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Building the Future: Expo 67 and the Postmodern City

On July 15, 1972, at approximately 3:32 PM, the first of 33 apartment buildings crumbled to the ground in the symbolic demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St. Louis, Missouri. This apartment complex, built as an experimental solution to low-income housing, was the site of much social turmoil over its short lifespan, and was widely viewed as a failure[1]. In his 1977 publication, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, architectural theorist Charles Jencks chose this historic demolition as the "death of modern architecture", marking it as the starting point of the postmodern era[2].

There has been much dispute over a clear definition for postmodernism. Some see it as a response to the collapse and failures of modernism, while others view it as a new turn of modernity itself. Others interpret it simply as the economic restructuring caused by the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial economy[3]. Nevertheless, contemporary theorists can agree on one thing: there has been a change in our present-day society that is distinct from the first half of the twentieth century. This shift can be viewed as the transition from modernism to postmodernism.

This essay will focus on one aspect of the emergence of postmodernism – that of urbanism, architecture, and the city. When the term 'postmodernism' began to be widely

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[1] Bristol, Katharine. "The Pruitt-Igoe Myth" in American Architectural History: A Contemporary Reader (London: Routledge, 2004), 352-359.
[2] Jencks, Charles. The Language of Post-Modern Architecture (New York: Rizzoli, 1984), 9.
[3] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 65.

used in the 1970s, the utopian vision of an 'ideal' modern city had already been well established. The basic organization of the modern city contained a defined central business and financial district, surrounded by residential and commercial zones arranged according to social classes, with the lower class located closest to the center, and the suburbs located furthest. The architecture and urban spaces of the modern city were designed to be functional and mass-produced[4]. The modern city is best exemplified in Le Corbusier's *Ville Contemporaine*, a radical plan that featured a grid of homogeneous cross-shaped skyscrapers and high-density housing complexes arranged around a central business district and segregated according to social class[5] (Figure 1). In contrast, while there has been no utopian vision of a postmodern city yet established, many theorists look to contemporary cities such as Las Vegas and Los Angeles as examples of postmodern urbanity[6]. Both display characteristics that are distinctly different than that of the ideal modern city, such as the lack of a clearly defined centre, the heterogeneity of its architecture, and the simulation of worlds. It is through this lens that we will view one of the significant events of the twentieth century, the 1967 International and Universal Exposition in Montreal, better known as Expo 67.

Expo 67 was a world-class exhibition held in celebration of Canada's centennial. Attracting roughly 53 million visitors, and featuring exhibitions from over 60 countries, Expo 67 exceeded all expectations and provided the most successful and popular world's fair of the twentieth century[7]. Located on two islands in the St. Lawrence River and on the former Mackay pier, the site was isolated from the city of Montreal, connected only

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[4] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 39-40.
[5] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 41.
[6] Hannigan, John. Fantasy City: Pleasure And Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis (London: Routledge, 1998), 7-11.
[7] "Expo 67: One Brief Shining Summer." Time 90, no. 18 (1967): 11.

by means of the new metro system and a high-speed rail line, forming a completely man-made world of its own[8]. Featuring the latest in technology and educational exhibits focusing on man's contributions to the world, the futuristic and unique pavilions of Expo amazed and captivated its audience. In the age of suburbia and glass-box skyscrapers, Expo 67 offered an environment that was distinct from the average city.

These world's fairs are often seen as experimental developments in the fields of urban planning and architecture, and are conceived as exemplars, "offering themselves as models of urban organization"[9]. Expo 67 can be viewed as a snapshot of the future of urban planning and architecture at the time it was built. The argument of this essay is that Expo 67 was an early model of the ideal postmodern city. Postmodernism developed in the 1970s, long after Expo was planned, but it is clear that the fair did not fit into its modern context. Throughout the essay, I will demonstrate that Expo 67 embodied many of the attributions of postmodernism, such as its heterogeneous architecture; its decentralized organization; its ignorance of common urban issues through its heavily guarded and monitored public spaces; its emphasis on the creation of spectacle; and its underlying principles of consumption and consumerism. These will be contrasted with the characteristics of a modern city, to show that Expo was not, in fact, a modern construction. Despite being staged a decade before the acceptance of postmodernism as a style, Expo 67 can be seen as a foreshadowing of the postmodern city, and an image of what our cities have become today.

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[8] Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. Les Objectifs du Plan Directeur. Master Plan Design Intent (Montreal: The Corporation, 1963), 5.

[9] Sorkin, Michael. "See You In Disneyland" in Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), 210.

