

Non-Fiction Project

Touch of a Place

Avi Friedman

Touch of a Place is about places. Good places know how to engage, keep one coming back, and trigger indifference. We may stumble across them by accident or be directed to them by others. They need to be experienced firsthand, appreciated and suited to our liking, and be kept among our treasured artifacts. Special spots can be found anywhere, in a posh quarter of town or a rundown district. They can be small, room-sized, or the scale of a civic square. They can be adorned or bare, and of any shape. What makes them unique is our notice of them and their effect on us.

In years past, Avi Friedman kept hunting for unique places. His training as an urban planner and an architect help him quest into their fabric. He wondered what made strolling through, sitting in, dining at, conversing with, rubbing shoulders, or simply being in them memorable, or conversely, a bad experience. Avi wondered what made him return to some places time and again, and questioned why he avoided others. He carefully records behaviour when he is in them in the company of others. Be it social gathering or intimate encounter, he is eager to find out why a crowd, as expressed by their reaction and attitude, behave the way they do.

Avi's travel took him to near and further away spots whose special markings left an imprint. Each place stands for a subject's area of interest. He reflected on the design of markets when he stumbled into one at the crack of dawn in Dalian, China. He thought about the disappearance of folk art from neighbourhoods when he accidentally walked into a collection of life-sized soapstone sculptures in Iqaluit, a town in the Canadian arctic. Avi considered the relationship between cities and their surroundings when he stepped out of his hotel in Fargo, North Dakota on a very cold winery day. He reminisced about the unravelling of human relations in North American suburbs when he was taken by the warmth and the camaraderie among spectators in the Palio of Calose d'Elsa in Tuscany. He wrote about the poor state of fitness among the young, and the disappearance of pathways from community planning when he crossed a neighbourhood in Kfar Sava, Israel.

Touch of a Place targets readers who will be drawn into the subject due to general interest in knowing about places, culture, architecture, history, geography and urban planning.

Areas covered in the book include:
England, USA, China, Canada,
Israel, Mexico, Italy

Non-Fiction: Memoir/Urban Planning/Design
Materials available: Manuscript: 50,000 words
with 10-12 photos
Rights Available: All



Avi's most recent book
published by Penguin Canada 2005
– all other territories available.