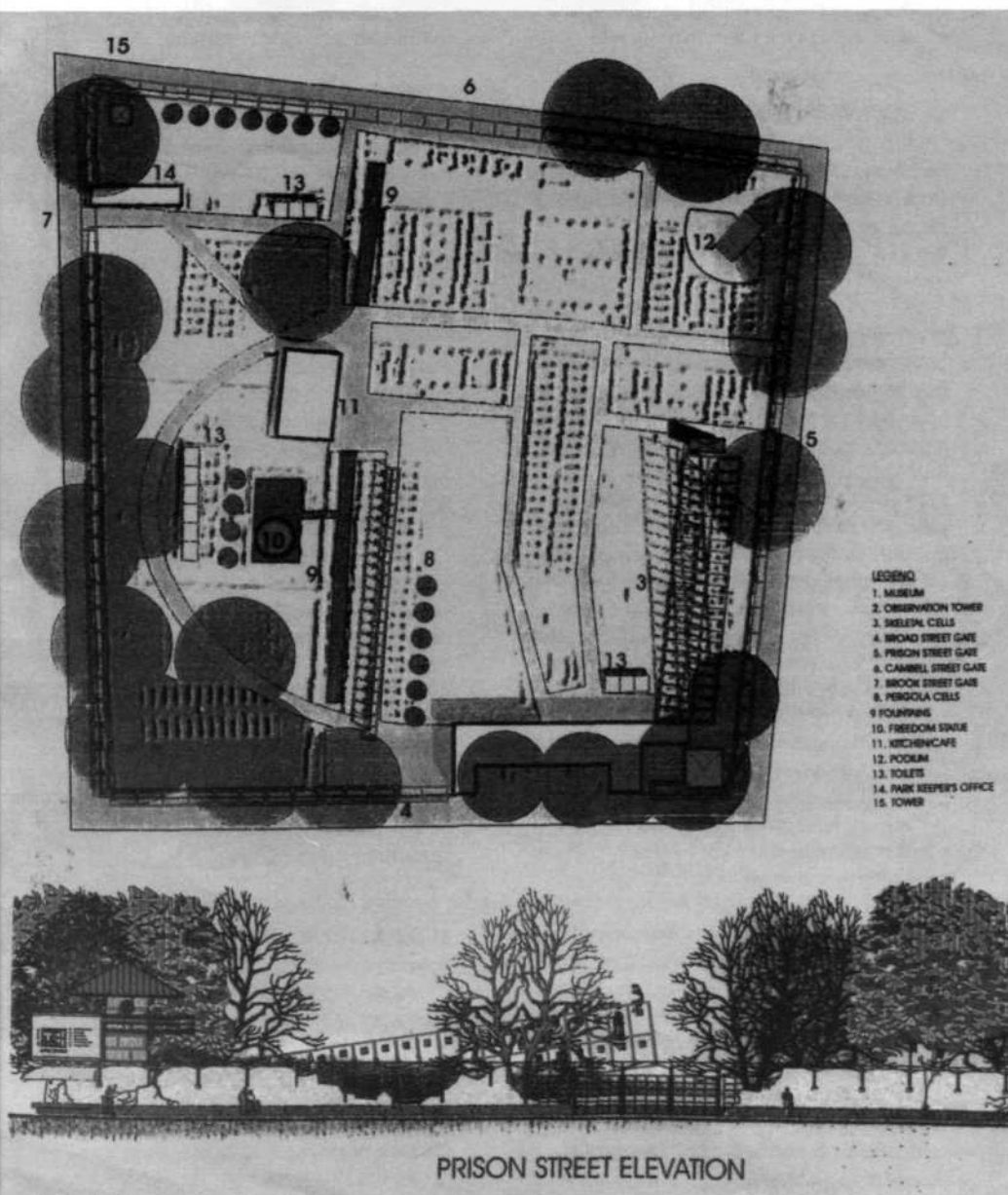
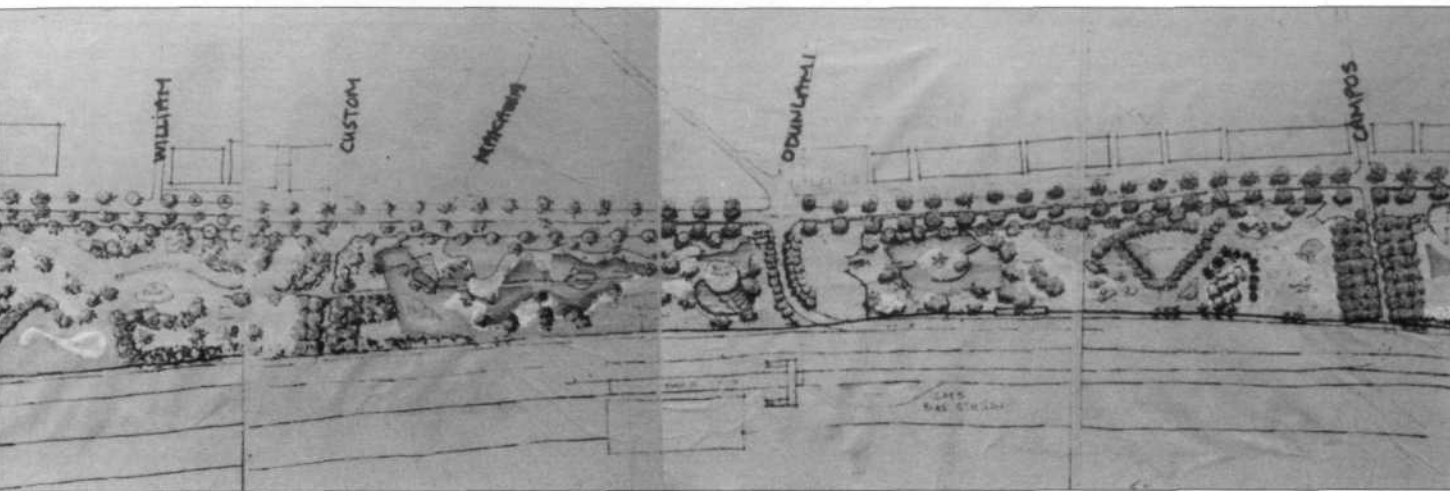