To begin, Expo 67 represented a postmodern city through its heterogeneity. The modern city of the early twentieth century was characterized by a homogeneous and universal architecture, loosely termed the International Style, where the belief in the mass-production of buildings governed the design of urban centers[10]. This can clearly be seen in Le Corbusier's *Ville Contemporaine*, which featured repetitive and identical skyscrapers and housing complexes, creating a homogeneous and universal aesthetic that could be applied anywhere (Figure 1). However, postmodern architecture dispenses of the idea of a universal style, instead relying on historical influences and the notion of context to produce buildings with individual and unique expressions of character, utilizing different forms of ornamentation to convey meaning[11]. For example, the skyline of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, the majority of which was constructed in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, is anything but homogeneous; each skyscraper is unique, featuring its own distinct expression and character (Figure 2).

As seen in Meredith Dixon's photograph, "Île Notre-Dame" (Figure 3), every pavilion of Expo 67 was unique. Each had its own character and expression based on either the country or industry represented by it, its context and location within the site, or the ideas and thoughts presented by the architect. The simple spherical shape of Buckminster Fuller's US pavilion stood across from the gently curving roof of the Soviet pavilion, while the prefabricated concrete boxes of Habitat stared across the river to Canada's soaring inverted pyramid and the tent forms of Frei Otto's dramatic West German pavilion, which was situated next to Britain's intentionally unfinished tower and the massive truncated tetrahedrons of the theme pavilions (Figure 4). Every pavilion was

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[10] Ellin, Nan. Postmodern Urbanism (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 91.
[11] Ellin, Nan. Postmodern Urbanism (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 91.

unique and had a character of its own. Thus, through its completely heterogeneous architecture, Expo 67 can be seen as a postmodern construction.

Furthermore, Expo 67 represents a postmodern city through its decentralized organization. In the modern era, cities were planned with a defined urban core which contained all essential services, entertainment venues, shopping, and so on, with residential and other services located on the periphery[12]. Conversely, in a postmodern city, there are multiple centers with the emergence of what is termed the 'edge city'. As the suburbs grew in size in the 1960s and 70s, they acquired their own city centers containing essential services, entertainment venues and the like, and thus became cities of their own, creating multiple nodes in urban areas[13]. This is best exemplified with the city of Los Angeles, a metropolis famous for its lack of a dominant center. Despite having a financial and business district, the main services and industries of Los Angeles are spread out over its entire urban area, creating multiple nodes in its growing suburbs. Cities such as Anaheim, Pasadena, and Riverside are examples of Los Angeles suburbs that are considered to be 'edge cities'[14].

From the initial planning stages of Expo 67, the traditional organization of a world's fair around a central boulevard or pavilion, as best seen in the 1893 and 1939 World's Fairs in Chicago and New York, respectively[15] (Figures 5, 6), was replaced with a multi-nodal plan with multiple defined centers[16]. The event was divided into four main

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[12] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 60.
[13] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 58.
[14] Soja, Edward. "Inside Exopolis: Scenes From Orange County," in Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), xv.
[15] "Expo 67", Architectural Review 142, no. 846 (1967), 87.
[16] "Expo 67: How The Fair Was Planned", Progressive Architecture 48, no. 6 (1967), 127.

areas: Cité du Havre, Île Ste-Hélène, Île Notre-Dame, and La Ronde[17] (Figure 7). These areas were of equal importance – all contained major pavilions, and no area was more significant than the other – and they were connected by a central and easily accessed transportation system, which circulated evenly throughout all four sites. The transportation system was used as the central backbone of the whole plan[18]. The primary mode of transportation, known as the Expo Express, was a high-speed rail line that provided free transportation for visitors from the main entrance at Place d'Accueil, stopping in each of the four main areas[19]. Located within close proximity to each stop was a theme pavilion. These provided focal points for the immediate area, creating nodes of activity at each of the Expo Express stations[20]. Also contrary to previous world's fairs, which had the main pavilions grouped in a central area with the smaller, less popular pavilions on the periphery, the planners of Expo 67 took a different approach:

> "In order to maintain interest and in a sense to contain the Exhibition, lots for the largest and perhaps the most spectacular pavilions, have been placed in terminal position to form poles of attraction. Lots for the smaller pavilions, to avoid their being hidden, have been clustered in groups in the central areas, partly surrounded by the lots for the pavilions of medium size…In order to enhance the feeling that

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[17] Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. Les Objectifs du Plan Directeur. Master Plan Design Intent (Montreal: The Corporation, 1963), 5.

[18] "Expo 67: An Experiment in the Development of Urban Space", Architectural Record 140, no. 4 (1966), 169.

[19] Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. Les Objectifs du Plan Directeur. Master Plan Design Intent (Montreal: The Corporation, 1963), 7.

[20] "Expo 67: An Experiment in the Development of Urban Space", Architectural Record 140, no. 4 (1966), 169.

the large pavilions surround the centre, their ground levels have been slightly raised above those of the central areas"[21].

By moving the main pavilions to the periphery and the smaller pavilions to the center, the planners of Expo 67 created a chaotic, decentralized organization that featured multiple areas of attraction spread out over the entire area, rather than grouping them together in the middle. This, combined with the multiple nodes of theme pavilions located next to transportation access points, and the layout of the entire event over four equally important sites, demonstrates the decentralization that is characteristic of postmodern cities.

