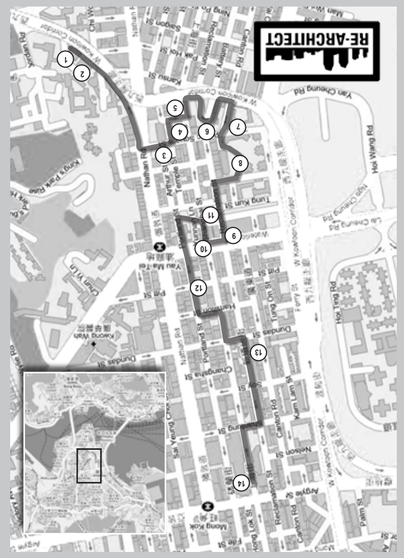
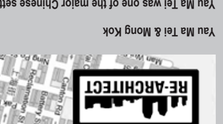


Yau Ma Tei & Mong Kok

Yau Ma Tei was one of the major Chinese settlements when the British occupied Kowloon peninsula. Shanghai Street was a major thoroughfare first built in the 1870s. Several reclamations followed and even after the plague in 1894 Yau Ma Tei had kept its status as the most populous district in Kowloon as well as a busy commercial district.



Mong Kok is the busiest area in Hong Kong, crowded with locals and tourists day and night. It is mainly residential and commercial with fewer industrial facilities apart from the obsolutions workshops and trades along the backstreets. Before the advent of malls in Hong Kong it was THE place for shopping – from women's wear, sneakers, pet fish and flowers to all other everyday needs, each with its designated streets. Instead of getting saturated with standardized high-rise public housing estates, most of Mong Kok's characteristic private buildings have mixed commercial/residential use.

South Kowloon Magistracy

1 South Kowloon Magistracy

Gascoigne Road is one of the most beautiful colonial buildings on the Kowloon Peninsula. Built in the 1930s, its main elevation is featured by its Ionic columns in the centre and British brickwork on the two sides. Additional wings when British colonial verandah in the front is a typical architects adapted neoclassical facades in subtropical climate.

Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Tradition, Balance".

2 Methodist Church

The Methodist Church on Gascoigne Road was built in the 1950s by Szeto Wai (who was known for the planning of Chinese University, Hong Kong and Statue Square in Central). Szeto Wai, educated first as an engineer but also a passionate painter and photographer, was among the first batch of Guangdong architects who were educated abroad and returned for the post-war building of Hong Kong. The Methodist Church is an demonstration of early Szeto's work, with an immense interest of using concrete as a sculptural material, interplay of Chinese and Western motifs, and a playful arrangement of spatial volumes. Architectural works by the early modern Chinese architects are often overlooked in Hong Kong. For the same reason many were demolished in the last two decades. The Methodist Church is fortunate to be left intact in the city. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Tradition".

3 Tin Hau Temple

Tin Hau Temple on Temple Street (1640s, rebuilt 1870) and the market in front of the temple was the centre of action. Construction of several public facilities still standing further consolidated the status of the area, including the Wholesale Fruit Market in 1913, the Police Station in 1922 and the Yaumatei Theatre in 1925. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Tradition, Feng Shui, Balance, Horizontal emphasis".

4 Yung Shue Tau

Today the little park known as Yung Shue Tau in front of Tin Hau Temple has become a public square where the elderly from the neighbourhood play chess throughout the day and practice tai chi in the morning. For decades the sidewalk outside of the square together with the Temple Street is converted every evening into a night market of fortune-tellers, street performers and makeshift stalls selling cheap souvenirs and sundries. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Harmony, Social, Sustainability".

Yaumatei Carpark

5 Yaumatei Carpark

Views of the surrounding residential remnants can be found at most angles from the 8-storey Yaumatei Public Carpark facing Shanghai Street, which houses more than 750 parking spaces. The Carpark structure, itself a functional government building, is particularly striking with a 2-lane highway flyover flight through it after the original building construction had been completed and in use for some years. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Honesty, Simplicity, Sustainability".

