

Go with Me

50 Steps
to Landscape
Thinking

























Go with Me

50 Steps to Landscape Thinking

Thomas Oles

With:
Marieke Timmermans
Jacques Abelman



Amsterdam Academy of Architecture
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Foreword

Aart Oxenaar

Director
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture

This vademecum allows us to look at landscape in a different way. Landscape here is not considered as a static image, a picture painted by nature or designed by man. It is, instead, considered as the temporary result of social, economic and political movements, as a snapshot in the continuous interaction between patterns of human occupation and natural processes. Does this 'deromanticize' the landscape? Not necessarily, since images of the landscape can still please the eye. We only acquire another understanding of the origin, of the reason for this esthetic appeal. And it becomes clear that this seduction — unlike that of a painted landscape — is by definition not static, not permanent. This vademecum is an inspiration to see, to understand the landscape as the enjoyable product of constantly changing processes and machinations, of good intentions and careless acts, of pointed interventions and 'laissez-faire'. Moreover, it forces us to reconsider our definition of landscape. And thus it is also a handbook, a genuine 'go with me' that can help designers find inspiration in this dynamic way of looking and understanding for their continuous work on designing and redesigning the landscape.

It is a great pleasure for the Amsterdam Academy of Architecture to present this vademecum as the result of the visiting professorship of Thomas Oles at the master programme of the Landscape Architecture Department from 2010 to 2012. Together with Head of Landscape Architecture Marieke Timmermans and assistant Jacques Abelman, with whom he worked intensively, he rounds off with this publication a highly inspiring period of teaching and research that encouraged the staff, tutors and students at the Academy to reflect anew on the essence of landscape. We are convinced that this vademecum will fulfil the same role for its readers.

Foreword

Living Landscape

Marieke Timmermans

Head of Landscape Architecture Department,
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture

My grandparents lived in the countryside. I loved their country life, the house with the yard and the wooden barn with machinery, the tomato-sorting machine with the big handle that I was allowed to swing and the trolley chassis that could ride you up to the end of their land. Land that was fully built with glasshouses filled with tomato plants. I remember the great smell when my grandfather and I were checking the quality of his tomatoes – they were the best in the region. My grandmother was always busy around the house, tending the garden, picking the plums, apples, pears, raspberries or strawberries and making jams out of them. In the cellar the glass jars with prepared vegetables were piled up along the walls. My grandmother's homemade salted white and green beans were my favourite.

I was a 'city child', but the idea that the countryside was all about green space and quietness was totally alien to me. The landscape of my youth was not green at all, it was totally built up, noisy and busy at times, but still definitely rural. It was not so much the spatial or physical factors that defined this ruralness, but the completely different way of life that was connected to the land. To me the rural landscape was the 'self-created world' of my grandparents.

Our rural landscapes are the creations of many individuals like my grandparents. A multitude of personal initiatives resulted in beautiful coherent landscapes over time. Natural and technical factors influenced possibilities, and political and economic processes influenced decisions. But above all, these landscapes were not only created from the point of view of production, there were also social rules, ideals and aesthetic goals too. People gave meaning to these landscapes by constructing their own living environment, often in a communal way.

When I started as Head of the Landscape Architecture Department at the Amsterdam Academy of Architecture in 2009 my goal was to expand the scope of my teaching from the urban landscape to the bigger scale of the rural landscape. The rural landscape is facing major changes. New social issues on nature, climate, food, energy and depopulation require our urgent attention. Change is an essential aspect of landscape; it is the key to its vitality as a system. But nowadays transformation often implicates an approach that tends to forgo or even exclude personal attachment, thereby diminishing the vitality and meaning of landscapes. To meaningfully change the rural landscape we have to recognize it as a human habitat. We have to keep people involved with their life and work and let them interact. Thanks to my childhood I cannot but see the rural landscape as the result of living. I wanted students to see this too, to challenge them to embrace the personal input of habitation and design on conditions for people to (re)construct their daily environment and give (communal) meaning to place (again).

That is why I started a lectureship called Living Landscape, within the lecturer programme developed by the Amsterdam School of the Arts. We set up a program to help students unravel the complex meaning of landscape and find out how the 'living' part of landscapes is linked to the spatial quality of landscapes. The keystone of the lectureship is this vademecum: *Go with Me, 50 Steps to Landscape Thinking*. A handbook for students to understand and design living landscapes. It covers topics we discussed during our studio sessions, exercises, workshops, lectures and excursions, and it provides a vast bibliography as inspiration for students. Many of the images in this book are taken from these studios and workshops.



The trolley chassis that could ride you up to the end of my grandparents' land (me on front row)

Introduction, or,

*How and Why
to Use This Book*

Thomas Oles

Lecturer Living Landscape,
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture

Whatever I may have fondly supposed, all that I have been writing and saying over the past years has in the last analysis dealt with a single topic – how to define (or redefine) the concept *landscape*.

— John Brinckerhoff Jackson

*

I happily own to a similar obsession. Much of my life is spent thinking about the same questions that preoccupied Jackson over his long career. What is landscape? Where and when did this word and concept emerge? Why does landscape resonate louder now than at any time since the eighteenth century? And, perhaps most important, how would rethinking what landscape is change the way we think about design and planning? These questions were the subject of ‘Living Landscape’, the interdisciplinary research programme I led at the Academy of Architecture in Amsterdam, the Netherlands from 2010 to 2012. The aim of the programme was to test how a deeper understanding of tensions inherent in the word and concept *landscape* – tensions that are, as the example of Jackson attests, more than ample for a lifetime of study – could help students of design refine or rethink the fundamental assumptions they bring to projects. By exposing students to the full breadth of landscape theory today, in disciplines from geography to archaeology to history, the programme attempted to use the idea of landscape *per se* to train more reflective, sensitive and critical designers.

*

I have often wondered whence my own passion for landscape. Perhaps it was an early fascination with maps. I remember buying the entire suite of United States Geological Survey maps of Massachusetts and laying them out on the living room floor so that they fit into a seamless image of the state seen from the air. In an era before easily available satellite photographs, there was something thrilling in that suddenly complete view of every forest, every mountain top, every structure. I remember well the sense of my own power over the places I saw. I had made them, after all, with my own hands: the scissors meticulously cutting one edge off each map, the tape laid over to connect them into one giant roll that I would unfurl, god-like, at will. Later, I encountered another side of landscape. As a graduate student I wrote a dissertation on the translation of pastoral motifs from French

painting into the Russian literature of the eighteenth century, exemplified by obscure writers like Nikolay Karamzin and Ippolit Bogdanovich.

These motifs, all smiling shepherds and babbling brooks, were imported wholesale into a land of wretched hovels, knee-deep mud and rampant alcoholism. They were no more 'real' than the fabled facades constructed to assure the travelling Empress Catherine that her land was as prosperous and tidy as France.

In both these landscapes, the map and the painting, there was a fundamental split between reality and illusion, object and subject, matter and representation. Landscape was a 'way of seeing', a veil or mask that concealed the 'real' environment behind it. When I looked at the maps spread at my feet I often imagined what it must really be like in all those places. I saw in my mind's eye hilltop farms, lanes lined with sugar maples, old stone walls in yellow woods. I learned only later that there was an entire body of scholarship, even then being written, that saw this mental picture of landscape as no less duplicitous, no less deceptive than the map or painting. All were mere representations, and behind them stood only more representation. Landscape was a Potemkin village without the village.

For a while I hewed to this notion of landscape as a kind of hoax, a great blanket pulled over the collective eyes of people, groups, classes. But in keeping with John Brinckerhoff Jackson's notion that landscape is a process of discovery rather than a thing discovered, my views have changed greatly over the years. This is primarily because I found the account of landscape that I have just described profoundly unsatisfying, not to say disempowering. There was, I just knew, something 'out there' to which I was drawn, the real stuff of the world and the people who made it. And so, fitfully, I moved from understanding landscape as a way of *seeing*, toward understanding landscape as a way of *being*.

This idea is not mine alone. It reflects a sea change in the conception of landscape that has been underway since the 1990s. This conception sees landscape not simply as a representation, but as the sum total of actions that people and groups undertake to build and shape their environment. Landscape in this sense is neither simply perception nor object perceived, but rather a set of social relationships unfolding and changing in time. It is less about space or vision than about *practice* and *performance*. And, because landscapes are made and maintained by actors with varying degrees of power, the concept of landscape inevitably has an ethical and political valence.

Though it has emerged in landscape scholarship only recently, this notion of landscape is hardly new. As geographer Kenneth Olwig has documented, it goes back to the very oldest definitions of the word as it was used in the 'landscapes' of the North Sea coast from Frisia to Jutland.

In this original sense, 'landscape' had nothing to do with scenery or plants, but rather was something very close to the modern 'township', a political community grounded in a particular place.

Such definitions are far indeed from the way many designers conceive of landscape: as a zone opposed to 'city' or 'industry'. In this sense, landscape is little more than the green stuff on so many student plans or professional projects, a kind of universal matrix, a greenish receptacle for whatever we (designers, planners) choose to put into it. During my time at the Academy I observed how this residual notion of landscape created a palpable anxiety among students of landscape architecture. Perhaps because they have yet to be drawn into the corporate design world, these students understood well that landscape is far more than a zone on a map: it is a way of thinking, a way of being in the world that by its very nature transcends dualities of subject and object, mind and body, representation and substance.

*

This book is meant as a tool for these students, and all those who share their curiosity about landscape. The title is an English translation of the Latin word *vademecum*. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a *vademecum* was 'a book or manual suitable for carrying about with one for ready reference', 'a thing commonly carried about by a person as being of some service to him'. A *vademecum* was meant to be actively used, made grimy with repeated thumbings in the field. A good *vademecum*, like a farmer's almanac held up against a lowering sky or Bible pulled out of a uniform pocket on the battlefield, is a used one – particularly at those moments when one does not know where else to turn.

Go with me is conceived in the same spirit. I hope that students wondering about the fundamental question that faces all designers – *where to start* – will find in this book a helpful companion. This book is organized into five stages of the design process that bridge positive and normative ways of knowing: *sensing*, *reasoning*, *showing*, *changing* and *testing*. Ten essential 'propositions', or general statements of principles and guides for behaviour, are arranged under each of the headings. The user of this book ought not to be misled by the sequential arrangement or rational overtones of the words 'heading' or 'proposition'. In reality the sections of this book can and should be read in any order. Like every *vademecum*, *Go with me* is intended to be opened on any page, and every page is written to be practically useful at any stage of the design process.

More than anything, however, this book is about different habits of mind. It holds that the essence of landscape thinking is its capacity to bridge the rational and the irrational, subject and object, qualitative

and quantitative – indeed, it is thinking that does not accept these as opposites at all. It says that it is possible to be both scientist and artist, both mind and body at once, and that this is actually essential if we are ever to put back together a world where, to quote Ian McHarg, ‘all the fragments lie on the ground’. This book may sometimes make the design process harder, but that is only because it ought to be. Landscape thinking is not a recipe for good design, but rather its precondition.

