

LAonline — Projects

Brisbane PARK(ing) Day 2008

a piece originally published elsewhere but LAonline was caught by the creativity involved and wishes to inspire others to maybe participate in Park(ing) Day 2008.



September 19 is PARK(ing) Day, where people in cities around the world change on-street parks from car parks to people parks. The PARK(ing) concept was started in 2005, by a San Francisco art-collective called Rebar, to raise awareness about the lack of green spaces in San Francisco's downtown. It is a rather playful temporary project, premised on the idea that as long as a parking meter is paid for, then the space is technically 'yours' to use for whatever you wish.

Like other streetscaping projects, PARK(ing) landscapes spaces with real trees, grass and furniture to improve public amenity and create social spaces. The landscaped park stays in the car park for as long as parking time limits allow for (or until the meter runs out) then the materials are moved by bikes to be 'parked' elsewhere.

The parks are fun and surprising additions to street environments, which prompt spontaneous interactions and become powerful visual symbols of communities wanting to improve urban quality. With more than 70% of most cities' outdoor space being dedicated to vehicles and only a fraction of that land is allocated to open space, PARK(ing) is a low-cost and creative way to broaden the community discussion about place-making and the role, provision and design of public spaces and urban infrastructure.

What began as a simple idea has been taking up and creatively adapted by other individuals, groups and cities across the world. In 2007, PARK(ing) happened in Brisbane outside the Urban Grind Café on Latrobe Terrace, Paddington.

You really have to see it in action to appreciate the idea, and the website www.parkingday.org has great videos and photos galleries about how PARK(ing) is transforming streets and sparking imaginations.

If you are keen to be involved in Brisbane PARK(ing) Day 2008, please contact Yen Trinh via yengen@hotmail.com

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