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from twelve volunteer architects and professional firms which had marked various portions of central Lagos, for study. The study area altogether stretches from Apongbon to Cable Street (East-West) and from Broad Street to the Marina (North-South). The whole area carved into twelve units were each to be supervised by a unit master, who actually represented an undertaking professional firm. Thereafter fifty-five volunteer students on attendance during the usual breakfast meeting now enlisted with the unit or area of study of their choice according to peculiarity of location and or ideology informing each work. Koku Konu further revealed that,

'a six-week programme of intensive study and examination followed, an interim review was held in the third week, just to make sure that we were on course, and give our colleagues the chance to criticise our preliminary thoughts.'

Konu whose pride in and zest for the whole enterprise was easily infectious notes also that



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 MOE Limited
 Multi-Media Limited
 OAC Architects
 Pieach Limited
 Siji Dosekun Partnership
 Total Consult Limited

'During this period a scale model of the study area was made. Each unit ran their own show and the schemes they produced range from the pragmatic to the futuristic. Some interventions are theoretical and rely on future technologies, whilst others are practical day to day solutions'.

The CIA's review sessions also gave principals heading the units the opportunity to visit other firms and exchange notes. Temi Stallings of Design Decisions for example remarked, following a visitation,

'it woke me up. It was my wake up call. I don't really have time to reflect during design, but being asked questions helped me to focus and think, oh shit!'

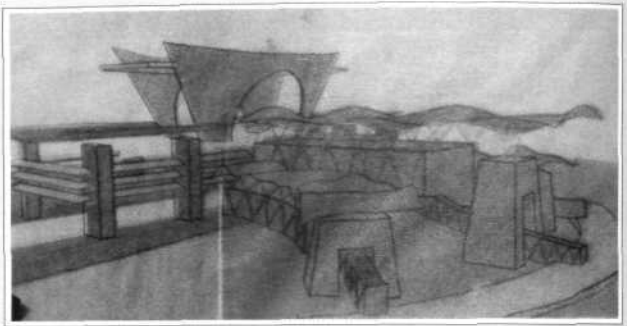
The Century Project, code-named Lagos 2000+ it seems won its hardest battle right from the outset and it was the battle of the will, seeping almost as far down as the question of ideology. Not a few people, even in the professional circuits of the city, held the view that the city was too rigidly set in its own way and could therefore be unamenable to change. The slightly more extreme variant to that, which also enjoys a bit of an impressive following, is on the pointlessness of change, especially radical change. Where the question bends directly towards the ideological is where it wears the nagging fear that some of the city's defining cultural elements would face instant erosion.

One of the leading architects in the country and on the continent David Aradeon, a professor, in a replanning commentary based on a Lagos subcity run on the pages of *Glendora Review* (vol. two, no. one) endorsed for example the retention of the city's defining, if less than noble, means of mass transportation, Molve, stylishly renamed funky train. The motivating ideological plank therefore became the word remodelling and not the blanket transformation which takes no recourse to the prevailing subcultures of the city. In achieving an effective consensus the CIA first anticipated and therefore resolved to exact usable kernels from the various positions first of all by airing them during its informal sessions, - its own organisational objective after all has stated clearly that 'philosophically speaking the CIA is really about having something to say' - and thereupon fashioning a body of ideas and programme of action in which all would find accommodation.

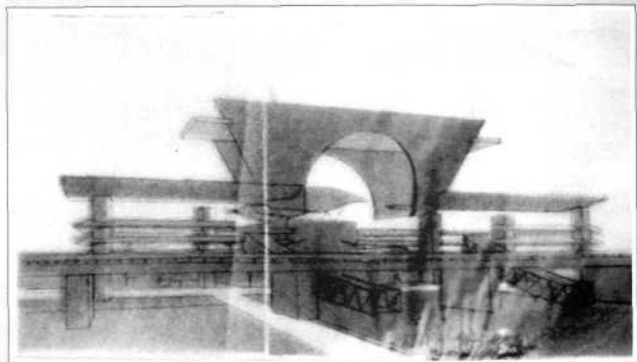
The Space We Create

One of the submissions with detailed plans for intervention in the Isale-eko area was initiated and drawn by Lekan Adams and Associates. The plan undertakes not just a programme of material reconstruction but adopts a theoretical appropriation of an area-strip which presents by far the poorest landscape in the whole of the city central. Isale-eko is a contradiction on two fronts: its close neighbour, Lagos Central's CBD, is also the uncontested financial nerve-centre of Nigeria; worse, Isale-eko itself, the seat of the infamous Area boys (mainly handbag snatchers, loafers,

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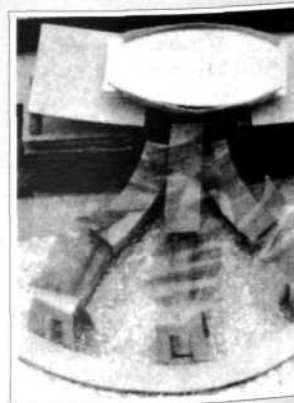


drug addicts), occupies immediately or potentially, a high quality real estate.

