

MATCHPOINT.MELBOURNE

This pamphlet provides an overview of the project and the activities that are part of the 2010 Victorian State of Design Festival.



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Creating a social hub and showcasing local sports identity

A vibrant and diverse park in the inner-city, Flagstaff Gardens is home to several social sports groups. The pavilion amplifies this by stacking a series of sports courts into a transparent building with a café/bar and events space. The host of new public sporting opportunities comes together with an experience animated by the lively bustle of play.



People and places

Melbourne's street people - chefs, musicians, designers, artists, fashion victims and coffee connoisseurs - many of them are into sports and also show up in international lifestyle magazines. Have you ever watched them playing sports while you're sipping an espresso? Why don't we see images of Melbourne's sports enthusiasts in such magazines yet?



Operating at the level of the local and the global

Central Pier features prominently in the aerial scenography of Melbourne and often appears in the backdrop of TV broadcasts. Until a long-term project for the site emerges, an interim "urban screen" could project a field of changing images that would appear vividly in the aerial view. The screen's pixels are simply umbrellas, providing shade for a range of public leisure activities across pier.



Fringe Events feed off Major Events

On the way from the Formula1 Grand Prix back to the city one passes this derelict area beneath Kings Highway. By upgrading the Taxi waiting loops into an urban race track, an exciting public space could unfold.



Tying together commerce and community

The Flinders Street perimeter project is about connections; connections between the city and the river, an indoor sports centre, Nike's local headquarters, homeless youth and sport programs to re-engage them with society. While providing a recreational space of real social value for citizens, the buildings large-scale protruding windows visually frame sporting Melbourne.

Engaging passersby - a city offering various experiences

Underutilised passage spaces could often easily be activated by providing some seating or a stage.

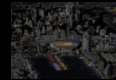


Matchpoint.Melbourne is an urban design proposal that aims to show how the city's future branding initiatives could connect to projects of real social substance, considering specifically the role of sport and urban culture. The exhibition tells its story and seeks to create public discussion around its themes.

Sport has arguably been the most successful way Melbourne's international brand identity has been built up over the last 20 years. Major events such as the Grand Prix and the Australian Open have substantially influenced Melbourne's international reputation. Recently, Melbourne's local urban culture has also evolved and attracts strong international interest. Through the regeneration of laneways, government programs such as Post Code 3000, and the emergence of an absorbing street life that exists somewhere between Prada and graffiti, the CBD has been transformed into a vibrant, cosmopolitan Central Activities District.

However, within the inner city there is another element of pervasive presence but which has never been considered to play a role in the projection of Melbourne's global image. Social sports, for which Melburnians are avid enthusiasts, can be encountered across the city in varied and engaging ways, such as urban bike polo at Flagstaff Gardens or even a race up the steps of Parliament. Perhaps if the framework for these everyday grass-roots activities was more consciously designed, we could reveal a new local asset that would further enrich the capital city zone.

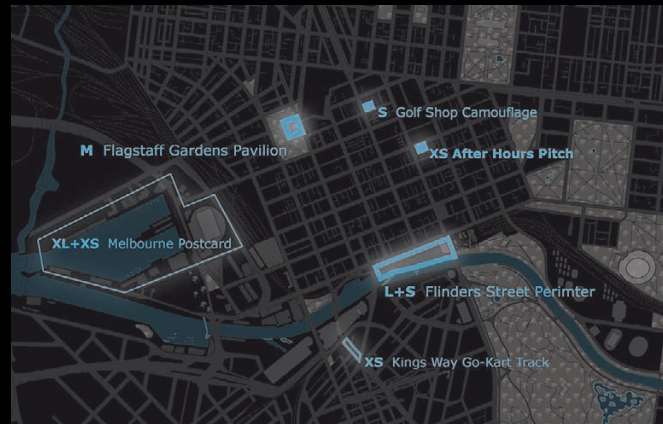
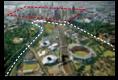
'Matchpoint.Melbourne' is an urban design proposal that attempts to show the potential of social sports as a dynamic new facet of Melbourne's urban mix. Through the strategic design of diversified and amplified sporting environments in underutilised urban spaces, local sports identity could be showcased all year round. While this strategy reinforces the city's global association with sport on a whole new level, it also borrows from the casual charm and diverse articulation of the city's urban culture to further enrich the city's public space.



In Melbourne grass-roots sport plays a significant role in strengthening community and wellbeing. Moreover, local welfare programs (such as Credo Cricket or Big Issue Street Soccer) commonly use participation in sport as a tool for re-engaging marginalised groups with society. For this reason, Matchpoint.Melbourne also attempts to demonstrate how the city's investment in global branding could include support for social projects of real substance.

A series of individual design schemes present examples of how the overall concept could be realised at different scales and degrees of permanency. Through strategies such as re-contextualisation and the intense overlaying of concurrent everyday activities, the projects yield experiences that are inherently original and embody local culture. By re-framing grass roots sports against the backdrop of the city, they become snapshots that fit within a chain of memorable experiences for everyone wandering through the inner city.

Matchpoint.Melbourne offers a strategy that simultaneously enhances the informal public realm, social infrastructure, and Melbourne's international branding in a way that is more sustainable and of greater tangible benefit to Victoria's people. Melbourne should keep on doing what it already does best: to offer a network of diverse and authentic experiences throughout the city for locals and visitors alike.





EXHIBITION.SYMPIOSIUM



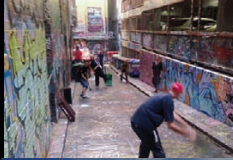
Melbourne's major sporting events attract worldwide attention; however, social sports in the inner city are also thriving but go largely unnoticed. Matchpoint Melbourne is an urban research and design project that suggests how the framework for our everyday sporting activities could be more consciously designed to reveal a dynamic new facet of the city's well recognised urban culture. In this way, the project aims to connect Melbourne's branding initiatives to projects of real social substance.



JULY 1-18

July 1 opening drinks 6-8pm
July 2-18 exhibition open daily 5-8pm
July 15 symposium 3-7pm, party 7pm
An interdisciplinary, round table discussion with representatives from urban design, architecture, cultural theory and the social and professional worlds of sport.

Location RMIT building 45, 33 Lygon Street
dates for live sports and lectures on www.matchpointmelbourne.com



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