

The Notre-Dame Street Overpass Sidewalk:
From Bill Vazan's *Highway #37* to Today



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An already-made geography sets the stage,
while the willful making of history dictates the action ...¹

The sidewalk plays a fundamental role as a place of transit in the modern city, as well as being a space of sensorial experience. A specific walkway can represent aesthetic change across generations while, nonetheless, eliciting sensory experiences where the pedestrian's feeling of safety is axiomatic. Such a space is seen in a photograph that is part of Montreal artist Bill Vazan's conceptual project *Highway #37*, created in 1970. *Detail 151* (Fig. 1), a black and white photograph, illustrates an eastward view of Notre-Dame Street taken from the southern sidewalk along the Notre-Dame Street overpass, a viaduct that spans over the old Dalhousie and Viger stations rail-yards. This is a historic locus linked to travel: this epic street exits Old Montreal towards the eastern part of the island. On today's maps it spans between Berry and St-Christophe streets. When viewed through Vazan's framing, this cityscape still serves as a striking palimpsest of the city's modernist past, where, formally, the sidewalk encompasses all the elements associated with a safe space for pedestrian travel. A comparative view of the landscape seen in Vazan's photograph between the time it was made and the present further enriches the narrative of this place, which nowadays sits on the cusp of the city's salient tourist space, Old Montreal. It is an area that is rapidly undergoing gentrification through the recent development of high-end housing projects.

By examining the landscape seen in Vazan's photograph, my aim is to investigate the sidewalk area where the photograph was taken for its spatial qualities, which will be contrasted

¹ Edward Soja, "History: geography: modernity," *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Simon During (London and New York: Routledge, 1993) 139.

between the time Vazan took his photograph in 1970 and now, 2009. *Detail 151* will thus be appropriated to act a part that is outside its original purpose and be considered as a dialectical sign. The past and present historical context of the actual location of this pedestrian passage will be reviewed while analyzing salient distinctions through a framework that will include urban, cultural, and sensory considerations.



Fig. 1 Bill Vazan, *Detail 151, Highway #37*, Montreal, 8 August 1970.
Courtesy of the artist and Vox Gallery.

Vazan created *Highway #37* on August 8th 1970 as a conceptual work. The project was conceived with the idea of composing an imaginary line around the city of Montreal made from road signage indicating the highway number by, as noted by the artist in a recent interview, “incorporating what was already in the social network.”² For this piece Vazan drove around the periphery of the city stopping at each Highway #37 panel to make a photograph, “extending the

² Bill Vazan, interview with the author, 19 Nov. 2009.

line,”³ as he recounts, of his course with each photo until he had completed the tour of the island. While the various roads used by Vazan at the time to contour the island still exist, the appellation Highway #37 does not figure on current maps. This is one of the first distinctions noticed when one starts to look closely at differences in today’s view with the one seen in Vazan’s photo: the road number sign is no longer there. As he was completing his tour, Vazan stopped on Notre-Dame Street to photograph the 151st sign. For Vazan *Detail 151* is about his “objet trouvé;”⁴ however, it also depicts a landscape that, upon initial view, could arguably seem to have changed little until today (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 Notre-Dame Street overpass sidewalk. Photograph: Philippe Guillaume, November 2009.

³ Vazan.

⁴ Vazan.

The dominant structures in the image, the Jacques Cartier Bridge and the Molson factory, remain imposing and unchanged figures to anyone contemplating the same vista from the sidewalk where Vazan stood almost forty years ago to take his picture. In contrast, the cars, missing warehouses and “Highway 37 Est” sign, as well as the sidewalk and the new apartment complex on the southern side of the overpass, do point to a different time. In 1970 the viaduct’s function was as a crossing over the CP rail-yard allowing traffic from Old Montreal a link to Centre-Sud, the eastern part of the city, its shoreline factories, and working class neighborhoods; today, following extensive renovations in 1998 by La Société de Développement de Montréal, this part of Notre-Dame Street is completely remade, while the overpass sidewalk has been configured as a pedestrian lookout.