So thumb this book, bend it, fold it, drop it into icy water on half-frozen lakes, carry it in your backpack as you wade through canals and across deserts, hold it by your side as you wander the plazas and alleys of the world. But use it. Use it to focus the attention, to hone the senses, to broaden the mind. Use it again and again to think landscape, and landscape architecture, anew.

Introduction

Learning Living Landscape

Jacques Abelman

Assistant of the Living Landscape lectureship

The two years of the Living Landscape lectureship was an intensely fertile period at the Amsterdam Academy of Architecture. The content of the program exposed students to both the breadth and depth of the cultural and intellectual richness of landscape studies. A bevy of leading landscape scholars and practitioners brought an influx of new ideas and energy from abroad.

The content of this handbook emerged from many hours of dialogue with Thomas Oles, who was able to make the highest level of landscape scholarship accessible to design students. Over the course of many months we sought to clarify the principles of the living landscape approach: what are the essential concepts and sources that surround the notion of 'landscape'? How do we shape these into tools to take direct action in the design process?

My task was to create a frame around each proposition by finding an epigraph to set off Thomas's writing as well as find key sources for further reading. Each epigraph, or quotation, is meant to introduce other voices into the landscape discussion. For example, I scoured the works of Aristotle to find out what he had to say about ethics and practice, and looked at Descartes's writing to think about how we use data to get to the 'truth' of things. From J.B Jackson to Lao Tzu, the epigraphs branch out into philosophy and literature but also extend to physics, economics, geography and more.

The other works referred to alongside the propositions are key texts that expand on the meaning of each proposition. Some are essential works in the profession, for instance Anne Whiston Spirn's *The Language of Landscape* or Yi-Fu Tuan's *Topophilia*. Some come from what might seem unfamiliar territory in our design educations. For example, I would argue that the Dalai Lama's writings on patience, accepting error and maintaining the 'beginner's mind' are qualities central to the design process. There are two or more texts per proposition, representing over one hundred possibilities for new explorations to strengthen and enrich thought and practice. The bibliography lists these texts, as well as many more, thus forming a 'canon' of living landscape thought.

But above all, these propositions are meant to be put into practice. We are designers with questions to answer and a job to do. Each proposition offers a concrete approach, a new way to see what's at stake, or a possible way out of the muddles and through the obstacles that are inevitable along the way.

The handbook is a connecting thread through the process of a project, one that each practitioner of landscape thought can unfurl as he or she goes along, from the field to the drawing table and then back again—without getting lost.

By doing this work I glimpsed the scope of ideas and practices that make up the wealth of landscape. We have tried to condense and offer that wealth here for all. I sincerely hope that this handbook will enrich and broaden the work of those that keep it in their back pockets.

*He who seeks
spring with
in the mud,
in abundance*

—Aldo Leopold

searches for
his knees
finds it,
ace.

CHAPTER I

Sensing





Walking the fields with students in the peat colonies, the Netherlands
European Master in Landscape Architecture (EMiLA) summer program, 2011
Coordinators: Marieke Timmermans and Thomas Oles

Get out ... Not just outside, but beyond the trap of the programmed electronic age so gently closing around so many people at the end of our century.

—John R. Stilgoe

oI Go

To sense a landscape you must put yourself there. You must look, listen, smell, touch and taste. This is only possible by rooting your senses and your intellect in substance. The images that the screens surrounding us yield up in ever greater numbers, and at ever greater speed – all have transformed the ways we understand the world. They have made it possible to know places we will never see, and they are indispensable tools. But the revelation they offer will always be partial and fleeting, no surrogate for the body in the world.

So: walk down the street, across town, across country. Get on a bicycle, in a car, on a plane or boat, but go. Come out from behind your screen, place yourself in place. Everything else follows.

For further reading:

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962.

Stilgoe, John R. *Outside Lies Magic: Regaining History and Awareness in Everyday Places*. New York: Walker and Co., 1998.



It's cold in the tent
Marie Gallat
EMiLA summer program, 2011

Locomotion should be slow, the slower the better; and should be often interrupted by leisurely halts to sit on vantage points and stop at question marks.

— Carl Sauer

02 *Take Time*

In the modern world we expect things to happen right away: the room that lights up at the press of a button, the plane that takes us across the world in the time it once took to travel to the next village, the insight that comes rapidly and effortlessly. But landscape, and real landscapes, are slow. To sense a landscape you must stay longer than you think is necessary, longer indeed than you think you are able. If you do not get uncomfortable, if people do not begin to ask you who you are and what you are doing, if your muscles are not tired – you have probably not been there long enough.

So: when attempting to experience a place, wait until the cold sets in, until shadows lengthen over the road as the mosquitoes begin to orbit your head. Slow down. Grow still, all senses alert, an owl sensing its prey. Let your whole body become an eye.

For further reading:

Berry, Wendell. *The Unsettling of America: Culture & Agriculture*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006.

Russell, Bertrand. *In Praise of Idleness and Other Essays*. New York: Norton, 1935.



What lies beneath
Esther Brun
Exercise led by Nina Kopp
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

To see a world in a grain of sand, And a heaven in a wild flower, Hold infinity in the palm of your hand, And eternity in an hour.

— William Blake

03 *Focus*

Landscapes are big. This is one of the things that distinguishes them from yards, neighbourhoods, even cities. But landscapes are not made only of mountains, rivers and fields – the big things that contain human lives. They are also green lichen on granite, dew on a bramble leaf, the tiny crimson spiders, fifty of which would fit on a thumbnail, now making their way along the sill outside my window. To fail to take the measure of these very small things, things that fall through the sieve of perception, is to fail to know perhaps the biggest thing of all about landscape: its all-encompassing physical and psychic presence.

So: whatever the task, whatever the place: think big, but look small. Landscape is there, too, just beneath the surface of the lazily sensed. Enter and inhabit this other world. Find there universes on universes.

For further reading:

Blake, William. *William Blake: The Complete Illuminated Books*. London, New York: Thames & Hudson in association with the William Blake Trust, 2000.

Mandelbrot, Benoit. *The Fractal Geometry of Nature*. San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1983.



Temporary sand garden: vegetable patterns on a building site
Astrid Bennink, Evelien de Meij, Frank van Zuilekom
Design studio tutor: Silvia Lupini
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2012

He who searches for spring with his knees in the mud finds it, in abundance.
— Aldo Leopold

04 *Dig Down*

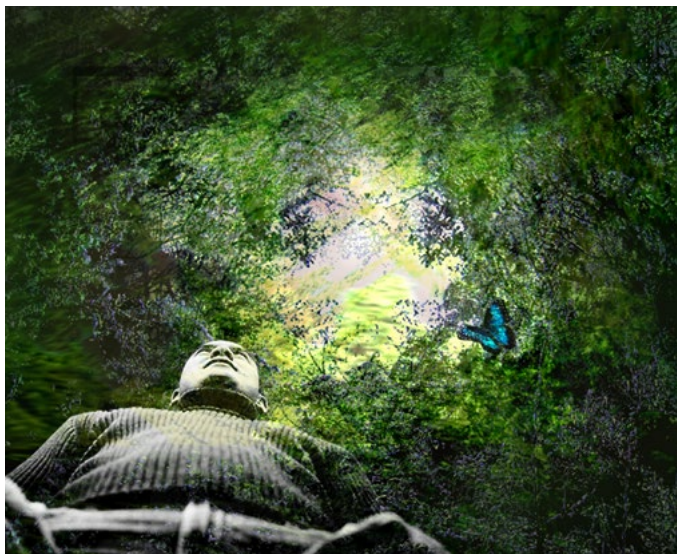
In its original meaning, ‘landscape’ was not a net draped over the surface of things. It was a thing shaped from, and the act of shaping, the earth. It was the digging of ditches and canals, the mounding up of berms and walls, the shaping and reshaping of these things over centuries. The substrate was the matrix of this shaping. Landscape went deep beneath the feet into the topsoil, into the gurgling bubbling under that, then deeper still into rock and heat. This early, earthy side of landscape was all but lost in the seventeenth century, and we live in the shadow of that loss. For without knowing the world under your feet, you will never fully know the world before your eyes.

So: get down on your knees. Lay your hands on the ground, then start digging and do not stop until your hands are bloody. Then turn your palms upward and smell the landscape there. Feel the roots of things.

For further reading:

Smithson, Robert. *Robert Smithson, the Collected Writings*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

Leopold, Aldo. *A Sand County Almanac*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1949.



Sitting-silent cell, Koutloumoussiou gardens
Donald Markkamp
Design studio tutor: Anouk Vogel
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

We hug the earth – how rarely we mount! Methinks we might elevate ourselves a little more.

— Henry David Thoreau

05 Look Up

For most of human existence, the sky was above our heads was far more than the earth before our eyes. Above lay the residence of gods, the guide to practice and morals. One found one's way home, and one's way in life, by looking up. Even in the early modern era, landscape remained more than land: the paintings of Aelbert Cuyp and Jacob van Ruisdael are mostly cumulus mountains above thin green lines of polder. Over time, the horizon inched up on the canvas. We stopped craning our necks, stopped reading as cities and towns erased the text of the night sky. But sensing a landscape in its entirety must involve sensing the way it enfolds and embraces us. This means re-learning the language of *up*.

So: lift your eyes above the horizon. Look into the branches above, then to the sky beyond. Crane your neck, hold it there until you swoon. Plunge upward, add this to your knowing of the place.

For further reading:

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walking*. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1862.

Turrell, James. *Geometry of Light*. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2009.



Mapping smell on the Amstel River
Marijke Beenhakker
Exercise led by Pepijn Godefroy
Amsterdam Academy of
Architecture, 2010

The brilliant smell of water, The brave smell of a stone, The smell of dew and thunder, The old bones buried under.

— G.K. Chesterton

06 *Breathe Deep*

There are days in Holland when spring manure hangs in the air like a fog. On such days the city dweller knows that farmers have once again begun the annual cycle, replenishing spent soil with the ordure of cows and pigs. This is striking, though, because it is the exception. For the most part life in cities has made smell, the oldest and rawest sense, irrelevant. Unless we happen upon jasmine spilling over a wall, or a pile of garbage on the street, we have come to wander the world oblivious to the scents of soil and plants, to the things that people make, eat, disgorge – oblivious, in short, to the very heart of places.

So: stop, close your eyes and mouth, and inhale. Draw in the landscape, pass it over the olfactory receptors. Turn it over there. Exhale, take five steps forward, and do the same thing. Repeat endlessly. Learn once more to think with your nose.

For further reading:

Ackerman, Diane. *A Natural History of the Senses*. New York: Random House, 1990.

