

LOOKING INFRASTRUCTURE

UIIIIO

Urban Imaging + Interface + Information Office

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Contemporary society is experiencing an experiential shift in spatial perception and the boundaries that constitute our awareness of place. The iSite addresses this phenomenon by questioning how one experiences place/space by affording a mediated sense of place-awareness, thus erasing traditional boundaries of space and place in urban environments.

The iSite addresses the complexities of urban place-awareness by way of ubiquitous sight/site in unfamiliar settings: we orientate ourselves within the city by way of mental maps that form our sense of place-awareness, which affords the experience of a particular place. Place is only assigned a value after experience or experience assigned to location, e.g. the “tourist site.” However, the tourist has no history of place, neither memory of site to construct cognitive maps. As a result, the tourist orientates herself via physical maps, tour guides, iphones, GPS and arrows/signs. The iSite affords a sense of familiarity beyond the post card ‘real’ by immersing the subject in the environment.

The iSite kiosk was designed as a unit in a virtual/mediated processional-viewing infrastructure. As travelers operate the kiosks, they are extended throughout the city. The iSite subverts the concept of the surveillant gaze by appropriating tracking infrastructures as a means to privilege the sight of the tourist. Cameras are positioned along the side of the kiosks. The cameras are controlled by the operator/tourist at respective iSite kiosks positioned throughout the city as a means to inform and afford the viewer with a sense of place/space-awareness. Furthermore, speakers, sensors, and aroma mechanisms are designed into the kiosk to immerse the subject in multiple environments, in essence, placing the operator in a real time experience of a particular place via sight, sound, and aroma.