At the same time, just below the structure, Faubourg Québec – an exclusive residential area that marks a clashing contrast with the location’s popular history – has gradually developed over the last decade in this area which, as the historian Joanne Burgess reminds us, is traditionally linked to a working class heritage.⁵ This venture is presented by the city as “The ‘new’ Faubourg Québec, a huge residential project, [that] is bringing new life to this area.”⁶ This is, however, an elitist “new life” that does not include the working-class social group that had historically populated this area, and did so into the seventies. Today, only those belonging to an upper economic class can afford the high real-estate and rent prices associated with the new development.

⁵ Joanne Burgess, “Écomusée du fier monde: Industrial and working-class history of Montréal,” *Écomusée du fier monde*. Web. 27 Nov. 2009.

⁶ “An Impressive Faubourg,” *Old Montréal*, 2009, Ville de Montréal. Web. 2 Dec. 2009.

Although my discussion is concerned with the sidewalk space at this location, it will be instrumental to first examine the area in a broader perspective dealing with the history of this site. This is a history that goes back to the end of the seventeenth-century⁷ when the French built a citadel that had its eastern gate just a few metres from the location where the Notre-Dame Street overpass would be built in 1896.⁸ Originally known as “Le chemin du roy,” Notre-Dame Street crossed Montreal’s Eastern gateway at this location. As this area was also along the only road to Quebec City, it was called “faubourg Québec” during the period related to Luc Noppen’s description:

Ce « faubourg Québec » se développe après la Conquête; plus à l’est, le «faubourg Sainte-Marie» apparaît alors et l’axe principal de communication, l’ancien chemin Saint-Martin, devient La St. Mary’s Street. La rue Notre-Dame ne sera prolongée que plus tard, dans les années 1820, après le nivellement des hauteurs de la citadelle, rocher hostile contre lequel elle butait jusqu’alors. C’est la création du square Dalhousie – en fait, une place triangulaire dominée par l’édifice de la citadelle – qui permet aux rues Saint-Paul et Notre-Dame de se rejoindre, pour former la rue Sainte-Marie, dans le faubourg du même nom. Ce n’est finalement qu’en 1882 que le conseil municipal adopte le nom de «rue Notre-Dame» pour l’ensemble du trace formé par les anciennes rues Saint-Joseph (faubourg de Récollets), Notre-Dame (Vieux-Montréal) et Sainte-Marie faubourg (Sainte-Marie).⁹

⁷ Guy Pinard, *Montréal son histoire son architecture* (Montréal: Les éditions la presse, 1987) 292.

⁸ Arkéos inc., *Le pont de la rue Notre-Dame: Relevés architecturaux et inventaire archéologique au site BjFj-56, 1993* (Montréal: Ville de Montréal, 1994) 10.

⁹ Luc Noppen, *Du chemin du Roy à la rue Notre-Dame* (Québec: Ministère des Transports du Québec, 2001) 54. “This «faubourg Québec» developed after the conquest; to the East, the «faubourg Sainte-Marie» appeared then, and the principal axis of communication, the old chemin Saint-Martin, became St-Mary’s Street. Notre-Dame Street will only be prolonged later, in the 1820s, after the levelling of the citadels’ mound, hostile rock upon which she had stumbled until then. It is the creation of Dalhousie square – in fact, a triangular place dominated by the citadel building – that allows Saint-Paul and Notre-Dame streets to join, to form Saint-Marie Street in the borough of the same name. It is finally only in 1882 that the municipal council adopts the name «rue Notre-Dame» for the route formed by the old Saint-Joseph Street (faubourg de Récollets), Notre-Dame Street (Old-Montreal), and Sainte-Marie borough (Sainte-Marie).” Trans. Philippe Guillaume.

