

AgoraPHILIA:
A Place for Assembly in Square Viger, Montreal

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ABSTRACT

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Lindsay Ann Cory

Square Viger was designed as an opulent and lush Victorian park in the mid-nineteenth century for the use of nearby wealthy residents. The park had trees lining promenades, benches, fountains, and a glass greenhouse. Over time, the influx of industry brought more working class citizens to the Ville-Marie borough and pushed the bourgeoisie to other areas in the early twentieth century. Historians of Montreal's built environment mark this change in demographic as the decline of the park. Since then the park has undergone drastic redevelopment due to changes in transportation infrastructure. Sculptor Charles Daudelin (1920-2001) redesigned the site and built the *Agora* in 1983, but his designs were met with animosity from the media and the public the site was intended for.

Using archival research, interviews with artists, and site analysis, this thesis investigates the *Agora's* appropriation by homeless groups and individuals and the artistic interventions the site has also incurred. Square Viger is a telling example of Montreal's push for modernization but is also an indication of the large-scale redevelopment projects that have taken place on the island. In March 2012, Square Viger has been defined as a threatened emblematic site by Heritage Montreal and its redevelopment looms in the very near future. With this redevelopment, I believe the social-cultural and design heritage of the site and the *Agora* will be forgotten. With this research, I present a methodologically inclusive investigation into this fraught public space and its values as a space for appropriation, community, and artistic practice.

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DEDICATION

To my Grandma for her endless love.

And to those without a fixed address in Montreal and around the world.
This thesis is a friendly nod to you, and yours.

It seems fitting to begin the way
every good thing has begun in my life:

*May the best you've ever seen
Be the worst you'll ever see;
May the mouse ne'er leave your pantry
Wi' a tear drap in its e'e;
May your lum keep blithely reekin'
Till ye're auld enough to dee;
And may you aye be just as happy
As I wish you now to be*

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INTRODUCTION

Square Viger in Montreal, Quebec is delineated by Rue Saint-Denis, Avenue Viger, Rue Berri and Rue Saint-Antoine, and it is the western-most in a set of three distinct public parks all redesigned in the wake of World War II, the International Expo of 1967, and the construction of the Ville-Marie expressway tunnel in the 1970s (fig. 1). Charles Daudelin, Claude Théberge, and Peter Gnass designed these three sites as well as the sculptural elements within them, from west to east, respectively. In 1984 Square Viger was re-imagined by the late Charles Daudelin (1920-2001) as a place for assembly, an agora (fig. 2), which he aptly titled *Agora*. Charles Daudelin designed the sculptural environment in a (then) gutted and flattened construction zone. The municipal planning committee directed the artist to design a traditional auditorium style agora for “lot A,”¹ however, Daudelin took liberty with the plans and produced a monumental sculptural environment instead.² The sculpture is formally influenced by Brutalist architecture popular in the 1950s-1970s and the ideals of modernism, which Daudelin had observed in his previous works. Made of concrete, the sculpture consists of terraces and a series of pergolas that provide shelter underneath, creating spaces for communal activities and a promenade of trees on the north and east sides of the lot. Daudelin’s design, which has been criticized in the media for being lifeless and heavy,³ also met critique from the

¹ The lots are defined in the planning documents/objects in the Ville de Montreal archives and the Musée Nationale des Beaux-Arts du Québec archives like maquettes, budgets, and meeting minutes in succession from west to east as lot A, lot B, and lot C.

² While Daudelin’s *Agora* is a piece of public art, this thesis will make reference to its architectural qualities as well. The work, however, was not made as a piece of architecture, but as a sculpture with distinct architectural elements, ie: roof, columns, stairs, terraces.

³ Patrick Lejtenyi “Viger Square Transformed” *Montreal Mirror* 20.10 Aug. 26-Sept. 2004, n.pag. WEB. Accessed 28 Feb 2012. In this article, Lejtenyi explains the potential redevelopment for the “ugly concrete

“public” it originally planned to serve: the middle class. The park, however, found a different purpose for homeless individuals who have appropriated the site by dwelling beneath the pergolas and erecting homes affixed to the concrete sculptures using tents and other found objects (fig. 3). The “freedom” of the homeless is quite constrained and their agency as members of the public not acknowledged or encouraged within socio-economic relations, but rather placed on the margins of the public sphere (or even not included at all). While Daudelin did not design the *Agora* for the use of the homeless, nevertheless, they have found a structure that mimics a shelter. This site has afforded a symbolic ownership of the site, offering a roof, the ability to see who is coming, but with no containing or stifling walls that might hearken memories of broken and violent homes.

Urban squares and parks consistently use sculpture, as well as other public art media, to effect change in the way people engage with these urban spaces. In Montreal more specifically, the major avant-garde movement in art was predominantly painting,⁴ and it was not until the early 1960s that “sculpture emerged as an autonomous field...[and] became the predominant medium of artistic expression, partly due to the influence of Expo 67.”⁵ Heritage monuments and statues, modern sculpture, and

park.” This redevelopment never came to fruition. He also explains the kind of dwelling taking place in the park in 2002, “the city experimented with turning a blind eye to the burgeoning population of street kids – many of them heroin addicts – staying overnight, complete with a collection of old sofas and sleeping bags.”

⁴ Les Automatistes were a group of painters from Montreal, Quebec. The artistic movement was founded in the early 1940s by painter, Paul-Émile Borduas and became known as the artistic style of the region and a “reawakening” for Montreal. The movement, strongly influenced by Surrealism, adopted ‘automatic writing’ and later Automatism and Tachism. “Its aesthetic is found in the significant meaning of the medium itself: the infinite variety of surfaces, the light or heavy application of paint, the swirls of the brush or palette knife, and the accidentals of colour.” See J. Russell Harper, “Reawakening in Montreal” in *Painting in Canada: A History Second Edition* (Toronto ON: University of Toronto Press, 1977 [original: 1966]) 330-344. PRINT.

⁵ Margaret Boyce, “Visual Art/Public Art and Urban Development: A Case Study of Montreal 1967-1992” (PhD Diss., McGill University, Montreal, 2002) 226. PRINT. Boyce explains that sculpture was a clear

utilitarian sculpture, like that in Square Viger, which invites direct use from those in a space are all examples of the types of art being placed in public space. The form sculptures have taken in public space, along with their meaning to the users of the site are both concerns that are addressed in this thesis as the intersection between public art, public space, and the public is critical to understanding a place like Square Viger. Some art and cultural theorists who have dealt with this contention of public space and art, namely Rosalyn Deutsche, Miwon Kwon, and Iain Borden, motivate my research joined with theorists who are essentially preoccupied with the spatial context of the urban, namely Fran Tonkiss and Dolores Hayden.

The “public” is a term used often in the urban discourse to convey a notion of a mass collective body that has access to public amenities and services. In reality, however, the public is mistaken by the public themselves as a cohesive body rather than a multifaceted reflection of the varying demographics and cultures present in urban areas. As Fran Tonkiss suggests, “city life is characterized by anonymity, instrumentality and atomization, because cities are – as social as well as physical forms – large, dense and diverse. People learn to keep their social distance, even in the press of the crowd.”⁶ Moreover, she continues to beg the question of how “local social spaces within the modern city”⁷ can be a vehicle for community. Class, gender, income, body type, education, ethnicity, sexual preference, ability or disability, religion, political views, and age are all factors that can affect one’s interpretation of a public space or artwork. They

highlight, due mainly to the “Génie Createur” open-air exhibition, which was devoted to showcasing modern and contemporary sculpture from around the world.

⁶ Fran Tonkiss, *Space, the City and Social Theory: Social Relations and Urban Forms* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2005) 14. PRINT.

⁷ Ibid., 14.

can also affect one's limitations and boundaries in the city, their ability to make use of services, and their access to public spaces. One finds communities within these local arenas, close-knit groups who share similar qualities like class or kinship and occupy urban spaces in ways that sometimes subvert their intended use. As Deutsche explains, public art can be an instrument for defining public space and how users will use it.⁸

It is simply impossible to please every perspective when selecting art for public places and design-inclusive spaces, while attempted, are not fully achieved.⁹ As Dolores Hayden writes, "Private nonprofit institutions (such as museums and preservation groups), as well as public agencies (city landmarks commissions and arts councils), are challenged daily to become accountable to the diverse urban public."¹⁰ And so, urban planners aim to appeal to the "general public" when attempting to please with redevelopment strategies. In doing so, those outside the "typical urban dweller" category are forgotten, and therefore public squares, parks, and spaces are rarely produced with their needs in mind. It can be seen however, within the interstices of these sites, the ways in which marginalized groups have infiltrated these spaces and appropriated public sites to suit their needs in the city. This is what has happened in Square Viger. The homeless have clung to the site for approximately twenty years as of this writing, appropriating Daudelin's sculpture for themselves; because of this, artists have also chosen to occupy the space with their work.

⁸ Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge Mass: The MIT Press, 1996) 288. PRINT.

⁹ For example, one forerunner in inclusive architectural design is the London based firm of muf who have established a reputation for inclusive design. On their website, they express an interest in "creating spaces that have an equivalence of experience for all who navigate them both physically and conceptually... that inspire a sense of ownership through occupation." See "Profile" *muf Architecture/Art* (muf architectural firm) (2010) WEB. Accessed 1 Mar 2012.

¹⁰ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge Mass: The MIT Press, 1995) 7. PRINT.

In the media, there is a rhetoric of failure surrounding the site of Square Viger. In the 1994 *La Presse* article “L’Agora” Nathalie Petrowski discusses the depressed, decrepit life she envisions those who live in Square Viger having and avoids the site completely.¹¹ Alan Hutsak writes in a 1995 *Montreal Gazette* article titled “Jewels around a concrete jungle” of a guided tour of “the real pleasures of the square [that] aren’t in the parks themselves but hidden in their perimeters.”¹² Sébastien Rodrigue describes the “inquiétante”¹³ environment of Square Viger in a 2005 *La Presse* article. The *Montreal Mirror* published an article at this time by Patrick Lejtenyi, which explains, “thanks to an urban development scheme that will replace an eyesore with a greener, more welcoming alternative. Viger Square... is officially on the city’s hit list.”¹⁴ He goes on to state,

...the Ville-Marie borough brain trust approved plans to demolish the self-enclosed, little-used park – which Viger Square technically is, even though it has the feel of a prison yard – and replace it with what people normally associate with parks: seven-million dollars’ worth of trees, grass, pathways and open borders.¹⁵

The square did not appeal to the arts community either. In a 1984 article in *Parachute*, for example, Louis Martin suggested the square was a poor use of space, being thoughtlessly designed and executed.¹⁶ First designated as a threatened emblematic site by Heritage Montreal in 2009,¹⁷ Square Viger’s future is quite undecided. In a weblog by Kate McDonnell about Montreal, an anonymous comment reads, “it is a crap brutalist public

¹¹ Petrowsky.

¹² Hutsak.

¹³ Sébastien Rodrigue, “Sculptures Mal en Pointe” *La Presse* (14 Nov 2005) n.pag. PRINT.

¹⁴ Lejtenyi.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Louis Martin “Charles Daudelin, Peter Gnass, Claude Théberge,” *Parachutes* 36 (sept – oct – nov, 1984) 53-54

¹⁷ “Viger Square.” *Heritage Montreal: 2009 Threatened Emblematic Sites*. Patrick Turmel and Stéphan Franic. n.d. WEB. Accessed 20 Feb 2012.

space that was never appreciated by anyone.”¹⁸ In 2012, *The Gazette* published an article by Marian Scott that lamented the potential erasure of famous architectural sites like Square Viger. Scott explains that people love to hate the Square even though showcases evidence of Montreal’s modernist history.¹⁹ Other descriptions of the site dwell upon the discarded condoms, drug paraphernalia, the debauchery and lack of supervision and safe public access, which all became the symbols of the square.²⁰ Exclusionary and ultimately negative statements like these leave little room for non-normative appropriation and forms of agency in the space. They also provide justification for relocating working class, ethnic minorities, and homeless people, a trend seen in redevelopment and modernization strategies throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Clearly there is an urgency to the research that has led to this thesis. While potential redevelopments planned in 2005 were superseded by Heritage Montreal’s labeling of Square Viger as an emblematic site in 2009, at the time of this writing, Square Viger’s future is threatened once again. While the homeless had occupied the site of Square Viger since the 1980s, in the summer of 2011 they were removed from the Square due to the adjacent construction of the Centre hospitalier de l’Université de Montréal (CHUM). On February 24, 2012 Heritage Montreal released their 2012 list of threatened emblematic sites on which Square Viger holds a prominent place. The Square has been yet again placed at the top of the City of Montreal’s hit list as major plans for

¹⁸ Kate McDonnell, “Viger Square may be remodeled again” *Montreal City Weblog*. (n.p) (Comment posted by “Poutine Pundit” on 25 Feb 2012) WEB. Accessed 28 Feb 2012.

¹⁹ Marian Scott, “Is this the end of an architectural era?” *The Gazette*, Feb. 24, 2012, n.pag. WEB. Accessed 28 Feb 2012.

²⁰ Petrowski.

redeveloping the site and area are in the near future.²¹ Heritage Montreal states on their website:

The lack of real activity in the sector makes it a poorly frequented area, associated with marginality and urban violence, two factors that now serve as a pretext justifying the indifference of the government and its desire to demolish it all without seeking to understand the significance of this site which ... offers great potential, since its trees have grown and new generations of artists and residents are discovering its possibilities. Agora is now threatened with demolition because of faults unfairly attributed to it.²²

It was in the 1980s that homelessness became a significant issue within developed countries. The University of Toronto Cities Centre drafted a collective publication on homelessness and policy in Canada in 2009 entitled *Finding Home*. It explains that “homelessness” has become “an odd-job word, pressed into service to impose order on a hodgepodge of social dislocation, extreme poverty, seasonal or itinerant work, and unconventional ways of life.”²³ Often nomadic, these groups occupy space in the city for

²¹ Davide Gentile, “Montréal s'apprêterait à raser une portion du square Viger” *CBC Radio Canada* (24 Feb. 2012) n.pag. WEB. Accessed 28 Feb 2012.

“Plusieurs fonctionnaires et politiciens de la Ville de Montréal pensent que la conception du square, qui est cerné par des clôtures, est un échec.”

“Many officials and politicians of the City of Montreal believe that the design of the square, which is surrounded by fences, is a failure.” (trans. Lindsay Ann Cory)

In the process of planning the redevelopment, the Daudelin family has been approached with a proposition: to save the fountain and give approval to destroy the *Agora*. The Daudelin family has not made any official press statements as of this writing.

²² “Viger Square.” *Heritage Montreal: 2012 Threatened Emblematic Sites*. Patrick Turmel and Stéphan Franc. n.d. WEB. Accessed 29 Feb 2012.

²³ University of Toronto Cities Centre, *Finding Home: policy options for addressing homelessness in Canada*. Ed. J. David Hulchanski et al. (Toronto, ON: Cities Centre Press, 2009) 1. WEB. Accessed 2, Jan. 2012. For developed countries like Canada, homelessness came into the lexicon of most citizens in the 1980s and 1990s during the “dehousing” process of redevelopment in the late twentieth century. It came to have an overarching meaning of poverty that includes *houselessness* but also many other complex features. In 1987, a document entitled the “Canadian Agenda for Action on Housing and Homelessness through the Year 2000” acknowledged the failure of the Canadian federal government to take action on the housing crisis, which would continue to last until the present day. This housing crisis plays an eminent role in the redevelopment process, however it does not often become the product of redevelopment. In large cities such as Montreal, new condominiums are erected every day and these social and public housing units often do not see the same architectural or economic treatment.

various reasons and their presence there is often frowned upon.²⁴ Homeless advocates like Pierre Gaudreau explain that with any redevelopment of urban space, “there is a desire to make it a somewhat exclusive kind of place”²⁵ and not in favour of the itinerant users so linked to the last thirty years of the site’s history. In what follows, one major research question will be explored: how can an inclusive study Square Viger, and its design and social history, acknowledge the alternative uses of the site and offer another perspective into its potential. Moreover, in light of the impending loss of this site, it is my hope that this thesis will be a reminder of the importance of this site in Montreal’s architectural and social history. At its core, the *Agora* was meant to be a place for gathering and while the homeless community were not Daudelin’s intended occupants, their presence in the Square should be included in the overall history of the site and its future.