Before plunging into the hard business of redesigning, the architects sought first to understand the dynamics - social, moral and spiritual - responsible for the creation of that 'institutional culture'; what social dynamics were responsible for Isale-eko, and its offsprings the Areas Boys, creating the poverty nexus that is so openly contested by Nigeria's own business district.

'This is in order that... population explosion, social poverty etc. can be understood in terms of the mechanism that produce, influence and maintain them.'

Premium was placed on such understanding because in their estimation every spatial expression or architecture



8

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Freedom Park - Total Consult Ltd. Remains of the old prison are exhumed to form a new urban park celebrating democracy and civil rights activism.
2. City Green Belt - Leonardo Associates. Partly underground car-parks are proposed at either end of this new urban park.
4. Letting it all out 2 - Frank Amenechi, Konu & Morrow. Clay model of transitory open WC and showers.
- 5a & b. Land, air and sea terminal - Design Group Nigeria. A new transport interchange to open our underutilised waterways and provide short hop helicopter flights to the main international airport.
6. Heavy load - Chioma Nwaka, Konu & Morrow. Sculpture of human figure, bringing an element of art and a sense of human effort to the purpose of the flyover.
8. Land, air and sea terminal - Design Group Nigeria. View of model from the water side.
10. Apogon - James Cubitt Architects. Model showing proposal for remodeling of Apogon, and a new bus terminal at the 5 finger marine jetty.
11. Lagos Outer Marina - The outer marina flyover sits on reclaimed land. What was once the old marina is now an urban no mans land. The Outer Marina now bounds this edge.
12. Drivers View - Bola Agunbiade, Konu & Morrow. A collage of the drivers view of congestion on the flyover.
13. PMUPMD Crane - Yemi Okuwobi, Konu & Morrow. A mobile crane straddled across the flyover removes broken down vehicles and puts them on the ground thereby reducing congestion above.
14. Model - Made by students of the departments of Architecture at the University of Lagos and Yaba College of Technology.
16. Land, air and sea terminal - Design Group Nigeria. Panoramic view of the existing ferry terminal and site of the proposed terminal.
17. The City Strip - AEK Designs Ltd. ECAD Design Group Ltd. & The Architects Collective. Proposed revitalisation of retail trade the life line of Lagos, from CMS bus stop to Tinubu Sq.
18. Figure ground/location plan - The Study area stretches north-south from Broad St. to the Outer Marina, and west-east from Apogon to Cable St.
19. New City Square - AEK Designs Ltd. ECAD Design Group Ltd. & The Architects Collective. A new civic square in front of the Cathedral is proposed to terminate a new processional route from Tinubu Sq.
20. The Container - Tuoyo Jemerigbe, Konu & Morrow. The amorphous structures are intended to provide user defined accommodation, and order the chaos below the flyover.

depends strongly on prevailing attitudes and culture and should the spatial structure be altered without a corresponding alteration occurring in the culture as well, the prevailing culture would reassert itself.

What seems to have helped with the fashioning of this plan, probably the most challenging of the CIA units, is the accompanying sense of responsibility by the architects. From outset, they felt imposed on them the duty to search for an appropriate strategy for the use of that space, thus ensuring, as its design objective, that Government's intervention outstrips the rate of the production of poverty. Also from the outset, two routes were open for the resolution of the urban oddity, each positing an ideological or class prospective - the demolition of the entire terrain and the relocation of its incongruous population on the one hand and a rehabilitation of both people and land space on the other. The Isale-eko versus CBD design proposition adopts the latter arguing that urban phenomena such as the Isale-eko were the direct expressions of the post-coloniality of both the modern African city and post-colonial peoples everywhere.

'A well-planned, environmentally correct spatial pattern can only come from a people of sound, stable, inner development. Therefore when man is removed from his cultural milieu whether by force as through colonisation or internal marginalisation, there is psychic disorientation...therefore those who are so marginalised are prone to violence.'

The thrust of the plan is therefore one of conservation and rehabilitation of the space as well as the cultural preservation of the people. An explicit social programme backs this in which society at large now exacts much less negative pressure on the Area Boy who through the programme of integration now contributes to development and whose pride and self-esteem are restored.

The goal of the material plan is the transformation of the Isale-eko into

a very important tourist and cultural centre reworking its historical and traditional relics to restore its pristine glory. This dispensation would absorb the Area-Boy who would now serve as tourist guide as well as ensuring security to his very erstwhile victims. Also included in the rehabilitation scheme for the Area Boy are access to credit, vocational training and cooperative opportunities on the one hand and infrastructural development providing for communication, transportation, portable water, waste management and affordable housing on the other.