Early renderings clearly show that there was no sidewalk here at the start of the nineteenth century. However, as the city developed during the next half-century, paths dedicated to pedestrian travel appeared at this location as they had in most major Western cities where, as Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris and Renia Ehrenfeucht remind us, “Sidewalks had become important elements of urban infrastructure.”¹⁰ One of the earliest illustrations showing a sidewalk in this location can be seen in an 1845 aquarelle titled *St. Mary Suburb* by George Seton. Meanwhile, Robert Auchmaty Sproule’s illustration, *Nelson’s Monument, Montreal, Notre-Dame Street Looking West* (1830), shows that in 1830 the sidewalk was clearly part of the cityscape on Notre-Dame Street to the east of Faubourg Québec. This fact is well noted by Gilles Lauzon and Alan Stewart in their discussion about the urban planning of the city during the first decades of the nineteenth century:

As inspector of roads, Jacques Viger supervised the city’s public works. [...] The major thoroughfares linking the city to the countryside were macadamized with layers of gravel and crushed stone. The main streets in the town were finally covered entirely with paving stones, as Chaussegros de Léry had proposed 85 years earlier. Stone sidewalks were also installed.¹¹

De Léry, supervisor of the king’s building projects, had made specifications regarding the rebuilding of part of the city following a major fire in 1721: stone became the dominant material. As Stewart writes, this “would have a significant long-term impact on the urban environment.”¹² It is an important change that eventually included the sidewalk.

¹⁰ Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris and Renia Ehrenfeucht, *Sidewalks* (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2009) 18.

¹¹ Gilles Lauzon and Alan M. Stewart, “The Bourgeois Town: The New Face of the Expanding City, 1800-1850,” *Old Montreal History through Heritage*, eds. Gilles Lauzon and Madeleine Forget (Québec: Les Publications du Québec, 2004) 116.

¹² Alan M. Stewart, “The Fortified Town: Built and Rebuilt, 1685-1800,” *Old Montreal History through Heritage*, eds. Gilles Lauzon and Madeleine Forget (Québec: Les Publications du Québec, 2004) 84.

The site of the Notre-Dame Street bridge is associated with a charged past; the expansion of the railway system during the late nineteenth-hundreds and early twentieth-century saw this portion of the street become an overpass. While the structure underwent a major overhaul in the nineties, its sidewalk, equipped with new railings and seating area, is still made from asphalt, a compound directly associated with walking. Mirko Zardini points out that,

As Walter Benjamin reminded us, asphalt was first used for sidewalks. Thus, its appearance in European and American cities in the 1820s was originally linked to pedestrians. Since then, this mixture of bitumen, a tar-like binding material, and inert materials like sand or crushed stone has come into ever wider use.¹³

The various components seen in Vazan's photograph, such as the Molson Brewery established at its present location in 1782, and the Jacques Cartier Bridge opened to traffic in 1930,¹⁴ are semiotic carriers of a modernist social ideal where architecture assumed a dominant role. The Molson Brewery played a central role in the development and history of the neighborhood where the Notre-Dame overpass was built. Its building still stands today as an emblem of the importance of factories in Sainte-Marie. Robert Lewis writes: "the Molson's [...] were the most influential family in the eastern part of the city and strongly shaped the district's early development."¹⁵ As it grew to its present day construction, the brewery changed architecturally: its contemporary makeup was created in the first decades of the last century. To this effect, while discussing the factory's urban integration, Noppen cites a municipal report that

¹³ Mirko Zardini, "The Ground of the Modern City and the Preponderance of Asphalt," *Sense of the City: An Alternative Approach to Urbanism*, ed. Mirko Zardini (Montreal: CCA and Lars Müller, 2005) 239.

¹⁴ David B. Hanna, "The Importance of Transportation Infrastructure," *Montreal Metropolis 1880-1930*, eds. Isabelle Gournay and France Vanlaethem (Montreal: CCA, 1998) 56.