METHODOLOGY

My research on the site has been situated within the square itself. This has provided me with a chance to integrate my own “partial perspective,” to use a term of Donna Haraway’s, into my study of Square Viger. The “situated knowledge” I have gathered from mapping the site and from speaking with people who know it well, has allowed for a feminist objectivity that Haraway has called for in research practices.²⁶ *Finding Home:*

²⁴ While it is extremely difficult to calculate the precise number of homeless people in a city, on one day in March 2001 (according to the 2001 Canadian census) the occupancy rates in Quebec for shelters (meaning homeless shelters, halfway houses and emergency lodgings for abused spouses and their children) were reported at 3365 occupants. See “Homeless Statistics” *Homeless.org*, Accessed 29 Feb. 2012. WEB.

²⁵ Lejtenyi interviews Gaudreau in his article for the *Montreal Mirror*. Gaudreau was the coordinator of the Réseau d’aide aux peronnes seules et itinérantes de Montreal (RAPISM).

²⁶ Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective” *Feminist Studies*, 14.3 (Autumn, 1988) 575-599. PRINT. Most recently published in *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual & Political Controversies*, Ed. Sandra Harding (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004) 81-101. PRINT. Haraway describes the priviledge of “partial perspective” as a

Policy Options for Addressing Homelessness in Canada (2009) explains that “when conducting research, it is important not to make quick assumptions about the lives and pathways into homelessness of the many different individuals who find themselves dehousing.”²⁷ This idea is echoed by Anna Shea and Suzanne Morton who coauthored an essay in *Negotiating Identities in 19th-and 20th-century Montreal* (2005), stating that over the past two hundred years the homeless “were poorly served by their contemporaries, [and] they have not been much better treated by historians. Their plight is easy to overlook, as their marginal lives left little imprint in the archives and the public record.”²⁸ I aim to acknowledge the agency of the Square’s artistic users like DARE-DARE, Les Villes-Laines as well as the homeless occupants.²⁹ In addition, I have consulted multiple archives, media sources, and secondary sources about the Square to inform my thoughts and to also help present my own personal site analysis and observations.

Very little scholarship has addressed this particular site and the few texts that do, do not mention it in its contemporary state. Marc Choko and Jean-Claude Marsan, both

replacement of an authoritative perspective on science, acknowledging the wide range of narratives to be told in research. She juxtaposes postmodern technological advances with the historical and previously supposed disembodied eye, stating that “vision in this technological feast becomes unregulated gluttony; all perspectives give way to infinitely mobile vision.” Haraway suggests “situated knowledge” and recommends a rebuke of the normative distance between subjects and objects stressing that “the standpoint of the subjugated are not ‘innocent’ positions. On the contrary, they are preferred because in principle they are least likely to allow denial of the critical and interpretative core of all knowledge.”

²⁷ J. David Hulchanski, et al. *Finding Home: Policy Options for Addressing Homelessness in Canada* (Toronto, Ont: Cities Centre Press, 2009) 11-12. PRINT.

²⁸ Anna Shea and Suzanne Morton, “Keeping men Out of ‘Public or Semi-Public’ Places: The Montreal Day Shelter for Unemployed Men, 1931-34” *Negotiating Identities in 19th and 20th Century Montreal* eds. Bettina Bradbury and Tamera Myers (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2005) 80. PRINT

²⁹ As of this writing, I have been unsuccessful at my attempts to interview homeless individuals about their interpretation and appropriation of Square Viger. While I have had numerous discussions, the threat of being included in an official public document remains a resounding concern for my homeless acquaintances. This could partially explain why the opinions of the homeless have been excluded from the overall history of this public site. However, in my undocumented conversations with inhabitants of Square Viger, it has been clear that the users feel that the site is tailor-made for their needs.

historians of Montreal's built environment, describe the site in their respective books as a once-beautiful yet now failed public place. Choko's book, *Public Squares in Montreal* (1990),³⁰ and Marsan's, *Montreal in Evolution* (1990 [originally published in 1974])³¹ end their analysis of the square just at the point when Daudelin's sculptural environment is designed. I will examine their opinions about the site more in this thesis, however my research focus lies in the lacunae these seminal texts present. Even though Marsan and Choko's books were written and printed some ten years after Daudelin's intervention into the site, neither of the authors present a post-1983 reflection on the site and its uses. Yet Square Viger is one of Montreal's largest public spaces and also an important example of Montreal's modern art history.

The only published literature reflecting the site in its contemporary state is a doctoral dissertation by Margaret Boyce of the McGill University School of Urban Planning, titled "Visual Art/Public Art and Urban Development: A Case Study of Montreal (1967-1992)." Much of her thesis outlines the political and artistic climate in which two Montreal case studies take place: the CCA sculpture garden by Melvin Charney, and three sections of Square Viger by Daudelin, Théberge, and Gnass.³² Boyce takes a sociological approach to the study of art and how it relates to the creation of

³⁰ Marc H. Choko, *The Major Squares of Montreal*, trans. Kate Roth (Montreal: Meridian Press, 1990) 112-116. PRINT. Marc H. Choko's book describes the historical importance of large public spaces to the development of Montreal and their role in shaping its socio-economic landscape.

³¹ Jean-Claude Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution* (Montreal, Que: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990 [original 1974]) 134. PRINT. Jean-Claude Marsan's book aims to describe the architectural and environmental development that took place in Montreal from the first fort of Ville-Marie to the Olympic installations of the 1970s. The reprinting of the book in 1990, however, includes an epilogue written especially for this edition, which considers the projects of the 1970s and later as well as the future of the city.

³² While Boyce does look at all three sections of Square Viger, she pays particular attention to Daudelin's *Agora*. This reflects the opinions of many media sources that use this section as the poster child for the failed site.

public art within the city. What Boyce fails to do in her analysis is acknowledge the social relations that do exist within these spaces. She writes, “The very definition of what constitutes a work of art seems to favour some art forms over others.”³³ Perhaps this idea can be extrapolated into a larger discussion about public art and space and how it is, and can be, used.

Fran Tonkiss is an important theorist within this discussion. Her book, titled *Space, the City and Social Theory: Social Relations and Urban Forms* (2005) investigates the interstitial social relations within the urban environment. Tonkiss opens her text by discussing how social processes are shaped by the spaces in which they take place, and through this guise she explores the agency that the seemingly static built environment can have on those that move within it. The location of Square Viger, geographically and socially, has played a crucial role in attracting the homeless to the site as well as making it attractive to artists, who have chosen it for their interventions. Moreover, Tonkiss provides insight into how and why Square Viger has been so stigmatized in the media.

Tonkiss asks:

How is it that cities, or parts of the city, come to be understood as a ‘problem’? ... There are other problems...which may be seen as the product of urban processes: that is, problems of the city. Most notable here are the ways in which cycles of economic and spatial change make certain spaces and certain people redundant.³⁴

To lift these “certain people” from possible social/political irrelevancy, it is essential to present a socially inclusive history of the site that acknowledges their use of space, however “publicly” contested it may be.

³³ Boyce 987.

³⁴ Tonkiss 46.

While this particular site reflects a modernization of the city³⁵ it is important to apply the post-modern perspective in which it was built. By exploring the specific territory of a site, as Dolores Hayden does in her book *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (1995), researchers can understand a site's cultural landscape from the multiplicity of narratives connected to it. As it would seem from the examples of Choko and Marsan, such an approach has not been considered for Square Viger. Hayden proposes cultural landscape theory, as a socially inclusive method that allows a researcher to concentrate on how space, architecture, and bodies develop communities and inform one another's coexistence; she also invites the researcher to look at architecture and the built environment, and the space it is constantly providing, through questions of authorship and ownership. With this approach, identity and what one chooses to identify with in the city become important factors when exploring any relationship to public space.³⁶ Moreover, Hayden specifically emphasizes the territorial elements that help create *place* within cities.³⁷ The specific, designed qualities of a place that draw certain communities to form, certain rituals to ensue, and certain connections to be made are often neglected when thinking about the city. Ultimately,

...a socially inclusive urban landscape history can become the basis for new approaches to public history and urban preservation...A more inclusive urban landscape history can also stimulate new approaches to urban design, encouraging designers, artists, and writers, as well as

³⁵ Boyce 274.

³⁶ Hayden 7.

³⁷ Hayden acknowledges the common misconceptions and difficulties with the terms "place" and "space" by referencing Henri Lefebvre's arguments in *The Production of Space* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1991). PRINT. "Place" she writes, "is one of the trickiest words in the English language, a suitcase so overfilled one can never shut the lid" (15). While "space" as she paraphrases from Lefebvre, is the physical linked to the social - the production of space being essential to understanding capitalist society and political economy. See also Jane Rendell, "Space, Place, and Site in Critical Spatial Arts Practice" in *The Practice of Public Art*, eds. Cameron Cartiere and Shelly Willis (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008) 33-55. PRINT.

citizens, to contribute to an urban art of creating a heightened sense of place in the city.³⁸

Miwon Kwon addresses site specificity and public art in her book, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (2002), where she discusses the paradigms of public art in the city. Art in public space, art in the public interest, and (in the case of Square Viger) art as public space are located within time and space as they become popular in western urban planning. Art as public space became popular in the 1970s and was used in a way that would physically change an environment, usually through sculpture. Rather than placing art in public space as many cities did, some artists would integrate their art into the setting itself with the goal of creating place. Charles Daudelin was well known for this approach to public art throughout his career.³⁹ Kwon discusses this paradigm as a progressive artistic gesture where many “seemed to think that the more an artwork disappeared into the site, either by appropriating urban street furniture... or by mimicking familiar architectural elements...the greater its social value would be.”⁴⁰ Daudelin also integrates furniture into the design of the piece as the benches and pergola roofs all belong to the concrete plaza design. Moreover, the use of Daudelin’s *Agora* as a podium on which public interventionist artists have placed their own work further confuses these paradigms, as the site is not only a public artwork in and of itself, but also a platform on which to display.

³⁸ Hayden 12.

³⁹ In addition to the agora in Square Viger, Daudelin produced another work in 1984 entitled *Embâcle* (fig. 4), which is a sculptural fountain in Place du Quebec in Paris, France. The work evokes a feeling of rupture as the concrete slabs that make up the space of the plaza erupt from the ground seemingly out of nowhere. Not uncommon to urban spaces, this fountain is used also in another way – Graffiti.

⁴⁰ Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2002) 69. PRINT.

Iain Borden writes about architecture and the built environment in cities and how these structures shape an understanding of urban space for the individual. As acknowledged by Adrian Forty in his forward to *Strangely Familiar: Narratives of Architecture in the City* (1995), a book Borden co-authored, “architecture, like all cultural objects, is not made just once, but is made and remade over and over again each time it is represented through another medium, each time its surroundings change, each time different people experience it.”⁴¹ Borden explores the subversive use of architecture in his writing about skateboarders in the city such as in *Skateboarding, Space and the City: Architecture and the Body* (2001). Borden is interested in how architecture and city infrastructure directs users to move within space and what to do in various places. Skateboarders, however, disregard these rules, for example, they ride through plazas in front of financial offices while not taking part in the money moving that goes on inside. Rather than limiting their use of the city to one small portion devoted to skateboarding, they claim it all. Borden writes,

...going beyond objects to processes, where architecture’s role in social reproduction is not limited to the spaces it provides or the way it is used, but involves representations embedded in architecture, in codified conceptions of space, in ideological and experiential as well as material aspects of building use.⁴²

For the homeless in Square Viger, in lieu of the overcrowded homeless shelters that disregard many of their needs, they have used the *Agora* (and the city at large) in ways alternative to what is prescribed: a bench for rest, a subway grate for heat.

⁴¹Adrian Forty, “Forward” in *Strangely Familiar: Narratives of Architecture in the City*, Iain Borden, Joe Kerr, Alicia Pivaro, and Jane Rendell (Taylor & Francis, 1995) v. PRINT.

⁴² Iain Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City: Architecture and the Body*. (Oxford UK: Berg, 2001) 9. PRINT.

Lastly it is essential to explain my intentional appropriation of Rosalyn Deutsche's term, agoraphobia, which she uses in her book, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (1996). She argues that public space is not universal, nor is the public art that exists within it. The term "public" is complicated in urban spaces when it comes to regulation of the site and deciding who is allowed and who is not. She writes, "The very quality that supposedly makes the public sphere public – its inclusiveness and accessibility – has always been illusory."⁴³ Rather than discussing the unitary public sphere as a lost entity to be lamented, Deutsche employs the theories and writings of Bruce Robbins and Walter Lippman to discuss the public sphere as a "phantom" or an illusion. Deutsche asserts the rights of marginalized people to the places they frequent and asks her readers as well as urban developers to acknowledge these groups as part of the many publics they wish to serve. Deutsche writes of agoraphobia near the end of her essay:

From a sociological perspective, agoraphobia is primarily an affliction of women. In city streets and squares, where men have greater rights, women devise strategies to avoid the threats that present themselves in public spaces.⁴⁴

I aim, as an embodied user of the space of Square Viger, to acknowledge the alternative uses of the site, entering into this discussion unafraid of the other users of the Square, in order to present an inclusive look at the way the *Agora* has been used since 1983.

⁴³ Deutsche 319.

⁴⁴ Deutsche 325-326.

SECTION I: THE CONCRETE HISTORY OF SQUARE VIGER

Before speaking historically of any site in Montreal, one must acknowledge the First Nations peoples who inhabit this city. Although their representation in public space is often racist and colonial, their presence is felt in almost every public square in Montreal. In Square Viger, and other public places like Cabot Square, however, their presence is more human and telling of the tragedies of colonization than the bronze Indians seen kneeling at the feet of white Europeans who “discovered” this land (for example, the monument to Paul Chomedey de Maisonneuve (1895) located at Place d’Armes in Montreal’s Old Port by the sculptor Louis-Phillippe Hébert) (fig. 5). Since the 1980s Square Viger has afforded a dwelling space to homeless people of many nationalities and heritages, and the City of Montreal has done very little to acknowledge the presence of these people within their “public” spaces in a contemporary way.⁴⁵ Sarah Wilkinson, an art historian from Montreal examines the ways in which indigenous peoples are represented in these monuments as the archetypical “noble savage” next to the image of European settlers.⁴⁶ The omission of First Nations narratives from these histories is something that post-colonial research has sought to overcome.

⁴⁵ There is a particularly large portion of First Nations people in Montreal who are homeless. Their physical displacement by colonial powers the influence of the residential school system has caused no short amount of difficulties for Native people. Problems with alcoholism, homelessness and poverty are only a few of the issues that plague the Native population in Montreal. See Irene Glasser, “On Being Native and Homeless on the Streets of Montreal,” *City & Society* 9.1 (June 1997) 263-265. PRINT.

⁴⁶ Sarah A. Wilkinson, “The Living Monument: A Consideration of the Politics of Indigenous Representation and Public Historical Monuments in Quebec,” (M.A thesis, Concordia University, Montreal 2011), 2. PRINT. Contemporary First Nations artists like Jeff Thomas and Shelly Niro, as Wilkinson explores in her thesis, have appropriated and reclaimed these false monuments (figs 6 & 7). See also Hayden 67, who calls this moment “Statuemanía”. See also Ruth B. Phillips, “Settler Monuments, Indigenous Memory: Dis-membering and Remembering Canadian Art History,” in *Monuments and Memory, Made and Unmade*, eds. Robert S. Nelson and Margaret Olin (Chicago: University of Chicago

A monument to Jean-Olivier Chénier,⁴⁷ which was erected in April of 1895 on the site of Square Viger (figs. 8 & 9) presents a similar conflict between imagined and real histories. While the monument depicts a distinct moment in the history of francophone independence in Quebec, its relevance is not particularly universal then or now. The end of the nineteenth century saw the installation of many historical public monuments. Hayden explains this as “Statumania” where “parks and other public places filled up with statues of political leaders and military figures on horseback... although they rarely represented a full range of citizens and often had clichés about white men’s conquests as their implicit or explicit narratives.”⁴⁸ Historical monuments are often maintained in squares to refer to a false heritage based in revitalization and not necessarily shared by the actual users of a site in an attempt to overshadow the reality of public spaces and the diversity of people who use them or even to glorify the false absence of marginalization.⁴⁹ While my thesis does not focus on public monuments, nor on the missing aboriginal narratives in Montreal’s sculptural landscape, it does focus on a public art piece in

Press, 2003) PRINT. See also Alan Gordon, *The Hero and the Historians: Historiography and the Uses of Jacques Cartier* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010) PRINT.

⁴⁷ Jean-Olivier Chénier (1806-1837) was a physician in Quebec. During the Quebec Rebellion of 1837 he was trapped in a church that was set on fire by the British troops. His corpse was used to scare and humiliate his supporters. See Marsan 141. This monument has since been relocated just outside the limits of the square

⁴⁸ Hayden 67. See also Deutsche 4-5. Deutsche refers to similar monuments in Union Square, Manhattan where artist, Krzysztof Wodiczko reinterpreted these historical monuments to acknowledge the contemporary presence of the homeless within the square. By projecting the faces of homeless individuals onto these monuments, Wodiczko acknowledges the presence of the homeless in order to avoid the kind of false heritage-based “revitalization” that attempts force social cohesion (fig. 10).