Mono-rail for Kakawa Street through Campos Street

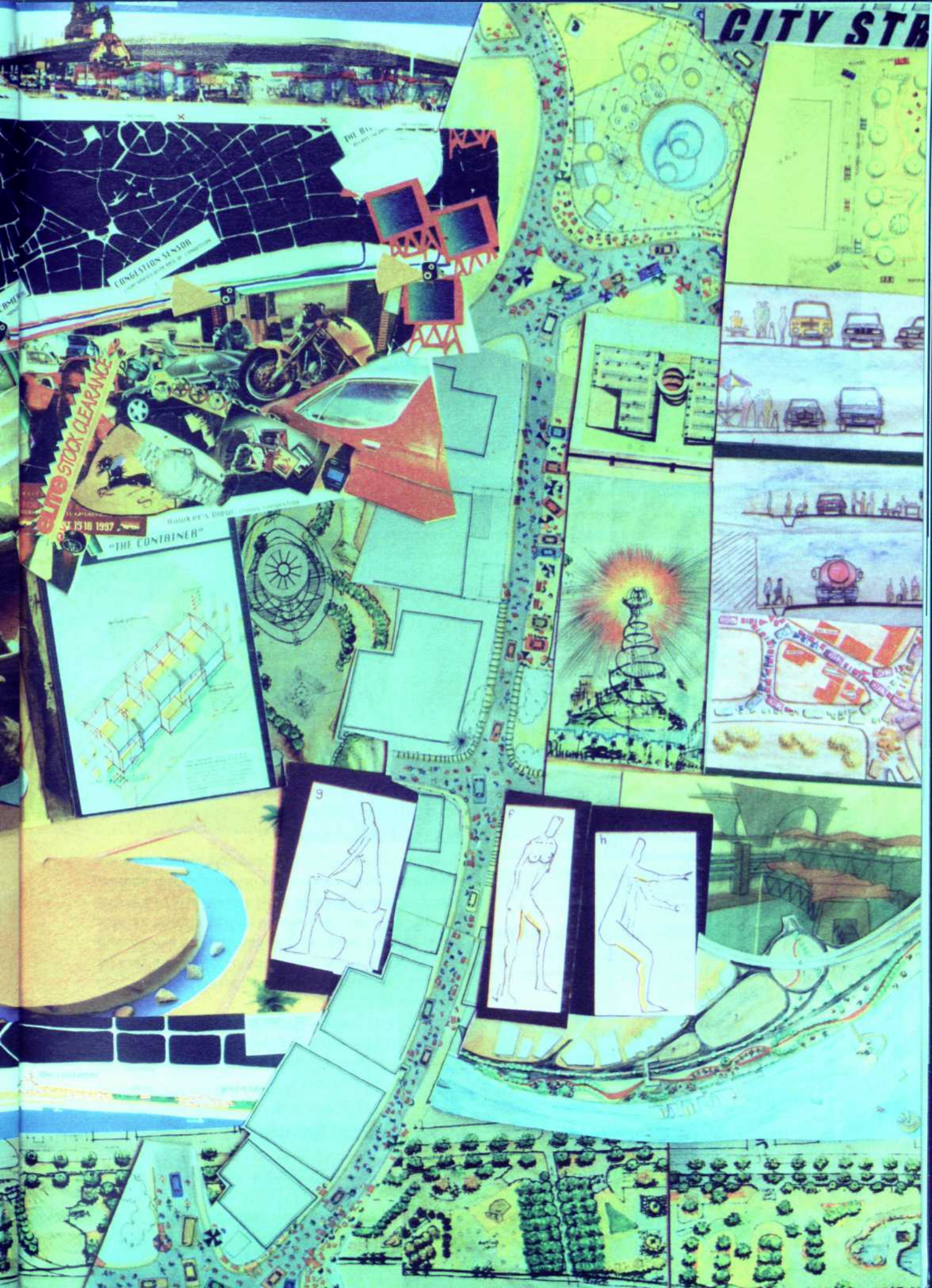
The Isale-eko design easily complements another of the procession of ambitious designs described as the Kakawa Street to Campus Street pedestrianisation and mono-rail intended to ease the congestion of pedestrians and traffic in the very nerve-centre of the CBD. The areas affected by the proposition include the CMS junction from which juts six roads. The area bordered by Kakawa and Campos streets on the West and East includes the inner Marina and Tinubu streets. North is Broad Street which is the terminal area for Odunlami Street.

The area has the largest concentration of offices - government, business and commercial - with the densest ooze of pedestrian and auto traffic, now merged in recent decades with hordes of street traders, sometimes with direct, near-permanent kiosks and other installations on street setbacks which never anticipated such occupations and traffic. The study set out to target pedestrian movement in the area first with the idea of a reversal of the direction of traffic on Tinubu Street and the introduction of a round-about junction to regulate movement of traffic at the CMS junction. A closer observation revealed its impracticability in the face of the pedestrian surge and possible traffic violations which finally gave birth to the idea of an over-head monorail. This would be placed to run the entire length of the inner Marina



● PERSPECTIVE VIEWS

"CONTINUED"





thus conveying pedestrian traffic right into the city centre. The monorail, proposed by A.T. Onajide Architects Limited, would be accessed at designated stops by spiral steps.

Freedom Park 2000

Introduced by Total Consult Limited is an urban park to be located in the very grounds of the colonial time gaol, the Broad Street prisons, long deceased.

The original gaol is said to consist of eight cells bordered by a mud fence. In the year 1885 however the Colonial Authorities upgraded it to a new Lagos prison, built with bricks all shipped over from England and constructed on a budget of sixteen thousand pounds. It is recorded ironically that in the same year the colonial government expended a paltry seven hundred pounds on education for the municipal area.

