

## The Dynamics of Passion

The 'creative city' is found in the "passionate" city, and a passionate city is by definition a creative city. For creativity is born of passion, and not vice-versa. It follows then that a discussion of the dynamics of passion is more crucial to the city debate, than the strategizing of elements that are a function of passion.

Let's take the word "passion" away from its media charisma and appreciate it as basic to the psychology, or as absent from it as "depression", or "well-being", or "reserve", or "self-consciousness" or any human affectivity, or disposition. Passion is the zeal with which one responds to the invitation to creativity. Setting up the invitations to creativity is useless unless one builds the mechanisms of response, and fosters the genesis of response to creative invitation.

People suppose that they can encourage others to "think" creatively. "Thinking" creative happens naturally and only when the "eros" or the excitement of an idea attracts the human initiative. But that excitement does not begin in the idea; it begins in the "response" to the idea. The most marvellous tools and options may be available in the inventories of artistic endeavor, civic or otherwise; but if the "ethos" of the city is not predisposed to respond with excitement to a vision, the city becomes just a paraphernalia of options and possibilities. And it is mistaken to think that the advertisements of attractive possibility will naturally seduce the citizen to the creative agenda. The "hunger" for growth has to be there, the "hope" for growth has to be there, free of the wastage of cynicism, free of the caveats of boundary and protocol, free of the constraints that a hyper-regulated metropolis offers, free of the many sanctions against physical expression that a techno-safety-conscious society iterates on a daily basis.

Very simply, "passion" starts with the body, and the expression of body. It is architecture that attempts to give a forum to the expression of the body. It is art that instructs people in how to use their bodies as mediums of greater involvement. It is the body, and the happiness of the body that the city provides furniture for, creates walking spaces for, provides shelter for, provides recreation for. And the body is never separate from the mind; but mind, when hampered in the use of the body, is never free to respond with passion to an idea or civic design of any sort.

You can judge a city firstly and mainly by the interaction of bodies, exchanges of social negotiation that are somatic, verbal and visual and yes, physical; "contact" cannot just be an abstraction, especially in a time when the violation of physical space is seen as intrusive to personal autonomy. You can have a "safe" city, but not without the risk of strategizing a non-physical city. A city that is not manifest in physical, verbal and sensory self-involvement, a citizenry that does not involve itself with the "senses" of others cannot use the city creatively as a habitat, for it is self-conscious, and self-consciousness is the first barrier to passion and response.

The first and most visible "index" of the health of a city, and the most impossible thing to quantify is its "self-consciousness"; it is evident, by degrees, in every city; and where there is little of it, a city is robust and free to experiment with the designs that it dares to dream.

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