6 Jade Market

The Jade Market near the flyover in Kansu Street is a mecca for collectors from all over the world. About 400 registered stall-owners sell amulets, ornaments, necklaces and trinkets made from the revered green stone believed to possess the power of warding off evil spirits and protecting travelers. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Enclosure".

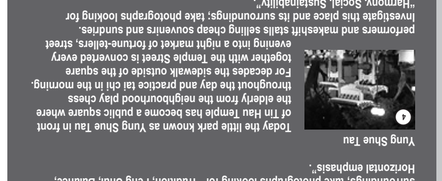
7 Yaumatei Police Station

The Yaumatei Police Station was completed in 1922 and is characterized by an English Edwardian architecture design. The station was much smaller when it was built some 60 years ago, but due to reclamation projects near the waterfront of Yau Ma Tei, the station was extended and a new phase – the three-storey Old Block, painted white and light blue, or the museum and a window of offices, with the third floor designated as barracks for women police officers. The building is spacious and linked up by long corridors and wooden doors decorated with arch-shaped lintels fitted with panes of artistically carved glass. Sunlight coming through the windows is really quite magnificent. Yaumatei Police Station has been classified as a historical building by the Antiquities and Monuments Office. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Tradition".

8 Broadway Cinematheque

A few steps away from the market lies the Broadway Cinematheque, offering online one-stop service of cinema, café, bookstore and disc store under one roof. The Cinematheque is located amongst government-subsidized residential development, pulling together film enthusiasts and local residents who share the public space in front of the cinema in their cultural pursuits or daily activities. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Harmony, Social".

Fruit Market + Yaumatei Theatre



9 Fruit Market + Yaumatei Theatre

The Wholesale Fruit Market is another interesting public facility along Waterloo Road. Other than the chain supermarkets, many smaller retailers come here at the wee hours before 6 o' ram to select and buy. The streets outside of the market are often congested and blocked by trucks and toilers in the middle of the night. The maze-like market consists of rows of tiny connecting warehouses and is a favorite location for action films. The adjacent 80 year-old Yaumatei Theatre was once the largest theatre in Kowloon. The Theatre fell into disrepair in the 1980s turn of the millennium the luckily escaped the bulldozer and is currently slated for remodeling into a centre for Chinese Opera. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Honesty, Re-use".

10 Red Brick House + 8 Waterloo Road

Just around the corner is the former pumping station or Water Supplies Department commonly known as the Red Brick House. The building is a small two-storey structure with a Chinese tiled roof and pink brick walls in Flemish bond that give it an English cottage appearance. Right above it situates the high-rise reddish residential towers 8 Waterloo Road which highlights the complex from its vernacular surroundings; in contrasting rouge. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Enclosure".

11 Chinese Shophouses on Shanghai Street

There are relatively few new buildings and still a handful of pre-war shophouses. Many of the shops along the Yaumatei stretch of Shanghai Street specialize in traditional Chinese embroidery/wedding supplies and professional kitchen utensils. The shops are the merchandise here are fast-disappearing cultures. The newer generations are clueless about these traditions. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Harmony, Hierarchy".

12 Portland Street

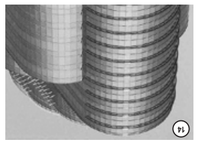
Portland Street just before Langham Place is exclusive territory for international building and home decoration supplies, from floor and wall tiles, bathroom and kitchen fixtures to wall papers and lighting. Most of the shops here are branches in Wanchai on the opposite side of the harbour. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Zeitgeist, Adaptability".

Reclamation Street

13 Reclamation Street

Specialty stores along the back streets further from Nathan Road, such as Reclamation Street and Canton Road carry heavier goods such as plumbing supplies, metal welding, timber and general hardware. They are frequented by tradesmen as opposed to the average consumer. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Zeitgeist, Adaptability".