In the course of the nationalist struggle several Nigerian notabilities passed various terms in the prison including the first labour leader Michael Imoudu, Herbert Macaulay, Adeleke Adedoyin, Adeyemo Alakija and Obafemi Awolowo.

The project named Freedom Park 2000, cashes in on the current national euphoria for democracy. The unit, led by Theo Lawson, plans to exhume the old prisonhouse in a pseudo-archeological exercise.

'We seek to expose the skeletons (metaphorically) buried beneath the ground. We have introduced a museum where once stood the records office, a performance stage where the gallows were, café and kiosks where the kitchen was and the various cell blocks are highlighted in some fashion (if you refer to the design).'

The architects are also of the view that the surviving site already possesses many ingredients for a beautiful park and

that it is well capable of financing itself.

According to the unit master, the rationale for the project hangs on two planks: the emotional and the rational. On the emotional, the Broad Street prison is elected a historical treasure on the same scale as the Elmina Castle in Cape Coast and therefore is deserving of preservation for posterity.

'Too many of our nation's fathers served time for Nigeria as we hold it today and that memory as well as that of the innocent natives entrapped there is what we seek'.

On the rational, Lagos it says, is over-developed and lacks major social infrastructure. The provision of a park is therefore a balm capable of soothing the built surrounding in addition to encouraging social interaction.

Land, Air and Water Transport interchange

A structure envisioned as a landmark monument and a reference point for Lagos in the new century is a transport interchange proposed to facilitate movement of people from land to air, to water and vice versa, possibly also transport workers to their buildings. The space marked to accommodate the facility is the surrounding of the existing ferry terminal on the Marina, over-viewed from the Church of Christ Cathedral.

Led by Sade Hughes, Bayo Odunlami and Dimeji Ajasin with the usual complement of students, this interchange will have other auxiliary functions such as retail shops, restaurants and exhibition halls.

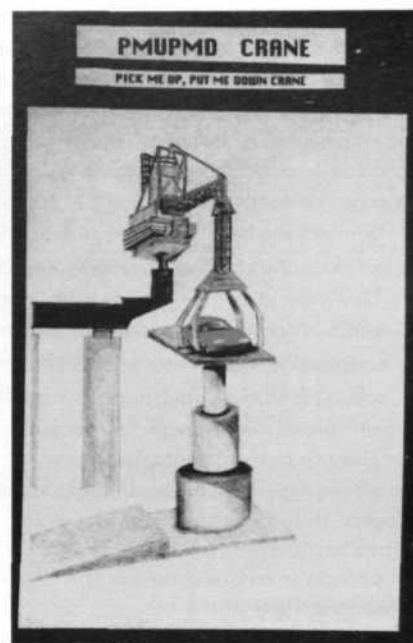
Apongbon Street Bus-stop

Apongbon is noted for its auto and human traffic density, occasioned in the main by the outgrowth of the bus-stop

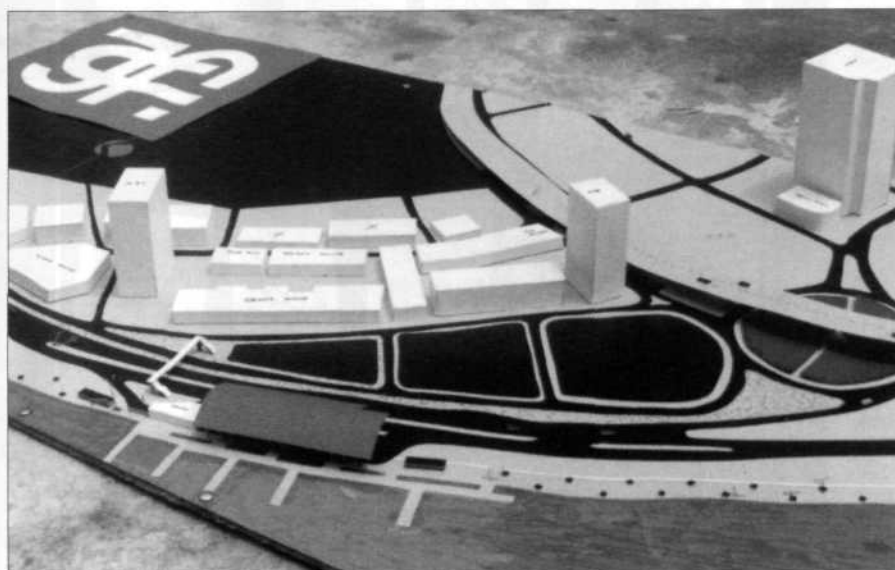


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underneath the descending north end of the Marina flyover which alone ensures the nightmarish traffic environment. It is the architects' intention to effect practical design solutions that would impact immediately on the chosen area of study, and that is the triangular sector bordered by the outer Marina, the lower end of Broad Street and the major roundabout at UTC.

The idea is in essence to relocate the Apongbon bus-stop to the under-utilised Leventis bus-stop located along the Lagos harbour on the outer Marina. According to Alan Davies and Tochukwu Ikeyina,

'The lay-by desperately lends itself to the use of a major bus terminus with potential ferry taxi links along the harbour to the CMS bus-stop. We are proposing a new bus shelter which would serve to

convey thousands of commuters to and from this stop to their various destinations as quickly and efficiently as possible.'

