Between Landschaft and Landskip: Examining the Landscape Urbanism Discourse Through Post-Infrastructural Open Space Projects in Berlin

by

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Between *Landschaft* and *Landscape*:
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ABSTRACT

This research examines how post-infrastructural open space has been approached in contemporary design practice using three urban parks in Berlin as sites for investigation: Tempelhofer Feld, Park am Gleisdreieck, and Natur-Park Schöneberger Südgelände. These sites are analyzed in juxtaposition with the discourse around “landscape urbanism,” as these projects’ timelines are dispersed across the beginning, rise, and plateau of that movement. First, I have tracked how landscape urbanism has been discussed in the literature since its coinage — what terms are used most frequently within the discourse and in what manner, which projects are most often called upon to illustrate central themes, and what theoretical building blocks are used in support of the concept. I then pull out specific themes prevalent in the literature that help to construct a method for analyzing the three aforementioned open spaces: how the historically dichotomized conceptions of “urban” and “nature” are approached in each space by examining edge conditions in relation to their surrounding urban fabric, how time and process are considered in each site’s staging of new programmatic interventions, and how the sites incorporate elements of previous infrastructural use, including relics and ruins. This section contains a series of drawings, diagrams, and annotated photographs illustrating this analysis, along with experiential observations and timelines describing the development process in each site’s transformation from infrastructure to open space. The critique explores how the theoretical discourse around landscape urbanism has engaged built projects and why such an examination is critical as the larger discipline continues to evolve and reorient.

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Introduction

Public open spaces in urban areas are often the spaces which contain the lowest barriers to entry across the city, particularly for those fortunate enough to live in relatively close proximity. Increasingly, the urban dweller’s presence in the world is justified through transaction and commodity; we earn the space we occupy through monetary means. Public open space provides an example of one of the last remaining places in the city where an expectation of a purchase does not forcibly precede the occupation of space. Therefore, there is great potential for these spaces to serve the important function of holding and constituting the formation of a certain kind of community.

In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt describes her *theory of action*; she defines action as “the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter,” which “corresponds to the human condition of plurality.” (Arendt 1958, 7) Action, she states, is primarily symbolic in character, as “the web of human relationships is sustained by communicative interaction.” So, to act is to speak; to share, to learn, to communicate. Arendt specifically makes use of the metaphor of the Greek *polis* to describe what she refers to as the “space of appearance,” where, for example, “I appear to others as others appear to me, where men exist not merely like other living or inanimate things...” (Arendt 1958, 198) She describes the Greek *polis* as a place that established a framework where “action and speech could be recorded and transformed into stories, where every citizen could be a witness and thereby a potential narrator,” (d’Entreves 2016) thus establishing a space of “organized remembrance.” (d’Entreves 2016)

While Arendt’s *action* has the potential to arise regardless of the material considerations of the spaces people inhabit, we know that space is both conditioned by those who occupy it and that a given space can, in turn, act as a conditioning force upon those who find themselves within it. As Henri Lefebvre and others after have argued, space is not merely a neutral container, but is socially constructed. (Lefebvre 1991) Given that people themselves are instrumental in constructing space, one might argue that the design of public space can have an effect on the ways in which action may arise in it. A careful line must be drawn, then, to distinguish between what Lefebvre calls “the illusion of transparency,” a space lending “miraculous quality to thought, becoming incarnate by means of a design (in both senses of the word)” (Lefebvre 1991, 26-27) and the design which might lend clarity to socio-cultural context. In Lefebvre’s conception of designed space, the mediator that is design produces a false transparency, a filmic overlay that disguises the degree to which social space is an active conditioning agent rather than innocent, passive vacancy. Naturally, a public space has the power to attract people to it simply through good, engaging design by making it transform...
into a destination, somewhere to go, see, and experience for those both distant and near. But a public space also has the power to prompt a deeper collective recalling of past action that has transpired there. Even, as Arendt suggests, “organized remembrance” (d’Entreves 2016) happens through the stories we tell, a well-designed, “constructed” environment has the ability to provoke the recounting of stories that may not be our own but are meaningful to our identity, both collectively and as individuals.