¹⁵ Robert Lewis, *Manufacturing Montreal* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins UP, 2000) 79.

notes: “Il en résulte un ensemble architectural d’une rare qualité, qui a une réelle apparence d’âge et une forte présence urbaine.”¹⁶

Concurrently, the approximately three-kilometre-long Jacques-Cartier Bridge – initially named “Harbor Bridge” – was built to provide a link to the South Shore, as the existing Victoria Bridge could no longer manage the increasing motor traffic accessing the island from the south. In 1970, the structure was a major artery to Montreal, and the Pont de la Concorde was the only connection for vehicles to Notre-Dame and St-Helene islands, the site of Expo ’67. Following the world fair, the structure had also become an internationally recognizable emblem of the city. It is described by David Hanna as “Montreal’s last gigantic infrastructural creation.”¹⁷ Hanna further provides a telling sketch of the early planned use for this structure:

To enhance American tourist access to Montreal and to facilitate the growing flow of trucking between Montreal and the eastern United States, not to mention coping with the surge of automobile commuters from the South Shore, something had to be done to relieve the totally inadequate, narrow, two-lane automobile passage on Victoria Bridge.¹⁸

The Molson factory and the Jacques Cartier Bridge are like active verbs in the city’s narrative that pull the viewer into a romanticized history associated with the utopian ideal associated with industry. While this history connotes a time that is tainted with the modernist promise of a better world, it was not a promise for the labor-class inhabitants of Sainte-Marie who mostly found themselves at the short end in their relationship with the many industries operating at the foot of the bridge. Further, this was a predominantly French-Canadian

¹⁶ Noppen 104. “The result is an architectural wholeness of rare quality, which has a real appearance of age and a strong urban presence.” Trans. Philippe Guillaume.

¹⁷ Hanna 56.

¹⁸ Hanna 56.

neighborhood, which is described by Michèle Benoît and Roger Gratton as follows: “le quartier Sainte-Marie est devenu le fief des ouvriers canadiens-français.”¹⁹ While in 1970 housing was still affordable in this still mostly French speaking low-income part of town, since the late 1990s consistently avaricious speculative real-estate projects have radically changed the scene. This is now a region where the impoverished and the laborers who had homes here have been pushed out as collateral casualties necessary to the economic development of this part of the city. It has become, above all, a place of motor transit meant to play a distinct role in a Lefebvrian urban context “that results from industrialization.”²⁰ Hence, the place where Vazan made *Detail 151* is one that performs in a way that further articulates the progressive modern social epitome tagged to the factory and the bridge.

While the practical nature of this overpass has changed in the time span between the two periods considered, its salience as part of an agent in the ideal of economic development over social development has not. It is probably even more evident today than in 1970. Whereas at the time, as Vazan’s photograph illustrates, there was little, if anything, to attract pedestrians to this location beyond transit, today this sidewalk is made to serve a dual purpose. First, it is still meant, superficially, as a safe conduit for those travelling by foot along this elevated part of Notre-Dame Street. Secondly, it is meant as an area for people to stop to admire the scenery seen south of the bridge. It is noteworthy that walkers are discouraged to use the northern sidewalk by its narrowness, while the wide southern walkway, which overlooks spectacular representations of

¹⁹ Michèle Benoît et Roger Gratton, *Pignon sur rue: Les quartiers de Montréal* (Montréal: Guérin, 1991) 95. “The Sainte-Marie neighbourhood became the fief of French-Canadian workers.” Trans. Philippe Guillaume.

²⁰ Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, trans. Robert Bonnono (Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis P, 2003) 2.

the city's recent past and history along this part of the river and port, is fitted with two long balconies with seating.

The primary function of the sidewalk is to provide a safe passageway for pedestrian travel. As Jane Jacobs notes, "To keep the city safe is a fundamental task of a city's streets and sidewalks."²¹ The Notre-Dame Bridge sidewalk offers no possible exit other than the extremities of the 400-metre long structure overlooking Faubourg Québec, warehouses, and industrial parking spaces below the 18-metre high overpass. In her distinction between place and space, Elizabeth Wilson notes, "for de Certeau space is a 'frequented place', 'an intersection of moving bodies'. It is a pedestrian who transforms a street into a space – space therefore implying movement and interaction."²² Following Wilson and de Certeau's line of thought, what Vazan's photograph depicts is barely a space. While it shows all the characteristics of what could be a space, the location itself is a psychological obstacle to the presence of the principal figure for it to become a space: the walker. Today, repeated visits (Fig. 3) to the location over time show that the sidewalk is still not a busy place. Except during the summer fireworks festival, its principal human traffic is composed of a scarce passage of people parking along the overpass.

