

this used to be a park

A project by Aino Larvala

And how instagrammability affects contemporary architecture practices and communicates with the world.

Social media plays a big part in all of our lives in both good and bad. If you are an active social media user, you might have seen the latest trends emerging in the cyberspace. It can be a new cool restaurant in your area or the Black Lives Matter-movement all around the world. The awareness to identity politics and environment has grown over the last decade and one of the reasons for that is wider representation from different people through social media. We all want to be part of a community that we aspire to and show it in our social media that we are.

Can we use this phenomena to bring people to an ordinary spot in Glasgow and raise an awareness on global and local issues?

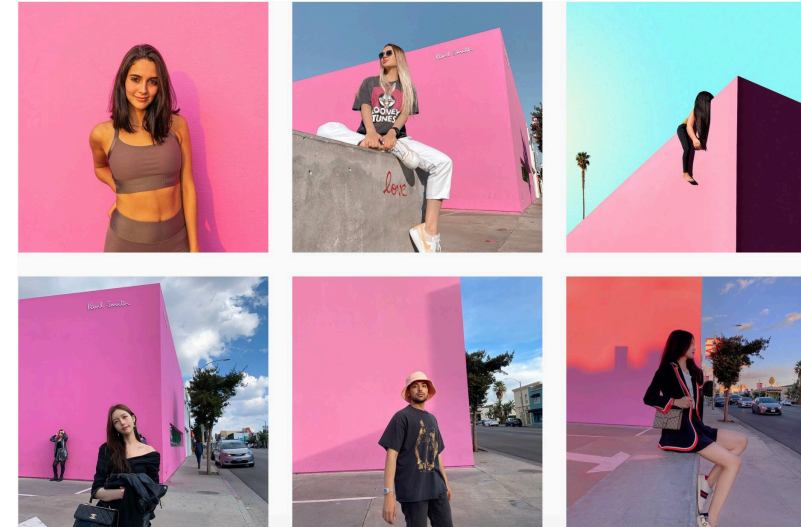


instagrammability

“Selfie politics are attention politics: it is all about who gets to be seen, who gets to occupy the visual field.”

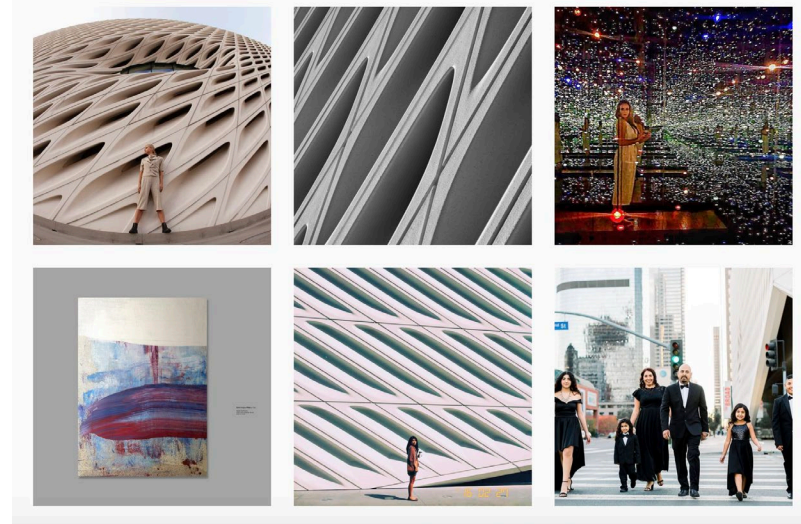
Instagrammable means that something is attractive or interesting enough to be suitable for photographing and posting on the social media service Instagram. Anything can be instagrammable: clothes, food, places or events. This phenomena is changing contemporary architecture practices as well as museums and exhibitions. Architects and artists are becoming more aware of how their designs are seen through a smartphone lens and so having a new dimension online. A recent survey showed that around 40 per cent of UK millenials choose travel destinations based on instagrammability. The more the place is able to attract visitors, the more succesful it is. Everyone wants to be seen.

The aim of this project is to use instagrammable elements in the site to bring people to the underpass in Glasgow and post pictures of it in their social media. The key element of the project is to use positive energy as a way to raise awareness on serious issues.