Moreover, Expo 67 illustrates postmodernism through the creation of a new kind of public space, one that is free of the negative aspects of urban life. After the Second World War, the growth of suburbia was attributed to the fact that it provided a safe and attractive place to raise children. The suburbs were supposedly free from the problems of living in the inner city, such as crime, violence, poverty, noise, traffic, and garbage, among others[22]. With postmodernism, the aim was to provide these areas of safety and security throughout the entire urban area. Elements such as gated communities, shopping centers, and entertainment venues are heavily monitored and guarded to provide citizens access to a sort of sanitized public space - a place where one can be out in public, but not have to worry about the dangers usually associated with these public areas[23].

Expo 67 was a prime example of this new form of controlled public space. The entire site was heavily monitored through Operations Control, which had its own pavilion

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[21] Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. Les Objectifs du Plan Directeur. Master Plan Design Intent (Montreal: The Corporation, 1963), 7.

[22] Hannigan, John. Fantasy City: Pleasure And Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis (London: Routledge, 1998), 72-73.

[23] Sorkin, Michael. "Introduction," in Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), xv.

that was open to the public[24]. The pavilion contained a 'situation room', which featured TV monitors "linked to 32 cameras fixed at key positions on the site, and to four mobile camera-teams that can be directed to any trouble spot"[25]. Furthermore, "should the situations room see a bottleneck on the site, the gallant Expo Band is ordered into action to siphon off some of the crowd; or if an area of the site looks dull, then a mobile pop group can be driven over there to liven up the proceedings"[26]. Before the opening of Expo, event organizers "ran through mock exercises of everything that could go wrong, even including a heart attack to a visiting head of state"[27]. Every precaution was taken in making sure that the Expo site was rid of persistent urban problems. "It was very safe," claims John Mirabelli, who visited Expo as a 17-year-old student on a class trip. "If you went somewhere where you weren't supposed to be, somebody told you right away. There were areas that you couldn't go into, and if you were out of bounds somewhere, there was always a security person standing there. I remember a lot of police just wandering around, making sure no one got out of hand." The Expo site was heavily monitored and patrolled by security in order to provide a public space where visitors could be sheltered from urban dangers.

Another way in which Expo provided a sanitized public space was in its masking of urban problems. For example, in preparation for the fair, the city of Montreal underwent an extensive operation to clear out the slums of the city, and remove the homeless from the streets[28]. Also, organizers of Expo 67 stated in their Master Plan documents that, "Service entrances…are required to be screened from view", and that,

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[24] "Expositions: Man and His World", Time 89, no. 18 (1967), 58.
[25] Baker, Jeremy, "Expo and the Future City", Architectural Review 142, no. 846 (1967), 152.
[26] Baker, Jeremy, "Expo and the Future City", Architectural Review 142, no. 846 (1967), 152.
[27] "Expo 67: Countdown", Time 89, no. 16 (1967), 25.
[28] "Expo 67: Cracking Down On Shantytowns", Time 90, no. 7 (1967), 8-9.

"proper enclosures for garbage, propane gas bottles, coolers or other mechanical equipment that may be required to stand upon the ground or to be serviced at ground level must be made in such a way that these will not be seen"[29]. These solutions to persistent urban problems, such as poverty and garbage, show the extent to which the city of Montreal and Expo organizers went to hide these negative aspects of urban life from view of the public.

A similar statement can be made about the American pavilion at Expo. The 1960s were a turbulent time for the States, which was in the middle of the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement, among others. But rather than display these important events in their exhibit, the US chose the theme 'Creative America'. Large installations of pop art stood next to images of popular celebrities, hats from various time periods, and technological innovations from the space race[30]. As one American journalist commented: "Some of our serious accomplishments and all of our serious problems are slighted…"[31]. Likewise, another journalist stated that, "understandably, it confounds those who expect to see only quantitative boasts of industrial strength, military power, scientific progress and cultural ascendance"[32]. It is apparent that organizers of Expo 67 attempted to provide an environment that was sheltered from everyday social problems, and purposely ignored any serious external issues that would otherwise ruin the mood. Thus, Expo 67 is an example of a postmodern city through its creation of a sanitized public space that is

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[29] Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. Les Objectifs du Plan Directeur. Master Plan Design Intent (Montreal: The Corporation, 1963), 21.
[30] "Cambridge Seven reveal U.S. Exhibit Plans For Montreal Fair", Progressive Architecture 47, no. 9 (1966), 54.
[31] "Expo 67: How The Fair Was Planned", Progressive Architecture 48, no. 6 (1967), 158.
[32] "Expo 67: A Brilliantly Ordered Visual World", Architectural Record 142, no. 1 (1967), 119.

heavily monitored and that masks negative aspects of urban life, giving the illusion of safety and security in an urban setting.