⁴⁹ Edmonton, Alberta recently erected a monument to homelessness in their downtown core. The monument is a doorway with tiles along the border of symbols and phrases that depict reasons why having a home is important and were made by local artists who have experience homelessness. A wretched figure sits in the doorway. A pitiful representation of a person, he/she is hunched over in despair. Jim Gurnett, who led the project and sculptors Keith Turnbull and Ritchie Velthuis installed the piece in a small park just north of city hall and explained during the unveiling that “There needed to be some way to remind us that they, too, are human beings that are part of our lives.” They project that the piece, which is placed in a part of the city frequented by the homeless. See Michelle Thompson, “Honoring Edmonton’s homeless.” *Edmonton Sun*, (1 December 2011) WEB. Accessed 2 Jan. 2012.

Montreal whose historiography has excluded the narratives of the its marginalized users, the homeless.⁵⁰

The homeless have, since the early nineteenth century, frequented the Old Port of Montreal and the surrounding areas.⁵¹ Mary Anne Poutanen locates “vagrants” (as she calls the homeless and which was the accepted legal term for the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century) in the vicinity of the Champ de Mars as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century. Champ de Mars is located near Square Viger and was a place in which the homeless would frequently, and illegally, erect their own shelters throughout these formative years of Montreal’s history.⁵² Poutanen writes of the challenge to survive the cold and unkind streets of Montreal, which she learned about through examining judicial court documents from the time period. This analysis makes a case for the flexible bonds and kinship developed in alternative housing like that within a self-made shelter constructed out of found objects and rebuilt daily wherever these relationships took them.

In mid- November 1835 Appoline St-Germain and fellow streetwalker Emily McIntosh found refuge in a hayloft. A few years later, she and Mary Milligan, Mary Ann Smith, Sarah Mitchell, Edward Lawrence, John Leines, and Joseph Charpentier erected their own shelter in the heart of the old city.⁵³

⁵⁰ Malcolm Miles, “Critical Spaces: Monuments and Changes.” *The Practice of Public Art*. Eds. Cameron Cartiere and Shelly Willis (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008) 72. PRINT. Miles explains that public art works and monuments should respect the diversity of cities and speak to the presence of marginalized groups (like the homeless) by reflecting larger themes like home-making and migration. In a conversation with artist Douglas Scholes (DARE-DARE) about the future of Square Viger he also encouraged a discussion of possible monuments to be placed in the Square that would acknowledge the use of the space by the itinerant dwellers.

⁵¹ Mary Anne Poutanen, “Bonds of Friendship, Kinship, and Community: Gender, Homelessness, and Mutual Aid in Early-Nineteenth-Century Montreal” *Negotiating Identities in 19th and 20th Century Montreal*. Eds. Bettina Bradbury and Tamara Myers (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2005) (25-48) 27. PRINT.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 29.

Poutanen establishes these networks of friendships as something important to the homeless; the ability to live together provided at the very least a feeling of camaraderie and closeness in an otherwise cruel city. The building of structures and the maintenance of social networks existent within them is still an important facet of Montreal's homeless population. As Poutanen addresses, it is a common practice of homeless populations, to group and depend on one another for assistance in surviving the dangerous streets of the city.⁵⁴ Public spaces and public art sculptures, like the *Agora*, can be appreciated for their spatial and structural qualities in this sense. For Iain Borden, this is appropriation in its most necessary form, like using an empty in-ground pool as a skateboard ramp. He writes of appropriation, or co-optation as "acting in relation to time as well as space. ...Appropriation is not the simple reuse of a building or space, but a creative reworking of its time and its space ... taking over without mastering, appropriating without ephemerality...where control is guaranteed by other means such as by political rule or law."⁵⁵ These dwellings and relationships present an alternative view of street people, one not solely based on what they lack but on their agency for survival and their ability to adapt.

Initiatives to combat homelessness have been present in Montreal since the early twentieth century. The Montreal Day Shelter (1931-1934) was conceived to provide a "warm place to sit and take part in organized recreational activities"⁵⁶ during the daytime when unemployed men were unwelcome in public spaces. The goal was to provide an indoor space that would allow for various recreational and private activities to occur.

⁵⁴ Poutanen 27.

⁵⁵ Borden 55.

⁵⁶ Shea and Morton 77.

Anna Shea and Suzanne Morton write extensively about this shelter in their co-authored essay “Keeping Men Out of ‘Public or Semi-Public’ Places: The Montreal Day Shelter for Unemployed Men, 1931-34” (2005). They explain, “early-twentieth-century Canadian society depended on the home to govern men’s behaviour in such a way as to ensure political and social stability.”⁵⁷ Without a home to speak of, it was believed that these unemployed men were dangerous, and there were numerous arrests made on these individuals for simply occupying public space, a kind of “idle hand” syndrome. Thus, the Montreal Day Shelter was born and it served over three thousand men in its first week of existence.⁵⁸ While this space was a short-lived experiment, the Montreal Day Shelter offers a distinct example of a thoughtful gesture towards the homeless population.

The right to space – warm space – was believed by the founders of the shelter to be a basic need of all humankind and they addressed this need head-on. By providing a place to go where one would have the right to claim a little “piece of peace” was an important belief of the day shelter, and the founders fought for money annually to maintain the facility.⁵⁹ To afford the right to space (and to limit the cost of running such a facility) a unique notion of allowing those using the shelter to also be responsible for its care was put into place. While a main goal of the shelter was of course to remove undesirable men from public space, there was also the hope that “promoting individual reform by channeling the men’s energies into positive recreation”⁶⁰ would also have a positive effect. This recreation was in the form of playing games, talking, reading, music,

⁵⁷ Ibid., 77.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 83.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 78.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 82-83.

learning, eating, and most importantly, taking care of the shelter. Men were allowed to come and go as they pleased, a freedom of movement that was seldom granted to them. It was self-governed by the men who used it and operated on an otherwise minimal staff, which provided a sense of ownership and accountability for the men towards the shelter. Shea and Morton explain the plan of action of self-governance in which “thirty men, selected by the unemployed, were each placed in charge of a room. . . . In the shelter, these monitors were issued striped sweaters that differentiated them from the other men. In exchange for their supervisory and cleaning duties, the men received free lodging and a salary of fifteen dollars per month.”⁶¹ While the shelter only existed for a few short years due to lack of funding and public support, it provides an early example of a rarely acknowledged facet of street life. These men actively shaped the institution in which they spent their time, thus reflecting their ability to take care of themselves and their comrades within a space they felt was their own.

Public social housing initiatives have been used in major cities since the 1930s to manage the amount of unemployed people who cannot afford housing. The economic depression of the 1930s caused many individuals to live on the streets and in public places like parks due to the high unemployment rate. While the depression affected Canada at large, it seemed to have affected towns like Montreal more extensively. The position of the city as an important industrial zone as well as being a railroad center made it a focal point in the Canadian economy bringing in the working-class during lucrative times. This position meant, however, that during economic downfall it was hit the hardest

⁶¹ Ibid., 85.

with unemployment.⁶² Providing for some of the basic needs to those less fortunate would also help to revitalize their quality of life. As a result, shelters and low-income housing were established. One of the earliest shelters, the Old Brewery Mission, has been a nighttime emergency refuge for homeless men and women since the early twentieth century and is still open today.⁶³

The borough that Square Viger is a part of, known as Ville-Marie, has a history of urban renewal that began in the early nineteenth century when the walls of the city's fortifications were torn down in 1821. The site of Square Viger reflects the radical role of public space in the development of Montreal as a metropolitan and modern city.⁶⁴ The loss of New France to Great Britain in the eighteenth century marks this transition.⁶⁵ While changes did not occur overnight, this period of time played a crucial role in the development of the urban space known today as Montreal. This push for modernization continues throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as urban planners made major changes in infrastructure to make the downtown core of the city more accessible by motor vehicle.⁶⁶ During these years many public squares and spaces were developed like Dalhousie, Place d'Armes, Victoria Square, Papineau Square, Chaboillez Square and, of

⁶² Shea and Morton 81.

⁶³ The Old Brewery Mission came into being during an extremely cold winter in 1889-1890. Mina Douglas and Eva Findlay, two wealthy women from Westmount, decided to help the homeless population by giving them warmth, comfort, and a hot soup. They found a donor and opened their doors on February 27, 1890. See "Our History" *Old Brewery Mission*. (MINC) (2009-2011) WEB. Accessed 1 Mar 2012.

⁶⁴ Daniel Fiset, "Le réaménagement du square Viger et l'Agora de Charles Daudelin : vers la restauration d'un espace public contesté," *Le Revue L'Argot* (University of Montreal, 2010) 4. PRINT. Fiset is a graduate student in Art History at University of Montreal writes of this major development in the area in a 2011 conference paper he gave on Square Viger at the Constructed Environment conference held in Chicago.

⁶⁵ Marsan 126-165.

⁶⁶ For example, the widening of René Levesque and Berri streets, which took place in the early-mid 20th century.

course, Square Viger.⁶⁷ As Marsan writes, the legacy of the urban park is a debt that can be paid to the Victorian era as “pre-industrial cities had no parks for the simple reason they did not need them; right beyond the ramparts, within fifteen to twenty minutes’ walking distance, one could find the countryside in all its beauty and durability.”⁶⁸ Of course, Montreal does not owe its many public squares solely to the influence of the British regime; many squares maintained their French character during this time.⁶⁹

The Viger Family gave the original sum of money for Square Viger to be developed in 1817. It was named as such to honour the Viger family, who were early settlers that had an important role in Quebec and national politics. The land was provided with the strict instructions to create a public market; a scale was even purchased for the site to ensure that it was developed in accordance with this directive.⁷⁰ In a document held at the Ville de Montreal archives, which outlines the minutes of a meeting held on August 15th, 1818, the plans for the development of this site as a market were to be completed by 1840.⁷¹ Those living in the area were given information regarding the location of this future animal marketplace, which was officially referred to as Place Viger.⁷²

⁶⁷ Marsan 141.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 297.

⁶⁹ See Marsan 141. “In terms of utilization of space, there is a great deal of difference between the continental squares, like the ones Montreal had inherited from the French regime, and the typical British version. Under the French colonial regime, the church was located in the middle of the square... This manner of highlighting a monument by placing it at the far end of a visual perspective is more characteristic of the classical continental square than of the British... The typical English square is an intimate open space, self-contained, located without any didactic intention; it is meant only for the enjoyment and satisfaction of its residents.” The original idea for a public marketplace was more inline with what Marsan calls the continental squares of the French regime while the later design of the park was more closely acquainted to British ideals for public space.

⁷⁰ Marc Choko, *The Major Squares of Montreal*. Trans. By Kathe Roth. (Montreal Que: Meridian Press, 1990) 20. PRINT.

⁷¹ Montreal City Archives. D 1901.136 (BOB252 28) “Marché à Foin Marché aux Animaux Place Viger” (1818). PRINT.

⁷² Choko 195.

Unfortunately, the land surrounding the site of the market did not develop as planned; it did not become an area for shopping but instead, for living.⁷³ Proposals for creating a public marketplace in the early 1840s were abandoned and shifted towards other ideas as to how this public site could best be used.⁷⁴

Due to the influx of residents, a public park was thought to be better suited for the area and the subsequent donors agreed. Two women, Dame Marie-Charlotte Lacroix and Dame Louis Lacroix who were sisters-in-law,⁷⁵ pushed for a fine public park complete with a fountain, bandstand, trees and grass areas, promenade, benches and a greenhouse. This building was meant to be reminiscent of Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace in London (fig. 11-13) with its cast-iron frame, plate-glass exterior, and central archway entrance.⁷⁶ In a document outlining the Lacroix's donation of money and land, their passion for producing this park come through as the women describe it in great detail.⁷⁷ Their desire was to create a space for leisure so that the French-Canadian bourgeoisie would be attracted to and populate this area of Montreal. This site, originally called les Jardins Viger, or the Viger Gardens, was officially inaugurated in 1860. Choko describes this site in the past tense as "one of the most beautiful in the city"⁷⁸ and although it was Montreal's first public garden it was later renamed Place Viger (1865), and then, Square

⁷³ Ibid.,19.

⁷⁴ Montreal City Archives. D 1901.136 (BOB252 28) "Dénomination – Règlement Concernant les Place Publiques" (1865) PRINT.

⁷⁵ Ibid. Marsan writes these women out of the history of the Square in his analysis. "Viger Square, the greater part of which was presented to the city in 1844 by P.Lacroix and by Jacques Viger..." he explains that "Other parcels of surrounding land were purchased" before and after this but names no one else. See Marsan 295.

⁷⁶ Boyce 691.

⁷⁷ Montreal City Archives. Meeting minutes with the Lacroix sisters from February 1846.

⁷⁸ Choko 111.

Viger (1867).⁷⁹ In historic photographs and cartoon drawings appearing in newspapers from the time reflect the opulence associated with the park (fig. 11-17). The fountain, a central feature, is captured numerous times in these photographs and etchings with people surrounding it and gives the impression that Square Viger was well used and popular site.

The park was popular. Along with the increase of people in the area came the swell of industry, charity, and faith. The fire of 1852 allowed for more development of this area, namely the construction of the luxury hotel and train station also named after the Viger family, which was inaugurated in 1898 (fig. 18 & 19). In 1864 the Holy Trinity Memorial Anglican Church was built on the north-west corner of Saint Denis Street and Viger Avenue (fig. 20). The square, this luxury hotel, and access to a train station brought the French bourgeoisie to the area as planned. Row houses with Mansard roofs (fig. 21) were built in the surrounding area in which these families would live and grow, spending most of their free time in the park strolling, reading, being with family, and speaking with friends.⁸⁰

As the population increased, the city allowed more development in the area and the square provided a path for the transit of many people, a meeting place for friends and colleagues in addition to its visual splendour. Important buildings linked to the proliferation of French-Canadian workforces such as the Union Nationale Française, the Consulate General of France and the Alliance Nationale also began appearing on the

⁷⁹ City of Montreal, Parks and Recreation department. City Council passed a resolution to change the name of Dubord Street to Viger Avenue. Extracted from City Council minutes. This prompted the change of name for the park to reflect the uses it wished to promote. Public squares are places of gathering and movement but also contemplation and solitude and the city wished this site to be used in such a way. See also Choko 116.

⁸⁰ Choko 116.

square's periphery in the mid to late nineteenth century.⁸¹ The introduction of these new buildings, however, brought the blue-collar community, who began to reside in this once very expensive area. The bourgeoisie, lacking the space needed for their growth in population and development, pushed north into the Latin Quarter, Outremont, and to Westmount. Boyce agrees with both Choko and Marsan, who see this moment and the surge of lower-class citizens into the area as marking the Square's decline.⁸²

In the eyes of historians, the twentieth century saw more declines in the area, as the economic downfall prompted the failure and departure of many businesses, along with residents. Their homes and shops, abandoned and vacant, were turned into rooming houses, bars and taverns in the late 1920s.⁸³ At this point, Choko notes, vagrants began to frequent this space, and in 1930 it was declared a "playground" by the city, a term associated with the apparent decline in class and social status of the area.⁸⁴ The Lacroix fountain, one of two that were once a prominent feature in the eastern portion of the site (fig. 18), was relocated to the popular Saint Louis Square.⁸⁵ Choko notes that while the area lacked in wealthy residents it did not decrease in population; in fact it only became denser, and until its complete destruction the square was still frequented.⁸⁶ The opulence of other neighbourhoods such as Outremont and Westmount (or the Golden Square Mile) only emphasized the more dilapidated parts of town, such as Ville-Marie.⁸⁷ Perhaps this distinction led to the complete destruction of Square Viger during the 1950s, coinciding

⁸¹ Boyce 694.

⁸² Boyce 694.

⁸³ Boyce 695. See also Choko 116.

⁸⁴ Choko 111.

⁸⁵ Choko 131.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁸⁷ Marsan 285.

with the post war development and increase of circulation and transportation in Montreal, with new highway construction and the metro system.