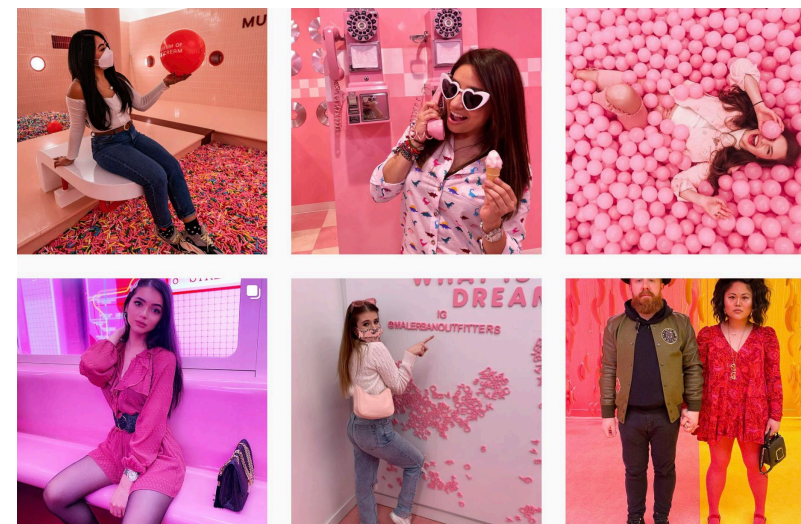
Screenshots from Instagram with the location tag of Paul Smith flagship in LA.

“I heard about it from my friends; they are saying it’s a landmark.” The majority of the 16 visitors I spoke to – most of whom were students visiting during spring break – had seen the wall on their social feeds, inspiring them to make the trip: “A lot of YouTubers like this wall;” “I see it on social media;” “My daughter saw it on social media;” etc.”



Screenshots from Instagram with the location tag of The Broad museum in LA.

“When The Broad museum opened in Los Angeles in 2015, it was immediately an Instagram sensation. You just couldn’t miss the “Instagram-worthy” new cultural institution, or the FOMO would be excruciating. Not only is the structure highly Instagrammable – consisting of honeycomb, off-white buildings with clear cut angles – but the art on display also works its magic.”



Screenshots from Instagram with the location tag of Museum of icecream in New York city.

“One year and three cities later, the Museum of Ice Cream has graduated to cult status on Instagram. More than 241,000 people follow its page, and countless more have posted their own photos from within the space. (Instagram doesn’t show how many photos have been posted at a particular geotag, but there are over 66,000 images with the #museumoficecream hashtag.)”

site

The Garscube Link in Glasgow is an underpass underneath the M8 flyover and connects North of Glasgow to the city centre for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Area used to be a thriving trading centre but nowadays it's a grey and mundane bulk of concrete for people to pass by. The reconstruction of the area in the 1960's was supposed to heal the connection between the canal network and Glasgow's city centre but destroyed the former Phoenix Park which once occupied the site.

Nature – such as parks – are destroyed for the sake of development and consumerism, while we are forgetting the importance of nature and our own relations to it. Nature heals us as well as the planet and cutting down forests, like Amazon, will eventually destroy the life as we know it, unless we do something.



Garscube Link in Glasgow, March 2021.

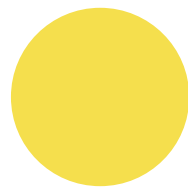
concept

In order to bring people to take pictures and post them in social media, the site needs to be visually attractive.

Attaching lights under the flyover enhances photographs and allows people to look their best.

A catchy sentence made out of outdoor lights tells the message of the site.

A bright and joyful colour on the background provides instagrammable pictures. The yellow colour used on the site is Pantone colour of year 2021, Illuminating.