Construction is of steel space frame roof supported on fair faced concrete column on an 8.5m square grid. The landscaping of the UTC roundabout which is recognisable by its firm statue of an Isale-eko mother and her two infants is to be significantly affected. A sloped soft landscaping would be combined on one side of the flyover columns and gridded cobbled paving on the other around the statue which would be elevated.

Ecological park and a landscaped Marina

A succession of three separate, and at some length, conceptually different, designs tackle the problem of deforestation at the inner and outer Marina, affecting southwards Apongbon and northwards the Race Course.

Femi Williams and Tayo Babalakin make parking and pedestrianisation their targets. They are especially concerned that the amount of heat and glare generated in their area of study - Broad Street, from Tinubu to Apongbon - is extremely high and this moreso when there is little or no greenery available in the affected parts. They therefore intend to plant trees at strategic points to provide for shade and reduce glare in the surrounding just as a green belt and ecological park are conceived for the Marina in the work of the unit led by Remi Ajose-Adeogun.

The green belt inspired by the memorable parks of some of the world's cities would run through between outer and inner Marina. It also provides for other utilities including a canopy top metro flypass, parking below canopy, park for relaxation and commercial activities as well as a bus depot at the periphery.

Similarly the Fatima Lawanson led unit plans to transform the very Marina waterfront. She says 'Our Marina is the worst Marina in the world in terms of landscaping and having a waterside vista. I am interested in softening and beautifying the waterfront with plants and spaces for people'.

The transformation of the shoreline, which runs from the CMS cathedral fronts to the Race Course, into a vegetal delight would allow Lagosians to enjoy the waterfronts once again in addition to cleaning the air and oxygen into the atmosphere of the business district following the wilful destruction of the natural Marina.

The Marina Flyover

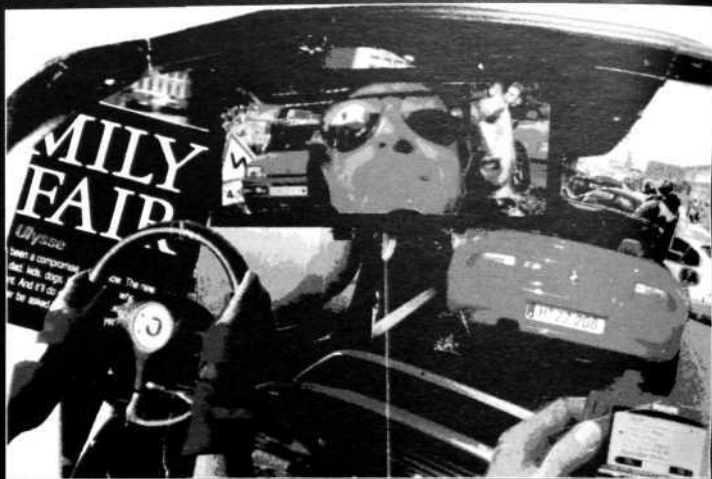
Still on the Marina. The unit overseen and led by Koku Konu turns its attention to the outer Marina flyover, the concrete bulwark which alone is the recipient of the business-hour traffic formed largely by vehicles returning from the inner arteries of Victoria Island and Ikoyi.

This is the lone project that provides individuals with credit for their contributions to the work, particularly the student volunteers, probably also because it is the unit with so many sub-divisions.

A drivers' information billboard, rigged somewhere on the flyover, is for example credited to Bola Agunbiade, while a mobile crane relying on new fangled technologies is the initiation of Yemi Okuwobi.

A flyover sculpture forbearing some of the weight of the bridge underneath has among the other objective of adding a human dimension to the normal functional columns, and this is the vision of Chioma Nwaka. Others are a transitory open WC by Frank Amenechi which provides a viable utility catering for, a traveller by Bukky Akinsanmi and a container by Tuoyo Jemiregbe set to reorder the existing chaos and is intended for the same design precincts as Nwaka's flyover sculpture.

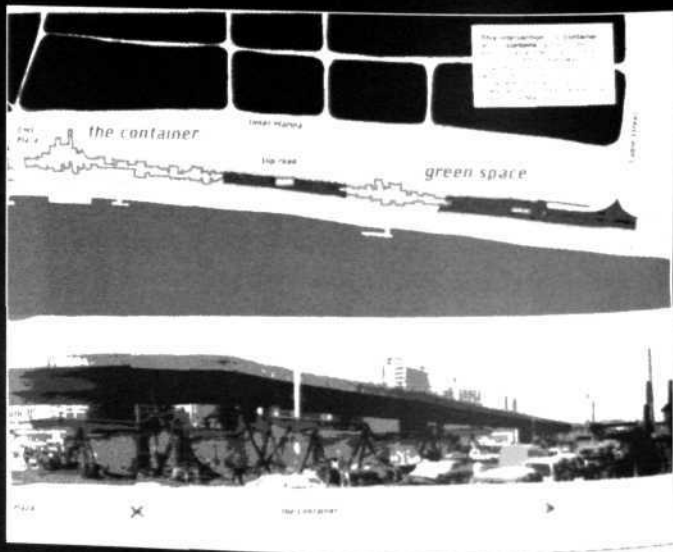
Of the overall experience, Konu says, 'it is difficult to know if what we did was 'right' or 'wrong', however, we do know that if we have to do it again, we'll do it the same way and with the same crew'.