The 1960s showcased this modern approach to urban development in Montreal. Many city streets were enlarged to support the increasing number of citizens driving within the city. In 1962 the residential buildings that had yet to be vacated in the vicinity of Square Viger were expropriated and set for demolition in order to enlarge Berri Street and Viger Avenue.⁸⁸ In the process of building the Ville-Marie Expressway and its tunnel during the 1960s, most of the eastern portion of the Square was completely destroyed. Later, the construction of the Metro system throughout the 1960s and 1970s forced the complete gutting of the rest of the site (fig. 22).⁸⁹ During this time of upheaval and redevelopment, Square Viger was a construction site and was completely destroyed in the process.⁹⁰ It was at this time in that the square became a temporary parking lot. It continued to be used as such during Expo 67 in an effort to camouflage the damage and unsightliness of the dissected construction zone.⁹¹ Fiset writes, “The pit created by the expressway tunnel, considered to be necessary at that time to allow better control of automobile traffic in the city, had the perverse effect of both creating a physical gap and reinforcing a cultural and social divide between Old Montreal and the new Latin Quarter”.⁹² Previously I mentioned the justification processes that Montreal has used in order to redevelop low-income areas and relocate these exclusionary types through mass expropriations. These marginalized groups are rarely considered in redevelopment

⁸⁸ Boyce 698.

⁸⁹ Choko 114.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 116.

⁹¹ Boyce 707.

⁹² Fiset 1.

strategies and left on the outside of plans for public spaces usually forced to find new areas to build their communities. This kind of urban revitalization and “redevelopment of the savage kind”⁹³ has shown how complete collective memories and communities can be destroyed. Until Expo ended, this site would be a shadow of its once green and plentiful self, and rather than providing a space for the gathering of people, it provided a space for parking cars.

During the late twentieth century the city decided to create a new kind of public space, a “hinge space” that would link Old Montreal with the Latin Quarter and provide a place for public events.⁹⁴ The loss of trees in the area due to the construction of the highway as well as the state of limbo in which it had existed due to all the changes in infrastructure meant that it could be redeveloped in a creative way, as it was in some respects, a blank canvas. Other than the history embedded within the site itself, it was an empty slate upon which to project the city’s stance on ideas about public space, gathering, community, and entertainment. By taking the opportunity to redesign Square Viger, the city gave the new square, on the westernmost lot, a new purpose as an agora, a place for public gathering.

In the summer of 1972 the Department of Public Works recommended that the City of Montreal allot money for the planning of three parks that could be used to remake the area.⁹⁵ In collaboration with the consulting firm responsible for the expanse of the

⁹³ Hayden 9.

⁹⁴ “Hinge Space” is an expression used by Melvin Charney with Catherine Blaine, Sylvie Perrault, and François Rioux, in “Le Carré Viger le Faubourg Quebec” report for La Société d’Habitation et de Développement de Montréal (SHDM) (15, Mar, 1991) 4. PRINT.

⁹⁵ Boyce 709.

highway (LVLV, later known as Lavalin⁹⁶), who would oversee the redesign of the site, the city began the preliminary process of re-imagining the space.⁹⁷ It was urban planner Michel Stanisic who prepared and presented these plans for the site in 1973.⁹⁸ Margaret Boyce outlines these designs with great clarity.

Two ventilation towers were identified within the western city block (St. Denis to Berri Streets), which had an agora occupying the centre of the place, and vegetation surrounding each of its sides, as a buffer zone. The park, in the middle of the three city blocks, had rest areas equipped with decorative pergolas. There was to be a monument in the centre of the park, where trees and vegetation were abundant. Finally, the city block more to the east included benches, trees... That area, the longer of the three, was internally divided into zones, presumably for distinct activities... When one looks at the original plan... one has a solid impression of dense vegetation amidst a sea of concrete and tar.⁹⁹

The plans defined three separate spaces to reflect the divisions of this once-continuous site. Each site would have its own artistic treatment/intervention, which would be selected by each planning party through competition.¹⁰⁰ The materials proposed for all artistic treatments of the site were to be concrete, granite, or bricks, therefore indicating from the very beginning that this site would mimic the modern materials used to build Montreal's urban environment.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Lavalin is also the company currently overseeing the current construction of the mega hospitals in Montreal.

⁹⁷ City of Montreal Archives. The assistant to the Deputy Minister transmitted the plans for the expressway for this section of land on 12 July 1974. PRINT

⁹⁸ Ville de Montreal, Service de l'habitation et de l'urbanisme, "Aménagement du parc Viger proposé," L=25/U-65 1, October 1974, signed M.S. Michel Stanisic presented the concept according to LVLV's wishes.

⁹⁹ Boyce 714-715.

¹⁰⁰ A poor quality photograph exists of the original model for the agora that Boyce included in her dissertation, which I have reproduced for this thesis (fig. 23).

¹⁰¹ This is not surprising given that the planning process took place during the peak of the modernist movement in Montreal and with the eminent construction pushing into the 1980s perhaps this is what caused some of the distaste for the park.

The model of the agora Stanistic had envisioned is particularly interesting to compare with the actual structure on the site today (fig. 23) as there are major differences that Daudelin designed in the space. Stanistic proposed a square auditorium with amphitheatre style seating that was raised on all sides, declining to the center where a stage could be used to present various cultural activities to an audience. The planning documents for Viger Square stated that “besides being a meeting place, the site would house temporary open-air exhibitions, and would become a square for cultural and artistic activities,”¹⁰² additional construction on and around the site would further enhance the use of the square.¹⁰³ The agora was designed to accommodate one thousand people and it is clear that Stanistic envisioned the western portion of the square with a real purpose in mind. The agora would promote a liveliness that had been lost through the redevelopment of the area and the exodus of residents, bringing people back to this district. Giving place to a site that had been so transient and undefined for so long was also an important part of the goal of creating a sense of permanency.

Even though plans had already been drawn regarding the use of the three separate blocks, the committee held a competition for choosing the artists who would design the sites.¹⁰⁴ While the competition for artistic proposals allowed artists to implement their own interpretation of the site, the general design was already decided.¹⁰⁵ While the term “competition” speaks to showcasing new talent, the planning committee decided they

¹⁰² Boyce 725.

¹⁰³ Additional construction included an office for a guard, a storage space, restrooms for men and women, and a control room for sound and lighting requirements for the entertainment to come.

¹⁰⁴ Boyce 724.

¹⁰⁵ Stanistic’s original plans were more or less based on the concept rather than the actual design. Artists competed for the design of the sculptural features in each park with Stanistic’s guides in mind.

would choose artists to compete rather than allowing anyone to submit their work.¹⁰⁶

While it may have thwarted the individual imagination and agency of the artists, Stanisic's plans for each site gave the artists approved ideas to work from and constraints to remain within when thinking of their designs. These specifications had to do with the treatment of the walls, ground cover, safety constraints around play structures, and sculptures among other things and basically reflected the city's hope for a coherent, three-block park. The committee selected artists based on the three sections of the overall park. In the end, they chose Charles Daudelin for the agora and fountain, Claude Théberge (1934-2008) for the ornamental park, and Peter Gnass (1936) for the parc Viger équipé block.¹⁰⁷ While my thesis is not concerned with the Gnass or Théberge lots, it is important to describe them to provide the context within which Daudelin's lot is situated.¹⁰⁸ Lot B, designed by Claude Théberge is a circular arrangement with benches and trees surrounding a large concrete sculpture called *Forces* (1985) (fig. 24-26).¹⁰⁹ Lot C, designed by Peter Gnass was a playground for children with a large fountain titled *Jeux d'enfants* (1984) (figs. 27 & 28).¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Boyce 726.

¹⁰⁷ Montreal City Archives. Dossiers to Legault, 29 April 1975, p.1 and one of the appendizes, "Liste des créateurs suggérés pour l'aménagement des places." The list of artists was also part of the documents submitted to Montreal's Executive Committee in June 1975 for the approval in principle of the expressway plans.

¹⁰⁸ Neither Théberge nor Gnass kept the records of their work on the Viger site.

¹⁰⁹ Matt McLaughlin, "Claude Théberge, Force, 1985" *Montreal by Metro: Art in the Metro* (n.p) (Oct 2007) WEB. Accessed 29 Feb 2012. Théberge is mostly known for his ceramic works and use of colour. Other urban art works include his untitled sculpture on Concordia University's Sir George Williams campus. A sculptural mural commissioned by the Bank of Montreal hides an unattractive air vent.

¹¹⁰ Matt McLaughlin, "Peter Gnass, Jeux d'enfants, 1984" *Montreal by Metro: Art in the Metro* (n.p) (Oct 2007) WEB. Accessed 29 Feb 2012. The fountain still exists on the site today while the play structure was destroyed in 2000 apparently due to security and safety issues. Gnass is well known in the sculptural community after his participation in Expo 67. He has worked with metal to integrate sculpture into landscape. He designed a metal sculpture in 1978 out of stainless steel at LaSalle métro station. Recently his concentration has moved towards neon.

THE ARTIST

Daudelin was born in Granby, Quebec in 1920. He found a passion for art and took classes in his hometown before moving to Montreal in 1939 to study at the École de Meuble where Paul-Émile Borduas taught drawing. Borduas would become Daudelin's artistic mentor. A successful student, Daudelin exhibited his work with his peers at various Montreal galleries. In 1943 he was elected a member of the Contemporary Art Society and showed his work at Dominion Gallery in Montreal, participating in annual exhibitions for the CAS throughout his career. In 1946 Daudelin married long-time friend and fellow artist, Louise Bissonnette, with whom he would collaborate on future projects. Daudelin and Bissonnette worked with various media including painting, sculpture, and even created marionettes for local puppet shows (figs. 29-31).¹¹¹ Daudelin's oeuvre, however, is best known for his urban sculptures that are integrated into urban architecture.¹¹² During the 1970s Daudelin was chosen to design and create the central altarpiece for the Chapelle du Sacré-Coeur in Montreal's Notre-Dame basilica (fig. 32).¹¹³ At the same time, Daudelin was chosen to design Lot A for Square Viger..

Charles Daudelin was the only artist to create an entirely new design for the site, as this block had been the one used in the 1960s as a parking lot. He also took the greatest

¹¹¹ Paul Bourassa, "Daudelin: Entre Imagination et Fonction" in *Daudelin* (Quebec City, QC: Musée du Québec, 1997) 61-80. PRINT.

¹¹² Louise Déry, "Daudelin: L'Art dans la Ville" in *Daudelin* (Quebec City, QC: Musée du Québec, 1997) 81-105. PRINT.

¹¹³ Yves Lacasse, "Le Retable de la Chapelle du Sacré-Coeur de la Basilique Notre-Dame de Montreal" in *Daudelin*. (Quebec City, QC: Musée du Québec, 1997) 106-111. PRINT. This work deserves some more attention, than this thesis can provide. It depicts a rising group of individuals who walk through three simple archways on their way to heaven. It should be noted that the altarpiece bears many visual similarities to the Square Viger pergola design. These however are circumstantial as there is no evidence that suggests Daudelin meant to refer to his earlier piece.

amount of freedom within the mandate he had been given.¹¹⁴ The balsa wood maquette of Daudelin's original design of *Agora* is available for viewing at the Musée Nationale des Beaux-arts du Quebec as are many of his works and archives, which were donated by his wife, Louise Bissonnette-Daudelin for a retrospective exhibition and for permanent display of his works among other Quebec artists (fig. 33-35). In this maquette, an overall perspective on the monumentality of *Agora* can be seen; Daudelin used actual branches to show the trees and indicated where the water would flow.

Daudelin's original design outlined three separate yet undivided zones within the *Agora* for the gathering of small groups at benches, tables and seats for playing games like chess or cards, and a section for playing the popular Quebec game, pétanque. He envisioned a connection between the living person and the concrete material of the *Agora*, and sculpted seats into the concrete for people to rest and interact with the site itself. One hurdle he was faced with was the mandatory ventilation towers that were located on his portion of the site. His design had to integrate these while still making them accessible for maintenance. He used successions of pergolas to hide the towers, beneath which he hoped snack bars and cafés would open. Daudelin rejected the notion of the *Agora* as a traditional auditorium in exchange for multiple areas for assembly. His choice to amend Stanistic's original auditorium plan in order to provide a place for multiple gatherings and community building was a key concept that was carried through the process until the end. To unify the various zones, Daudelin created a water feature and wished to implement, wherever possible, sweet smelling plants such as mint and thyme, using clovers as the

¹¹⁴ Boyce 740.

ground cover, with European lindens and honey locusts surrounding the park.¹¹⁵ As a piece of public art, Daudelin saw the *Agora* as a place of assembly in every sense wishing to draw people to the site and to his sculpture.

Boyce had an invaluable opportunity to complete her research while Daudelin was alive. She interviewed him about the design process and included much of this interview in her dissertation. Daudelin admitted to her that while his initial concept for the park may have been a little over the top, he always had the user in mind.

J'ai fait... quelques presentations qui étaient peut-être un peu trop folles, oui... toujours à cause de ces pentes-là. Au lieu de faire avec des paliers, j'avais fais ces pentes-là, c'était en béton, comme une grande glissade, comme une... rampe, mais pleine largeur, comme pour les handicapés, mais comment je vous dirais ça? Dans cette pente-là il y avait des trous, ronds... et puis ça redevenait comme une marches, mais c'était un siege. C'était un petit fauteuil... Avec la pente, on avait des petites côtés,... puis c'est sûr que descendre dans ça, ben, c'est vrais que ça aurait été un casse-gueule, mais enfin! Mais, on avait des sieges. Tandis que là, c'est dans les marches, et dans les paliers qu'on peut s'asseoir. Non, ...il y avait des côtés un peu fous!¹¹⁶

His art lay not simply in the construction of this sculptural environment but in the relationships he hoped would take place within it, and anticipated many different groups being able to coexist in the square together.

The process of redevelopment was a lengthy one due to many factors, including political regime changes, issues with artists' designs, and the unfriendly relationship

¹¹⁵ Boyce 745.

¹¹⁶ Interview between Charles Daudelin and Margaret Boyce. (27 Feb 1998) See Boyce 744.
"I have made... some presentations that maybe a little too zany, yes... always as a result of the slope, there. Instead of with landings, I had made the slope, it was in concrete, like a great slide, like a... ramp, but much larger, like for the handicapped, but how can I say this to you? In this slope there are holes, mounds... and that became like steps, but it was a bench. It was a little chair... With the slope, it had small sides... and it is sure that descending that, well, it is true that it would have been dicey, in the end! But, it had the benches. While there, on the steps, and on the landings that we can sit. No....Those sides were a little crazy!" (trans. Adam van Sertima)

between the artists and the city planners.¹¹⁷ After a few revisions, Daudelin's design was finally accepted by the planning committee and put through to the next step in the process. There were some adverse opinions from the public on the plans being discussed in the Montreal newspapers. Journalist Jean-Pierre Bonhomme wrote an article in 1980 describing some of the difficulties of Daudelin's plans.¹¹⁸ Finally, in February 1983, absolute final plans were submitted, accepted, and construction began on the site.

THE SCULPTURE

Daudelin's square spans approximately one hundred twenty-five square meters and contains over twenty pergolas which vary in form between fully roofed, slatted, and completely open (fig. 36). These pergolas play host to greenery that spreads over each structure and even overtakes them in the summer months (fig. 37). Likewise, the unmaintained green roofs on many of the pergolas belie the idea that this site is dead. On the contrary, life breathes there every day. The fountain, *Mastodo* (1984), was designed by Daudelin to double as a timekeeper, as it would tip back and forth every fifteen minutes as water flowed into its bronze basin (fig. 38). The water would move through a series of pools that circle around a stage and pour through a waterfall. The bronze dish is over three meters in diameter and is supported by four large elements made of steel and bronze. This tidal water transfer may sound quite gentle in this description. In reality, however, the design called for a sudden eruption of three hundred gallons (1363 litres) of

¹¹⁷ Boyce 772.

¹¹⁸ Jean-Pierre Bonhomme, "La Form du Nouveau Squar Viger Demeure Indécise," *La Presse* (Montreal, 14, Nov. 1980) PRINT. He writes, "Le service d'urbanisme de Montréal compte une douzaine d'urbanistes; aucun d'entre eux n'a par contre de formation particulière en paysagisme."

"The Urban planning service of Montreal includes a dozen urban planners; never between them had they any particular training in Landscape design" (trans. Adam van Sertima)

water every time it tipped. Unfortunately, the mechanism that would have pumped the water throughout the park never truly worked and has since deteriorated beyond repair. Today the park is parched until it rains and the old fountain fills with water yet again.

The official opening of the parks was in the spring of 1984, and the public, who had been generally opposed to the plans, rejected the design's concrete structure because it made them feel cold, claustrophobic, and vulnerable.¹¹⁹ In the absence of the intended public the park was built to serve, the landscape designs, which had been approved by the committee, were not continued. The city, which had always had a strained relationship with the project and with Daudelin, slowly began to abandon their efforts to maintain the site.¹²⁰ With the winter months inflicting damage on the concrete structures, and lack of permitted events actually taking place in the Square, it is little wonder that these public park islands have fallen into decay.

