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*2010 Joint Meeting of International Study Group for the
Multiple Use of Land (ISOMUL) and the Council of Educators
in Landscape Architecture (CELA) (review)*

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Landscape Journal: design, planning, and management of the land,
Volume 30, Number 1, 2011, pp. 162-166 (Review)

Published by University of Wisconsin Press

LANDSCAPE
JOURNAL



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The second panel of the symposium, “Infrastruktururbanismus and Context,” mostly focused on projects with infrastructure strategies in response to changing urban realities. Jae-Sung Chon (University of Manitoba) examined the road infrastructures in the works of Team X and Metabolists (from post-war Japan). In particular, he called for the re-examining of road “shadow spaces” in a spatial discourse that moves beyond the functionalism of roads and toward alternative interpretations and stories.

Susannah Drake (dlandstudio, Brooklyn, New York) presented three of her firm’s cutting-edge projects in New York City. All three elevate landscape architecture to the driving force of infrastructure and urbanism. The projects were: SpongePark in Brooklyn; The Brooklyn Queens Expressway reconnection study; and their submission to MoMA’s Rising Currents exhibition, “Lower Manhattan: a New Urban Ground.”¹

Tobias Govert (London Development Agency, Design for London) presented a broad examination of the development of the infrastructure and “in-between” spaces at London’s Royal Docks. He gave compelling and practical examples of how these spaces can become lasting, valued public spaces, despite the complex development process of such projects.

Thorsten Schauz (Stadtidee, Dortmund, Germany) took us to the sprawling Ruhr region in Germany to examine a variety of successful, yet very different, residential projects juxtaposed with infrastructure. This region shows that a range of design and planning possibilities can be successful when integrated with site-specific land and community requirements.

The final panel of the symposium, “Infrastruktururbanismus and Infrastructural Landscape,” addressed the metropolitan scale, integrating spaces, places, and landscapes with infrastructure in what is often understood as “landscape urbanism.” Although most of the cases in this panel were in Western Europe, they all brought attention to the fact that large infrastructural landscapes are the reality, spatially and experientially, in most urban areas.

Eduardo Rico (Ove Arup and Partners, London) gave an engaging lecture on landscape urbanism projects, including: Ronda ring road in Barcelona; Parc de la Trinitat in Barcelona; and a transport interchange in Hoenheim Nord, Strasbourg, France.

Stefanie Anna Bremer and Henrik Sander (orange edge, Gelsenkirchen, Germany) brought us back to Germany’s Ruhr region, giving analysis and examples of design interventions along the Autobahn A40. They showed how a highway can

become a spatial narrative for a region, not simply a non-spatial connection.

Other presentations in the final panel included Maarten Van Acker’s (University of Leuven) analysis of the historic complex urbanism intertwined with Antwerp’s ring road; Panos Mantziaras’s (Ecole nationale supérieure d’architecture Paris-Malaquais) study of 10 proposals for the future of the greater Paris area; and Alessandra De Cesaris’s (University of Rome) new strategies for Rome’s ring road, the Grande Rac-cordo Anulare, that integrate the concepts of parkway, infrastructure, and public space.

The Infrastruktururbanismus Symposium brought together a range of thinkers bridging different theories, disciplines, and practices. The common thread throughout the symposium was the value of the interstitial and the infrastructural—particularly at the intersection of landscape, public space, and infrastructure. It was inspiring to see so many presentations and discussions tackle current and emerging urban landscape realities.

NOTES

1. Drake’s work can be viewed at <http://www.dlandstudio.com/>.

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2010 Joint Meeting of International Study Group for the Multiple Use of Land (ISOMUL) and the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA)

Maastricht, Netherlands

May 12–14, 2010

EDITORS’ NOTE: The editors asked three attendees to review the annual CELA conference in hopes of providing broader coverage of the event. MaryCarol Hunter provides an overview of the conference and sessions reviews, while Bruce Dvorak and Noah Billig contribute session reviews.

REVIEW BY MARYCAROL HUNTER

Maastricht lies at the cross roads of several cultures owing to its location in the peninsular southern-most province of Limburg in the Netherlands. Location gives this very old city as much geographic continuity with Germany and Belgium as its

home country, making Maastricht a fitting place to host the joint conferences of two international landscape architecture organizations. Of the 254 people attending the conference, there was representation from all habitable continents except South America.

The conference theme, “Landscape Legacy” focused on our responsibility for the environmental imprint left by landscape designers and planners. In the call for papers, people were asked to focus on the balance between the artistic and scientific foundations of landscape architecture. Several aspects of this issue were specified: At what point in the creative process should a design become informed by non-aesthetic goals regarding social and ecological needs? How can scientific knowledge be translated to the creation and installation of designs? How does the duality of an art and science foundation affect teaching, research, and professional practice? The challenge was ably met by every aspect of the conference.