Langham Place



14 Langham Place

Langham Place is so far the biggest urban redevelopment project in Mong Kok by the government and private developers. It was a massive project of a 5-star hotel, office towers and over 10 stories of shopping space, pulling down 40 buildings on several city blocks and took 2 decades to fully complete. It is the only large shopping mall in Mong Kok. But the shops and stalls outside of Langham Place keep doing brisk business and the streets are busy as ever. However there has been a significant rent hike immediately outside the mall and some of the older business and shops were pushed to close. Gentrification also pushed the sex trade at the previous Langham Place location to Yau Ma Tei or other areas. Investigate this place and its surroundings; take photographs looking for "Zeitgeist".

Troubleshooting the 7scenes mobile application

The application is gone!
No problem - just restart the application to continue your journey - see below.

I don't see any maps!
If the screen says 'Waiting for satellites', then the GPS doesn't have an accurate position yet. This may take a few minutes.
If the screen says 'Loading maps', but the progress indicator doesn't move after a few seconds, there may be a network problem. See below how to check that.

The location indicator doesn't move!
Check the GPS signal (see below)
Try moving away from large buildings, and into a more open space. Careful with traffic!

I'm on top of a Place, but nothing happens!
Try moving away from large buildings, and into a more open space. Careful with traffic!
Try walking about a bit. GPS accuracy a bit. GPS accuracy can be sometimes reduced.
Check the GPS signal (see below)
Check the network connectivity (see below).
If all seems OK, try restarting the application (see below).

To restart the application:
From the main screen of the telephone (press the red button a few times to get there), re-start the application by pressing on the left or right softkeys (the blue keys right below the screen - where it says '7scenes')
When the blue 'Scenes' screen shows up, select your round to continue on your journey.

To check the GPS signal:
You can check the GPS signal from within the application:
- Go to the main menu, and select 'Settings'
- From the 'Options' menu, select 'GPS'.
- The GPS status should say 'Fix OK'
- The numbers degree lion, and lat may jump around a bit - that's OK.
- The GPS accuracy should be around 25m.

Tip: always slide the telephone open to improve GPS reception. The antenna is underneath the keyboard.

To check the network connectivity:
In the top left corner of the screen, a small icon with two arrows and the text '3G' should be present. If there is nothing there, check the profile settings:
- Then from the 'Options' menu, select 'Profile'.
- On this Profile screen, check if the text below 'state' says 'logged in'. If not, check if the 'username, and 'password' fields are filled in, and correct them if necessary.
- If that doesn't help, try restarting the application: From the main menu select 'Quit' (Or press the red key on the telephone), then re-start the application.

Re-architect:
to redesign, make fundamental design changes.

Re-architect is a game on urban design, play and transformation. The game takes you on a photographic treasure hunt along the architectural past, present and future of the city. Along your journey you investigate locations and their surroundings, are asked to respond to their design principles and photograph the city from different architectural perspectives.

www.re-architect.org

Individually players will learn more on how they perceive the city, collectively all players create a new map of the city together.

Re-architect can both be played hi-tech, with GPS-enabled phones triggering game content by player's positions and lo-fi using this hard-copy map.

Re-architect is also very much a discussion platform asking you to comment on the city's changes not only from a architect's perspective but also as a resident or visitor responding to public space. What kind of changes would you make in the city?

What would you re-architect?

Re-architect is played during the Business of Design Week '08 in Hong Kong and was created by Waag Society and 7scenes in collaboration with the Hong Kong Design Institute, Polytechnic University Hong Kong and NAi. Sponsored by PCCW mobile.

www.waag.org
www.7scenes.com

7scenes Waag Society PCCW mobile

Rules

0. Prepare: bring your digital camera.

1. Team up: create a team of 3.

2. When playing with a phone: get 7scenes running on a GPS phone (visit www.7scenes.com). Use this booklet on your way.

3. Navigate: start navigating from location to location.

4. Learn: at each location discuss the available info about the place.

5. Investigate: investigate the location and its surroundings based on the linked design principle(s). Does this (set of) principle(s) not work for you? Pick another. Check out this booklet for explanations.