Drobnick, Jim. *The Smell Culture Reader*. Oxford, New York: Berg, 2006.

Porteous, J. Douglas. 'Smellscape'. *Progress in Physical Geography* 9, no. 3 (1985): 356–378.



Proskynitēs thisavrós - Skarb pielgrzyna, Koutloumousiou gardens
 Anna Sobiech
 Design studio tutor: Anouk Vogel
 Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.

— Nelson Mandela

07 Know The Tongue

Places are made of words. The hand-painted plea *Go Slow for Our Children!* on a country road; the hill that commemorates a lost sailor or jilted bride; the local names of everyday things like stone, pond, stream, cloud – all suggest the original link between landscape and language. No landscape can truly be known, or designed, without understanding the words of the people who have made it. To do this means leaving behind the comfort of one's own words and entering a less forgiving world. It means struggling to sound out forests of signs, make out scrawlings in the street. It means becoming a compulsive eavesdropper, hungry for the next recognized phrase. It means slowly, painstakingly learning to speak once again.

So: wherever you work, even if it is in a place where you already know the language, attend to the words. Eavesdrop. Get to know the names of things, learn to read the signs.

For further reading:

Spirn, Anne Whiston. *The Language of Landscape*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

Mark, David M., Andrew G. Turk, Niclas Burenhult and David Stea, eds. *Landscape in Language: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2011.



Workshop Transgress coordinator: Thomas Oles
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

Social power and social resistance are always already spatial.

— Tim Cresswell

08 Transgress

Much of life is spent doing the permitted. We walk where we are supposed to and say what is expected, fearful of the opprobrium that might result if we do not. We keep in line. This is important, since it is through law and custom that societies, and landscapes, are held together. Yet sometimes understanding places demands that conventions be violated, that orders be disobeyed. This means walking straight past a Keep Out! sign, doing things that do not belong like sleeping in the street or reciting poetry in a public bus. These small transgressions quicken the sense of place; we become animals again, intent, alert, all sense suddenly honed.

So: never do only what you are told or what is permitted. At least once, ignore the rules. Find the limits of territory and propriety – and go beyond them.

For further reading:

Cresswell, Tim. *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Sennett, Richard. *Authority*. New York: Vintage Books, 1981.



New food systems for old landscapes: augmenting hedgerows
Jacques Abelman
Design studio tutor: Marieke Timmermans
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

Eating with the fullest pleasure is perhaps the profoundest enactment of our connection with the world.

— Wendell Berry

09 *Eat It*

Eating is a metaphysical act. Through it parts of the world become, for a time, us. How is this possible? At what point does the eaten thing – the root, the berry, the leaf – become the eater? Is it the taking up with the hand, the chewing, the swallowing? (The point at which it ceases to be the eater seems more clear.) We speak of devouring when we consume something with such abandon that we absorb it into ourselves. Landscapes can be thought of this way, too. The original meaning of landscape, a collection of fields, implied physical sustenance. Today it is unusual to think of landscape in this way; yet eating a place – turning it into oneself – is the most profound, literally visceral way to know it.

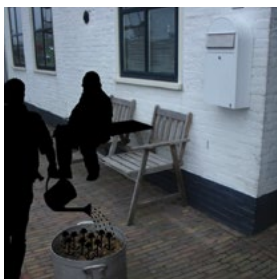
So: whatever the place, look with eyes that have fasted for days. Find what can be consumed, then make it you. Savour the soil on your tongue and save some grit on your teeth: it will come in handy later.

For further reading:

Petrini, Carlo, ed. *Slow Food: Collected Thoughts on Taste, Tradition, and the Honest Pleasures of Food.* With Ben Watson and Slow Food Editore. Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2001.

Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma : A Natural History of Four Meals.* New York: Penguin, 2006.

Steele, Carolyn. *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives.* London: Chatto & Windus, 2008.



Imaginary landscapes: looking for the expected
 Evi Ntini
 Exercise led by Pepijn Godefroy
 Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2013

The soul never thinks without an image.

— Aristotle

10 *Believe Your Eyes*

It is perhaps too easy to suspect vision, the royal sense. The eye is a trickster, some say, invoking appearances and deception, books and covers. Optical reality seems to offer itself too readily to the understanding, take on too easily the patina of truth. The surface of things, surely, must conceal a deeper reality within, one that can be seen only through closed eyes. Yet how to reconcile this with the obvious fact that beauty and goodness, the aesthetic and the ethical, have always been entwined? With the fact that it is often through seeing that we know, not just what is, but what is right?

**So: suspect vision, but hone your sight.
Attend to the surface of things. Remember
that sometimes the eye is not a trickster but
a guide in darkness, the lamp that lights the
world.**

For further reading:

Aristotle. *On the Soul; Parva Naturalia, On Breath.* Translated by Walter Stanley Hett. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935. Original work written in 350 BCE.

Harris, Diane, and D. Fairchild Ruggles, eds. *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007.

*Every man
limits of his
of vision for
of the world*

—Arthur Schopenhauer

*takes the
own field
r the limits
d.*

CHAPTER 2

Reasoning



* The government started to buy a lot of the land in an enthusiastic movement to convert agriculture to nature (heathland & forest) But the restoration limited this, and the productive land remained.

STORY OF THE FARMER'S SON.

• he grew up on a cow and pig farm, he loved horses. He took over the farm and it was declining in profit. In the 1980's he turns his passion for horses and he "capital" from his existing ~~horse~~ livestock and invests in Horse breeding / training ~~as~~ on an international level.

15 - had hectar
20 - Needs for foods.

Glaciers bought
ish of material
pushes to sides

spreads
runs to
water.

Does a tunnel

ICE

PEAT

Glaciers
Tourism
Farmer.
Government.



All study of landscape is the study of localities.

— W.G. Hoskins

II *Think Like A Local*

The word *local* comes from *locus*, the Latin word for place. It is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as a ‘person who is attached by his occupation, function, etc. to some particular place or District’. This definition does not distinguish the farmer from the tourist, the commuter from the designer. A local is simply a person who feels investment in, and attachment to, a particular place. What distinguishes a local from a non-local is not where one lives or what one does, but how deep, and how long, one cares.

So: locate yourself. Care for every place you design as you care for the places nearest you. Do not love every one, but try to understand, and speak to, those who do. Do not stand back. Get and stay attached.

For further reading:

Hoskins, William George. *The Making of the English Landscape*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1955.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Topophilia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.



Waiting on the world to change
Mathé van Kranenburg
Exercise led by Nina Kopp
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

The 'wilderness' is a cultural artifact.

—Max Oelschlaeger

12 *Denature*

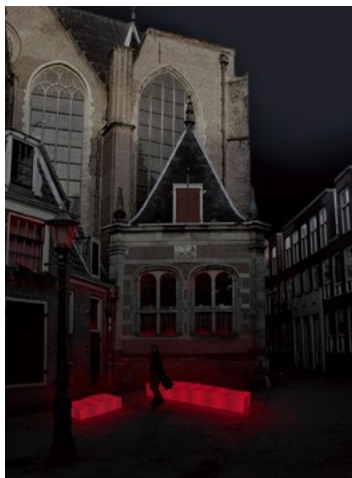
'Nature' is an old, vexed word. We speak of it in the same way we speak of the past, foreign countries forever lost to us. Nature is unavoidably metaphysical, an ideal strived toward but never attained. Like the past, it recedes from us just as we reach out for it. But even if it were possible to find the Rubicon where culture ends and nature begins—what would we do when we had crossed it? Where would that leave us? There is no 'back to nature'; we are born into culture and we will die out of it. The line between them is not the Rubicon, but the Lethe.

So: question your own use of nature, its too easy elision with landscape. Remember always that natural landscape is an oxymoron, cultural landscape a tautology.

For further reading:

Oelschlaeger, Max. *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.

Harrison, Stephan, and Nigel Thrift, eds. *Patterned ground: Entanglements of Nature and Culture*. London: Reaktion, 2004.



Red Light District: embedding design
Gert-Jan Wisse
Design studio tutor: Matthias Lehner
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2009

Sustainability has become an ornament.

— Rem Koolhaas

13 Go Beyond Green

Search for landscape and the internet brings up page after page of green: green fields, green mountains, green worlds. There is a reason for this. The origins of landscape architecture are in the arrangement of plants for clients wealthy enough to shift their lands from arable to pasture, or to keep them out of production altogether. But this is a phenomenon of the eighteenth century. The first meaning of landscape dates back centuries before, and had nothing at all to do with greenness. Landscape was originally a political and social concept, 'green' only to the extent that the human economy was based on farming. Landscape was green, in short, because landscape was work.

So: whatever the project, embrace the non-green provenance of landscape. Remember that today the richest landscapes are almost always shades of grey.

For further reading:

Olwig, Kenneth. *Landscape, Nature, and the Body Politic: From Britain's Renaissance to America's New World.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002.

Thayer, Robert L. *Gray World, Green Heart: Technology, Nature, and Sustainable Landscape.* New York: Wiley, 1994.

Waldheim, Charles, ed. *The Landscape Urbanism Reader.* New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006.



Showing the unseen: capturing sound
Antoine Fourier and Louise Flach de Neergaard
Exercise led by Pepijn Godefroy
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2013

Every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world.
 — Arthur Schopenhauer

14 *Doubt Your Eyes*

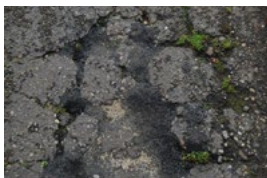
When asked whether they would prefer to go blind or deaf, most people will answer the latter – even though deafness isolates more than blindness. To lose the power of sight, we think, is to lose the capacity to apprehend and reason, our very humanity. For centuries we have privileged that which is seen over that which is experienced through the other senses. Landscape architecture began with scenography and painting, and these arts have shaped the way landscape is understood ever since. But landscape as scene conceals as much as it reveals. Nowhere is this truer than landscapes of pleasure built and managed to hide every trace of the toil that has gone into their making.

**So: trust your eyes, but know their limits.
 Know when to look behind the veil, and when
 to suspect the old alliance of beauty and truth.
 Treat vision as a fickle friend.**

For further reading:

Crandell, Gina. *Nature Pictorialized: 'The View' in Landscape History.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993.

Plato. *The Republic.* Introduction by Charles M. Bakewell. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928. Original work written 360 BCE.



Structures in detail: envisioning landscape
 Esther Brun
 Exercise led by Nina Kopp
 Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

As perception becomes habitual, it becomes automatic. We see the object as though it were enveloped in a sack.