Two keynote speakers opened the meeting by addressing the theme of legacy as realized historically and practiced in present times by landscape architects. Diedrich Bruns related the importance of earlier cultural landscapes in providing a design framework that can support local memory and economic/ecological function. A notable example was the royal kitchen gardens of Versailles, a practical and beautiful design done in response to an ecological disturbance known as the little ice age. A lively discussion followed about identifying meaningful landscapes in a modern world where change is rapid and migration is common. Catherine Ward-Thompson made a convincing argument that visual thinking is an effective stabilizer for the inherent complexity of research involving the art-science duality. She used examples from her own multidisciplinary team research, which focuses on design of space for quality of life, to demonstrate how scientific hypothesis testing can be paired with methods of visual investigation. Such a combination gives intuition and artistry its rightful place in the production and transmission of knowledge. A discussion about modes of visual analysis made clear the need for clarification on how best to apply different modes to the research question at hand. The plenary debate was moderated by Tracy Metz, a respected design and planning journalist, who brought provocative insight and engaged the audience and speakers in spirited repartee.

The 3-day program included presented papers (217), posters (14), and topical panels (4) that described research

Table 1. Content of conference presentations

Track/ Sub-theme	Oral presentations	Written papers	Panels ¹
Research and design (legacy theme)	40	16	A
History, theory, and culture	61	17	
Design education and pedagogy	21	11	B
Sustainability	20	8	C
Service learning/community engagement	17	6	
People-Environment relationships	17	4	
Landscape planning and ecology	12	5	
Urban design	7	5	
Methods of Inquiry	8	2	D
Design implementation	8	2	
Communications and visualization	6	0	

¹Panel Topics

- A Evidence-based design: how to bring scholarship into the design process for teaching and practice
- B Integrating aesthetics with ecological, social and economic design goals in studio teaching
- C Pedagogical considerations of the transdisciplinary nature of design intelligence in today's studio
- D Developing an effective way to catalogue and disseminate published research by landscape architects.

in terms of the conference's legacy theme or research aligned with one of CELA's ten topical tracks (Table 1).

The panel sessions handled the challenge of the art-science duality from several perspectives (Table 1). A panel discussion on evidence-based design (A) yielded a specific recommendation—every design should be accompanied by a post-occupancy evaluation (POE) checklist that includes reaction of the users. Since a POE provides an efficient way to document design intent and to measure its success, a compilation of POE results provides a cost-effective approach to establishing design standards. As the premises of design itself expand to include more ecological, health, and cultural considerations, the POE offers a direct path to evidence-based design. Another panel discussion focused on plans for dissemination of landscape architecture research results within and outside the professional cohort (D). The job will be handled by CELA's new administrative post—Vice President for Research (held by Chris Ellis at present). The panel also had a timely discussion on the need for and challenge of establishing a visionary, proactive (versus reflexive) research agenda, something that will bring two benefits: sparking the profession to their full capacity in environmental design leadership and putting our visioning capacity into the public face of landscape architecture.

The challenge of designing within the art-science duality was handled with research approaches that ranged from the data rich to the highly artistic. For example, plans for adaptation to climate change came from an investigation of how to increase carbon storage across a metropolis. The strategy

articulated an approach for planting designs across a city's meta-park system based information about carbon sequestration in plants and the dynamics of the urban soil ecosystem processes (D. Hoffman-Brandt). Another research project used visual language (artful photographs) with poetic text to catalogue urban spaces where ecological processes produced breaks in infrastructure or an unexpected emergence of nature (N. Hilmer).

The conference theme also played out in talks from specialty tracks. For example, from the pedagogy track, we learned how to organize a design studio where students learned how to create climate responsive designs through the application of climate change data to the production of artful design solutions that work at local and larger spatial scales (S. Lenzholzer). Beyond the conference theme other important aspects of responsibility were addressed, such as how minimalist landscape design can meet social needs and offer cultural meaning (K. McCown); how the use of digital media expanded a Balinese community's ability to articulate the vital ingredients of its sense of place (K. Thompson and J. Widmer); how landscape architects can contribute to design and planning for unregulated squatter settlements, an expanding type of urban presence worldwide (N. Billig); and how the profession can design to bring children in better contact with nature (W. Miller).

Formal social gatherings were held outside the conference center at locations that relayed a sense of place. The welcome reception was held in Maastricht's stunning 17th century Town Hall, complete with a welcome from the mayor and the freedom to wander among the elegant city offices. The farewell banquet was held at Fort Sint Pieter, an 18th century fortress located on the city's mount, with stunning views of the city and Meuse Valley—modernity overlaid on a medieval template, embedded in a rural landscape.