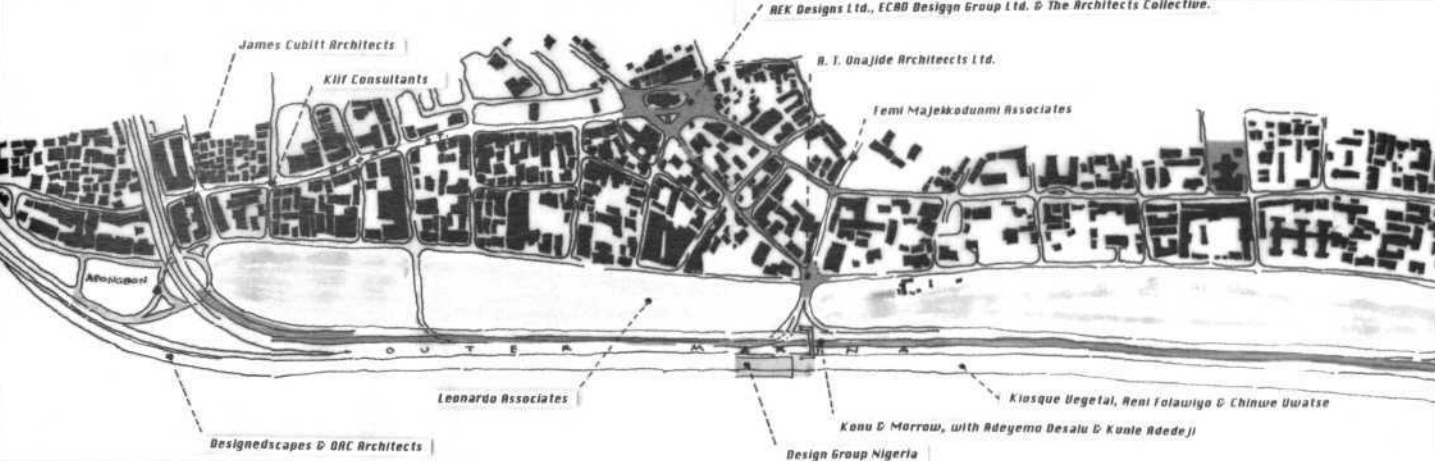
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A Twenty- four Hour City Zone

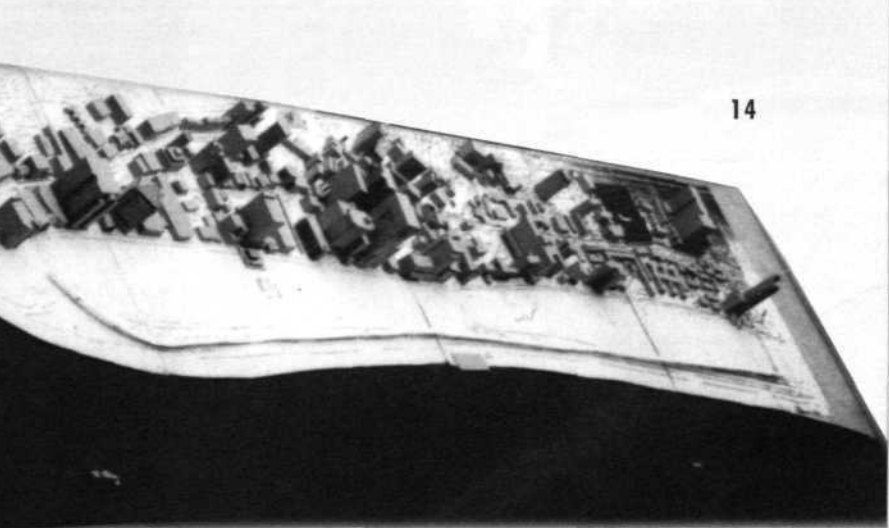
A collaborative work involving three whole firms culminates in the design proposal which studies the city strip running from CMS to Tinubu Square. This area is among the centres of pedestrian activity of the CBD made impassable purely because, of the contestation between street traders and auto and also between pedestrians particularly during business hours.

Street trading is what elevate this arena to the chaotic over and above other areas already marked for study and intervention. Wole Sanyaolu, Ade Laoye and Dokun Oyenuga who lead this unit admit that 'we

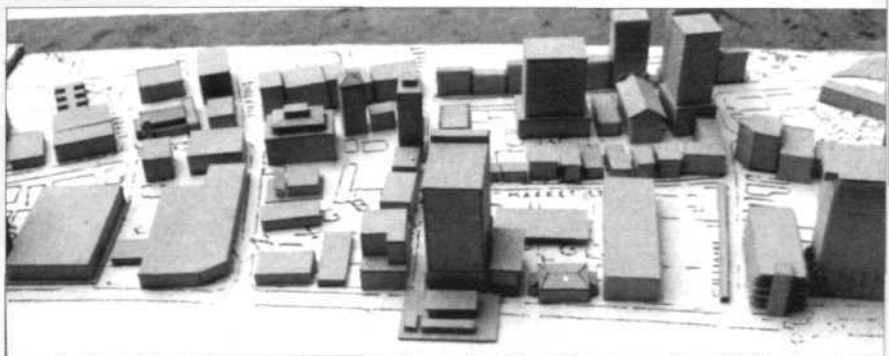
are a nation of traders', so that accommodation is sought for this national characteristic instead of denying it or aiming to someday stump it out in the said zone and others like it.

'We are a nation of traders. How can this be a point of connectivity within the various parts of the city? How can this enhance and enrich our urban fabric? Is our retail shopping well articulated within the city?'