Of the various forms that public open space can take, the reclamation of space that has formerly held transportation infrastructure carries a significant amount of cultural value. Most obviously, infrastructure is a key feature of the industrial age, facilitating the movement of material and goods that provided for the massive amounts of wealth (and by extension, geo-political power) accumulated by a select handful of Western nation-states. Everyday labor, human capital, made that accumulation possible. Post-infrastructural spaces are hence inherently political, and therefore lend themselves well to the kind of gathering Arendt describes because of the history embedded in them. People are drawn to spaces with rich histories; we have an innate desire to understand the past and how we relate to it, especially when it’s taught to us through physical space, perhaps because history feels most accessible when we feel like we can reach out and touch it. Even for those who might suggest that the wealth of nations has largely been accumulated in the name of the “common good,” the designed post-infrastructural space has the potential to remind anyone who finds themselves within it that its current existence as a place of leisure was made possible by its former existence as one of labor, movement, and even violence.

The discourse around “landscape urbanism” has provided a provocative way of understanding the potentials for designed landscapes in the contemporary context, informing both theory and practice and perhaps contributing to a shift in how the larger discipline of landscape architecture is perceived by practitioners. Landscape urbanism, an idea born in the early- to mid-1990s, suggests the ways landscape can (and in the opinion of its many adherents, should) supplant the more traditional form-giving disciplines of architecture, urban design, and urban planning and dictate that it “become the basic building block of contemporary urbanism.” (Waldheim 2006c) Whether intentional or not, the previous two decades of landscape architecture practice has gravitated towards many of the principles embedded in the landscape urbanism idea. Given that the discourse seems to now exist decidedly in the past tense, (Duany 2010) the current moment provides an opportune time to dissect how the theory within the discourse translates to the realities of built projects from an objective standpoint. Determining how the practice has been influenced by the discourse and vice versa feels essential to
informing landscape architecture’s future evolvement and direction as a discipline and its relation to the other building arts.

Arendt is not referenced by those who partake in the discussion of landscape urbanism, but philosophical sources of inspiration come from a varied pool regardless, including works by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (rhizomatic “image of thought”), Michel Foucault (governmental rationality), Henri Lefebvre (the production of space), David Harvey (accumulation by dispossession), Bruno Latour (actor-network), Jacques Derrida (deconstruction), and Jürgen Habermas (communicative action). These philosophical ideas are primarily used to advance the agenda of the landscape urbanist (one might argue to varying degrees of success) and to suggest the tools at the landscape urbanist’s disposal. However, only some corroborate the necessity of landscape serving as public space and expound upon the ways it is produced, upheld, and threatened. In the landscape urbanist discourse, landscapes are described as “social and political agents;” (Mostafavi 2003) landscape purportedly possesses the ability to enact models of urbanism “that are open to, and encourage, participation by all citizens”; (Mostafavi 2003) and also has the potential to ”stage the ground” for uncertain futures, new conditions, and relational structuring. (Marot 1999) Whether these are merely ideas that express desire for landscape’s potential or can be evidenced in the way contemporary projects have been formulated requires a closer look at the full discourse as well as the projects that incorporate some the discourses’ central tenets.

**From here, two questions emerge:**

How do the central tenets that are considered ingrained in the landscape urbanism idea manifest across built examples of contemporary projects for public open space?

What might these findings suggest in terms of how future theoretical discourse evolves within the greater discipline of landscape architecture, particularly in its intersections with urban planning?
Methodology

1. A selection of sites based a pre-defined set of criteria:

A conscious decision was made to select one element present within each potential site that would be representative of the challenges contemporary practitioners face today, as well as a symptom of urbanization that is often considered more broadly within the larger literature of planning and landscape:

The choice to focus on post-infrastructural space was made for three reasons. One, the cultural meaning and significance of these spaces is not something that is typically dissected analytically as much as other, more “contested” spaces of urban transformation, such as the decommissioning of military bases or the vacant spaces that crop up following a city’s economic downturn (Detroit). Modern infrastructure has not only shaped the contemporary city in numerous ways, but has also been a key driver in the accumulation of wealth that has enabled countries in the Western world to maintain political and economic dominance over other states and territories that have not yet industrialized or done so at a slower clip. On a more local scale, the sites of these infrastructures are important not simply because of the materials they transported, but the people who constructed and maintained their presence for the larger part of the twentieth century. Though it is common to see defunct industrial sites considered symbolic and valued as such in terms of their status as former sites of labor (Langhorst 2014), sites of hard infrastructure should be regarded. This is alluded to in the work of Manuel Castells beginning in the late 1980s and Saskia Sassen today, (Castells 2003; Sassen 2006) but their primary concerns are around anticipating and articulating the local impacts of politico-economic alignments in the movement of global capital across trans-national boundaries on contemporary urban space.