The five conference tours were extremely well chosen. Everyone returned feeling that they had chosen the best trip. The tour for two destinations, Maastricht, Eindhoven and Helmond (Netherlands), focused on how a temporal continuum of cultural heritage was successfully embraced by land use planning and architecture. A trip to Liege and Three Countries (Netherlands, Belgium, Germany) Park highlighted the role of policy in enhancing the rural character of the area. The tour of Emscher Park (Germany), led by the designers Peter and Annelise Latz, highlighted the successful conversion of

old industrial infrastructure to a contemporary park—a striking example of artistic creation done within the bounds of cultural preservation and ecological restoration. The experience of a meditative and playful landscape happened at Insel Hombroich (Germany), a sculpture garden of 11 pavilions, each designed to dispel the sense of inside versus outside. The seeming bucolic sense of the 20-hectare park emerged within superb landscape design that combines naturalist and minimalist sensibilities within the requirements to design for extensive ecological restoration of an old missile base.

A suggestion for future conferences: The highly interdisciplinary nature of landscape architecture makes the assignment of a talk to one of the topical tracts risky business. There were many talks I would like to have heard but did not realize so until reading the abstract booklet . . . post-conference. It would be beneficial if the abstracts, listed by sub-theme, were released on the internet/conference website at least two weeks before the conference so that people could browse, search, and select before the exhaustion of travel and the excitement of spending time with colleagues eat up the spare minutes. The schedule of talks is not necessary for this opportunity to be fruitful.

Tremendous planning went into this wonderfully organized conference. Deep gratitude is extended to ISOMUL and Wageningen University, especially Dr. Gerrit Carsjens who was the local coordinator. The next CELA conference will be held March 30–April 2, 2011 in Los Angeles, at the University of Southern California. Its theme is “Urban Nature,” a timely follow up to this year's theme.

REVIEW BY BRUCE DVORAK

While sustainability has already gained significant momentum over the past decade among professional landscape architects and planners, its visibility at CELA conferences has only recently become more visible. The 2010 CELA/ISOMOL conference in Maastricht signaled a significant expansion of sustainability with a number of science-based papers investigating original research of sustainable technologies. The two new research tracks, Sustainability and Design Implementation, will now provide focused outlets for new forms of faculty research. Previous CELA conferences have been largely dominated by traditional landscape architecture themes such as landscape form, art, contextualism, pedagogy, and design. Furthermore, it was not too long ago that the mention

of sustainability and some of its recent advances: green roofs, bioswales, porous pavements, and living walls rose more than a few eyebrows. In Maastricht, a number of papers focused on original research by landscape architects and planners investigating sustainable technologies including such alternative stormwater management strategies as porous pavement, bioswales, and green roofs.

As the moderator of one of the Design Implementation Tracks, it was interesting to note that three of the four presentations in my group presented green roof investigations. At the previous CELA conference in Tucson, there was only one full paper and one abstract concerning green roof technology. In Maastricht, there were seven green roof presentations in total across three different tracts represented by two full papers and five abstracts. Reflecting on the content of the presentations, it was evident that green roofs are still an emerging technology for North American researchers with themes such as guidelines, standards, vegetation trial plots, and case studies dominating the dialog. There was one presentation however, that investigated the historic legacy of roof gardens in the U.S. focusing on the rooftop theater and diner era that was popular at the turn of the 20th century.

Other presentations discussed ways landscape architects and planners are bridging art and science. In doing so, many reached out in collaboration with other landscape architects, scientists, engineers, and architects. It became evident that the more we collaborate and lead in these areas, the more justified our skills become in a world that is increasingly volatile as well as economically and ecologically strained. If clients cannot afford beauty for its own sake, from what was evident at the conference, they are beginning to find ways to afford sustainability especially when it is visually attractive and can save money. Since these trends are also reflected in architecture and other professions, our challenge should be to keep moving forward. By doing so, faculty can investigate ways sustainable technologies can be applied locally and provide critical data needed by professional landscape architects and planners across diverse ecological regions.

Overall, the conference was a very engaging multicultural and intellectual expression of what landscape architects and planners do best: *synthesize*. Throughout the conference, it was apparent that we know what we do well and can teach others how to do it, but struggle at times explaining its theory. One of the strengths of the conference was the inclusion

of ISOMUL. The international perspective was significant in that it represented a mature understanding and expression of the conference theme. Missing from the conference was a significant wrap-up discussion or round table with the larger audience to absorb the perspectives taken in and discuss what was learned about the conference theme. There is still much room for improvement with the new role of discussants. Some of the discussions lacked focus regarding the tract theme, and some of the moderating was poor, as several speakers who had invested significant resources and traveled many miles to present their research had their presentations cut short due to poor time management by moderators.