City planners recent attempt to improve the sidewalk by creating seating overlooking a rich historical panorama where luxury condo projects figure in the foreground are a failure because of the very lack of pedestrian traffic. A flux of pedestrian activity would eliminate the feeling of unease created by being in a deserted and closed environment, especially after

²¹ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961) 30.

²² Elizabeth Wilson, "Against Utopia: The Romance of Indeterminate Spaces," *Embodied Utopias: Gender, Social Change and the Modern Metropolis*, eds. Amy Bingaman, Lise Sanders and Rebecca Zorach (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) 259.

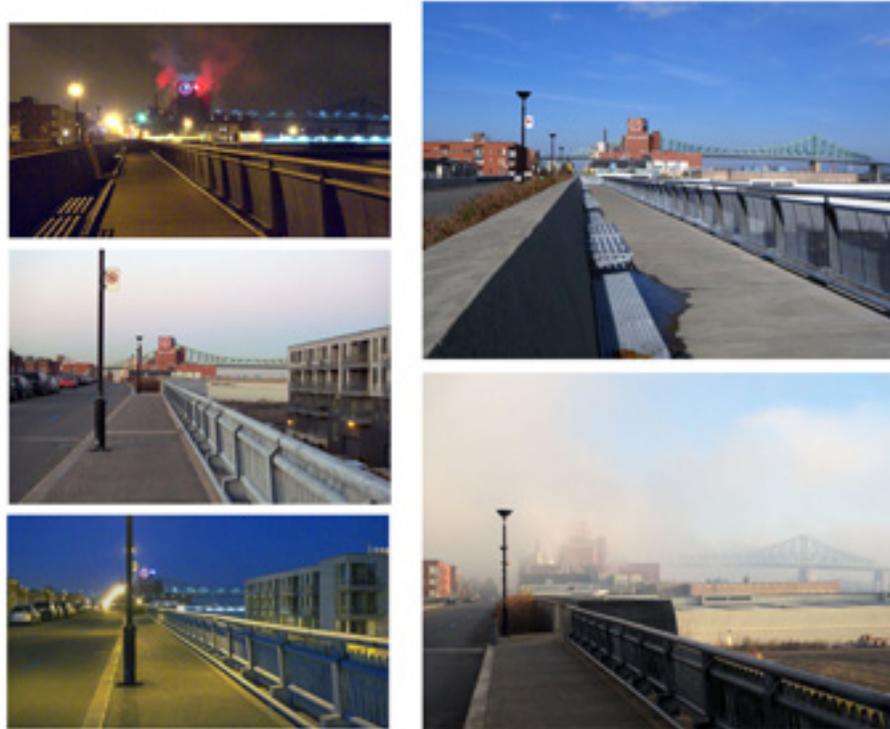


Fig. 3 The sidewalk at night and different times of the day. Photographs: Philippe Guillaume, 2009.

nightfall, in this place where, despite its bright streetlights, there is a permeating sense of entrapment and danger. Likewise, the terrain underneath where *Detail 151* was made cannot be interpreted as representational of a space along the lines of Wilson's description. As evidenced by traces of broken bottles, syringe caps and cigarette butts, it is an area that bears the signs of a temporary human presence that is mostly solitary. This is a zone along a vestige of the wall from the old Citadel where the absence of "human interaction" prevents it from being a "space" as defined by de Certeau.