As an historical monument of Quebec's artistic heritage on one hand but a festering and problematic wound on the city's urban fabric on the other, the site can become "lost" within the rhetoric of what constitutes effective public places. These places, however, require what urban critic Jane Jacobs called "the boon of life and appreciation conferred upon them."¹²¹ Therefore, an acknowledgement for "other" uses of the site, however marginal or discrete they might be, would show how certain urban communities have appreciated this seemingly failed public site. As my next section will show, a new generation of artists have chosen the Square for creative intervention, exploring the contested value of the site and its potential.

¹¹⁹ Petrowski.

¹²⁰ Boyce 782.

¹²¹ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1961) 89. PRINT.

SECTION II: THE VINES ARTISTIC INTERVENTION

“...no matter how controlled city spaces are, they are also open to subversion”¹²²

- Anna Waclawek

As with all contemporary urban areas, artists have found ways to infiltrate the liminal spaces of the city. Dr. Anna Waclawek, one of the foremost scholars on graffiti and street art, writes that the management, monitoring, and restricting of urban public space is not always perfectly regulated and while some sites are heavily surveyed, others are not. This militarization of urban spaces also dictates who can use them, what they can be used for, and when then can be used – but then how are these places public? This is the confusion that the term *public* is constantly plagued by in the city. As Tonkiss writes, “urban spaces... provide sites for political action and are themselves politicized in contests over access, control and representation.”¹²³ Thus, public space, and those who “own” it, is constantly under discussion. The lack of supervision in Square Viger has allowed a symbolic ownership over the site for the itinerant dwellers. The space is contested over and over again by the media, who deem its qualities dead and lifeless, likening it to a “cement-henge.”¹²⁴ Yet a closer look shows there is life all over the square; from the vines that have scaled the concrete structures and overtaken the park with greenery, to the people who have built impermanent structures in the square, and the artists who have subversively intervened in the site – these all indicate life and use. Thus, what is productive about this marginalization is that it allows for subversion; for creative

¹²² Anna Waclawek, *Graffiti and Street Art*, (London, UK: Thames & Hudson, 2011) 114. PRINT

¹²³ Tonkiss 59

¹²⁴ Hutsak.

processes to inhabit and fit themselves within forgotten spaces of the regulated urban landscape.

Artist collectives such as DARE-DARE and the Yarn-Bombing crew, Les Ville-Laines have occupied the Square and used its liminality as a space for creative production. While the square may be situated (historically and geographically) in the city centre, it can be thought of as a liminal “non-space” by way of its use and attention from the city. As Waclawek suggests in her discussion of marginal space, sites like Square Viger become repurposed in a way that is outside the prescribed use of urban space. She writes, “the opportunities that non-spaces offer for freedom of action and expression are especially significant for artists working on the margins of acceptability.”¹²⁵ Deutsche explains further:

...art practices that question the exclusions that ground these “realities” do not ... fall into privacy. On the contrary, these practices nurture the gestation of a different kind of public sphere that emerges precisely because our commonality is uncertain and therefore open to debate.¹²⁶

Since the 1960s, the Quebec artistic landscape has promoted endeavours that circumvent the consumerism and commercialism associated with the art market of the time. I have noted the particular interest in sculpture in this period, but it is also important to explain that at this time artists were not only thinking of public art as art within the public realm, but as art that was in the public interest.¹²⁷ The Montreal artist-run collective DARE-DARE (Centre de diffusion d’art multidisciplinaire de Montréal) presents a flexible idea of public intervention in artistic practice. Their aim has been,

¹²⁵ Waclawek 114.

¹²⁶ Deutsche 319.

¹²⁷ Kwon 70. See also Suzanne Lacy “Time in Place: New Genre Public Art a Decade Later” in *The Practice of Public Art*, eds. Cameron Cartiere and Shelly Willis (New York, NY: 2008) 18-32. PRINT.

since its founding in 1985, to serve young artists, and to question traditional approaches and spaces used for the dissemination of art. This collective was originally located in a small barber shop on rue Laurier, and at first aimed to present and sell the work of emerging artists aged eighteen to thirty-five. With an “interest in exploration and in the diversity in the modes of presentation,”¹²⁸ their twenty-six years of operations have supported and presented the work of over one thousand artists.

While DARE-DARE projects were once showcased in traditional gallery spaces, in 2003 the board of directors decided to locate DARE-DARE artists outside the white-cube. Artists would present works that used the city, targeting audiences within the urban arena, as subject matter, gallery, and archive. In a conversation, one of the founding members and practicing artist, Douglas Scholes, explained, “the types of exhibitions for some time leading up to and during the board’s debates about the centre’s mandate and direction, tended toward artists who were working outside the ‘white cube’ and with urban issues.”¹²⁹ The board members of DARE-DARE decided this would also be an excellent opportunity for artists to explore more urban communities and landscapes within their work. By not owning or renting a gallery space, DARE-DARE’s practice and mandate is similar to that of artist-run-centres like 3e Imperial in Granby, Quebec, which also displays works throughout the city. DARE-DARE uses a mobile office in a construction trailer that could be situated within any site or community. This trailer facilitates the goal

¹²⁸ “Mandate” *DARE-DARE Centre de diffusion d’art multidisciplinaire de Montréal*, DARE-DARE (n.p.) 2008. WEB. Accessed 2 Jan 2012.

¹²⁹ Douglas Scholes, personal interview, 15 Dec, 2011.

to reflect the city within the artists' work and located the work, artists, and subject matter in the same urban space (figs. 39-41).¹³⁰

DARE-DARE had to approach the City of Montreal for permission to set up their office somewhere within the city, as a publicly funded organization cannot squat on city property.¹³¹ The centre requested the use of marginalized urban spaces, those that were on the periphery due to their use but still within the city centre, Scholes explains that the city was keen to have an active arts organization occupy a liminal territory like Square Viger:

You have to know that the city was using DARE-DARE as much as DARE-DARE was using the city. The city understood permanent occupation in Square Viger would provide a form of surveillance, a means to 'clean up' the public space. DARE-DARE saw the potential of being on the ground and in the streets as an opportunity to bring art to the public and be able to provide a reciprocal location for the programming it was planning.¹³²

The centre had been given the site rent-free and there was no charge for the electricity used by the office. However, there was no running water and the only sanitation facility was a chemical toilet. While the city expressed a general interest in DARE-DARE's occupation of the site, they were not necessarily interested in the same goals as the artists but more in the idea of affordable surveillance of the square. Either way, DARE-DARE would situate themselves, by way of their trailer, in the Square Viger cultural, and physical, landscape.

¹³⁰ Another factor that contributed to DARE-DARE's ability to move beyond the confines of the gallery space to the space of the city was the funding agencies. Scholes explains, that funding agencies like Canada Council for the Arts, Conseil des Arts et des Lettres Quebec (CALQ) and the Montreal Arts Council influenced the departure from the gallery space as they were questioning why they would fund a centre that was not utilizing their rented space. They were able to put grant money towards artists projects rather than towards leasing a building/gallery space.

¹³¹ Scholes.

¹³² Ibid.

DIS/LOCATION 1: Projet D'Articulation Urbaine Square Viger (hereafter referred to as *DIS/LOCATION 1*) was a collection of public art projects that took place in Square Viger over the years of 2004-2006 and was the first of its kind to make use of the mobile trailer/office. The intent was for the artists to produce work that would reflect the particular situation of Square Viger and the community that used it, interacting with them as much as possible while still producing artworks. They placed their trailer in a section of the square that was “unclaimed” by the groups who were currently spending time there (squeegees, prostitutes, homeless, drug dealers) (fig. 42). In conversations with both Scholes and Fiset the topic of territory came up regarding how artists can infiltrate public spaces such as this one. Scholes explained that when they arrived, they made a point of speaking with members of all the groups to find the best place to put their trailer without encroaching upon any one group’s territory more than another’s. In the end they settled with north east corner of the square. Scholes said – there were no archways there and so no one had set up camp beneath.¹³³ This was an important gesture in the project as the artists continuously acknowledged the contemporary use of the site and sought ways to merge their work into the Square without dominating it.

The issue of this merger presented new challenges for the artist-run-centre who had, for the most part, worked within traditional galleries. Scholes describes three types of “itinerates” who used the Square: the intravenous drug users, the homeless who used the site to build their shelters and slept there, and the squeegee community who also lived with their dogs that had essentially coexisted in a self-governed manner over the years.¹³⁴ Given the circumstances, DARE-DARE risked appearing as an extension of the already

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

long arm of the law and needed to attend to that before pursuing any artistic projects in the site. The artists and administrators acknowledged the self-governed and symbolic ownership of the Square and decided to deal with any problems on their own without calling in a third party.¹³⁵ By doing so they made the conscious decision to integrate rather than appear authoritative. The impermanency of the office and the importance for DARE-DARE to handle day-to-day problems “in-house” not only afforded the centre more money to contribute funding to the artistic projects rather than towards rent, it also mimicked the impermanency and transience of the homeless community. It afforded interpersonal communications with the community that would come to be useful with the various artistic projects that would be planned - a key factor in any community based art practice.

Douglas Scholes presented one of the first projects in Square Viger in the fall of 2004 which was titled, *(This is) What Happens When a Thing is Maintained (?)*. Scholes cast fifteen hundred bricks from beeswax, a medium his interventionist sculptures often take.¹³⁶ The beeswax was strong enough to support itself but vulnerable to climatic changes in weather and of course the human elements that are inevitable in a public

¹³⁵ Douglas Scholes described various problems like controlling the free alcohol that would be available at vernissages, homeless sleeping beneath the trailer, and break-ins for food and other shelter that were frequently threatened on the office. However, there were some circumstances where police came to the square and DARE-DARE representatives would urge them not to get involved. Scholes laments that although this method was commendable, it also had its limits as it led to dramatic incidents like when their trailer caught fire when someone lit a fire beneath the trailer to cook their food.

¹³⁶ Scholes' most recent work for DARE-DARE is part of a satellite project in Corktown, Detroit, Michigan in collaboration with a local non-profit organization, The Imagination Station, who are creating a creative campus based on community, technology, sustainability, and the arts. The organization owns two empty houses that date to the late 1800's, which are now blighted. *Target* was designed to extend the reach of *DIS/LOCATION* from September 26 to October 16 2011, Scholes worked with one of these houses as a frame for his installation of 27 beeswax window pains, which bore an iconic red bulls eye now synonymous with consumerism and commercial capital. See “Target” *Douglas Scholes Artists Website* (self published) (30 Nov 2011) WEB. Accessed 1 Mar 2012.

place.¹³⁷ The blocks were stacked in tall rectangular structures at the corner of Viger and Berri streets, which emulated the nearby high-rise towers that are synonymous with Montreal's downtown core (fig. 43-46). In addition, the six to eight feet tall building-like structures were enclosed in construction fencing referencing the history of redevelopment in the Ville-Marie borough. The work was "designed to fall apart,"¹³⁸ as Scholes explains, and as the inaugural artwork of *DIS/LOCATION 1* it aimed to introduce the city to the Square Viger's cultural landscape and redevelopment history.

As the work would fall apart, Scholes would return to remake the towers each day. In the catalogue for *DIS/LOCATION 1*, "the process of erecting, repairing, renovation, cleaning and rebuilding"¹³⁹ was an important part of the project. However, Scholes explains that after repeated vandal attacks he decided to introduce his project, and himself, to those he felt responsible for the damage, the Squeegees who were camped out under the *Agora*.¹⁴⁰ He addressed the group by offering them a useful form of currency – four Labatt 50 beers – as a peace offering and through this gesture was acknowledged as a comrade rather than an enemy within their territory. In return the squeegee community took responsibility for the artwork, and protected it against numerous attacks. Two men, Anthony and George, also took authorial responsibility for the work as the squeegees requested permission to rebuild the piece as well.¹⁴¹ Scholes explains that this type of

¹³⁷ Dare-Dare (Centre de Diffusion D'Art Multidisciplinaire de Montreal), *DIS/LOCATION 1: Projet D'Articulation Urbaine Square Viger*. (Montreal, Quebec: Édipresse, 2008) 70. PRINT.

¹³⁸ Scholes.

¹³⁹ Dare-Dare 70.

¹⁴⁰ Scholes.

¹⁴¹ Dare-Dare 94.

communication helped DARE-DARE to integrate into the community through respect and collaboration.¹⁴²

Les Ville-Laines (The Wool City) artist collective of Montreal has been working with yarn and textiles to create “tags” that wrap city infrastructure. While in conversation, these artists equate themselves with the likes of graffiti writers through their vocabulary (bombing, tagging) their practice is more linked to the overarching umbrella of post-graffiti, or street art. Yarnbombing, as it is referred to by those who participate in the practice, has recently developed into an artistic movement that appropriates the visual and spatial language of graffiti but uses fibres and textiles to bring warmth and colour to what may sometimes feel like a cold and unforgiving city. In general, “it involves the act of attaching a handmade item to a street fixture or leaving it in the landscape”¹⁴³ and therefore has commonly been linked to such practices that are also renegade and ultimately illegal. The term and practice is usually credited to Magda Sayeg, who began the artist collective Knitta Please in the 2005 in Texas.¹⁴⁴ Practiced predominantly by women, yarnbombing also circumvents the notion of the impenetrable boys’ club that graffiti culture often wrongfully portrays.¹⁴⁵ I spoke with Mimi Traillette, a founding member of Les Ville-Laines Montreal based artist collective, who explained that while every yarnbomber may have a personal opinion as to why they participate in the culture, “for the most part we yarnbomb to reclaim and occupy public spaces, to question the public about their relation with their surroundings, to add colour and warmth to our grey

¹⁴² Scholes.

¹⁴³ Mandy Moore and Leanne Prain, *Yarnbombing: The Art of Crochet and Knit Graffiti* (Vancouver, BC: Arsenal, 2009) 17-18. PRINT.

¹⁴⁴ Ruth Scheuing, “Urban Textiles: From Yarn Bombing to Crochet Ivy Chains” *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings* (n.p) (2010) Paper 50. 2. WEB. Accessed 2 Jan 2012.

¹⁴⁵ Waclawek 72.

concrete cities and lives, and to add a touch of unexpectedness to people's routine".¹⁴⁶

More specifically she spoke about Les Ville-Laines' wish to call attention to "places that have a significant social or political history or issue that is important to us".¹⁴⁷ A common criticism of knitted graffiti tags is the juxtaposition between the domestic task, its usefulness in the urban realm, the value of its product, and the futility of a medium that is misconceived as only functional. Critics are often puzzled with the choice to knit cosies for concrete and often ask, "Why don't you do something useful, like knit socks for the homeless?"¹⁴⁸ Knitted and crocheted tags on elements of the urban built environment are effective strategies that blur the lines between dichotomies that become conflicted in urban space that is used by homeless people. Public and private, domestic and urban, and home and hideaway are intersected by these renegade knitters looking to make public space just a little more warm, and bright.

The *Home Sweet Home* (2011) project by Les Ville-Laines uses this criticism (among other things) and situates their work in the very place in which a large community of Montreal's homeless dwell. Square Viger presented an interesting location for an intervention as the situation of the homeless in the square was so unexplored and yet to be woven into the art historical narratives of this site. Les Ville-Laines aimed to effectively bridge this gap. During the summer of 2011 they began planning and creating the tags for one of their largest projects to date. They measured the site in advance and created the knit pieces to cover three of the pillars on the rue Berri side of the Square along with three of the flower-boxes in the same area (figs. 47-50). On a rainy November 10th in 2011 Les

¹⁴⁶ Mimi Traillette, personal interview, 10 Dec. 2011. The collective of around five core members also collaborate with other solo yarnbombers like Capitaine Crochet to realize large intricate works.

¹⁴⁷ Traillette.

¹⁴⁸ Scheuing 2.