Moreover, Expo 67 is a representation of a postmodern city through its creation of spectacle. In the modern city, the urban spaces focused mainly on functionality and honesty of materials and construction, often producing similar buildings devoid of any ornamentation and simple in shape and character[33]. For example, the Toronto Dominion Centre in Toronto, Ontario, designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in the late 1960s, consists of a series of office towers surrounding a pavilion, all similarly constructed from painted black steel and bronze tinted windows (Figure 8). The buildings are simple and homogeneous in their appearance, resembling plain glass boxes with their rectangular shape and lack of ornamentation[34]. In contrast, the urban spaces of the postmodern city are focused on the stimulation of the senses, of creating an object that captivates the attention of the viewer. Outward appearance and unique experiences are utilized to create visual and sensual spectacles throughout the city[35]. An example of this spectacular construction is Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain. Completed in 1997, this sculptural museum shocked the world with its whimsical and futuristic shapes, creating a spectacle that attracts millions of visitors annually to take in its daring architecture and dominating presence[36] (Figure 9).

The architecture at Expo 67 was very spectacular. Many of the pavilions demonstrated daring technological and structural innovations that led to constructions

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[33] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 61.
[34] "Tourist Info: The Architecture," Toronto Dominion Centre, <http://web.archive.org/ web/20080802 092735/http://www.tdcentre.ca/home/index.ch2?pageNumber=10> (March 28, 2011).
[35] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 61.
[36] "Guggenheim Museum Bilbao," Guggenheim, 2011, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, <http://www.guggenheim.org/guggenheim-foundation/architecture/bilbao> (March 28, 2011).

that were one of a kind. This aspect was perhaps one of the most memorable experiences of Expo; a 2008 study of the memories which people have of visiting Expo show that nearly all of the 50 participants interviewed made some reference to the exotic, futuristic, and daring architecture of the pavilions[37]. When asked what he remembered most about Expo, John Mirabelli responded that it was "the weird buildings, it was just so different. I remember one building…it was like a big glass ball. That's what I remember the most about it." Eleanor Brooks, who travelled from Massachusetts to visit Expo with her husband, Barry, and their three young children, spoke of Moshe Safdie's Habitat 67 housing complex when recalling her time at Expo: "[It] was very, very impressive. [It] is what I remember, even before looking at the photos. I remember it because I thought it was such an unusual structure. I thought it was amazing." The effect of the cacophony of futuristic shapes was further heightened with the dramatic lighting seen after sunset (Figure 10). "Everything was lit up, and it was very impressive," recalls Barry Brooks. "That is why we went back at night. It was beautiful, everything was lovely." The stunning architecture displayed at Expo thus helped to create a spectacle that captivated its audiences.

Another method used to create spectacle was the transportation system. The mini-rail was a secondary transportation system comprised of three separate monorail tracks located on Île Ste-Hélène, Île Notre-Dame, and La Ronde[38] (Figure 11). One of its functions was to transport visitors from the main Expo Express stations to major pavilions around the site, but its primary function was to give an overview of the site and

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[37] Anderson, David and Viviane Gosselin, "Private and Public Memories of Expo 67: A Case Study of Recollections of Montreal's World's Fair, 40 Years After The Event," Museum And Society 6, no. 1 (2008): 8, <http://www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/m&s/Issue%2016/andersongosselin.pdf> (March 19, 2011).

[38] "Expo 67: Transport", Architectural Review 142, no. 846 (1967), 107.

provide interesting views to passengers[39]. The slow-moving vehicles of the elevated track would "twist inside and around the pavilions, go under waterfalls, and provide amazing and continual changing views of the site"[40]. In fact, the mini-rail itself became a popular attraction at the fair: "So many mini-rail riders were sightseers rather than bona fide travellers that Expo had to start emptying trains at some stops"[41]. The path of the mini-rail provided a spectacular visual and sensual experience, emphasized by its journey through the Ontario and US pavilions, and as one journalist accurately described it, "the way they are planned has provided a new form of entertainment"[42] (Figure 12). The transportation system therefore created a spectacle for its passengers, a pleasure ride that explored changing vistas and experiences as it travelled along its winding path. Thus, Expo 67 is representative of postmodernism due to its creation of spectacle, both through its architecture and its transportation systems, which visually amazed and captivated its audience.