1a. Based in one urban area

Berlin was chosen as the sole city within which cases would be selected for a few specific reasons.

First, the decision to choose only one city in which cases would be compared was both for practical and analytical reasons. Analytically, comparing across different urban contexts, rife with the social, cultural, political, and economic complexity held within a given metropolitan area, would prove difficult to analyze. Therefore, this thesis’s findings are not meant to apply broadly across all urban/metro areas. Rather, this is intended to be a specific look into one urban area where open space projects of the nature described here have been common over the last twenty years. Readers can choose to see this text as a starting point in beginning to consider how other urban areas might be impacted by the design literature discussed here and the type of projects it uses to demonstrate its
main points, as these projects will continue even after the literature’s influence has waned entirely.

More practically speaking, this thesis was devised and executed under a short timeline and with a limited amount of resources. Given these constraints and the strong desire to discuss only sites experienced first-hand, the thesis focuses upon three projects in one urban area.

Given that post-infrastructural space was determined as a criterion by which sites would be selected, the number of cities with a sampling of designed post-infrastructural projects to choose from was fairly limited.

In addition, taking into consideration the literature’s focus areas and projects typically referenced, a conscious effort was made to avoid cities that appear muse-like to the most prominent landscape urbanists, including places like Detroit, London, and Amsterdam.

Lastly, while landscape urbanism’s influence has been large, some argue it remains an insufficiently interrogated set of ideas. Therefore, an effort was made to pair analysis of the discourse with a place where not only built projects enshrining its core tenets existed, but also a place where a rich, pluralistic analysis of the city’s social, cultural, and political context could be threaded together from scholars across the social sciences. This would theoretically enable a separation of a city’s rich history from the ideas propagated by landscape urbanism, allowing for as objective an approach as possible.

\textbf{2. Site visits, photography, field notes and sketches of site conditions and observed socio-spatial dynamics}

Photography is represented within this thesis as a method towards capturing the experiential qualities of the sites studied. The justification for this method comes in part from scholars of the Frankfurt School like Walter Benjamin (see quotation, page 12).

\textbf{3. Through the close reading and analysis of four chosen “canonical” texts within what’s considered to be part of or influential to the landscape urbanism discourse, there are two outcomes anticipated:}

Distillation of the discourse into thematic groupings, each of which will be assessed for applicability toward the aforementioned sites selected for analysis.

A number of scholars have reference landscape urbanism’s applicability to North America but express reservations when applying its thinking elsewhere. Is landscape urbanism purely a North American phenomenon? In 2016, Waldheim admits that “the early promise of landscape urbanist discourse was buoyed by built work in western Europe.” (Waldheim 2016, 55) Yet many still perceive the landscape urbanist discourse as aimed at (and thereby
only applicable to) a North American context. (Thompson 2012; Vicenzotti 2017)

Notes on scope: Why these texts?

A note on how those texts were chosen: These texts were chosen based on an assessment of the survey of literature pertaining to topics considered within the discourse of “landscape urbanism.” Factors considered in the narrowing down of the breadth of work to these four texts, which I would argue as the four most seminal to the discourse, include the author or editor’s demonstrated attachment to the material over the long term. This is considered in terms of publication / scholarly output as well as influence within respective schools of thought as measured by symposia or exhibition curation and the positioning of academic curricula. From this, three figures emerge:

Charles Waldheim, who officially coined the term in 1997, has arguably been most invested in the development of the idea for two decades. His displacement of New Urbanism from its own academic foothold at Harvard is documented in Andres Duany’s infamous recounting of the 2009 “Ecological Urbanism” conference hosted there. (Duany 2010) Waldheim edited a collection of essays published in 2006, the Landscape Urbanism Reader, widely considered to have made a substantial impact on the “building arts” disciplines (see Thompson 2012, Sordi 2015, Vicenzotti 2017). Waldheim eventually became Chair of the Landscape Architecture Department at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design in 2009, a position he held upon the release of Landscape as Urbanism in 2016, his own set of essays devoted entirely to furthering the discourse’s reach and cementing its core ideals. Notably, he has been succeeded as Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design by Anita Berrizbeita, though he still retains his position as a faculty member there.