Ville-Laines brought their creations to the square where they would install them. The pieces wrapped around the structures emblazoned with the phrases “Tricot=Paix” and “Home Sweet Home” and marked the presence of the yarnbombers within the square while acknowledging how the Square has also been used as a dwelling. In fact, the crew waited until autumn to occupy the Square as they planned to leave blankets they also knitted for those who needed more warmth as the weather changed.¹⁴⁹ The pillars are quite large, and the crew enlisted the help of people who were there at the time (fig. 49 & 50). When the crew explained that their project was to decorate and bring warmth to the Square (just for those who spend time in it), as Traillette explains, the itinerant dwellers were “more than enthusiastic” to help.¹⁵⁰ Les Ville-Laines’ gesture of kindness and beautification in Square Viger aimed to make visible this space that has been forgotten about in many ways. In Traillette’s own words, the goal of the project was to say, “we know you are here and we are not forgetting you.”¹⁵¹

Waclawek notes the ability of street art and graffiti, as ultimately illegal appropriations of the built environment, to appeal to the homeless community.¹⁵² When artists make work in Square Viger, it reminds outside viewers, passersby, and city officials that a “public” does use and appreciate this space, albeit a different one than originally intended. Artistic practices, like the ones positioned in Square Viger over the last decade, also raise awareness for the use of space, acknowledging the site as a symbolic, yet temporary, home. In so doing, the projects circumvent the notion of non-

¹⁴⁹ Traillette.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Waclawek 71.

confidence for the homeless held by the media, by employing and showcasing the contrary. The Home Sweet Home project and the work of Douglas Scholes not only acknowledges the homeless, but calls to them for assistance with the art making. “Home” is something that is universal as everyone has a memory of home (loving it, leaving it, making a home). Art pieces that reflect something larger than a false sense of heritage are more effective in urban environments as they bridge gaps often left in history with notions that can be linked to the larger, more inclusive human experience.¹⁵³ Both the work of Douglas Scholes and the unsanctioned project of Les Ville-Laines, ultimately display an essence of impermanence, redevelopment, and illegality, all issues that the homeless can relate to in their experience of the city.

HOMELESS OCCUPATIONS

The artists that have located their works in Square Viger have done so in response to the Square’s marginalized position and subsequent homeless occupations over the past thirty years. The past few decades are an integral, but often skipped-over era in Square Viger’s historiography. Not only does this period mark the Square’s most recent redevelopment and subsequent de-valorization by the media but it also marks a particular moment in Canadian history when *homelessness* was being discussed more publicly through policy and urban planning. Not surprisingly, this is also the time the homeless began to mark their presence within Square Viger and other public spaces in cities across North America. In an article for *Revue L’Argot*, Daniel Fiset discusses the validity of the homeless occupation of the site.

¹⁵³ Hayden 9.

La question reste à savoir si la fréquentation d'un espace public par des populations considérées comme marginales est un argument convaincant pour le maintien de cet espace. La solution est-elle de chasser l'itinérance d'un espace mal-aimé, où plutôt d'intégrer l'itinérance dans une des problématiques du parc qui serait appelé à être restauré? Raser le square Viger revient-il à éradiquer les problèmes sociaux de Montréal? Rien n'est moins sûr.¹⁵⁴

These questions come in 2011, a time when Square Viger and the people who use the site have been extricated from a place they have inhabited for decades and a time when the site becomes slated for another ruthless redevelopment. Jane Jacobs writes of the homeless as a group “in cities which, all by itself, can enjoy and populate a park long and well.”¹⁵⁵ Jacobs writes of Skid Row Parks where homeless groups and individuals often congregate. Whether produced for the homeless or not, Jacobs’ interest in these neighbourhood parks lies in their balance between use and design.¹⁵⁶ The economic history of Ville-Marie shows that the residents of the area had moved on and industry moved in and the goal at the time was not to remake the Victorian park that once stood but to reimagine the space as a place for assembly. Of course, Daudelin did not design the *Agora* for the implicit use of the homeless, however the specific structure of it has enabled a shelter, and an interesting juxtaposition between design and use.

Deutsche explains, “how we define public space is intimately connected with ideas about what it means to be human, the nature of society, and the kind of political

¹⁵⁴ Fiset 13.

“The question rests on thinking if the frequenting of public spaces by populations that are considered marginal is a convincing argument for maintaining that space. Is the solution then to pursue the itinerant into a forsaken space, or rather to integrate the itinerant as one of the problematics of a park which has been called for restoration? Razing Viger Square as the cost of eradicating the social problems of Montreal? Nothing is less certain.” (trans. Adam van Sertima).

¹⁵⁵ Jacobs 99.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 99-100.

community we want.”¹⁵⁷ So then are the definitions of public space by the homeless considered less human or real, thereby reflected in their under-representation by scholarly and journalistic writing? Democracy and public space become confused in this regard, in that a democratic community does not now, nor has it ever meant cohesion or universality but rather, conflict and debate. As Deutsche writes, “democracy...has a difficulty at its core [as] power stems from the people but belongs to nobody.”¹⁵⁸ In this sense, the terms *community* and *public* also become confused and generalized, excluding marginalized groups that do not fit into the ideal of the middle class. Parks and squares present however, a particularly difficult example when it comes to analyzing the convoluted notion of the “public”. Here ownership lies in the hands of municipal authorities that hold the power to enforce rules and regulations regarding the use of the space. Many Montreal parks, for example, close after 11:00 pm; pathways are marked and straying from these are frowned upon, and bringing dogs is often not allowed.¹⁵⁹ So who really owns these places that are so named “public”? Therein lies the rub: indeterminacy. Public space is by nature shared, and with that comes confusions and disagreements upon use and value.

An appropriate example of this would be the Occupy Wall Street movement of 2011 where public space in large cities was occupied by protestors calling themselves the 99%.¹⁶⁰ In these temporary neighbourhoods, dwellers would gather and debate socio-economic issues that were important to members of the community. In a letter from Cairo

¹⁵⁷ Deutsche 269.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 273.

¹⁵⁹ Christopher Dewolf “Ville-Marie’s War on the Homeless” *Spacing Montreal* (Spacing Media Inc.) (7 April 2008) WEB. Accessed 5 Mar 2012.

¹⁶⁰ The 99% refers to the income and wealth inequity in America which marks the wealthiest 1% as the decision makers rather than the rest of the population.

supporters to Americans occupying parks, squares and other spaces, reminds occupants of their rights to the city.

Hold on to these spaces, nurture them...After all, who built these parks, these plazas?...Why should it seem so natural that they should be withheld from us, policed and disciplined?...These are public spaces. Spaces for gathering, leisure, meeting, and interacting – these spaces should be the reason we live in cities...it is up to us to make sure that they are safe, inclusive and just. We have and must continue to open them to anyone that wants to build a better world, particularly for the marginalized, excluded and for those groups who have suffered the worst.¹⁶¹

Up until the summer of 2011 various groups of street people have erected shelters beneath the pergolas of the *Agora*. While none of these individuals have been willing to officially discuss these shelters with me for the purposes of this thesis, I cannot deny how such individuals have used the space in alternative ways to those that were imagined by the artist and the city. In a similar way to the skateboarders Iain Borden discusses, the homeless have used “tactics of appropriation, colonization and identity formation’ to help ‘redefine the city.’”¹⁶² During my time on the site where I would sit and draw or write while observing the people there, I witnessed numerous survival tactics in terms of creating shelters on the site and maintaining relationships. These ran the gamut from sharing what food they had, to living in groups rather than individually in isolation. The space of the square itself is quite substantial and the twenty or so individuals living there at the time could have manipulated much more of the vacant space.

The homeless who frequent Square Viger operate under a form of self-governance and self-regulation within the various groups living there. I believe this is because the

¹⁶¹ “Letter from Cairo to the U.S. Occupy Movement.” Originally published in *Recherchejournal zum aufstand* (n.p) (24 Oct. 2011) Trans. By Support OWS. WEB. Accessed 2 Jan. 2012. Protestors reclaiming public spaces were evicted approximately one month after their occupation began. These evictions have shown the reality of police brutality in North America. Evictions have been documented by occupants and placed on various websites.

¹⁶² Borden 53.

homeless who call this place home feel a sense of accountability and responsibility to govern their territory if only to forestall the attention of city police if a situation develops. As Douglas Scholes had no authority in the square, he enlisted the help of the squeegee kids who would be close to his artwork to protect it from anyone who might want to destroy it. He was not a member of this community and therefore had to submit his work to those who could protect it. While Square Viger is not a shelter, or a space that is civically maintained for the leisure or living of the homeless, it is a *de facto* combination of the two. Rather than enforced upon these people as a method to save them from their plight, the agency of the *Agora*'s sheltering qualities and what it could offer has afforded a space that suits their specific needs. It has thereby produced various communities within its landscape that have learned to exist together.

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF THE *AGORA*

During the summer of 2011 there were two distinct groups living in the site, a younger punk group of squeegees who lived with dogs calling themselves “La Niche des Maîtres” on the eastern side (fig. 51), and an older group who had large communal shelters beneath the western pergolas keeping mostly to themselves. “La Niches des Maîtres” or *the Master’s Doghouse* (as they are referred to in some English circles) has many chapters that scatter Montreal’s urban landscape yet all maintain the same mandate (fig. 52). Members have canine companions that provide them with a sense of comfort and home, as Mario Paquet, a founding member of La Niche des Maîtres, explains in interviews (fig. 53). La Niche des Maîtres was put in place to fill the need for people living with dogs to live together. While there are homeless settlements and the need for a community for people living on the streets is abundantly clear, like any other neighbourhood – sometimes they cannot live together peacefully. Therefore groups have formed based on various factors: for La Niche, needs like ample space and respect for dogs are compelling reasons to live with groups of people who share the same spatial needs. Unfortunately, traditional homeless shelters typically do not accept animals, so these individuals choose to sleep in their own self-erected dwellings with others to serve both human and canine needs.¹⁶³ I learned that the Maîtres did not wish their dogs to be harmed by any discarded drug paraphernalia and the other group seemed to stay away from the squeegee community.

¹⁶³ Phil Carpenter. “Doggedly Pursuing His Mission.” *Montreal Gazette* (21 Nov. 2007) n.pag. PRINT. See also Government of Canada Website for Human Resources. As of March 2007 the Canadian Government released some alarming numbers. There were an estimated 1026 shelters with 26 872 beds for over 150 000 estimated homeless individuals in Canada.

These homeless groups and individuals have since been exorcised from Square Viger. The reason, the building of a new teaching hospital and ploy to “clean up” the area is a part of Montreal’s 2025 plan for imagining and building a creative and prosperous city, and is another justification for the removal of a community from the Ville-Marie borough.¹⁶⁴ The \$450 million renovations proposed for Viger Station (including seven hundred residential units, none of which have been advertised as including social housing) has influenced the slating of Square Viger for redevelopment too. Mayor Gérald Tremblay states that “city dwellers today want to live in “real” places, ones that encourage the open-mindedness, social cohesion and inspiration they need for their own and their families’ well being.”¹⁶⁵ Now, unpacking this statement provides a great deal insight into how the political leaders of Montreal view public space, community, democracy, and creativity in the urban realm. Ultimately though, what this statement and the projects associated with the plan present is a mass redevelopment and regulation over public spaces that will leave out marginalized uses of them and those most in need of attention.

The *Agora*, and the shelters that its modernist structure affords, have enabled the agency of the homeless to help themselves. While having the homeless live in Square Viger indefinitely is not a viable option, the use of the design qualities of the *Agora* and what it affords could be explored further and applied to future attempts at creating effective programming and social housing.

Since any site has the potential to be transformed into a public or, for that matter, a private space, public art can be viewed as an instrument that either

¹⁶⁴ *Montréal 2025: Imagining, Building*, (Ville de Montreal) (2008) WEB. Accessed 3 Mar 2012.

¹⁶⁵ “The Mayor’s Note” *Montréal 2025: Imagining, Building*, (Ville de Montreal) (2008) WEB. Accessed 3 Mar 2012.

helps produce a public space or questions a dominated space that has been officially ordained as public.¹⁶⁶

Rosalyn Deutsche illustrates the ability of public art to become a vehicle for the production of public space. Montreal, like all large urban environments, has a history of public art becoming a gathering place for the homeless.¹⁶⁷ Tonkiss writes that kinship has a relationship to place within a specifically local social geography; this could be a monument, a public artwork, a park, a home, a shelter or any place that has facilitated and maintained these friendships.¹⁶⁸

Sam Davis, an architect, writes in his book *Designing for the Homeless: Architecture that works* (2004) about designing and building effective living arrangements that work to meet the specific needs of this demographic. He indicates that, in his experience in California, with the lack of a dwelling, the individual is denied opportunities to benefit his or herself. The book explores various strategies by architects to acknowledge homelessness in their cities and to essentially remove them from “public” space. Davis writes,

Some architects maintain that the best way to achieve affordable housing is to recognize cost limitations at the outset and make compromises on space standards, amenities, and even quality; other argue, as [Davis] does, that affordable housing should be indistinguishable from nearby housing so that the residents will not be stigmatized and will feel a part of the surrounding community.¹⁶⁹

Traditional shelters also present an element of danger, as they are fraught with cases of rape, violence and vandalism. What Davis is most interested in are modern shelters that

¹⁶⁶ Deutsche 288.

¹⁶⁷ Cabot Square and Berri Square are examples of this common practice.

¹⁶⁸ Tonkiss 19.

¹⁶⁹ Sam Davis, *Designing for the Homeless: Architecture that Works* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004) 20. PRINT.

reflect the dwelling practices the homeless already display in the city – transience, self-government, and of course, appropriation. Davis writes of shelters like the San Francisco mission, which sports movable partitions between beds that can be adjusted in height as well providing privacy but also a feeling of independence. If architects and developers were to observe the practices of homeless individuals more often and work with them closely to create space for this particular demographic, it would be a far more effective route, and their shelters would be more effectively used.

Through observing and speaking with a few individuals who live in Square Viger, I quickly learned that the environment Charles Daudelin built is, unknowingly, a fitting place (at least architecturally) for them to claim as a dwelling. The sturdy roof and lack of walls, along with the multitude spaces, allow for numerous groups of people and animals alike to use this space comfortably. I believe the enclosing walls and harsh atmosphere of traditional homeless shelters would bring feelings of entrapment in an unsafe place, which are thereby proliferating various mental anxiety issues. Davis rightly argues “all citizens have a right to be in a public space...even if their presence makes others uncomfortable.”¹⁷⁰ As I have acknowledged, the goal of public space is not to unify but to enable democracy, which is rightly situated in conflict yet hazed over with a veil of “universal” appeal. By investigating the dwelling strategies of the homeless in Square Viger and other public sites, architects and designers might build shelters/housing projects that implement the impermanent strategies the homeless have come up with on their own, a tarp for privacy or cardboard for warmth. My contribution to the historiography of Square Viger is in my acknowledgement towards publics, like the

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 60.

homeless and artist populations, who have used the space as agents within the Square reflecting upon its design and architectural qualities to produce work in the changing climate of public art practice.

By exploring the unconventional uses of public space, that of artists and the homeless, I have considered their use of the square as an important element within both the site's history, and the history of Montreal as well. There may have been an opportunity to revitalize the Square however, this "unloved corner" will be gutted once again as the city has planned to raze the sculpture.¹⁷¹ How can Montreal negotiate the plans to move forward with Square Viger *sans l'itinérant* without forgetting their past use of the site?

While urban space is constantly being redefined, there is a balancing act between the occupied and abandoned, use and misuse. I strongly believe there is a place in the history of Square Viger for the homeless who have occupied and appropriated Daudelin's *Agora* as their home. Perhaps this thesis will contribute to demonstrating the importance of acknowledging these "other publics" and planning a commemorative art project that acknowledges the history of the site and the homeless occupations of it too. Dolores Hayden argues that, "the most effective public art projects about places [are those] that link past and present."¹⁷² To me, the dwellings and communities that were maintained within Square Viger and the *Agora* and the overall history of the Ville-Marie borough are equally entrenched into the site as the vines on the concrete pillars – creeping up and in, and ultimately re-determining the space.

¹⁷¹ Joanna Piro, Communications Project Manager, "Viger Square redevelopment: What will happen to the works?" News #847, *Le Regroupement des Artistes en Arts Visuels du Quebec*, (n.p) (n.d.) WEB. Accessed 29 Feb 2012.

¹⁷² Hayden 73, 75.

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Figures

Fig. 1



Map of Square Viger

Google Maps. 2011. Map

In this map we can see how the Ville-Marie Expressway runs directly beneath Square Viger. The construction of this underground tunnel was the reason Square Viger was redeveloped in the 1970s. The three lots that are depicted here in green and divided by Rue Saint Denis, Rue Berri, and Rue Saint Hubert were redesigned by artists Charles Daudelin, Claude Théberge, and Peter Gnass.

Fig. 2



Charles Daudelin's Agora in Square Viger. Looking east
Lindsay Ann Cory. June 2011. Photograph

A group of homeless squeegee kids gather with their dogs in this square. They had settled here for an undetermined duration of time as “La Niches des Maitres”. Under a pergola beyond the right border of this photograph is where their shelters were located. Tents and found objects were erected and affixed to the concrete structures.

Fig. 3



Homeless habitation in Square Viger

Bernard Brault, *La Presse*. 2008. Photograph

Source: “Sans-abri mort de froid: «C'est une mort tragique»,” *La Presse*. Accessed 2 January 2012.

This photograph shows one of the tents that have existed in Square Viger since its redevelopment in 1984.