Finally, Expo 67 is an example of a postmodern city through its underlying principles of consumption and consumerism. In the modern era, as a result of the rise of capitalism, the economy was based on the mass-production and mass-consumption of goods[43]. Postmodernism saw a more specialized form of capitalism, catering to the individual consumer, rather than the masses. This notion was consequently reflected in postmodern urbanism in the late twentieth century[44]. Urban and spatial planning began to focus on the controlled persuasion of individuals to purchase goods, while architecture

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[39] Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. Les Objectifs du Plan Directeur. Master Plan Design Intent (Montreal: The Corporation, 1963), 5.
[40] Baker, Jeremy, "Expo and the Future City", Architectural Review 142, no. 846 (1967), 153.
[41] "Expo 67: Chaos Around the Corner?", Time 89, no. 22 (1967), 11.
[42] Baker, Jeremy, "Expo and the Future City", Architectural Review 142, no. 846 (1967), 153.
[43] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 62.
[44] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 63.

became visually stimulating to create a spectacle and attract attention. Simulation of worlds and themed spaces led to exoticism and atmosphere as another form of persuasion[45].

Expo 67 displays many of the characteristics of consumer culture. As mentioned earlier, the organization of Expo led to the decentralization of the plan and the creation of multiple centers. However, this form of planning was not new at the time; Expo's organizers, in fact, used shopping malls as a precedent for the planning of the event[46]. In the design of shopping malls, major department stores are generally placed at opposite ends of the building, creating poles of attraction. The smaller shops are placed in between the major stores, forcing people to pass by them on their way, and thereby bombarding them with images of consumable goods. There are also limited views to the exterior, forcing the consumer to focus only on the storefronts[47]. Thus, the smaller shops are not ignored, and the visitor is slowly persuaded to purchase their goods. The same principles were applied to Expo. As outlined in the Master Plan documents, the larger, more popular pavilions are placed at the extremities to create poles of attraction, with the smaller pavilions grouped in between. The larger pavilions are also built at a slightly higher elevation, and many of the views within the park are therefore directed toward them[48]. This was all in an effort to "maintain interest and in a sense contain the Exhibition"[49].

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[45] Hannigan, John. Fantasy City: Pleasure And Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis (London: Routledge, 1998), 71.

[46] "Expo 67: An Experiment in the Development of Urban Space", Architectural Record 140, no. 4 (1966), 119.

[47] Crawford, Margaret. "The World in a Shopping Mall," in Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), 13-14.

[48] Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. Les Objectifs du Plan Directeur. Master Plan Design Intent (Montreal: The Corporation, 1963), 7.

[49] Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibition. Les Objectifs du Plan Directeur. Master Plan Design Intent (Montreal: The Corporation, 1963), 13.

Furthermore, the creation of spectacle is characteristic of consumerism in the postmodern city[50]. As mentioned earlier, the fantastical architecture and carefully planned transportation system at Expo 67 created a visual and sensual spectacle at the fair. The idea of creating spectacle is primarily to attract the attention of the viewer, and to captivate them in the hopes of persuading them to consume whatever it is one is trying to sell[51]. For example, one can look no further than the Disney theme parks to observe the phenomenon of spectacle. The parks are carefully designed to amaze and captivate their visitors. One can enter a dreamlike castle at the main entrance, before being confronted by one's favourite Disney characters brought to life, and continue on to walk through a fairyland, where buildings have an historical essence and are built in miniature to enhance the feeling of fantasy, all while taking in stunning shows of music, magic, theater, and more[52].

In the case of Expo, the showy architecture helped create a spectacle that aimed at persuading visitors to enter the pavilions, and thus 'consume' the culture, goods, and exhibits that were within them. "Everything about it seemed to be futuristic," says John Mirabelli, "but once you got into pavilions, there wasn't a lot in them. It was pretty dry stuff." The emphasis of many of the pavilions was on the outward appearance so as to attract visitors to the inside. The architecture outshone the exhibits, as is shown in Anderson and Gosselin's study of visitors' memories, as well as the results from my own interviews; the majority of participants remembered the architecture of the pavilions, but

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[50] Hannigan, John. Fantasy City: Pleasure And Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis (London: Routledge, 1998), 4.
[51] Jayne, Mark. Cities and Consumption (London: Rutledge, 2006), 77.
[52] Sorkin, Michael. "See You In Disneyland," in Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), 205-207.

not their contents[53]. In this way, Expo 67 demonstrated one of the basic principles of consumer culture in the creation of spectacle.

Another embodiment of postmodern consumerism at Expo was the simulation of worlds. Simulation is one of the defining characteristics of postmodernism; the replications of historical settings, natural phenomena, or famous destinations are all used to attract consumers through their exoticism and atmosphere[54]. The prospect of visiting a far away destination by simply driving down the street is an enticing idea. No present-day city embodies this idea better than Las Vegas, where one can travel from Venice to New York to Paris, witness a battle between pirate ships, and be transported back in time to ancient Rome or Egypt, all within a distance of a few miles[55].