— Viktor Shklovsky

15 *Be A Stranger*

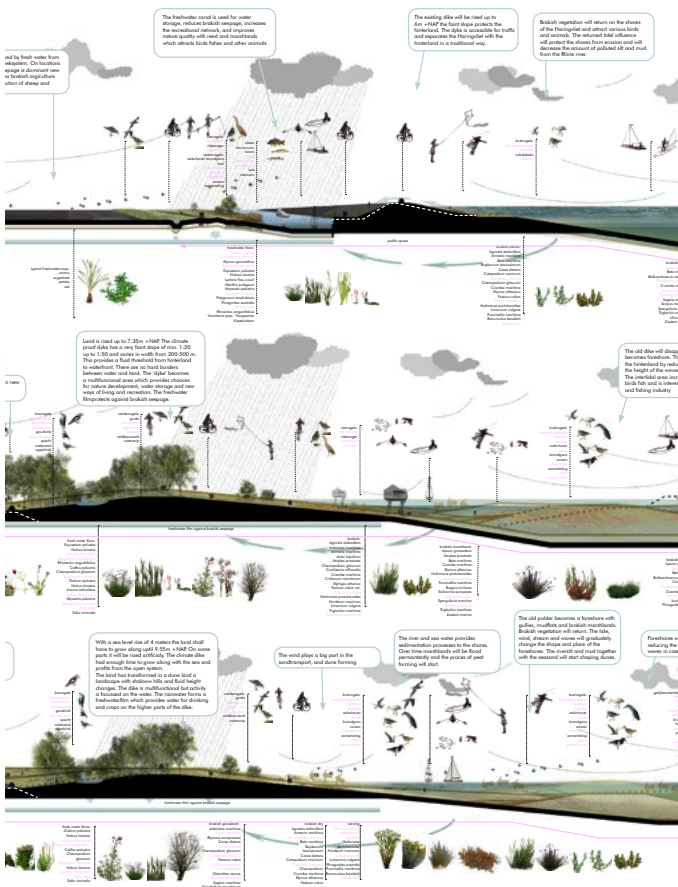
The world has grown old by the naming of it: house, fence, tree, rock. How could it be otherwise when we live and die in language? Yet names can substitute convention for understanding. They make shells of the things of the world, make us lazy seers and lazy thinkers. It is only through looking at the house, the fence, the rock as though one has never before seen them, that one begins to approach what medieval philosophers called *haecceity*, or 'thisness'. Not 'tree,' but this smudge of dark green on the retina, this sharp smell of resin on this clear winter night. This is the understanding of the stranger, the one who lacks language, the one who doubts that which all others know as true.

So: make the world strange, then draw and write it in this way. Look like a child, a horse, an alien. For once, cease giving names to things.

For further reading:

Needle, J. *Brecht*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1981.

Shklovsky, Viktor. 'Art as Technique'. In *Russian Formalist Criticism: Four Essays*, edited by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reiss, 3–24. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.



Reclaimed Dynamics
 Graduation project by Anne-Fleur Aronstein
 Mentor: Jana Crepon
 Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2012

We learn to distinguish life from the inanimate and move toward it like moths to a porch light.

— E.O. Wilson

16 Remember To Share

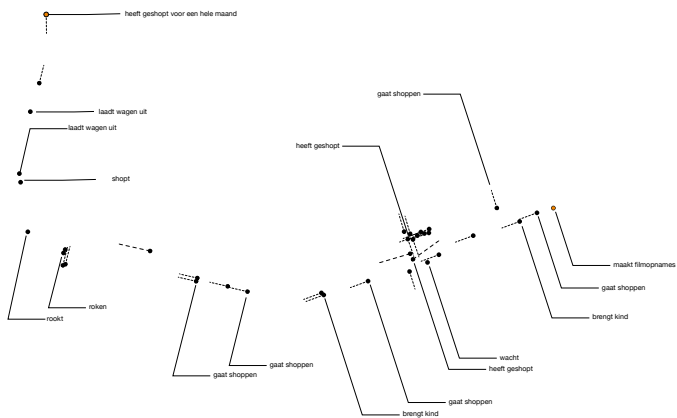
Landscape is a relationship between people and the world, one that unfolds through shaping and reshaping the physical and social environment over time. In this sense, it is an unavoidably human concept. But this does not mean that landscape is limited to *Homo sapiens*. Landscape is also the relationships between people and the species with whom they share the world, from the bear in the nature reserve, to the Chaffinch in the hedge, to the bacteria that eat our waste and, one day, ourselves. We are as dependent on these species as they are vulnerable before us, and no landscape can be said to thrive while they suffer. Assuring their preservation and increase is therefore a practical, and moral, imperative.

So: make room in your thoughts for other species. Understand their habits, their habitat, their interaction. Learn to read the signs of affliction and work to remedy them. Love all life as life.

For further reading:

Shepard, Paul. *The Others: How Animals Made Us Human*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 1996.

Wilson, Edward O. *Biophilia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984.



Where they all go, observation data

Leen Vantuyne

Exercise led by Joyce van den Berg

Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

Neither science, nor art, nor creative action can tear itself away from obstinate, irreducible, limited facts.

— Alfred North Whitehead

17 *Do Your Homework*

Landscape thinking is often intuitive, but there is no substitute for getting your facts straight. Understanding a place means knowing who lives there, their ages, their wages, the beliefs they profess and the stories they tell. It means knowing what is in the soil and what is in the water, and how it got there. It means knowing what was before and how what is now came to be. One lays the groundwork for this understanding by attentive looking, but builds the structure through careful, often painstaking, research. This work takes time, but it is essential. Bad investigation gives facile answers; if the solution seems too easy, you probably have not done your homework.

So: gather as much information as you can, using every means at your disposal. Resist answers not founded on evidence. Harvest facts; become a datavore.

For further reading:

Giere, Ronald N. *Understanding Scientific Reasoning*. New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1984.

Gleick, James. *The Information: A History, a Theory, a Flood*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2011.

Groat, Linda, and David Wang. *Architectural Research Methods*. New York: J. Wiley, 2002.



Growing towards the past: new scenarios for old systems
 Graduation project by Jorrit Braaksma
 Mentor: Lodewijk van Nieuwenhuizen
 Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2012

Everything is suspended in movement.

— Tim Ingold

18 Question Form

We live in a world of objects that present themselves to our senses as stable and unchanging. The house we inhabit, the stone in the stream, the mountain on the horizon, even our own watery bodies, at any given moment of observation, seem solid and reliable. Yet every one of these things are not things but states, temporary arrangements of rock or molecules, their change occurring at different rates, whether seconds, years or aeons. Soon enough, that stone under your foot will be a grain of sand, that mountain out your window a stone, that body you call yours stardust once more. Understanding landscape means hearing this concert of growth, decay and renewal. It means exchanging stasis for change, giving up the comfort of fixed things.

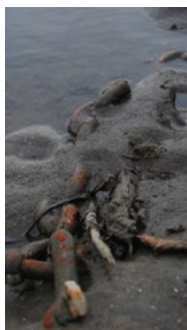
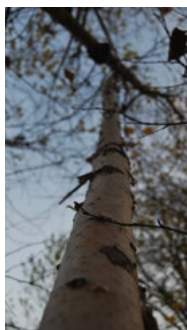
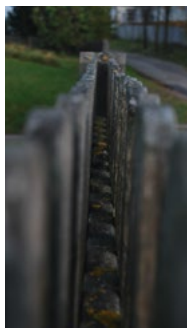
**So: know the world as process, not form.
Think like a geologist and a historian. Imagine
the mountain as stone, the river as a canyon,
the city as a ruin. Settle into a world of flux.**

For further reading:

Gibson, James Jerome. *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979.

Ingold, Tim. 'The Temporality of the Landscape'. *World Archaeology* 25, no. 2 (1993): 152–171.

Thompson, D'Arcy Wentworth. *On Growth and Form*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961.



Latvia Initia: envisioning landscape
 Esther van der Tuin
 Exercise led by Nina Kopp
 Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.

— John Muir

19 Connect

The modern world is a world of atoms and fragments. The poet does not speak to the biologist, the historian knows nothing of engineering, the physicist shuns the priest. Understanding is carved into spheres of influence, and to stray into the domain of another is to invite suspicion or ridicule. Specialization, focus is the way to advancement. Resisting this fragmentation is difficult, particularly when it means foregoing the rewards reaped by those who do not. But divisions of mind and discipline have blinded us to the tangledness of the world. They made us to forget how no thing, however we may yearn to make it so, is ever any one thing.

So: embrace the connection of all things. Find the hitches, run your fingers over them, take their measure. Work to weave the world back together, thread by thread.

For further reading:

Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. San Francisco: Chandler, 1972.

Goodwin, Brian. *How the Leopard Changed Its Spots: The Evolution of Complexity*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1994.

Meadows, Donella H. *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. White River Junction: Chelsea Green Publishers, 2008.



Reclaimed Dynamics
Graduation project by Anne Fleur Aronstein
Mentor: Jana Crepon
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2012

Take rest; a field that has rested gives a bountiful crop.

—Ovid

20 *Let Go*

Landscape is not an object but a relationship, a tension between the stuff of the world and our apprehension of it. It is not possible to step out of landscape and evaluate it apart from our own perceptions, memories and values. Landscape is always between: we are *of* it even as we purport to observe and act *on* it, and its existence is inseparable from our own. This is why no person, however skilled or perceptive, can ever know what a landscape is, and what it needs, solely through reason. The road toward understanding any landscape begins not in the world before your eyes, but in the worlds inside your head.

So: keep your mind open. Try not to contain every tension, resolve every contradiction. Leave room for the illogical, the dream, the vision. When in doubt, suspend reason, return to sense.

For further reading:

Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space*. New York: Orion Press, 1964.

Solnit, Rebecca. *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*. New York: Viking, 2005.

McNiff, Shaun. *Trust the Process: An Artist's Guide to Letting Go*. Boston: Shambhala, 1998.

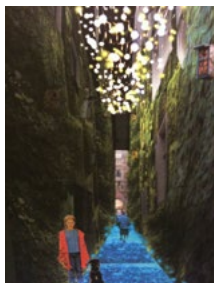
*Those who
stories rule*

—Plato

*tell the
society.*

CHAPTER 3

Showing



We created a three dimensional language through weaving and stitching the 3-D mounds to the canvas. We hoped to unify the individual elements into one through this process, spreading the influence of the esche throughout the greater landscape.
Each stitch was a decision reflecting the rich cultural influence of people on this landscape.



The bocage landscape of Twente, project model
Group leaders: Gloria Font and Tianxin Zhang
EMiLA summer program 2011

The landscape idea is a visual ideology; an ideology all too easily adopted unknowingly.

— Denis Cosgrove

21 *Put Things Out Of Perspective*

The history of landscape and the history of perspective are so entwined it is hard to imagine one without the other. The modern idea of landscape emerged as conventions of linear perspective were being established, and perspective remains a widely understood device for simulating depth, and control, on the flat surface of a drawing. But there is another, pre-perspective side to landscape. When the word landscape came into being, it had nothing to do with converging lines and vanishing points. Instead it described something close to what is now called 'place': an area associated with particular people, rituals, and institutions. In this original sense, landscape was not a composition of scenes, but a collection of practices.