Fig. 4



Charles Daudelin's Embâcle (1984) at Place du Quebec in Paris

Steven Ballegeer. 2006. Photograph

Source: "Embacle by Charles Daudelin, Paris." *Steven Ballegeer*. Flickr, 4 August 2006. Accessed 2 January 2012.

In this photograph we can see Charles Daudelin's *Embâcle* (1984) at Place du Quebec in Paris and how it has also been used for renegade graffiti artists to tag their whereabouts in the city. This is an alternative use to the one originally intended by the artist or the commissioning bodies.

Fig. 5



Monument to Paul Chomedey de Maisonneuve in Place d'Armes, Montreal

Pierre Obendrauf, *The Gazette*. 2011. Photograph

Source: "The recently reopened, refurbished Place d'Armes is improved in some ways, but the Old Montreal gathering spot has also lost its intimacy." *The Gazette*. Accessed 2 January 2012.

This monument in front of Notre-Dame Basilica depicts Natives crouching below the statue of Paul Chomedey de Maisonneuve in Place d'Armes. The square is a major tourist stop for photo opportunities and gathering.

Fig. 6

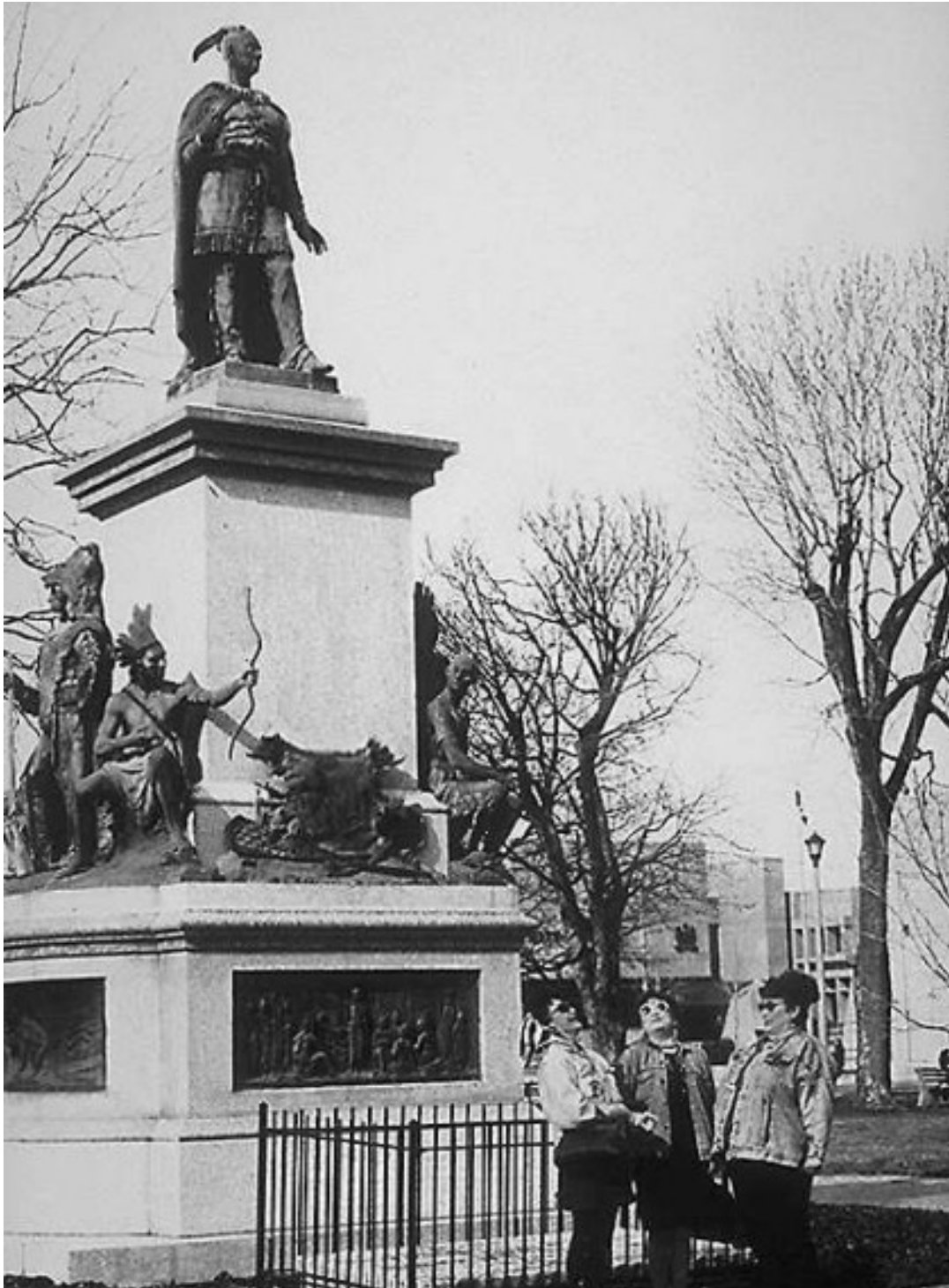


Jeff Thomas' Peace Chief at Place d'Armes, Montreal (2001)

Photograph

Source: "Peace Chief at Place d'Armes" *Artnet*. Accessed 2 January 2012

Fig. 7



Shelley Niro's Three Mohawk Women at the Base of the Joseph Brant Monument (1991)
Library and Archives Canada. Photograph
Source: Library and Archives Canada.

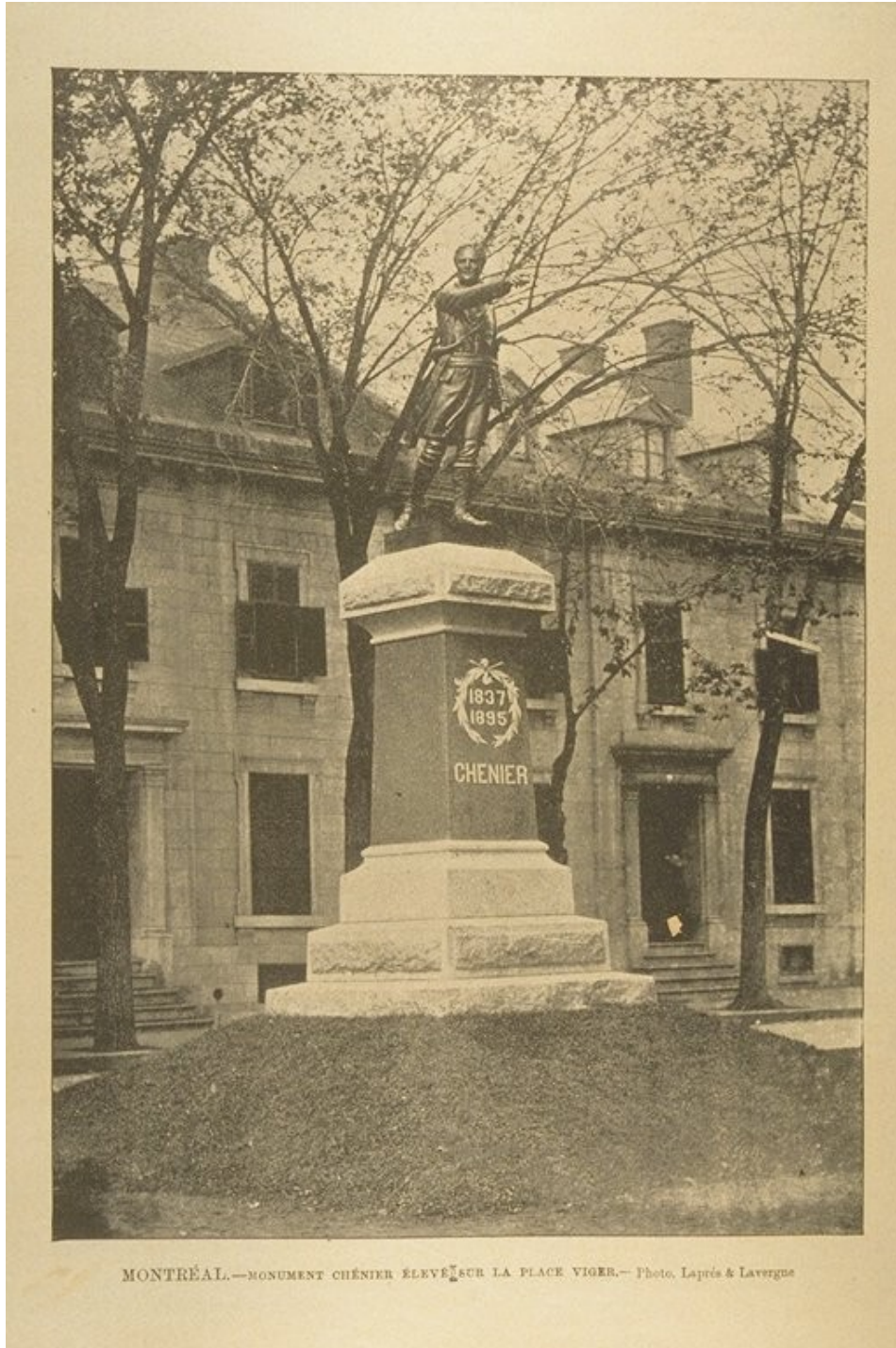
Fig. 8



Monument to Jean-Olivier Chénier adjacent to Square Viger
Jean Gagnon. 2008. Photograph

Source: "Chénier Monument." *Jean Gagnon*, Flickr, Accessed 2 January 2012.

Fig. 9



Monument Chénier élevé sur la place Viger
Le Monde illustré. 1895. Photograph
Source: Bibliothèque National et Archives de Québec.

Fig. 10



Krzysztof Wodiczko's Homeless Projection on the Civil War Memorial (1987)
Unknown Photographer. 1992. Photograph
Source: "Krzysztof Wodiczko's Homeless Projection on the Civil War Memorial"
ArtIcono, Accessed 2 January 2012.

Fig. 11



Le Carré Viger, Montreal

L'opinion publique. 1870. Etching

Source: Bibliotheque National et Archives de Quebec.

In the middle-right of this drawing, see the greenhouse, reminiscent of London's Crystal Palace.

Fig. 12



Le Jardin Viger, le soir du 24
L'opinion publique. 1874. Etching
Source: Bibliotheque National et Archives de Quebec.

Fig. 13



Square Viger fountain
William Notman. About 1875. Photograph
Source: McCord Museum, Montreal

Fig. 14



Musique dans les places publiques: concert de la bande du 65ème bataillon dans le jardin Viger, Montréal

L'opinion publique. 1880. Etching

Source: Bibliothèque National et Archives de Québec.

Fig. 15



Square Viger fountain
Neudiens Brothers. 1907. Photograph
Source: McCord Museum, Montreal

Fig. 16



Aerial view of Montreal. Place Viger and Square Viger can be seen in the mid-ground.
Public Archives of Canada. PA-56098. Photography
Source: Jean-Claude Marsan, *Montreal in Evolution*, pg. 294

Fig. 17



Square Viger in the early evening
H. Sutcliffe. About 1925. Photograph
Source: McCord Museum, Montreal

Fig. 18



Place Viger railway station and hotel
William Notman & Son. About 1901. Photograph
Source: McCord Museum, Montreal

One of the Lacroix fountains located on the left side of the photograph.

Fig. 19



Square Viger with abandoned Place Viger in the background
Andrzej Maiejewski. 2000. Photograph
Source: McCord Museum, Montreal

Fig. 20



Holy Trinity Anglican Church near Square Viger
James George Parks. 1870-1880. Photograph
Source: McCord Museum, Montreal

Fig. 21



St. Denis Street showing Laval University
Anonymous. About 1910. Photograph
Source: McCord Museum, Montreal

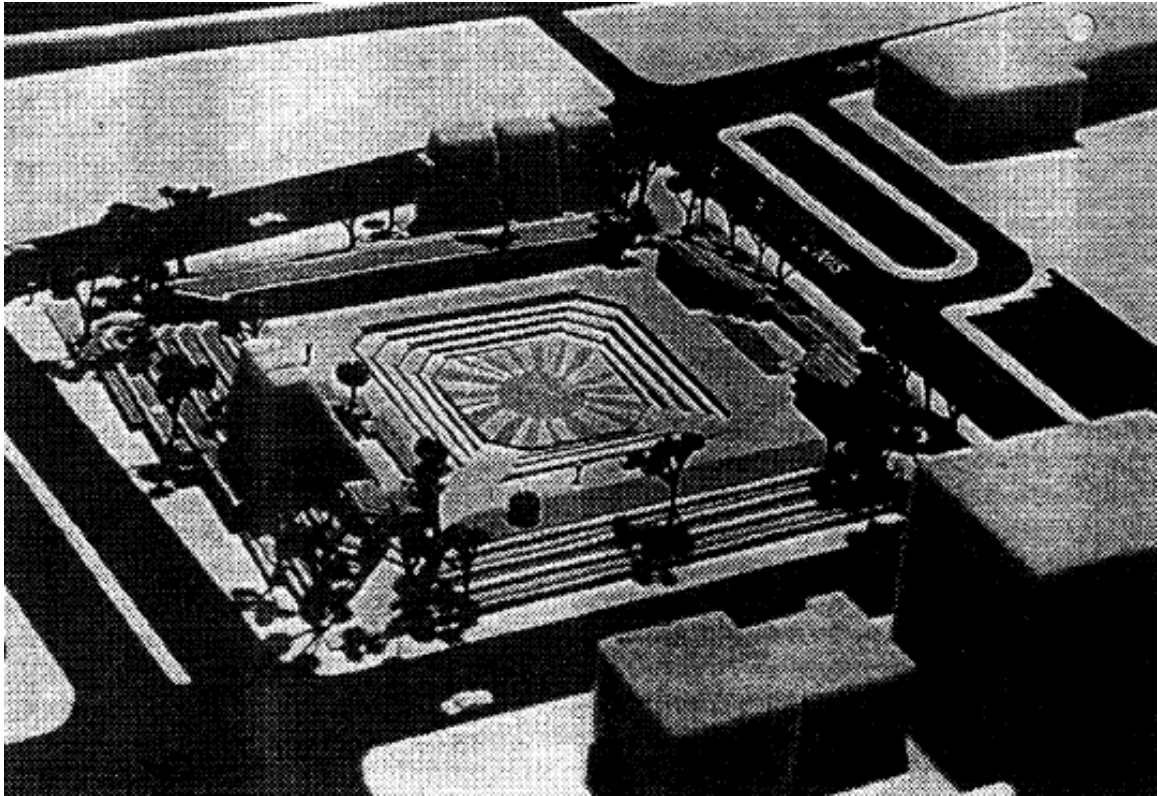
Fig. 22



During the construction of metro and highway
Photographer Unknown. Date Unknown. Photograph
Source: Marc Choko. *The Major Squares of Montreal*, 138

The destruction of the square meant the loss of many large trees on the site.

Fig. 23



Michel Stanisic's original plan for the western Square Viger block re-design.
Margaret Boyce. 2002. Photograph of model. pg 716
Source: Photograph of model located at the City of Montreal Archives, Parks Service
which is not currently accessible.

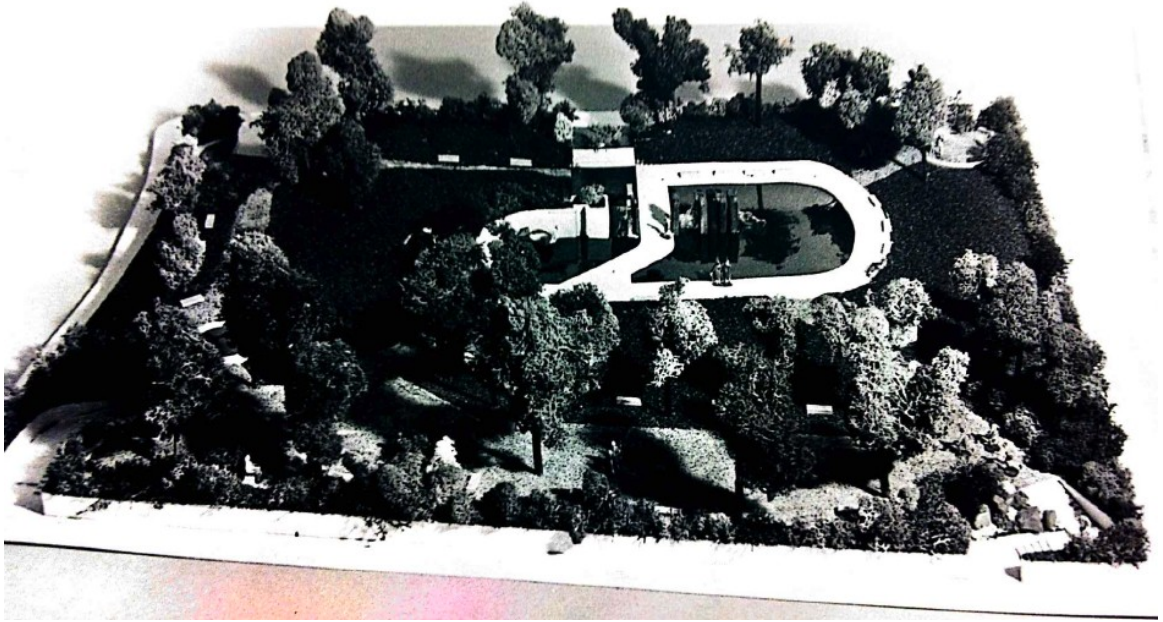
This photograph shows the auditorium style agora that was originally favoured by the City of Montreal.