The same can be said for Expo 67; one could experience over 60 countries, simply by entering their national pavilions, observing their exhibits, eating their food, and interacting with their people, all within a few hundred acres in the middle of the St. Lawrence River. Visitors to Expo could experience the world in a few days, and learn about distant cultures without ever having to leave the country. In the 2008 study of people's memories of Expo, one of the most common themes in the participants' recollections was the "displays of the exotic others"[56]. When asked about what was remembered most about Expo 67, Eleanor Brooks stated that, "one thing that we bought

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[53] Anderson, David and Viviane Gosselin, "Private and Public Memories of Expo 67: A Case Study of Recollections of Montreal's World's Fair, 40 Years After The Event," Museum And Society 6, no. 1 (2008): 7, <http://www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/m&s/Issue%2016/andersongosselin.pdf > (March 19, 2011).

[54] Sorkin, Michael. "Introduction," in Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), xiv.

[55] Hannigan, John. Fantasy City: Pleasure And Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis (London: Routledge, 1998), 71.

[56] Anderson, David and Viviane Gosselin, "Private and Public Memories of Expo 67: A Case Study of Recollections of Montreal's World's Fair, 40 Years After The Event," Museum And Society 6, no. 1 (2008): 7, <http://www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/m&s/Issue%2016/andersongosselin.pdf> (March 19, 2011).

that my children still remember was called bobos. They were deep-fried meatballs, and it came with a dipping sauce. And we loved them." Whether it was foreign architecture, such as the Thailand, Iran, or Ceylon pavilions, eating exotic food, or hearing and seeing traditional musical or dance performances from various cultures, the exposure to 'otherness' left a lasting impression on visitors at Expo[57]. It did not matter that this was not the genuine experience; visitors to the Thailand pavilion were not actually in Thailand, nor were visitors who observed exotic animals actually seeing these animals in their natural habitats. Despite being out of place, these aspects fascinated the minds of the viewers. This element of exoticism captivated the audiences of Expo, and thus embodied the principle of the simulation of worlds so often seen in postmodern consumerist culture. Consumption was the underlying idea in the design of Expo, as seen through its carefully orchestrated organization, its creation of spectacle, and its simulation of worlds and exoticism, thereby embodying the tenets of postmodernism.

In conclusion, Expo 67 provided an early model of the postmodern city. Through characteristics such as its heterogeneous architecture, its decentralized organization, its heavily controlled and monitored public spaces, its creation of spectacle, and its emphasis on consumer culture, Expo 67 embodied the basics of postmodern urbanism. For the brief six months of its existence, Expo entertained, shocked, and amazed visitors with its never-before-seen architecture and exhibits, its daring engineering, and its wild popularity. Looking back on the event today, one can easily compare Expo to such present-day postmodern constructions as Las Vegas, Los Angeles, shopping malls, and

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[57] Anderson, David and Viviane Gosselin, "Private and Public Memories of Expo 67: A Case Study of Recollections of Montreal's World's Fair, 40 Years After The Event," Museum And Society 6, no. 1 (2008): 7-8, <http://www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/m&s/Issue%2016/andersongosselin.pdf> (March 19, 2011).

the Disney theme parks, which, upon further analysis, display the very same characteristics as those outlined here. Thus, Expo provided a brief window into the future, a foreshadowing of what was to come in our postmodern society. We can look back into the past to see into the future; is Expo 67 what our cities will look like years from now? Or is it already what our cities have become? Postmodernism owes much to Expo 67 as a manifestation of its ideals and principles, and as a model for our basic understanding of postmodern cities today.

