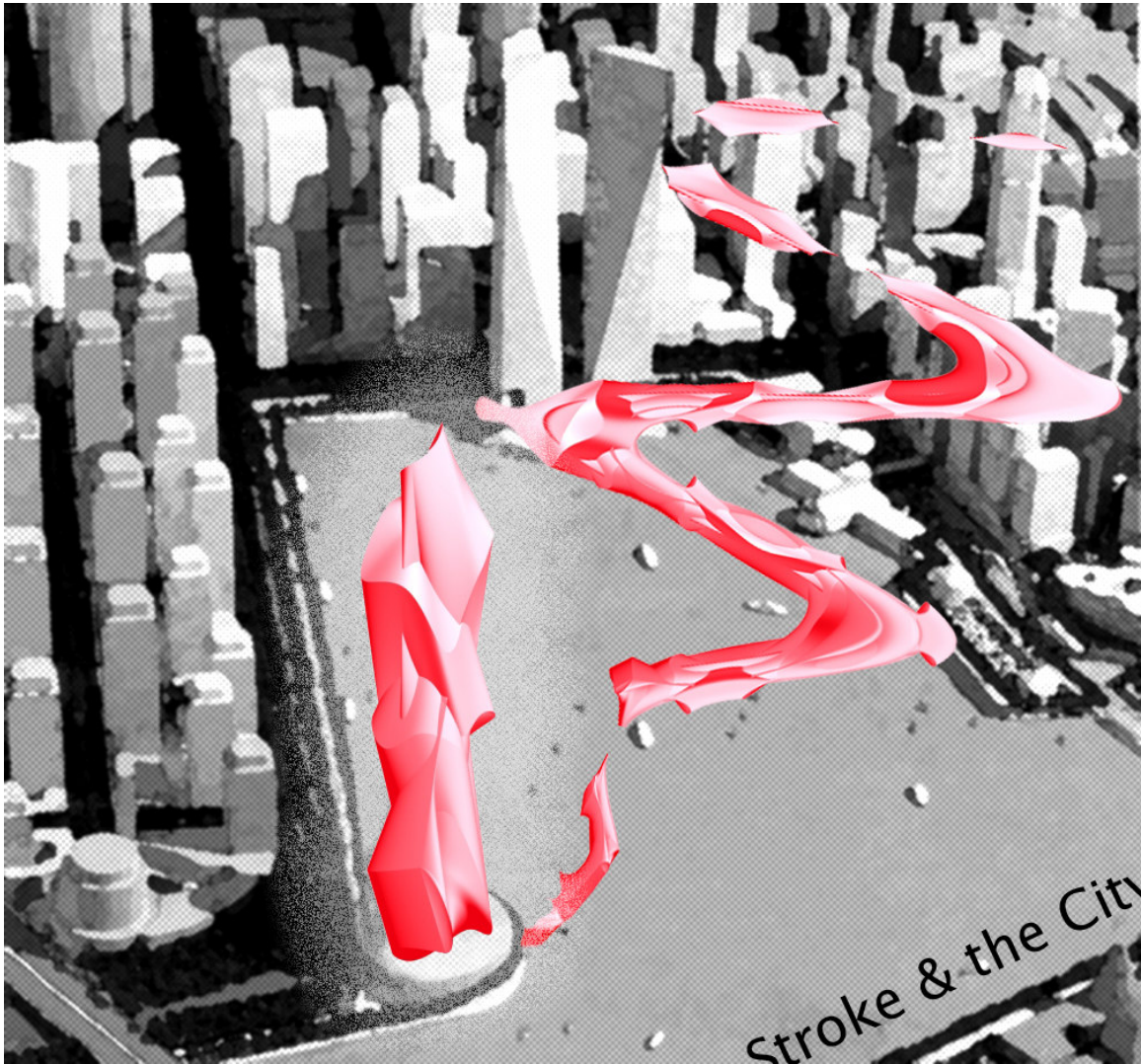


Stroke & the City



stroke & the city

There was once a little red-dot known as THE cultural desert;
the desert had seas surrounding;
a sea was filled;
an idea planted;
the idea turned into a stroke;
the stroke swept across the city
& found life on virgin land;
and it grew into a scraper;
with twist & turns like a heuristic spiral,
the stroke was born.

Kent Neo, 15 Dec 2005

Stroke_casino at the Bay - a vertical stroke_city

Stroke_casino is a vertical answer to the functional requirements of the IRs (Integrated Resorts). Singapore has evolved tremendously ever since her independence in 1965. In a short span of 40 years, Singapore has eradicated poverty and many other vices still suffered by third-world countries. Gambling was a vice and will always be if not understood in the right vein. Taxes drawn from gambling will benefit many sectors of society that need funding. The logic is simple and should always stay this way - those who can afford may now donate willingly in a form of recreational gambling. It should not be seen as a shortcut to instant wealth for those who do not have the means. With this assumption in mind, stroke_casino is proposed as a high-rise vertical city made possible with the micro-economy created by gambling. While in my earlier writings, stroke_city will manifest as a compassionate stroke that encompasses differences, stroke-casino would seem to contradict the earlier vision. Herein lies the truth, compassion should go to where it needs most. In stroke_casino, spaces will be arranged in an evolutionary upwards flow where people can experience the intricate web of life as they elevate towards higher floors. Guggenheim Museum will be housed on the lower floors alongside with a children's art gallery on the ground floor. Sotheby's will be housed above Guggenheim Museum. Above the auction venue will be Singapore's first Media Centre (similar to Melbourne's Centre of moving image at Federal Square). Hotel rooms will occupy the central section of stroke-casino with a commanding view towards the bay. On the highest floors of the strokes-casino will be where the actual gambling takes place. With a sense of exclusivity, members of haute society can mingle here while contributing voluntarily to the activities below. Last but not least, a clinic for compulsive gamblers will be located at the basement for those who have slipped from the social echelons due to unrestrained gambling habits.

Stroke-casino as an iconic landmark - the great leap forward

The IR proposal is a great leap forward for Singapore as a mature country shedding her image as a conservative city. Gambling when regulated (requiring club membership & subscription), will provide the badly needed funds for artists and art culture in Singapore. A maturing state needs an icon; stroke_casino is iconic as it is the first non-standard building to be proposed by a Singaporean for Singapore on reclaimed land. It will also prove that Singapore is a creative city full of vivacious local talents awaiting for that special contribution to his/her home country. To me, the ideals of strokecity (see 'Towards an art of calligraphic architecture', opening address to Strokecity_2005 exhibition), has begun its manifestation, and this has been made possible by the IR concept.

Kent Neo, 15 Dec 2005, proposal for Marina IR