A salient didactic interpretation of "place" is proposed by Marc Augé who notes that, "If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which

cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place.”²³

This area below the bridge is charged with history, a point evidenced by, to name but one example, the presence of the old stone wall. However, today it no longer functions as a relational intersection, and therefore is not a “place.” All the while, it is historical, preventing it from being a “non-place,” as well. Hence, this area under the elevated sidewalk, which in abstract terms belongs to the immediate “space” where Vazan took his photo, proposes a rich dual reading of its own that complicates any easy categorization, as well as blatantly resisting the surrounding gentrification.

In 1970, Montreal was still the dominant economic metropolis of Canada. It was also the seedbed of a strong Quebec nationalist movement that, with the October Crisis, culminated in a Federal Government imposition of the War Measures Act in the city and the killing of Pierre Laporte, provincial Minister of Labour. While today radical separatist movements are nominal, traces of a socio-political ideal historically associated with the period when Vazan was making *Highway# 37* are, nevertheless, kept alive through urban art like graffiti.

While Expo was a recent memory in 1970, it was also the year the International Olympic Committee announced that Montreal would host the 1976 Olympic Games.²⁴ This was a time when Montrealers and Mayor Jean Drapeau who, as Annick Germain and Rose Damaris note, “was convinced that great cities need great monuments which would help the citizens to forget their daily misery,”²⁵ were seeing the radical urban metamorphoses of their city in line with the

²³ Marc Augé, *Non-Places: An Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. John Howe (London and New York: Verso, 1995) 77-78.

²⁴ André Lortie, *Les années 60 Montréal voit grand*, ed. André Lortie (Montréal: CCA, 2004) 23.

²⁵ Annick Germain and Rose Damaris, “Montreal’s Built Form: French Heritage, Victorian Legacy and Modernist Ambitions,” *Montreal: The Quest for a Metropolis* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd., 2000) 84.

mayor's grand plan to see Montreal on par with the principal capitals of the western industrialized world. This was a project that transformed the downtown skyline with the massive building of office and residential towers, radically changing the city throughout the sixties and seventies. As a direct result, municipal heritage preservation groups were created, worrying that, as Martin Drouin relates, "La ville que les Montréalais chérissaient et pour laquelle ils militaient allait [...] s'effacer' in an onrushing wave of asphalt parking lots and high-rise bachelor apartments."²⁶

Today, while its past economic dominance has been overtaken in the context of an increasingly global economy, Montreal is actively pursuing an ambitious plan to figure as a leading place of spectacle and cultural tourism, as highlighted on the city's web site, which states, "Montréal also affirms that culture is a key driver of its development, economic vitality and future prosperity."²⁷ Nevertheless, culture forty years ago resonated with a local identity that was still in the wave of the spirit of the sixties, as Phyllis Lambert remembers: "Les artistes et les intellectuels québécois des années 1960 rompent avec le passé afin de créer une société moderne non rurale, non sacrée, et sortie de ces mythes."²⁸ Today, however, large show business

²⁶ Martin Drouin, *Le combat du patrimoine à Montréal (1973-2003)* (Sainte-Foy: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2005) 169. "The city Montrealers cherished and for which they militated would [...] be erased." Trans. Philippe Guillaume.

²⁷ "Montréal: City of Culture, City with a Future," *Montreal Cultural Metropolis: A Cultural Development Policy for Ville de Montréal 2005-2015*, Ville de Montréal. Web. 27 Nov. 2009

²⁸ Phyllis Lambert, "Les transformations intérieures," *Les années 60 Montréal voit grand*, ed. André Lortie (Montréal: CCA, 2004) 17. "Quebecois artists and intellectuals from the 1960s break from the past to create a modern non-rural society, not sacred, and free of its myths." Trans. Philippe Guillaume.

corporations, as representatives of Quebec culture, have mostly overshadowed the local individual voices that carried a message of distinct identity in the past.²⁹