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Illustrations

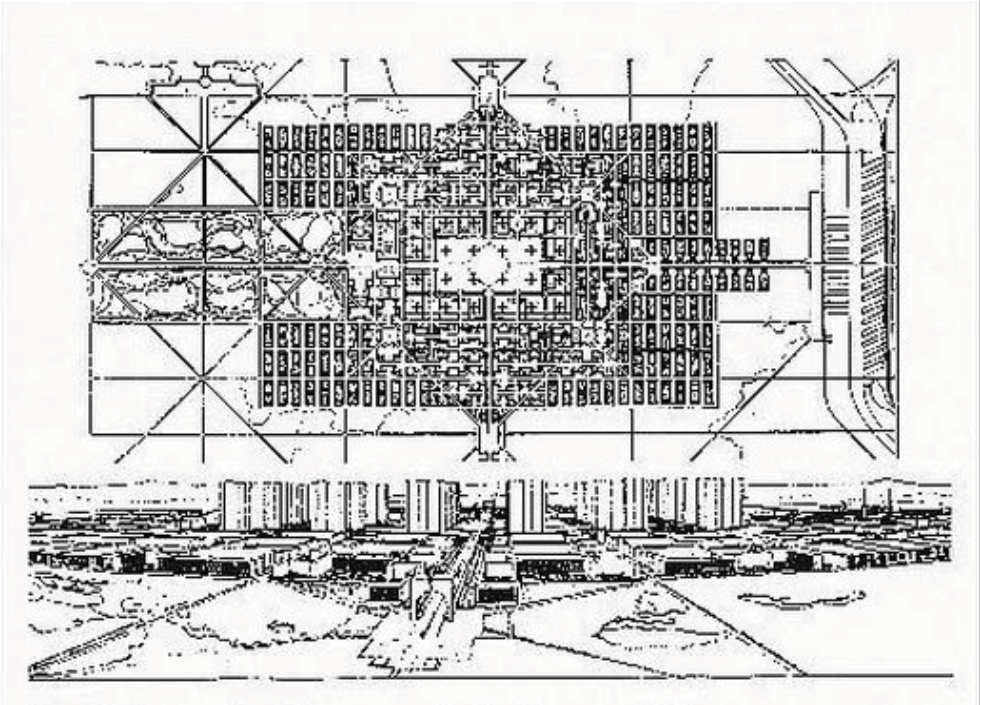

Figure 1: Plan and perspective of Le Corbusier's *Ville Contemporaine* (1922).
Source: http://utopies.skynetblogs.be/archive/2008/12/12/le-corbusier-une-ville-contemporaine.html

Figure 2: The skyline of Dubai, showing its uniqueness and heterogeneity.
Source: http://panarabia.blogspot.com/2010_10_01_archive.html

Figure 3: "Île Notre-Dame", courtesy of Meredith Dixon and McGill University.
Source: http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/expo-67/slides/LARGE/(3A)_4_IleNotreDame_AerialView.jpg

Figure 4: View of Île Notre-Dame pavilions, showing heterogeneity of design.
Source: http://picasaweb.google.com/lh/photo/9B9diAz-pARLATEf90blOg

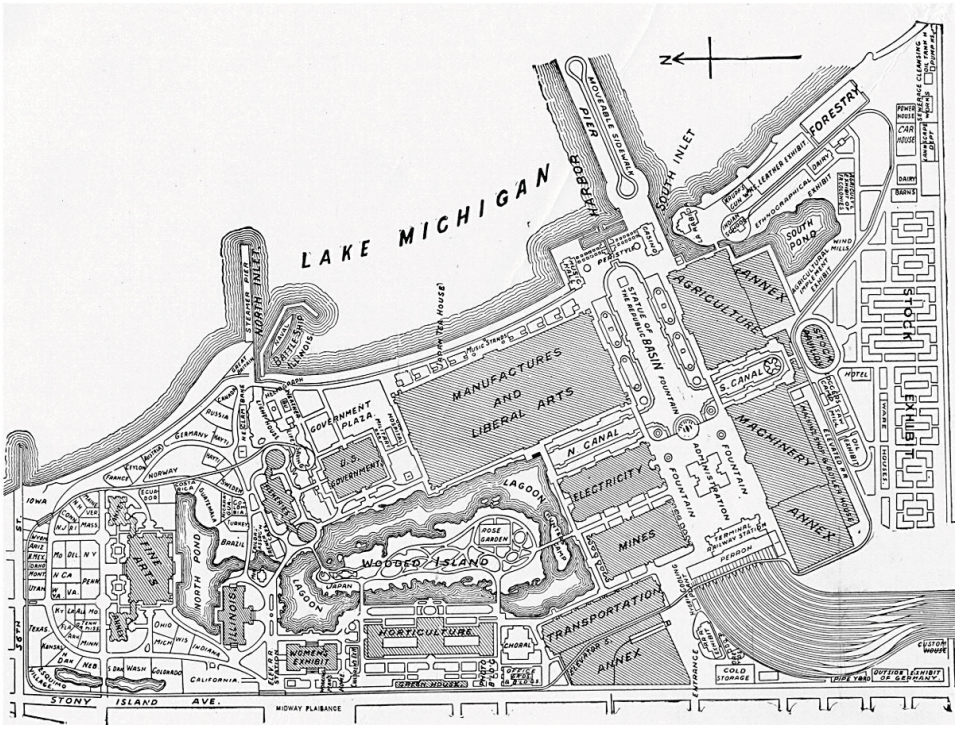

Figure 5: Plan of 1893 Chicago World's Fair, showing organization of the major pavilions around a central boulevard.
Source: http://skullsinthestars.files.wordpress.com/2009/07/1893_gplan.jpg