So: think how you would show landscape if perspective had never existed. Experiment, invent. Wonder, as you put converging guidelines to paper or screen, how much of the original meaning, and richness, of landscape is receding into blue?

For further reading:

Cosgrove, Denis. *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984.

Getch Clarke, Holly. 'Land-scopic Regimes: Exploring Perspectival Representation beyond the "Pictorial" Project'. *Landscape Journal* 24, no. 1 (2005): 50–68.



Scale and impact: distilling ingredients for design from the field
Maurice Wenker
Exercise led by Pepijn Godefroy
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

Don't be afraid of the decay, disintegration, and apparent chaos of natural processes.

— Achva Stein

22 Remember The Mess

Landscapes are unruly things. Even when their outward face suggests order and control, they rarely conform to the designs made for them. The daytime park becomes a nighttime cruising ground, the carefully conceived wall is a tablet for graffiti, the tasteful seating area is ignored in favour of a clutch of plastic chairs two metres away. Living places will always resist attempts to contain, control or plan them. For this reason, any representation of any place is inevitably a debasement. The messiness of a place, its very life and placeness, can never be captured – only evoked, intimated, suggested. Finally, a living landscape can only be represented by itself.

So: when evoking any landscape, avoid the hubris of control. Return to your first encounter, to the haze of impressions before hierarchies of importance set in. Try to preserve something of this mess, this life, in each drawing you make.

For further reading:

de Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

Waldrop, M. Mitchell. *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.



From village edge to village pride

Marijne Beenhakker

Design studio tutors: Hanneke Kijne en Bart van der Vossen

Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

One must be careful of the hypothetical monsters that lurk between the map's latitudes.

— Robert Smithson

23 *Unpack The Map*

Modern geometry and mapping date to the Renaissance, and particularly to the European exploration of the New World. The power to measure and represent territory was the power to control the people and extract the resources of what seemed a limitless *terra incognita*.

Modern mapping also served the emerging capitalist land economies of the same period; Dutch landowners always commissioned maps to record parcels born from the swamps. Today, maps are so widespread and so precise that it is difficult to imagine landscape, or landscape architecture, without them. But four hundred years of mapping have also flattened out the hills and valleys of experience. They have pushed aside older, and sometimes richer, ways of knowing and showing the world.

So: consider how you use maps, as revelation or obfuscation, empowerment or control. Experiment with other ways of representing space and objects. Redefine the limits of the cartographic.

For further reading:

Cosgrove, Denis, ed. *Mappings*. London: Reaktion, 1999.

Harley, J.B. 'Maps, knowledge, and power'. In *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on The Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, edited by Denis Cosgrove, 277–312. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.



Performing landscape
Winter workshop Going Dutch
Coordinators Bruno Doedens, Marieke Timmermans
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

One must force the frozen circumstances to dance by singing to them their own melody.

— Karl Marx

24 Act Up

Landscapes are not just compositions but collections of practices, from the smallest private Gestures – the placing of a cross on a roadside where someone has died, the planting of an allotment garden in the spring – to the most important public rituals of a place, events that happen once a year or once a lifetime: a bonfire at midsummer, the death of a king. Landscapes never fully lend themselves to representation by drawing because they are composed only partly of the things to which drawing lends itself. In order to evoke any landscape, one must instead begin to enact the rhythms of practice that create and sustain it. One must think of landscape not just as the stage, but as the performance.

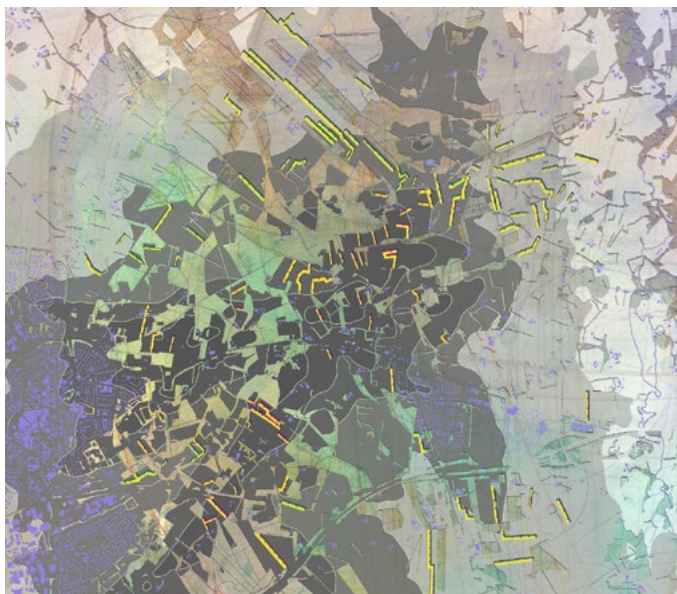
So: see in landscape a thousand scripts, each of which can be performed in a thousand ways. In every place you work, learn ten and act them out. When you show landscape, always make a scene.

For further reading:

Lorimer, Hayden. ‘Cultural Geography: The Busyness of Being “More-Than-Representational”’. *Progress in Human Geography* 29, no. 1 (2005): 83–94.

Pearson, Mike. *Site-Specific Performance*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Thrift, Nigel. *Non-representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect*. London: Routledge, 2007.



New nature and housing: multi-layer map synthesis
Marijne Beenhakker
Design studio tutor: Marieke Timmermans
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

This is what modern science is: the egg shattered, all the fragments lie on the ground.

— Ian McHarg

25 Refuse Layers

It has become common to think of landscape as layered. The movements of people or water; the locations of forests and fields; the boundaries of towns and parcels: each of these can be conceived and analysed as one parchment in a very old palimpsest. When these layers are laid over each other, they give, as if by magic, a picture of landscape as a totality. Modern geographical information systems are an advanced form of this process, and their models often yield striking insights into landscape process. But layers have one great limitation: they cannot capture values, perceptions, practices, associations and memories – in short, the very things that make landscape *landscape*.

So: use layers critically. Think about what you are revealing and what is being lost. When you have taken the landscape apart, make sure to put the pieces back together again.

For further reading:

McHarg, Ian. *Design with Nature*. Garden City: Natural History Press, 1969.

Berger, Alan. *Systemic Design© Can Change the World. Utopia's Practical Cousin*. Response by Dirk Sijmons. Amsterdam: SUN, 2009.



Initial site visit, Mount Athos, Greece
Excursion leader: Rieks Bulthuis (pilgrim)
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

...the bark of a tree, the abrasion of granite and sand,
 the plunge of clear water into a pool,
 the face of the wind – what else is there?

What else do we need?

— Edward Abbey

26 Come To Your Senses

Familiarity erases immediacy. First, when you did not know the place, when the stuff of the world had yet to arrange itself into hierarchies, everything was as important as everything else. You noticed big things – the long slope of land toward sea, the red-orange ribbon of a river – but also the hand-painted sign on an old boundary, the sound a snake made sliding up stone, the hard taste of olive branch smoke. You did not have ideas, only movement and sense. Later, as you came to know the place, to rank and organize its contents, this tangle of impressions receded to the margins of your mind, where it languished, half-remembered. Yet you were never again as present as during those first precious moments.

So: when you have your idea, return to the state before ideas, before reasoning, even before thought. Recover the landscape as pure sense and motion, show the self open to the riot of the world.

For further reading:

Abbey, Edward. *Desert Solitaire: A Season in the Wilderness*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1971.

Abram, David. *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World*. New York: Vintage Books, 1996.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *The Essential Writings of Merleau-Ponty*. Edited by Alden L. Fisher. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1969.



Bees on Mount Athos

Joep Meijer

Exercise led by Anouk Vogel and Marieke Timmermans

Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

It is only by drawing often, drawing everything, drawing incessantly, that one fine day you discover to your surprise that you have rendered something in its true character.

— Camille Pissarro

27 Draw

There was a time when drawing was coin of the realm. Places could not be shown, either as they were or as they might become, without putting pen, pencil, brush to paper. Drawing was not only representation, but exploration, inquiry, a craft that every designer was expected to master. In the past two decades, this has been nearly lost. There is no time, it is said, in this age of digital thinking. But the insights one gets from drawing cannot be gained by any other means. Drawing forces you to slow down, take stock, test first impressions, sort the peripheral from the essential. As anyone who draws knows, drawing is finally not about showing at all, but about seeing – carefully, critically, deeply.

So: leave time for drawing. Wrest it from other tasks if you must. Forget rules and conventions; draw incessantly, furiously, painstakingly. Choose an implement and make it your fifth limb. Let your arm and hand lead your mind.

For further reading:

Dee, Catherine. *Form and Fabric in Landscape Architecture: A Visual Introduction*. London: Spon Press, 2001.

Treib, Marc, ed. *Drawing/Thinking: Confronting an Electronic Age*. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2008.



Journey through edible geography

Mylène Andreoletti

Design studio tutors: Thomas Oles and Maike van Stiphout

Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

Those who tell the stories rule society.

— Plato

28 *Tell Tales*

Landscape is not simply a collection of spaces, containers for people, things, events. It is an interaction, a relationship, a tension between the physical and the psychic. This interaction is always discursive, arising from and dwelling in the stories that people tell each other, and themselves, to give meaning to their individual and shared existence. People inhabit these stories as houses, towns, cities. Narrative is the warp and woof of landscape, and no field, no river, no mountain can be said to exist outside it. Showing landscape therefore requires more than simply envisioning materials, spaces, objects. It requires imagining the tales that will be told about them.

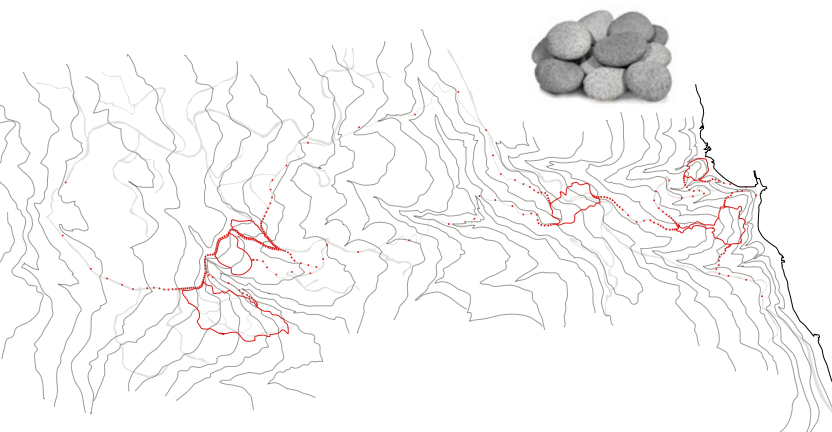
So: when you show a landscape, remember discourse. Create the narratives that give sense to the place you envision. Populate these narratives with characters, with yourself. Fill every space you design with stories.

