

A Pleasurable Methodology: Joyously Reimagining our Neighbourhoods

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Abstract

The Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland neighbourhood of Ellerslie has undergone destructive erasures of ecology and indigeneity since colonisation. This is exemplified by the filling with concrete of the sacred subterranean caves, Waiatarua, during the construction of the Ellerslie Racecourse grandstand. This paper argues that this causal act of destruction through architectural procedures, and others geographically similar to it, can be understood as a result of a painful colonial legacy that continues to adversely inform architecture today. In response, a Pleasurable Methodology is proposed as an alternative architectural practice that emotively engages with the immanent whenua of Waiatarua. It speculatively aims to generate neighbourhoods where equality is formed between the vitality and wellbeing of the earth with the wellbeing of the communities that whakapapa and live there. This is crucial to facing the rising inequities of housing, food security and climate facing our cities. As a result of the methodology, experimental drawings are created from an embodied pleasurable engagement between decomposing organic matter as whenua and conventional architectural materials such as wire, paper and clay. This entangled dialogue provokes an emotive neighbourhood where whenua and pleasure fabricate and reimagine a regenerative way of living within our isthmus. This paper's main findings conclude that by challenging conceptions of land and architecture, we can potentially endeavour to feel and then draw future neighbourhoods where the vitality of whenua is intimately tied to loving communities.

Keywords: Whenua, Waiatarua, Pleasurable Methodology, methodology, decolonisation

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