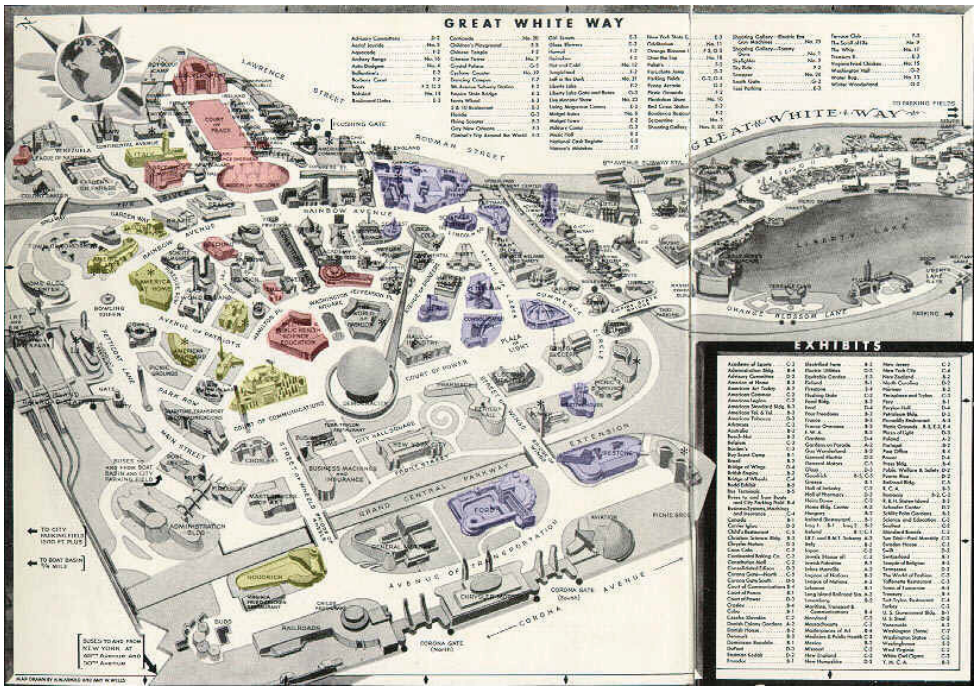

Figure 6: Map of 1939 New York World's Fair, showing general organization around a pair of major pavilions, the Perisphere and Trylon (central sphere and tower on map).
Source: http://www.collectorscircle.com/bohemian/1939/images/1939_worlds_fair_exhibit_map_1940.jpg

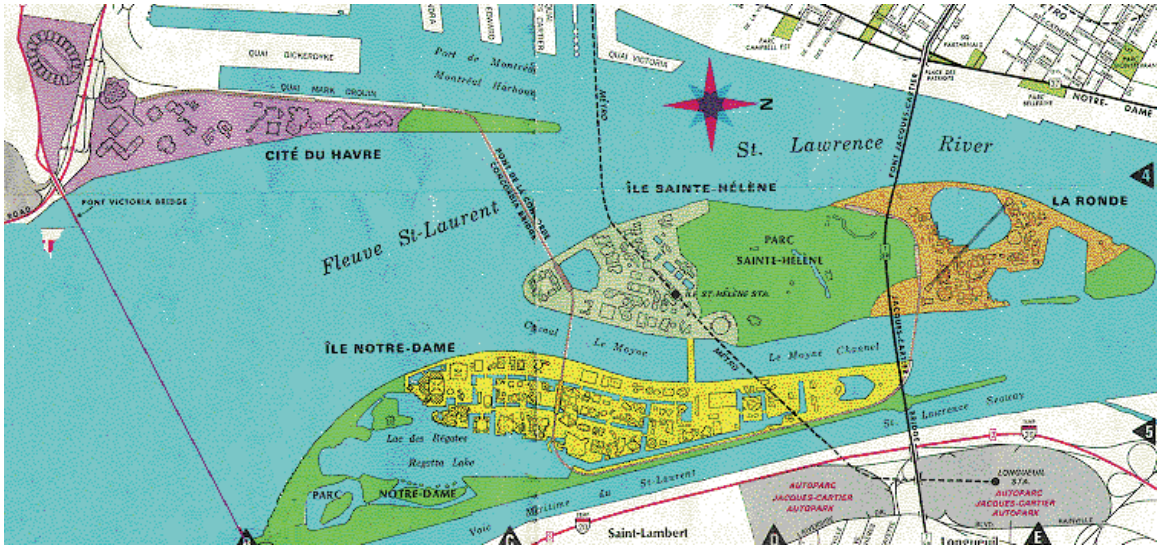

Figure 7: Map of Expo 67, showing the four main areas of the site.
Source: http://www.westland.net/expo67/map-docs/expo67-mainmap.htm

Figure 8: Aerial view of Toronto Dominion Centre, by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.
Source: http://www.officeleasingonline.com/?portfolio=toronto-dominion-centre

Figure 9: Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain.
Source: http://thebesttraveldestinations.com/guggenheim-museum-bilbao-spain/

Figure 10: View of Soviet Pavilion (back) and Thailand Pavilion (front) at night, courtesy of Meredith Dixon and McGill University.
Source: http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/expo-67/slides/LARGE/(3C)_25_IleNotreDame_NightScene_Thailand_USSR.jpg

Figure 11: View of the mini-rail system.
Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/61779764@N00/2525865087/

Figure 12: The mini-rail passing through the USA pavilion.
Source: http://expolounge.blogspot.com/2006/06/us-pavilion_30.html

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