From the point of view of the designers the process leading to the end product must be inclusive and closely matched to the needs and aspirations of end users. To a large extent this is a work in progress, a model still in function, since the layout deliberately excludes detailed specifications. And the



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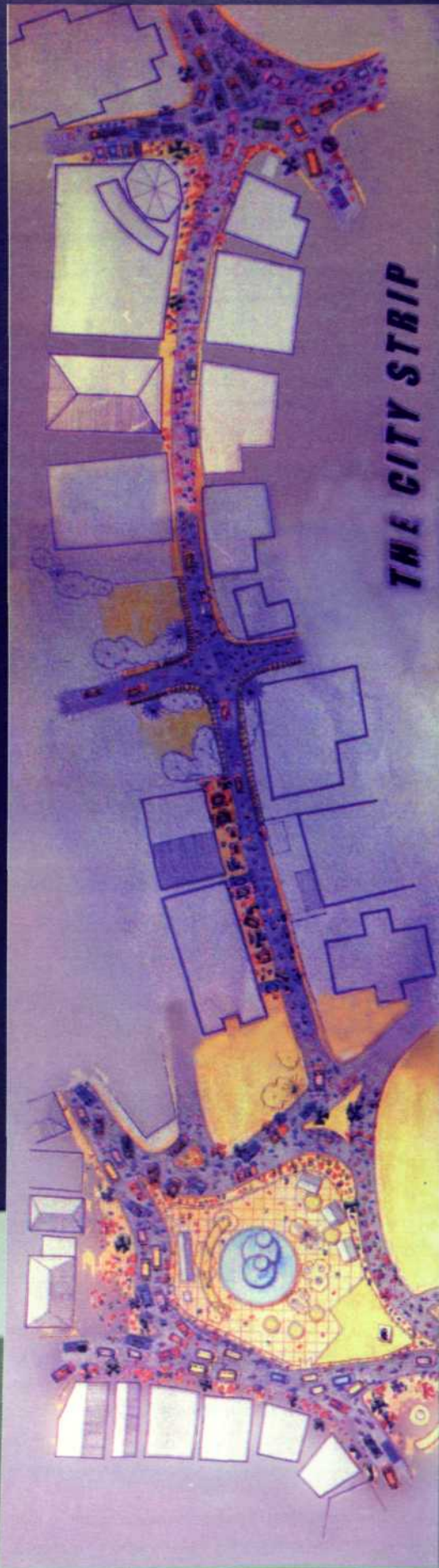
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reason is no doubt because they intend to examine ways of including community participation in the function of the brief, and possibly in the execution of the programme.

There are rational bases for adopting this strategy. First is the fact that, 'sense and order can be amounts of money being spent'. More than this, they are fully convinced that good planning and design can always 'initiate, add value and aid economic process within the city'.

The Matter of Cash

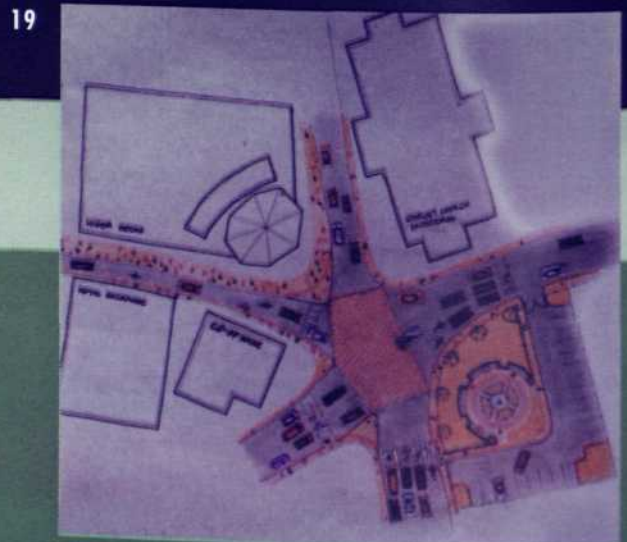
There has been an attempt to harmonise the entire plan and firstly, design a programme for actualisation, in phases.



THE CITY STRIP



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This helps to view the variegated units as members belonging to one whole, suggesting a well-articulated and continuous stream of thought. The entire CIA century project grossing a sum of four hundred and thirty-two and half million naira (four million, three hundred and twenty-five thousand US dollars) can be effected in three phases over a period of a year and six months. The first covering four months includes a Lagos Island clean-up exercise by private contractors, pavement refurbishment and street architecture (dustbins, streetlights, benches, pavements), street signs and road markings and the Marina waterfront planting, cleaning and car parks. This phase envisages a budget of only eleven and a half million naira (one hundred and fifteen thousand dollars). The second proposed for between January and June 2000 involves a long-term solution for refuse collection and identification of permanent dump sites. Includes also are traffic solutions extracted from the unit designs with the relevant propositions; there would be trading only roads, one-way routes and bus routes through the inner recesses of the CBD. The reminders of work on the Marina water fronts and other proposed small structures would additionally receive the requisite focus. And the budget is placed at one hundred and thirty-five and a half million naira (one million, three hundred and fifty-five thousand US dollars).

The third work phase for between July and December 2000 include the Freedom park, relocation of the CMS bus-stop, review of the Apongbon bus-stop and the erection of the land, air and sea terminal at an overall sum of two hundred and eighty-five and half million naira or two million, eight hundred and fifty-five thousand US dollars.GR