Fig. 24



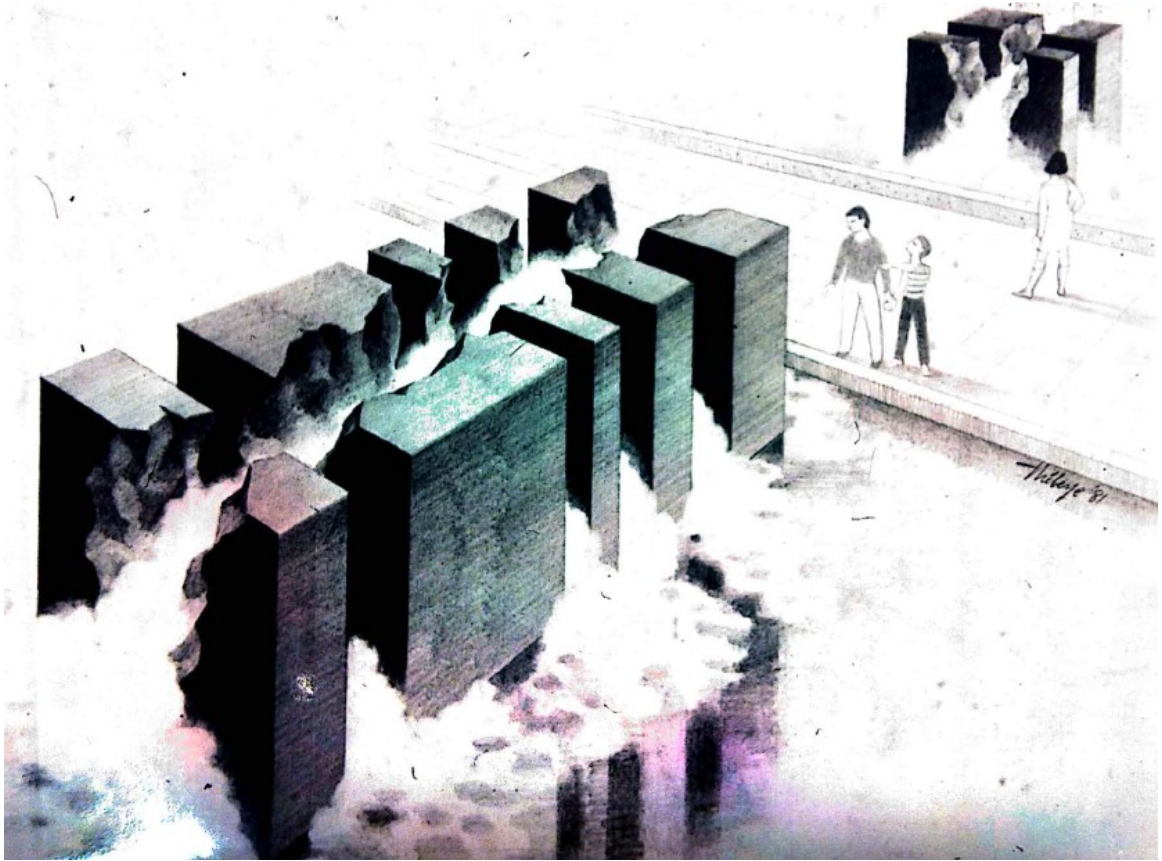
Claude Th  berge's Force (1985) in Parc Viger
Sculpture. Granit and Concrete
Image Source: Metro de Art. Accessed 2 January 2012

Fig. 25



Model of Claude Théberge's Forces (1985)
Musée du Québec.

Fig. 26



Drawing of Forces by Claude Th berge (1981)
Mus e du Quebec

Fig. 27



Peter Gnass's Jeux d'enfants (1984) in lot 'C'
Fountain. Stainless steel

Fig. 28



Model of Peter Gnass's Jeux d'enfants fountain (1984)
Musée du Québec

Fig. 29



Charles Daudelin with his wife Louise Daudelin with photographs and models of sculptural projects.

Photographer Unknown. 1969. Photograph
Image Source: *Daudelin* exhibition catalogue, 21

Fig. 30



Daudelin with his daughter in his Kirkland at home studio.
Photograph. 1958
Image Source: *Daudelin* exhibition catalogue, 19

Fig. 31



Marionnettes made by Charles and Louise Daudelin: Noiraud (1949) and Le Clown Ric (1949)

Wood, velvet, metal and cotton

57 x 10 x 10 cm (Noiraud) and 75 x 16 x 13 cm (Le Clown Ric)

Musée du Québec

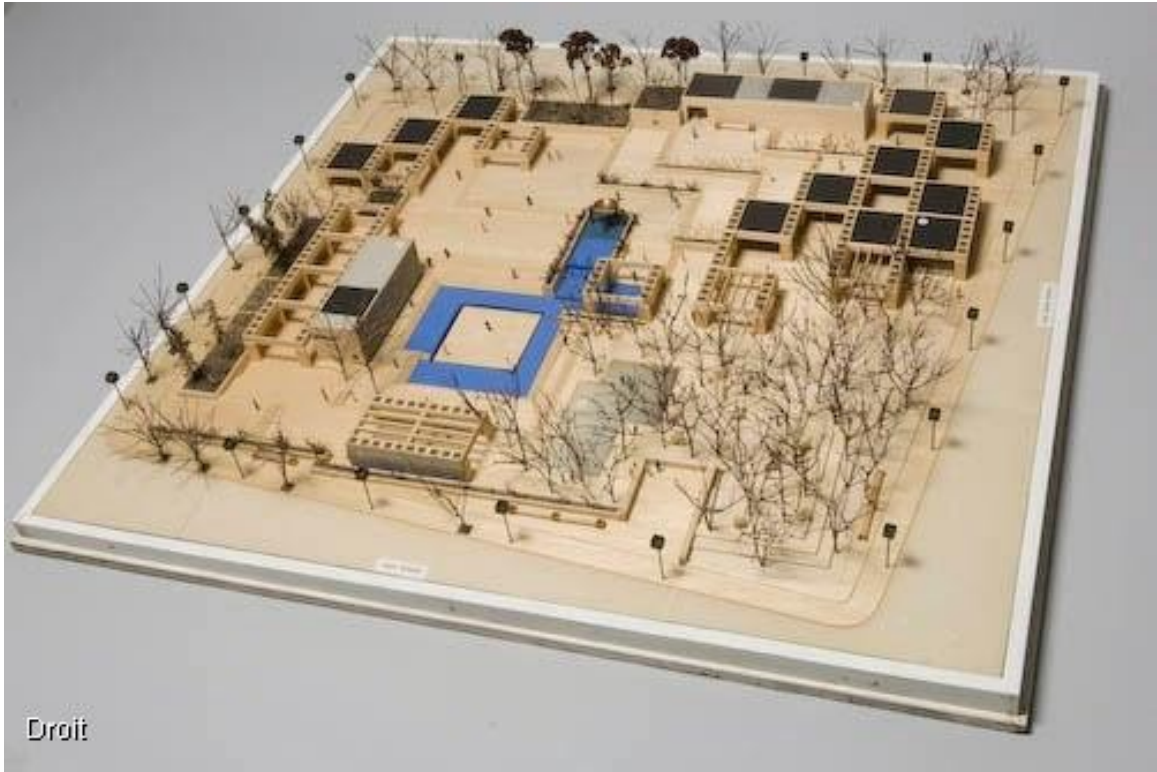
Image Source: *Daudelin* exhibition catalogue, 68.

Fig. 32



Central altarpiece for the chapelle du Sacré-Coeur in Montreal's Notre-Dame basilica.
Charles Daudelin. 1980-1982. Bronze
Source: Yves Lacasse, *Daudelin*. 107

Fig. 33



Charles Daudelin's maquette of Square Viger Agora
Musée du Québec. Sculpture. 1983

33 x 126.5 x 124.5 cm
Balsa wood, plastic, metal and branches

Fig. 34



Charles Daudelin's maquette of Square Viger Agora
Musée du Québec. Sculpture. 1983

33 x 126.5 x 124.5 cm
Balsa wood, plastic, metal and branches

Fig. 35



Charles Daudelin's maquette of Square Viger Agora
Musée du Québec. Sculpture. 1983

33 x 126.5 x 124.5 cm
Balsa wood, plastic, metal and branches

Fig. 36



Agora slatted roof pergola
Lindsay Ann Cory. 2011. Photograph

Fig. 37



Agora in the summer
Lindsay Ann Cory. 2011. Photograph

Fig. 38



Charles Daudelin's Mastodo fountain (1984)
Fountain. 1983. Bronze
Lindsay Ann Cory. 2011. Photograph

Fig. 39



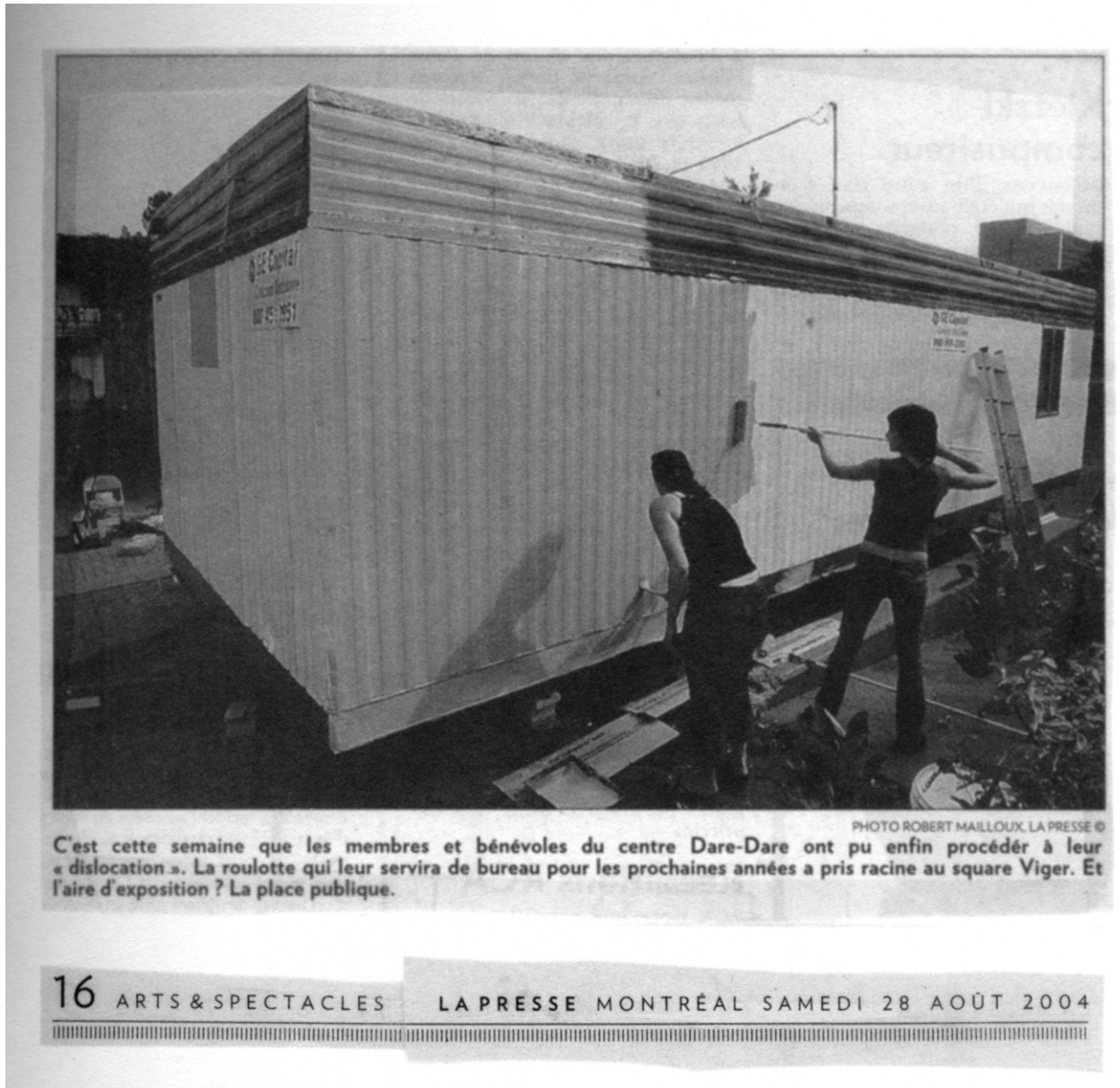
Dare-Dare mobile office in no name park (Cabot Square)
Unknown Photographer. 2007. Photograph
Source: *Dare Dare*. Accessed 2 January 2012.

Fig. 40



Inside the Dare-Dare mobile office (while in Square Viger)
Dare-Dare. 2004-2006. Photograph
Source: *DIS/LOCATION 1 catalogue*

Fig. 41



Painting the Dare-Dare mobile office (while in Square Viger)
Robert Mailloux, La Presse. 2004. Photograph
Source: *DIS/LOCATION 1 catalogue*

Fig 42



*Overhead map of Square Viger
Dare-Dare. 2004. Satellite photograph.
Source: DIS/LOCATION 1 catalogue*

Red rectangle shows where mobile office was situated during the DIS/LOCATION 1 project (2004-2006)

Fig. 43



Installation photograph of Douglas Scholes' artwork: This is what happens when a thing is maintained (?) (2004)

Dare-Dare. 2004. Photograph

Source: *DIS/LOCATION 1 catalogue*

Fig. 44



Installation photograph of Douglas Scholes' art work: This is what happens when a thing is maintained (?) (2004)

Dare-Dare. 2004. Photograph

Source: *DIS/LOCATION 1 catalogue*

Fig. 45



Vernissage snapshot for Douglas Scholes' art work: This is what happens when a thing is maintained (?) (2004)

Dare-Dare. 2004. Photograph

Source: *DIS/LOCATION 1 catalogue*

Fig. 46



This is what happens when a thing is maintained (?) (2004)

Douglas Scholes. 2004. Beeswax bricks

Source: *DIS/LOCATION 1 catalogue*

The structures would often be destroyed or simply fall down due to humidity or other climatic changes. The towers would be rebuilt daily by Scholes and volunteers.

Fig. 47



Les Ville-Laines Yarn Bombing project: Home Sweet Home (2011)

Home Sweet Home tag

Eli Larin. 2011. Photograph

Source: Les Ville-Laines. Accessed 2 January 2012.

Fig. 48



Les Ville-Laines Yarn Bombing project: Home Sweet Home (2011)
In the process of mounting the tags on the Agora
Eli Larin. 2011. Photograph
Source: Les Ville-Laines. Accessed 2 January 2012.

Fig. 49



Les Ville-Laines Yarn Bombing project: Home Sweet Home (2011)
Eli Larin. 2011. Photograph
Source: Les Ville-Laines. Accessed 2 January 2012.

In the process of mounting the tags on the Agora while a dweller (in the purple and pink bandana) assists.

Fig. 50



Les Ville-Laines Yarn Bombing project: Home Sweet Home (2011)

Eli Larin. 2011. Photograph

Source: Les Ville-Laines. Accessed 2 January 2012.

Fig. 51



La Niches des Maîtres in Square Viger.
Lindsay Ann Cory. 2011. Photograph

Fig. 52



Chapter of La Niche des Maîtres

Ben Soo. 2008. Photograph

Source: *Ville-Marie's War on the Homeless*. Spacing Montreal. Accessed 11 January 2012.

Fig. 53



Mario Paquet with his nine dogs living in a La Niche des Maitres settlement.
Armand Trottier, *La Presse*. 2007. Photograph
Source: "Mario Paquet" *La Presse*. Accessed 2 January 2012.

Fig. 54



Agora (Charles Daudelin, 1984) in Square Viger, August 2011
Lindsay Ann Cory. 2011. Photograph

The square is empty after the homeless have been roused from this spot after over twenty years of inhabitation.