Mohsen Mostafavi, the person responsible for appointing Waldheim Chair as Harvard’s current Dean of the Graduate School of Design (GSD), is another central figure to the discourse. Before becoming Dean, Mostafavi trained at the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London (AA), where he returned as head from 1995 to 2004. There, he co-founded with Ciro Najle the AA’s Department of Landscape Urbanism, going on to publish under the school’s moniker the title Landscape Urbanism: A Manual for the Machinic Landscape. For Mostafavi, developing the idea of landscape urbanism is consistent with previous work which centered around how the temporal, cultural, and social qualities of the built environment should inform how designers approach these disciplines, as evidenced by the theses of his other publications, 1993’s On Weathering and 2002’s Surface Architecture.

Finally, James Corner has been highly influential in the development of the
ideals that landscape urbanism is founded upon. Both in Mostafavi and Waldheim’s separate anthologies, Corner not only acts as a central contributor, but his work in Recovering Landscape, published before both in 1999, serves as an intellectual template for how the many ideas landscape urbanism is concerned with can work in concert. Corner orchestrated conferences in the early 1990s after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in Landscape Architecture in 1986 and receiving a position on the faculty there two years later. These conference events served as the foundation for his later text, planting the seed of an idea amongst colleagues in the field and accomplishing the networking needed to catalyze the discourse’s momentum thereafter. Corner became Chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania in 2000, and his firm James Corner Field Operations (initially established in collaboration with architect Stan Allen simply as “Field Operations”) is responsible for a keystone contemporary project both for landscape urbanism and for the building arts in general: The High Line, which opened in New York City in 2009.

4. A more thorough analysis of each site and their relationship to one another through a set of drawings, some of which are presented here. This is based not only on the concepts of landscape urbanism that apply to each site but also how each site relates to one another.

5. Synthesis: given what is learned by analyzing the physical characteristics of the sites examined, along with their cultural context and the temporal considerations inherent in their development, how do these projects exemplify or break with the various arguments made within the discourse of landscape urbanism?

By close-ups of the things around us, by focusing on hidden details of familiar objects, by exploring commonplace milieus under the ingenious guidance of the camera, the film, on the one hand, extends our comprehension of the necessities which rule our lives; on the other hand, it manages to assure us of an immense and unexpected field of action. Our taverns and our metropolitan streets, our offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories appeared to have us locked up hopelessly. Then came the film and burst this prisonworld asunder by the dynamite of the tenth of a second, so that now, in the midst of its far-flung ruins and debris, we calmly and adventurously go traveling.

Walter Benjamin, 1968
Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, p. 236-7
Chapter 2: Meanings in German Landscape

To provide context for the sites analyzed in this thesis, a selection of three critical historical moments, which intersect landscape conception and practice with the development and history of Germany and Berlin, are roughly sketched out here as relational vignettes. First, discussion of the etymological origins of “landscape;” second, meanings of the German forest around the turn of the twentieth century; and third, the post-war fascination with Berlin by the larger design culture, specifically within the building arts, with particular attention paid to Rem Koolhaas and O.M. Ungers’ concept for a Green Archipelago in West Berlin.

LANDSCHAFT AND LANDSKIP

In a work from 2004, Denis Cosgrove, a contributor to James Corner’s earlier Recovering Landscape (1999), focuses on the geographical and historical disciplines’ connection to landscape through the German landschaft. Cosgrove, relying on the work of Kenneth Olwig, describes landschaft as having meaning at different scales, but functioning as a polity rather than a territory of a certain size. (Cosgrove 2004) These polities were defined by custom and culture rather than the physical qualities of the land which they occupied. Eventually, however, the word “landscape” emerged as tied specifically to scenery. “It is logical that over time, the combination of community, custom, and territory would give rise to visible distinction of one Landschaft from another, but the scenic aspects that are now so closely associated with landscape were not in any sense primary to the meaning of the German concept and its cognates elsewhere in northwestern Europe.” (Cosgrove 2004, 61)