For further reading:

Potteiger, Matthew and Jamie Purinton. *Landscape Narratives: Design Practices for Telling Stories*. New York: John Wiley, 1998.

Lorimer, Hayden. 'Telling Small Stories: Spaces of Knowledge and the Practice of Geography'. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers New Series* 28, no. 2 (2003): 197–217.

The gutter path works like a network and connects all the gardens. The intervention is very small and made of local pebbles. The gutters work through a kind of insider knowledge; after more visits people will realize that they lead to the gardens. The closer to a garden, the denser the rhythm of the gutters becomes.



*Pilgrim Path, Garden for Koutloumousiou monastery,
Anna Sobiech, Gert-Jan Wisse, Inge Vleemigh
Design studio tutor: Anouk Vogel
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011*

No particular locale can be experienced in isolation.

— Carol Burns

29 *Suspect Site*

The word *site* usually refers to the area of a project, a limited area of the earth's surface defined by clear, and unchanging, boundaries. Sometimes these boundaries are geomorphological, such as a mountain, stream or ocean. Far more often, however, they are legal fictions called parcels. These divisions of the world constrain nearly every aspect of design practice – so much that their arbitrary character is rarely called into question. But the notion of site as an ownable, alienable chunk of the world has very little to do with landscape. Sites never exist in isolation, but are always in dialogue with other sites, other people, other times. Every landscape, finally, is its own site, an indivisible and inalienable whole.

So: at whatever scale you work, broaden your notion of site. Look for the links across space and time. Always question legal boundaries, champ at this universal cadaster.

For further reading:

Burns, Carol and Andrea Kahn, eds. *Site Matters: Design Concepts, Histories, and Strategies*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Kwon, Miwon. *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002.

The growth of watercress was used to tell the story of forest growth. The model represents the forest stages when trees were thinned out, cut down, or replanted.

The watercress seeds were sown in phases so that a significant difference was shown between seeds, sprouted seeds, and peduncles, thus showing transitions between new planting and the mature forest.



New landscape structures, growing model
Annelies Bloemendaal
Design studio tutor: Judith Korpershoek
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

To account for the spatial, tectonic, or atmospheric effects of landscape design, one needs to devise other methods and instruments.

— Clemens Steenbergen

30 Deconstruct Architecture

Landscape architecture is a recent metaphor, the attempt of nineteenth-century landscape gardeners to give heft to a new and fragile discipline. This metaphor has shaped the way landscapes are shown ever since. But sections, plans, and elevations – the standard tools of architectural representation – will always be imperfectly suited to the evocation of places; only so much can be shown using the methods of Vitruvius. What is lost when such methods are used exclusively is the very essence of landscape – the intersection of the riot of the world with human memory and practice, the vital tension between outside and inside, sense and reason, body and scene.

So: question the metaphor of architecture, and consider how you would evoke landscape had it never been introduced. Be, for once, not a landscape architect, but a landscapist.

For further reading:

Leatherbarrow, David and Mohsen Mostafavi. *On Weathering: The Life of Buildings in Time*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993.

Steenbergen, Clemens and Wouter Reh. *Architecture and Landscape*. New York: Prestel, 1996.

Venturi, Robert. *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966.

*We only this
confronted
problem.*

—John Dewey

*ink when
with a*

CHAPTER 4

Changing





Looking for chances
Milda Jusaite
Design studio tutor: Froukje Nauta
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

Everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing conditions into preferred ones.

— Herbert Simon

31 *Design Always*

Design, in its original sense, means ‘intent.’ Understood this way design is hardly an esoteric pursuit or the province of a certain class of people. Instead, design is a habit of mind open to anyone, a targeted way of seeing the world, a looking *towards*. The Greeks called this way of thinking ‘normative,’ or concerned not with what the world is, but with how the world should be changed. Normative thinking does not depend on a complete understanding of reality, but rather suffuses the way designers apprehend and inhabit the world. At its simplest, to design is to be, at every moment, in the world both as it is and as it might one day become.

So: nurture your impulse to transform, to reshape, to remake. Strive for dispassion, but always think of change – not for its own sake, but a means toward the good. Make the meliorative your home.

For further reading:

Dorst, Kees. *Understanding Design*. Amsterdam: BIS Publishers, 2003.

Rowe, Peter G. *Design Thinking*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987.

Reconnecting the landscape socially and physically is critical to integrating the community with its cultural landscape. We believe that the esche needs to be reinstated as a social and cultural structure that defines the landscape. It has the potential to unify landscapes undergoing transformations, just as it originally did.



The esches

Justine Pauze

Group leaders: Gloria Font and Tianxin Zhang

EMiLA summer program 2011

We only think when confronted with a problem.
— John Dewey

32 Find The Problem

In the ‘best of all possible worlds’ there would be no designers. Design is needed when the world functions less than optimally, when things go *wrong*. But no single design can solve everything; there are simply too many different ways Pangloss was mistaken. One must therefore always be explicit about the nature and extent of the problem to which any given design responds. What is the scale of this problem in time and space? Is it one of social ecology, natural ecology or the links between them? What will the design improve, and how will this improvement be measured? Failing to ask such questions, and failing to communicate the answers to others, yields designs unmoored from reality, free-floating and vacuous.

So: define the problem and consider how your design solves it. Be specific, but be flexible; refine questions in response to new information. Do not rush to answers; savour the asking.

For further reading:

James, William. *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*. New York: Longmans, Green, 1907.

Moore, Kathryn. *Overlooking the Visual: Demystifying the Art of Design*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2010.

Carl Steinitz, ‘A Framework for Theory Applicable to the Education of Landscape Architects’. *Landscape Journal* 9, no. 2 (1990): 136-143



Occupying empty building sites with temporary gardens
Marit Janse
Design studio tutor: Jana Crepon
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

Virtue makes the goal right, practical wisdom the things leading to it.
— Aristotle

33 *Have An Ethics*

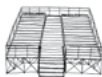
Aristotle called ethics ‘practical wisdom’. By this he meant the rules and standards that enable people to assess the goodness or badness of actions they perform every day. An ethics is a subtle and supple instrument, neither entirely dependent on circumstance nor entirely inflexible, for guiding behaviour. As a pursuit that prescribes change to the world, design must always be grounded in an ethics, for it is only then that the relative justifiability of those changes can be judged. Gaining an ethics is a long, hard process, one that requires us to reflect critically on every decision we take, and to think deeply about the relationship between means and ends.

So: develop standards to justify your design. State them clearly and be explicit about their origins. Measure decisions against them, and use the design process to refine them. Be always your own sternest judge.

For further reading:

Blackburn, Simon. *Being Good: A Short Introduction to Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Christopher Rowe with introduction and commentary by Sarah Brodie. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.



Longlist of places with a view
 Annelies Bloemendaal
 Ongoing research project

The world is never the less beautiful when viewed through a chink or knot-hole.
 — Henry David Thoreau

34 Obsess

Monet painted Rouen cathedral again and again, observing minute changes in light and shadow, using a single building to forge a new style of painting and a new way of seeing the world. The seventeenth-century garden historian Thomas Browne wrote a treatise hundreds of pages long on the quincunx. A contemporary artist makes pencil drawings measuring twenty square centimetres, never more, never less. These examples suggest the time and focus that obsession demands, an almost perverse drive to return, insatiably, to a place, idea, format. But they also show how the constraints that obsession imposes are almost always productive, the source of inspiration and invention. Obsession is like a soil bore, narrow but deep. When brought to the surface it reveals aeons on aeons, worlds upon worlds.

So: nurture your obsessions, your fascinations. Know the world deeper and deeper. Be as Aesop's hedgehog, make one big thing the measure of your life.

For further reading:

Davis, Lennard J. *Obsession: A History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Hoptman, Laura. *Yayoi Kusama*. London: Phaidon Press, 2000.



Landscape is a man-made system of spaces superimposed on the face of the land, functioning and evolving not according to natural laws but to serve a community.

— J.B. Jackson

35 *Get Political*

When it first came into being, the word *landscape* had two meanings. It denoted an area, an extent of the earth's surface with boundaries, a meaning that has persisted until the present day. But *landscape* referred also to the group that shaped that area through practices, rituals, and institutions. Like the modern 'township,' *landscape* in this original sense was both a physical space and a political community. And like political communities everywhere, *landscapes* were almost always marked by unequal degrees of power. *Landscapes* were, and remain, places of contest and conflict, of hard work and brute force, even when studiously concealed. To ignore this political dimension of any *landscape* is to miss a fundamental part of its essence.

So: recover the political dimension of *landscape*. Wherever you work, know who has influence, who lacks it and why. Take the measure of old rivalries. Understand power.

For further reading:

Olwig, Kenneth and Donald Mitchell, eds. *Justice, Power and the Political Landscape*. London: Routledge, 2009.

Egoz, Shelley, Jala Makhzoumi and Gloria Pungetti, eds. *The Right to Landscape: Contesting Landscape and Human Rights*. UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2011.

The conversations while walking in the colorful and diverse landscape around the monastery with Father Jacobov help me to get a picture of how the monks live. Their life is devoted to their religion.

Walking in nature is a religious act to them. According to Father Jacobov the serenity and calm of the landscape open up the mind for reflection and contemplation.

In silence we walk under a roof of fragrant sweet chestnuts. Pointing to a ray of light on an open spot, Father Jacobov says, 'Germans call this a Lichtung. For me it is a divine order, and for you it is a tool and inspiration to create landscape and to tell a story.'

I connect this image with the divine experience I had in the morning in the dark dome where the light of one candle revealed the interior of the Katholika with walls full of icons and monks that pray and sing. Walking in silence towards the azure blue sea the garden at Kaliagra unfolds in my head.

Donald Marskamp, Mount Athos project, March 2011



Pilgrim's delight, Koutloumousiou Gardens

Inge Vleemingsh, Gert-Jan Wisse, Anna Sobiech

Design studio tutor: Anouk Vogel

Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

Through practice and performance individuals are able to feel; are able to think and rethink.

— David Crouch

36 *Take Part*

Landscape architecture often proceeds from the assumption that one can stand aside from landscape and contemplate it, much as one might do any other object. Certainly, landscapes contain objects that can be described empirically: rivers, houses, roads, walls. But adding such measurable things together does not equal landscape. This is because landscapes are also, always, tangled up with the perceptions, memories and values of the people who encounter them. Landscape is ineluctably a dance between self and world, one from which it is impossible to step away. Simply by thinking about a landscape, you involve and implicate yourself in it.

So: whatever the place, get entangled. Give up the illusion of detachment; acknowledge you as see-er, as actor. Take sides, join the dance.

For further reading:

Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Whatmore, Sarah. *Hybrid Geographies: Natures Cultures Spaces*. London: Sage Publications, 2002.



Group sketch exercise: first site observations
 Coordinators: Marieke Timmermans, Thomas Oles
 EMiLA summer program, 2011

Any intelligent fool can invent further complications, but it takes a genius to retain, or recapture, simplicity.

