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Expression
Centre for Experiential Therapy in seeing, hearing and feeling.

The use of Expressive Therapy as a tool for impaired or disabled individuals is an alternate approach to help those with psychological issues. These issues may arise from the catalyst event causing the impairment or disability, or from their preceding everyday life. The affected individual is not always able to address these issues through verbal psychotherapy, due to their new found physical state. This Expressive Therapy Centre will provide a space for individuals to express themselves through their own personal modus operandi, for later discussion through a therapist guided healing process. Expressive Therapy, such as art, dance, music, drama and writing therapy, affords another route for the individual to express their emotions and experiences. This project considers the history of Expressive Therapy, in conjunction with the existing theories and approaches within the field. This research forms a clear understanding of this type of therapy, along with the required provision for specific spatial needs related to this therapeutic process. An investigation into the theories of Steven Holl, Peter Zumthor and Juhani Pallasmaa sets up current theoretical views around the perception and experience of architecture. Theories of the psychology of space are investigated in relation to health care facilities, and the experience of impaired or disabled individuals treated within traditionally or alternatively designed spaces. The link between nature and health is established through theories and research regarding the development of design drivers. This research focuses on the perception and experience of architectural spaces for such affected individuals. Owing to this, this thesis implores for the establishment of an Expressive Therapy Centre within the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital Complex. This paper illustrates the manner in which such a Centre will provide treatment to patients of the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital, as well as the surrounding community. The aim of this thesis is to develop a therapeutic healing environment, within an already active and functioning complex.