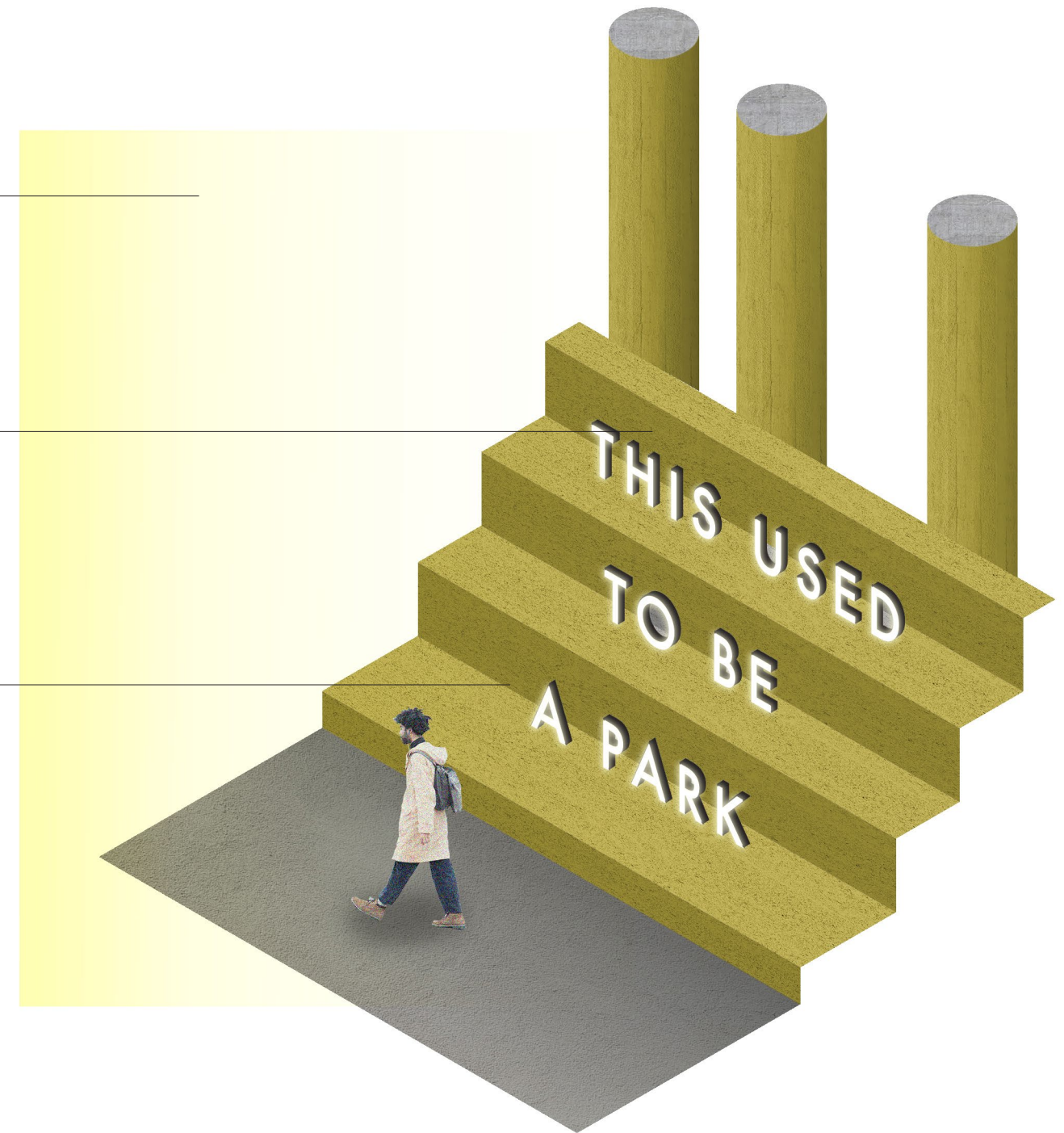
Pantone
13-0647 TCX
Illuminating

Lighting

Light sculpture

Background

“I want to feel respected by people like me and those I aspire to connect with. I look for guidance of what I have to do and where to go to be part of that circle.”



afterwords

“Instagram is reinforcing the fact that space matters, which can only be a good thing for designers and architects.”

There are many opinions about social media and how it affects us both positively and negatively. Instagram can inspire people to pay attention to their surroundings, which can be a good thing for designers. We can also argue that social media is controlling our everyday life when we forget to immerse ourselves in the experience at the expense of good content on social media.

It's up to designers to reflect their role in designing our surroundings and in that way bring awareness to issues that actually matters more than a good post in social media.

#thisusedtobeapark

Research

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