Despite an attempt in recent years by the city to transform part of this sidewalk into a lookout by including public seating facing the port and Notre-Dame Island, this area is still mostly a site of motor transit where few pedestrians are seen using the bridge walkway. When Vazan stopped here, the sidewalk's function was as a practical pedestrian passage between Old Montreal and the lower eastern part of town; it was also, in a way, symbolic as a "bridge" for "all" between the Anglophone west and Quebecois east. Today, despite a planned effort to make this space appealing to what Wilson calls the "selective tourist gaze,"³⁰ the area is still mostly devoid of any human presence. In fact, this sidewalk is today, in spite of attempts to keep it an interstitial space, a non-place that sits atop an area that, in a way, slips between the cracks of neatness associated with categorization. The inclusion of isolated panoramic outlooks along this sidewalk with no alternative exit save its extremities almost half a kilometre apart creates, as Wilson writes, a non-place as meant by Augé: "Augé's non-places are dystopian, or utopian in a wholly negative sense, in that they are over-determined, totally prescriptive and [...] usually provide an impoverished experience."³¹

For the lone walker, the experience along this walkway is one of sensorial discomfort. This is rendered by the cognitive state of alertness for safety that results from the physical entrapment that stems from the new layout of the sidewalk, as well as the feeling of isolation in

²⁹ Two prominent contemporary corporations of spectacle in Montreal have marked associations with the Notre-Dame Street overpass. In the early 1990s the Cirque du Soleil had its headquarters in the old fire station on its northeastern side, while the Cirque Eloize presently occupies the old Dalhousie station located at the start of the bridge.

³⁰ Wilson 257.

³¹ Wilson 259.

an uncontrolled reclusive space when walking along the balconies. Although this is a subjective feeling that could be experienced by anyone – including myself, having lived it repeatedly during several visits to the site – it is particularly strong at night, as well as for women. The latter is a notion already analysed by Fran Tonkiss, in another context, through her discussion involving Gill Valentine's research about women, fear, and space, as she notes:

Valentine suggests that women perceive space as dangerous when people's behaviour (especially men's behaviour) is seen as unregulated. This can be true of open spaces ... which can be difficult to get out of or to quickly get across It is equally true of "closed spaces" which are sealed off and where behaviour is relatively concealed.³²

In this discussion, the photographic object itself has become a palimpsest by combining modern scenery with a postmodern work. Vazan's *Detail 151* is a snapshot that illustrates a loaded view related to the social and industrial history of Montreal. The Notre-Dame Street overpass' sidewalk is a notable place of sensory cognizance that has changed since Vazan's photograph. In its attempt to create a space where Montrealers and tourists would stop to gaze at iconic representations of Montreal's industrial history (with the Jacques Cartier Bridge, Molson Brewery, and the port with its silos), or cultural reminders (with Notre-Dame Island and Expo 67, and the annual summer fire-works), the sidewalk area here has been transformed beyond any formal transformations into a "space" that is readily gendered and maintains a feeling of apprehension for the most frequent user of this sidewalk – the lone pedestrian. Turning it into an area of historic and cultural spectacle for the spectator and tourist gaze has mostly erased any critical, local, or social agency in the name of a hegemonic history. Over the years spanning

³² Fran Tonkiss, *Space, the City and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005) 103.

Vazan's picture and today's view, the neighborhood has been transformed into a part of the city where the poor and the working class – which has composed this community since the early years of the colony when Sainte-Marie was a township on the outskirts of town where the workers and families who could not afford housing within the walls lived – have been pushed out. Today, any allegorical significance of the sidewalk on this bridge as a link between the affluent English speaking west side of the city and the working class French Canadian east end is being replaced by deluxe housing for a mixed upper-middle class multinational clientele.

Architectural changes made to this public sidewalk during the time span between the two photographs have resulted in an area that today performs in opposition with the basic purpose of a sidewalk, which is to provide the pedestrian with a sense of security. Vazan made *Detail 151* on this sidewalk in 1970 as part of a work where he borrowed from urban geography for his raw material; revisiting the site today where an urban readymade sign – now part of the urban history of the city – made him stop to take a photograph suggests the salience of changes beyond those visible to the eye.

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