— E.F. Schumacher

37 *Keep It Simple*

Like any craft, design has its shibboleths, its secret codes, its jargon. Knowing the right words shows that one has mastered the discipline, can claim a place in the guild. When used to present designs, such words always have a twofold meaning. They both describe the proposal and assert the designer's right to have that proposal taken seriously. But landscape is not the domain of a specialist class. It is an ongoing relationship between people and their environment, an enterprise fundamentally collective and shared in nature. Visions of landscape change should therefore not depend on specialized knowledge to be understood. Ultimately, the intent of a landscape design should be clear enough to speak for itself.

So: recapture simplicity. Speak and write clearly. See how few words you can use; make every design its own description.

For further reading:

Maeda, John. *The Laws of Simplicity*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1854.

Boehner, Philotheus, ed. and trans. *William of Ockham: Philosophical Writings*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1957.



Student sketchbooks of first impressions
Coordinators: Marieke Timmermans, Thomas Oles
EMiLA summer program, 2011

Trust instinct to the end, even though you can give no reason.
 — Ralph Waldo Emerson

38 *Trust Instinct*

People familiar with the design process will avow that it often comes down to intuition, to a vague but unmistakable sense of rightness or wrongness about an idea, a form, a solution to a problem. Before we know too much, it is easy to remain open to these hunches, using them as the first handholds of understanding. When we know more, however, it is tempting to release our grip, stepping onto what appears the firmer ground of objective data. But one's first impressions are sometimes, even often, uncannily *right*. Even when they are based on imperfect knowledge, as they almost always are, hunches and instincts can be the source of inspiration, even genius.

So: never discard your hunches. Make time to recall your first impressions. Let instincts be your guidepost when all else fails; balance entrails and evidence.

For further reading:

Davis-Floyd, Robbie E. and P. Sven Arvidson, eds. *Intuition: The Inside Story: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Myers, David G. *Intuition: Its Powers and Perils*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.



Painting the canvas white again

Group leaders: Verena Butt, Ionna Spanou, Maria Goula
EMiLA summer program, 2011

You must kill all your darlings.

— William Faulkner

39 Give In

Design is sometimes thought of as a process in which analysis of the world leads, step by deliberate step, to proposals for changing it. In this understanding, sound analysis ineluctably yields sound design. But this is a fallacy. Careful analysis sometimes yields very bad projects; one specious idea, one misread clue in an otherwise sound chain of reasoning can fatally undermine a design. One must therefore always be ready to change course, suddenly and sometimes radically. It is never, ever too late to point the train of ideas in another, more promising, direction.

So: do not fear the sudden switch, the reversal, the about-face. Relinquish your most cherished idea. At every stage, stand at the easel, brush in hand, ready to paint the canvas white again.

For further reading:

Bayles, David and Ted Orland. *Art and Fear: Observations on the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking*. Santa Barbara, CA: Capra, 1993.

Koren, Leonard. *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets and Philosophers*. Berkeley: Stone Bridge Press, 1994.

Tharp, Twyla. *The Creative Habit: Learn It and Use It for Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003.



SPOTS: filling the park with ideas of the users
 Esther Brun, Zuzana Jancovicová, Els van Looy
 Workshop Drawing Time tutor: Noël van Doorn
 Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2013

Nothing is perfect, nothing lasts, and nothing is finished.

— Richard Powell

40 *Know Limits*

A design for a landscape is like a site, one small fragment of the world. It is inevitably an intimation, unfinished and provisional; there is always far more outside than inside it. Because finally everything is connected to everything else, the line between design and world is necessarily an artificial one. But it is the making of this line, this wresting away of chunks of reality in order to know them more deeply, that enables any kind of thought about, or design for, the world at all. No single person can propose change for the whole landscape because no single person can know the whole landscape. To imagine otherwise is hubris.

So: reflect out of your limited body and mind. Relinquish the desire to design everything, to solve every problem. Be humble and be strategic; learn where to draw the line.

For further reading:

Batchelor, Stephen. *Buddhism without Beliefs*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1997.

Remes, Pauliina. *Neoplatonism*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.

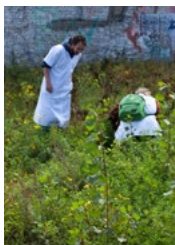
*We see things
as they are,
we are.*

—Anaïs Nin

gs not
but as

CHAPTER 5

Testing





Refugium: How different urban habitats develop in time
 Graduation project Thijs de Zeeuw
 Mentor: Rob van Leeuwen
 Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

*Here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years.*

— William Wordsworth

41 *Return*

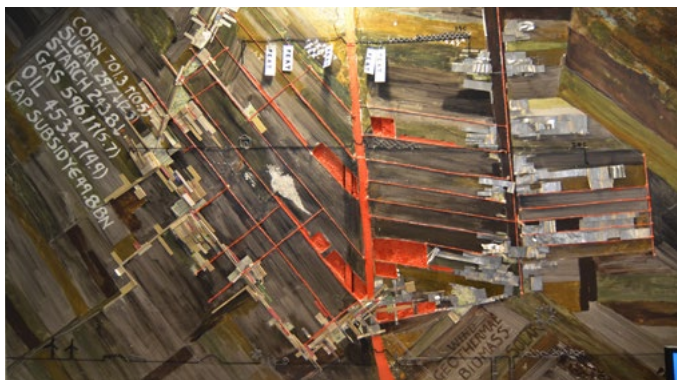
Off the desk, out the door, sent to client or teacher, designs lose their urgency. There is always a new place, a new task, a new deadline pressing on the attention. Yet, when it comes to assessing a landscape change, there is no substitute for going back. One must see with one's own eyes the engineered bank erode; the parking lot emerge as theatre; the well-wrought garden wither into dust for lack of maintenance. It is only through such first-hand impressions, meticulously collected, that one can truly know whether the changes prescribed in a design were justified, and which assumptions were correct. What is more, because every landscape unfolds in time, just once is not sufficient. One must return again and again, day after day, year after year.

So: never let your last encounter with a landscape be the moment a proposal for changing it leaves your care. Wait a week, a month, a year – but make every design an eternal return.

For further reading:

Brand, Stewart. *How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built*. New York, NY: Viking, 1995.

Zube, Ervin H., Robert O. Brush and Julius Gy Fabos, eds. *Landscape Assessment: Values, Perceptions, and Resources*. Stroudsburg: Dowden, Hutchinson, and Ross, 1975.



Peat colonies group final model: production landscape and crop data
 Group leaders: Thomas Oles, Jorg Sieweke, Thierry Kandjee
 EMiLA summer program, 2011

We need a method if we are to investigate the truth of things.
— Descartes

42 *Run The Numbers*

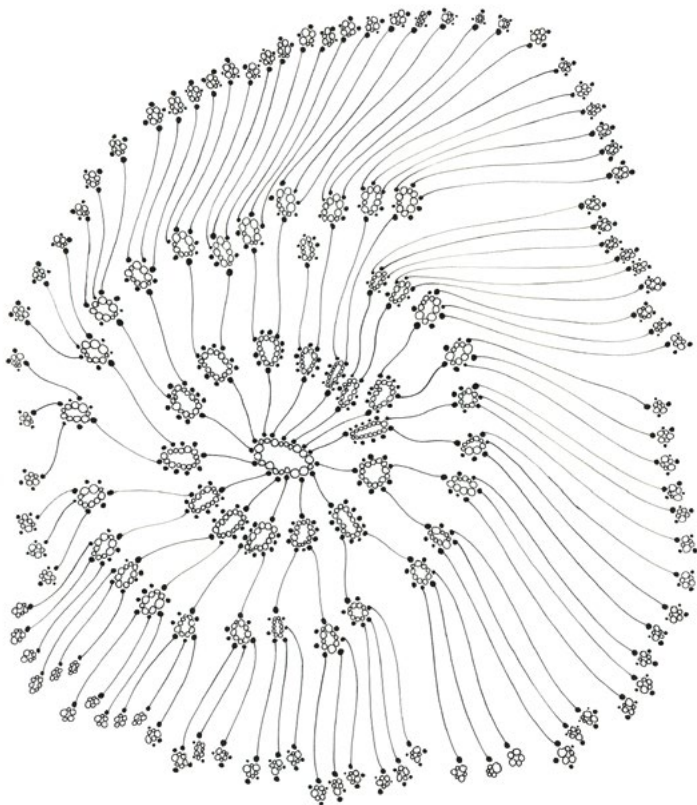
Like landscape itself, landscape design is ultimately intuitive and subjective. But the benefits of any proposed change can always be quantified in some way, from the number of fish returned to a stream, to the volume of carbon dioxide absorbed by a park, to the monetary value of trade on an urban plaza. Such measurements can never capture all aspects of a place, but they provide one means of testing claims against outcomes. Because people invest numbers with authority, there is often no more effective way to demonstrate the benefits of a given landscape change – or to disprove the assumptions on which that change was based.

So: get quantitative. Attach numbers to every proposal and use them to assess every change. Embrace the messiness and tension of landscape, but always leave something for the statisticians.

For further reading:

Descartes, René. Rules for the Direction of the Mind. In *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, translated by John Cottingham. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985 [1628].

Johnson, Bart and Kristina Hill, eds. *Ecology and Design: Frameworks for Learning*. Foreword by David W. Orr. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2002.



This drawing is inspired by cellular division but it's also about the thought process within design itself, about how we come to make decisions and rules and how those create form. I start the drawing with a set of rules about circles, lines, and dots, and how they reproduce. The drawing develops as I follow the rules precisely and observe what happens. The drawing is a result of how this plays out over time. It's a kind of meditation.

Cellular division, drawing, Jacques Abelman

When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be.

—Lao Tzu

43 *Detach*

'Detach' comes from the root *tacca*, a nail or tack or spot. Detachment is an active removal, a forceful, even violent extraction of one's own passions from a task or situation. This habit of reason is not easy or 'natural,' because ultimately we are always pinned to the world, always involved. But no design proposal can be effectively judged and tested without engaging in this kind of rational exercise. One must try to see the proposals one has made, and the changes those proposals have brought about in the landscape, as though one had no particular interest in them other than to assess the relationship between claims and outcomes. One must, for a time, untack.