Across the world, the design professions are in a dynamic transformation where many diverse professionals are learning to come together, collaborating and also competing for work in ways not so evident a decade ago. Since many in Europe and abroad have already been working with sustainable technologies for some time, North Americans have only to gain from open dialog and expanding international collaboration. The conference was a very memorable one, and I think the theme and international location should be revisited again soon and more often.

REVIEWED BY NOAH BILLIG

In an "Urban Design" session, Beth Diamond (University of Michigan) examined the Heidelberg Cultural Village in Detroit. She gave a vivid analysis of this locally focused, arts-based community project as a catalyst for urban sustainability. She paraphrased the originator of the Heidelberg Cultural Village, Tyree Guyton, comparing art to medicine: "It is sometimes hard to take, but it can be healing." Ultimately, Heidelberg has become a transformative and empowering urban medicine for the residents of this Detroit neighborhood. In the same session, Madis Pihlak (Penn State University) presented Toronto as an ideal North American case study of a sustainable city. Toronto's ubiquitous transit, urban density, policies supporting pedestrians, and improved ecological functioning of the Don River, contribute to a city that applies the tenants of ecological urbanism and serves as an example for other cities. Sean Burkholder (Penn State University) concluded the session with, "Lagscapes: The role of landscape within the shrinking city." His presentation took an evocative look at the potentials of landscapes that have not kept up with the current living city. The discussion for this session focused on shrinking

cities, concepts of a city's identity and "soul," and the idea of creative empowerment.

In a "Research and Design" session, Nathan Hilmer (University of Oregon/Atelier Dreiseitl) gave an interesting presentation on breaks (for example, erosion, cleaving, heaving, and seeping) and collections (for example, recording, staining, aggregation, and growth) in relation to emergent urban ecology. Hilmer focused on interventions made in the urban fabric to take advantage of breaks and collections in what he called, "the process of handling the existing," and, "the immediacy of the actual." Hilmer presented conceptual examples of how designers could embrace breaks and collections in a new paradigm of complex urban sustainability. These included light rail footings designed to collect debris and water, eventually cultivating vegetated patterns along the tracks, and an urban park designed in the water collecting spaces of a demolished department store.

In another "Research and Design" session, John Crone (University of Arkansas) presented a case study examining the integration of pedestrian and bicycle systems in a high volume highway intersection. MaryCarol Hunter (University of Michigan) presented her work on street loss and sense of place in southeast Michigan. Her research provides empirical data to support the goals of design, incorporating community well-being, perceived aesthetics, and ecosystem health. David Hill (Auburn University) presented his research on the ephemeral nature of planted forms and their effects on designed spaces. His work moves beyond mere plant parts (for example, bud, green leaf, red leaf, no leaf) and provides useful data on plants' multi-dimensional spatial changes. Hill's research includes detailed documentation of dynamic spatial and textural changes in plants through time and seasons. These presentations were inspiring in their innovation and potential for application by fellow researchers and designers.

In a "Sustainability" session, Forster Ndubisi (Texas A&M University) presented a framework for sustainable regionalism to mitigate the effects of climate change. He openly incorporated many ideas from previous researchers in ecological/natural regionalism (for example, Geddes and McHarg), but adapted them to current regional realities. For example, Ndubisi gave a list of seemingly simple principles, such as, "target variable ecosystems" and "maintain and establish ecological corridors." He pointed out that the strength of these principles is how they are linked together in a spatial and ecological framework that articulates a vision.

In the "Communications and Visualization" track, Blake Belanger (Kansas State University) gave an intriguing presentation, "Visualizing complexity: Nonlinear relations and photo montage." Belanger contended that landscape is a complex system that is relational, adaptive, and always unfolding, and that conventional representative and design process strategies (e.g., maps) do not always reflect this complexity. Belanger proposed and gave examples of how photomontage is generative, non-linear, and evocative, and can thus be used for addressing the inherent complexity of landscape systems.

The conference tour of the Three Countries Park region took participants on a beautiful and interesting bus ride through the rural areas between Maastricht (Netherlands), Heerlen (Netherlands), Aachen (Germany), Hasselt (Belgium) and Liege (Belgium). The Three Countries Park is a collaborative effort of nine public partners in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. The tour focused on various land use strategies and interventions based on this international cooperation. It was very interesting to see the policies and decisions of many stakeholders play out on the land. The result is integrated regional landscape systems that also allow for place specific land use choices and policies. Projects in the region focus on spatial planning, sustainable agriculture, landscape and natural management, and (eco) tourism. Four stops were made on the route: Chateau Neercanne (on the border of the Netherlands and Belgium and site of the reception after the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht in 1992); Val-Dieu Abbey; Plombières (where we toured a phyto-remediation project); and Vaalserberg (a park at the highest point in the Netherlands and the point where the borders of Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands meet).

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