

Practices of Care: Celebrating overlooked people and place

In 2022, Glasgow City Council became the first city in the UK to adopt a feminist city framework, embedding feminist principles into policy-making and public services. This motion aims to address gender inequalities, amplify women's voices, and challenge traditional governance structures, emphasising inclusivity, social justice, and gender equity ensuring that the experiences of women, gender minorities, and marginalised groups shape urban planning and policy reform.

Our practice began as three women, alert to the gender inequalities that exist in the field of architecture. Our reading began with Rebecca Solnets 'Men, Explain things to me' and from there, has taken us on a journey to explore and celebrate those voices and places that are overlooked or hidden, underpinned with the writings of Leslie Kern and her book 'The Feminist City' as well as 'Making Space: Women and the Man made environment' by MATRIX.

Our first collaborative event was with a group of Stage 4 architecture students, in the Doublet ladies lounge. A washing line of confessions opened up discussion around shared experience of inequality, sexism and discrimination in the workplace, studio and construction sites. The bar was packed full and conversations opened up to voice experiences that had been concealed or considered the norm, as a women in the field of architecture. This informal, supportive gathering together and pegging up of the written 'confessions' offered a platform to those often overlooked.

Archifringe offered Missing in Architecture another opportunity through the festival of common/ Senses and a project titled Frankentypes. Missing in Architecture collaborated with students, to produce the Institute of the Every Day. An, interactive, accessible model of architectural elements offering discourse through the 'playing' with the elements to allow every user to construct an Institute of the Everyday in may different forms and recognising that protected characteristics are not just for the few, but for everyone.

The Equal Architect symposium was held in 2019 and brought a range of voices together within the Glasgow Arts Club on Bath St. The themes of education, practice, equality, process and the future were presented and discussed by a range of contributors and helped Missing in Architecture establish themselves with a network or collaborators, from which 4 lecture series have been organised and which promoted those voices not often heard from.

The methodology of engagement through activity has always been our key interest and why we all enjoy and value our teaching practice. In collaboration with the charity Glasshouse, we have been refining a co design methodology in which students, staff and the wider community are brought together to discuss, brainstorm and make 3dimensional mind maps in response to a provocation. Most recently, this provocation has been in response to redefining Glasgow as a feminist city. Using the feminist methodology of participatory design, the event, held on International womens day, brought forth a series of responses to the feminist city in relation to practice, community, ecology and education.

Using coloured pipe cleaners, tissue paper and plastecine, the activity was inclusive of all and allowed voices to be heard, whilst thinking through making. Speculations of how architecture can

enable the activation of space and the value of the process and speculation is something inherent in Cedric Price's work.

These co design events were all delivered in the abstract allowing guests to put forward provocative responses to questions.

Most recently MiA have had the privilege to work with Glasgow Urban Sports on a live project proposal under the M74 canopy on the southside of Glasgow.

The M74 highlights the vacuum that exists between the city centre and the southside of Glasgow. The walk itself takes approximately 30 minutes from Central Station to the bottom of Victoria Road, but the lack of investment and infrastructure makes it a desolate and unforgiving route. Similar to Price this emptiness and lack of function can be seen as an opportunity.

In 2012 skateboarder Neil Davidson dreamt up the idea of using the 'lost space' under the newly constructed M74 extension as a skate park, using the M74 as a canopy, the park could become a rare undercover, outdoor community space.

Since 2014, the project has been led by Scottish artists and skateboarders Toby Parterson and Raydale Dower through the formation of Glasgow Urban Sports charity. John Bailey director of the successful indoor skate park in Glasgow the Loading Bay has been involved since 2020.

As you can see from these early proposals from 2020, the space designed focuses on skateboarding and has not been inclusively designed with diversity of user in mind.

I was brought on in 2021 to bring a feminist perspective and have been chair of GUS since then.

Through this connection MiA has been able to use our research and feminist methodologies of engagement to open up the discussions around design which has supported a much richer and diverse response.

In the first instance we ran a co-design workshop as part of Archifringe 2023, based in Raydale's studio. The event itself attracted over 50 participants from the skating and art community plus local residents and architects. The conversations were rich and the outputs varied and imaginative.

Through this co design event a number of key elements were established around the reuse of materials wherever possible and the development of green space, again drawing links with Price's interests.

GUS took on board this feedback and through discussions with Glasgow City Council and we aim to use reclaimed granite sourced from surplus stock in the city. GUS has an in principal agreement with the council to use this, effectively an in-kind contribution towards the project. Also contributing to the city's net zero policy.

We have also been working with Rachel Bailey Landscape Gardeners who attended the co design event and have commissioned Erz landscape architects to develop a more inclusive and green proposal.

We ran another session in the Tramway recently supporting the launch of the skate spot at the Riverside Museum. Both events were successful in engaging with the public and supporting ongoing discussion and community involvement with the project.

GUS are due to submit a planning application for this 8000 square metre area of disused land under the motorway flyover before Christmas. The proposal developed by Erz proposes a new public, free to use, urban sculpture park and active leisure space.

It aims to improve the connectivity between the city and the surrounding neighbourhoods of Gorbals, Govanhill and Pollokshields. The use of this urban 'lost space' will enhance the immediate surroundings. The park offers a pause point on the journey between the city and queens park as well as a destination for playful activities.

The park proposes an inclusive multi-use outdoor public space designed by an artist-led partnership to support active leisure for all ages.

Creative landscape design of sculptural terraces, set within a strong green framework offsets the impact of the M74 motorway.

Clear sightlines and lighting throughout Devon Street will ensure the different zones are visible encouraging passive surveillance.

The park offers a range of spaces, both active and reflective – including seating, meeting spaces, viewpoints, quiet areas and 'sittable edges'.

There is also the intention to develop a pavilion building and GUS are in discussions with Stallan Brand around this. This building is designed to support the space and provide services making it inclusive and accessible for all whilst being a playful, sculptural structure.

The project is being supported by the Susanne Marcus Collins Foundation who have confirmed an offer of £1.2 million towards project delivery. GUS are working to secure additional match funding from Glasgow City Council, Scottish Government and other areas like Sport Scotland, with the ambition to have this available for the Commonwealth Games in 2026.

The connections between the Potteries Thinkbelt and the industrial landscape of the M74 are clear and the proposals for this Sculptural Urban Park promote an inclusive, vibrant rethinking of this lost space.