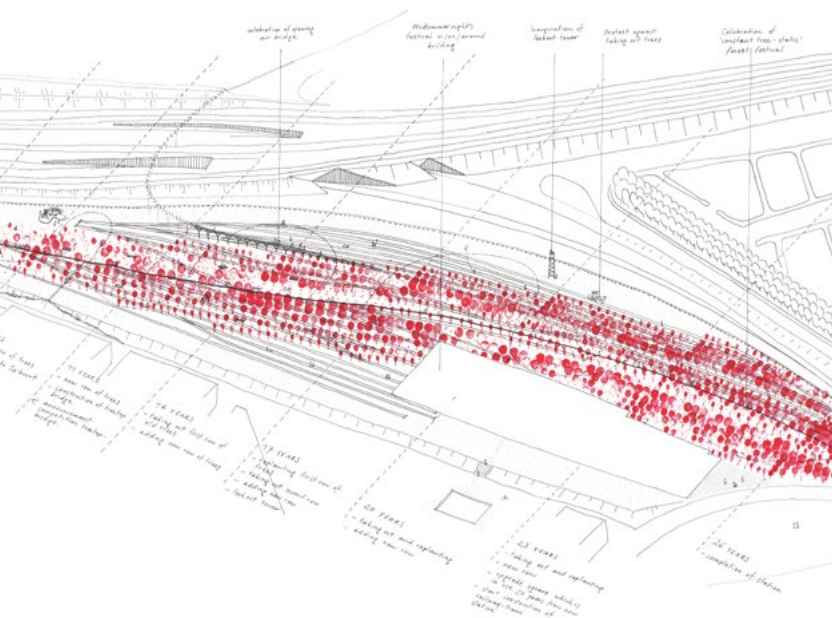
So: when assessing a design, always doubt your own motives, always question your own interest. Get out of yourself; take up a view from nowhere.

For further reading:

Nagel, Thomas. *The View from Nowhere*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching: A Book About the Way and the Power of the Way*.

Original work written around 500 BCE. Boston: Shambhala, 2009.



Tree plantation time line

Hannah Schubert, Astrid Bennink, Valentina Chimento
Workshop Drawing Time tutor: Noël van Doorn
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2013

The processes that shape landscape operate at different scales of space and time: from the local to the national, from the ephemeral to the enduring.

— Anne Whiston Spirn

44 Vary Measures

Landscapes are complex, the effects of designs for them often unpredictable. Once implemented, a design might improve natural ecology but cause discord among people, and both these outcomes must be weighed in any judgment that we make about it. But very different kinds of landscape change, whether social or biophysical, cannot possibly be judged according to a single, universal standard. There is no one way to take the measure of a landscape, because the landscape is never any one thing. That is why, when surveying the outcome of a landscape design, it is important not to use one particular scale to the exclusion of all others.

So: use a measure fit for the problem, but never forget those parts of landscape that elude it. Diversify; wherever you go, carry many yardsticks.

For further reading:

Eames, Charles and Ray, and Philip Morrison. *Powers of Ten: A Book About the Relative Size of Things in the Universe and the Effect of Adding Another Zero.* Redding: Scientific American Library, 1982.

Spirn, Anne Whiston. *The Granite Garden: Urban Nature and Human Design.* New York: Basic Books, 1984.



New and old perspectives: historical Dutch paintings interwoven with Google maps
Marijne Beenhakker
La4Sale, 2012

In every deliberation, we must consider the impact on the seventh generation... even if it requires having skin as thick as the bark of a pine.

— The Constitution of the Iroquois Nations

45 *Speed Up*

Landscapes last. Fifty years is an age in a budget or a parliament, but a mere moment in landscape time. The effects of a given change, good or ill, can take years to appear and persist long after traces of the design that caused it have faded and vanished. This is why assessing those designs means speeding up, looking far beyond the hedge of one's own life and time to next decade, next century, all the centuries the landscape is likely to endure. This is a principle of ethics and a task of the imagination. To judge any landscape change, one must become an augur, a seer of worlds.

So: when assessing a landscape change, imagine a world centuries hence. Ask yourself what then – then look further and deeper still. Think time like a landscape.

For further reading:

Brand, Stewart. *The Clock of the Long Now*. New York: Basic Books, 1999.

United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. *Our Common Future, the Brundtland Report*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW 1



mvw. L.J.A. Koenders

85 jaar

Verkeerd op gezondheidsweden.

Positief

koers 30

Negatief

sasle lange route naar niksels
glaes rondje om
glaes gezellig centrum
grote rimen



mvw. I de Haas

72 jaar

Verkeerd op gezondheidsweden echtgepaar

Positief

koers 30
hauwje/suitericht maar eigen stoel
me
binnertuin ook eigen stoel mee
contacte buren

Negatief



mvw. Bouquet

72 jaar

Verkeerd n.o.n. overlast buren

Positief

koers 30
rustige s'f'er
contacte met buren

Negatief

winkels ver weg/
moeilijk bereikbaar



dhv. J de Haas

72 jaar

Verkeerd op gezondheidsweden en familie woont ook op Ysing

Positief

koers 30
hauwje-strand
sociale contacten met buren

Negatief

winkels ver weg/
moeilijk bereikbaar



dhv. Mulder

Verkeerd op gezondheidsweden

Positief

koers 30
fietser
winkels
binnertuin

Negatief

The stories of the elderly

Esther Brun

Design studio tutor: Mathias Lehner

Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

It begins by listening to people and place.

— Randolph Hester

46 Listen

Landscape are collections of the voices of the living and the dead. They emerge from all the things that people say and hear, all the words they write and read, all the conversations and arguments they have, within and among themselves, through time. One must attend to this unending chorus, when it is harmonious but particularly when it is discordant. One must strive to follow the common line even as one seeks out those voices that stray farthest from it, the voices that grate most with one's own desired score. For these errant voices are also, more often than not, the voices of learning.

So: make time and space for every voice in the chorus. Ask more questions than you answer, listen far more than you speak.

For further reading:

Hester, Randolph. *Design for Ecological Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006.

Healey, Patsy. *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997.



Havelte: A new community identity can bring farmers and villagers together
Marijne Beenhakker
Design studio tutors: Hanneke Kijne and Bart van der Vossen
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2011

We see things not as they are, but as we are.

— Anaïs Nin

47 Change Lenses

There is no end to the ways different people can experience the same place. The preservationist, the ecologist, the rural booster may all love the same fields and hedgerows. But their reasons for doing so may diverge so widely as to call into question whether they are seeing the same landscape at all. The designer of landscapes is but one person among many, one small bundle of values, memories, and tastes in dialogue with the stuff of the world. But designers also bear a special responsibility: to transcend the limits of their own vision and see the world as others do. Looking over field and hedgerow, the designer must learn to think like the preservationist, the ecologist and the booster, all at once.

So: when assessing a landscape change, remember to put on different glasses. See that change as others do. Do not just understand people; stand behind their eyes.

For further reading:

Lowenthal, David. 'Not every prospect pleases'. *Landscape* 12, no. 2 (1962): 19–23.

Meinig, Donald William. 'The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene'. In *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, edited by Donald William Meinig. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.



Forgotten water regained: improving IJburg's water system
Annelies Bloemendaal
Design studio tutor: Harma Horlings
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

Give up the notion that you must be sure of what you are doing. Instead, surrender to what is real within you, for that alone is sure.

— Baruch Spinoza

48 Try Error

Judging designs after they are built can be an uncomfortable experience. Assumptions may turn out to have been false, casualties of bad information or bad interpretation. Central design elements may be ignored, while those you thought peripheral are cherished. New and unexpected variables may emerge, changing or undermining the expected performance of a park, a river, a region. It is all too easy to despair at such outcomes, at the chasm between aspiration and reality. But the design of landscape is never simply an unbroken array of triumphs. It is a succession of false starts and dead ends, reversals, reappraisals and new beginnings. These events are not unfortunate ruptures in an otherwise smooth process. They are the very essence of that process – and the foundation for better design later.

So: embrace your missteps, your haltings, your failings. Remember that every dead end leads somewhere, that every error feeds the bed of learning.

For further reading:

Dalai Lama. *How to Practice*. New York: Pocket Books, 2002.

Deming, M. Elen and Simon Swaffield. *Landscape Architecture Research: Inquiry, Strategy, Design*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2011.



Stitching it over and over again
Marjan van Herpen
Design studio tutors: John Lonsdale and Oana Rades
Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, 2010

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.
— Confucius

49 Start Over

Landscapes are, for the most part, forgiving of the designs that people make on them. A bad proposal can damage a landscape, certainly, but almost no design, no matter how ambitious, can destroy it. Far from license to design heedlessly, this generosity is a second chance. It is an invitation not to walk away, but to go back, start over, make good all those failings one did not foresee at the beginning. That this does not happen more often is due to the nature of design practice, where projects, like sites, have beginnings and ends, are fixed in space and time. But landscapes do not have beginnings or ends. Every change made to them is but the ground on which those who follow will build their world.

So: do not just test, fix. Make time to tinker, refine, rework, improve. See in every landscape change you propose not an answer, but a new and better question.

For further reading:

Horton, Myles and Paulo Freire. *We Make the Road by Walking*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

Spirn, Anne Whiston. 'Restoring Mill Creek: Landscape Literacy, Environmental Justice and City Planning and Design'. *Landscape Research* 30, no.3 (2005): 395–413.



Walking the fields

Coordinators: Marieke Timmermans and Thomas Oles
EMiLA summer program, 2011

To dwell is to garden.
— Martin Heidegger

50 Stay

In a world of endless motion, a world of roads and deadlines and flickering sputtering information, staying put is the most radical thing of all. Literally *radical*: we speak of ‘sinking roots’, of ‘growing into a place’, of being ‘embedded’. To stay put is to become like a tree in the landscape, one small part of a living, beating organism. Some philosophers have called this tree-being ‘dwelling’. In many ways, dwelling is the antithesis of design, where it is always the next project, the next place, the next landscape that commands the attention, seduces the ego and the wallet. To design is to be always, inevitably, moving on. But you will never truly know any place you envision this way. To understand a landscape you must graft your habits, your memories, your very self to it. You must slow down, stop and dwell.

**So: stay. Travel down the road, as you must,
but leave roots in every landscape you touch.
Then return to the beginning of this book.
Place your trunk, your body there once more.**

For further reading:

Heidegger, Martin. ‘Building, Dwelling, Thinking’. In *Poetry, Language, Thought*. New York: Harper and Row, 1971.

Lovelock, James. *The Ages of Gaia: A Biography of Our Living Earth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

*Landscape,
language, n
thought tan
imagination*

—Anne Whiston Spirn

*as
makes
gible and
n possible.*

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- Abram, David. *The Spell of the Sensuous*. New York: Vintage Books, 1996.
- Ackerman, Diane. *A Natural History of the Senses*. New York: Random House, 1990.
- Alexander, Christopher. *A Pattern Language*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- Anderson, Kay, Mona Domosh, Steve Pile and Nigel Thrift, eds. *Handbook of Cultural Geography*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2003.
- Appleton, Jay. *The Experience of Landscape*. Chichester and New York: John Wiley, 1996.
- Aristotle. *On the Soul; Parva Naturalia, On Breath*. Translated by Walter Stanley Hett. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935. Original work written in 350 BCE.
- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Christopher Rowe with introduction and commentary by Sarah Brodie. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
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