7. Photograph: Discuss which principle(s) fit(s) best and take photos that best illustrate this – as a team.

8. Upload: upload your photo directly via 7scenes on your phone or email them (phone or web) to: eye99larger@photos.flickr.com (subject: location, design principle; body: comments)

9. Comment: let us know your thoughts when you took the photos, leave all of your comments on our flickr page (flickr.com/photos/re-architect) and discuss your ideas with other players.

Design principles

Use the principles below to look at buildings or spaces from a specific point-of-view. Some are already linked to locations on the route, but if you see new relationships, feel free to express this with photos and upload them with your comments to the website.

Zeitgeist
Every age has a certain spirit or set of shared attitudes that should be utilised when designing.

Tradition
A building should be designed so the public will appreciate a structure's timeless beauty and understand immediately how to use a given building.

Harmony
A building should be designed in accordance with the particular characteristics of a specific place. Aiming for visual harmony between a building and its surroundings and a connection between past and present forms of a building.

Balance
Emphasis on balance by bilateral symmetry and articulation (elements in a building that are jointed together).

Hierarchy
The hierarchy of buildings is based on their strict placement in a property/complex. Buildings with doors facing the front of the property are considered more important than those facing the sides. Buildings facing away from the front are the least important. Buildings in the rear and more private parts of the property are held in higher esteem.

Enclosure
Constructing buildings or building complexes that take up an entire property but encloses open spaces within itself. These enclosed spaces come in two forms: the open courtyard and the "sky well" (a hole in the roof that allows sunshine to get in, to all levels in the house)

Feng Shui
Harmony through careful placement of objects. Screen walls face the main entrance of the house, which stems from the belief that evil things travel on straight lines. The windowless back of the structure faces the north, where the wind is coldest in the winter. Ponds, pools, wells, and other water sources are usually built into the structure.

Horizontal emphasis
The emphasis on the horizontal axis, in particular the construction of a heavy platform and a large roof that floats over this base, with the vertical walls not as well emphasized. Stressing the visual impact of the width of a building.

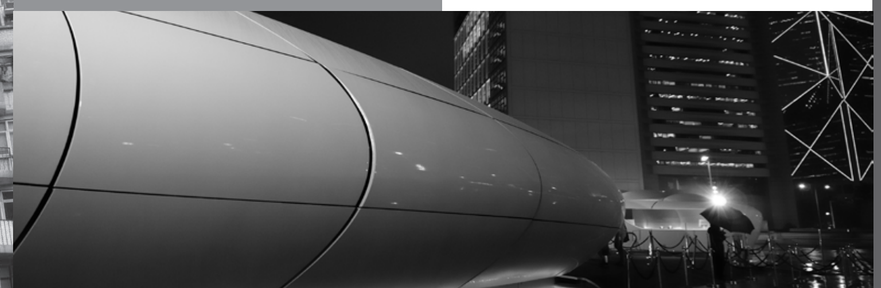
Honesty: structure, function and material
A structure shall display its "true" purpose and not be decorative. A building form shall be shaped on the basis of its intended function, often known as "form follows function". Materials should be used and selected on the bases of their properties, and that the characteristics of a material should influence the form it is used for.

Simplicity & minimalism
Simple forms, i.e. aesthetics without considerable ornaments, simple geometry, smooth surfaces etc., represents forms which are considered as "real" art.

Natural & organic
Nature can provide inspiration, functional clues and aesthetic forms that should be used as a basis for designs characterized by free-flowing curves, asymmetrical lines and expressive forms. "Form follows flow".

Social
Emphasis on creating a building or complex designed for social interaction and awareness.

Re-use & Modification
Existing buildings can be continuously used through updates.

Sustainability
A sustainable and/or environmentally friendly building approach is beneficial to users, society and future generations.

Adaptability
Design purpose and values should be able to change and respond to social, economic and community needs. Users and residents should be able to create as much as designers, planners and architects.