Cosgrove discusses “landscape’s authority” derived from what Stephens Daniels refers to as its “duplicity,” (Daniels in Cosgrove 2004, 68) or “its capacity to veil historically specific social relations behind the smooth and often aesthetic appearance of ‘nature.’….Landscape acts to ‘naturalize’ what is deeply cultural.” This, at least partially, is identified by Corner in 1999’s Recovering Landscape, serving as the project’s inspiration. In a similar discussion of the difference between landschaft and the Old English landskip, Corner argues that the designer’s role is not merely to project an image, but to project an idea through imaging activities: “While theorists and historians focus on the object or the idea, designers focus on the activities of creativity, with the ‘doing’ and with the often bewildering effects of bodying forth things neither foreseen nor predetermined.” (Corner 1999a, 160) This difference extends to (or is derived from) landschaft and landskip; while landskip concerns the process of image-making, landschaft concerns a deeper “formation of synesthetic, cognitive images” which “forge a collective sense of place and relationship evolved through work.” (Corner 1999a, 161) The “work” Corner is referencing here stems from how he defines landschaft, as an “occupied milieu,
the effects and significance of which accrue through tactility, use, and engagement over time.” (Corner 1999a, 154) This ties back with Cosgrove’s use of the word *polity*, as forged collectively through utilitarian demands. Thus, for Corner in his early work, *landschaft* represents the ideal that has been lost, an ideal he wishes to “recover.” “Is it possible to realign the landscape architectural project toward the productive and participatory phenomena of the everyday, working landscape?... neither to agrarian existence nor to functionalist practices but rather to emphasize the experiential intimacies of engagement, participation, and use over time, and to place geometrical and formal concerns in the service of human economy.” (Corner 1999a, 158)

THE GERMAN FOREST: EARLY CONCEPTIONS OF NATURE, MODERNITY, AND IDENTITY

In Jeffrey K. Wilson’s book entitled *The German Forest: Nature, Identity, and the Contestation of a National Symbol, 1871-1914*, Wilson challenges the dominant interpretation that German connections to nature were based in agrarian romanticism rather than efforts at modernization. (Wilson 2016) The all-encompassing “German forest” is referenced time and time again since Reformation and is used by authors discussing everything from the firs on the Alps, copses of beech trees in the Baltic, to the pines of Eastern Prussia. (Wilson 2016, 3) Wilson outlines the reasons why the forest became an enshrined symbol for “Germandom,” and argues the many sets of actors attempting to mobilize it for their own ends commonly sought to use the forest to “adapt to an industrializing and urbanizing society;” this varied group included “landowners, hunters, timber-producers, peasant-rights activists, hikers, charitable organizations, and state officials.” (Wilson 2016, 5)

Additionally, Wilson points out that both the nation and the landscape are human constructions; he cites Anthony Smith, who has made the case that landscapes play an important part in the imagination of the nation, with communities deriving meaning from the space that surrounds them, tying their fates to the physical land as they contribute to the construction of a national identity. (Wilson 2016) This ideological combination, Wilson points out, was made important by the nineteenth century scholars who sought to craft a German historiography. The German forest, thus, is a “modern invention...a product of the era of nation states.” (Wilson 2016, 11)

Wilson relies on two cultural geographers to drive home the impetus for his own project: W.T.J Mitchell and Raymond Williams, both of whom have also been cited by the landscape urbanists. Mitchell discusses the cultural power of landscapes, insisting we not focus on what landscape “is” or “means” but how it works as a *cultural practice*. (Mitchell in Wilson 2016, 10) Williams echoes this point, but sharpens it in *The Country and the City*: “It is possible and useful to trace the internal histories of landscape
painting, and landscape writing, landscape gardening and landscape architecture, but in any final analysis we must relate these histories to the common history of a land and its society.” (Williams in Wilson 2016, 10) Williams argues that by turning our attention away from the few prominent individuals who enforce a certain history of ideas to construct a dominant narrative and towards the “sentiments and activities of those at the local level,” (Wilson 2016, 10) an image of the land comes into focus that is otherwise less easy to locate historically.

THE CITY IN THE CITY: UNGERS & KOOHLHAAS

“In fact, in narrowly architectural terms, the Wall was not an object but an erasure, a freshly created absence. For me, it was a first demonstration of the capacity of the void – of nothingness – to ‘function’ with more efficiency, subtlety, and flexibility than any object you could imagine in its place. It was a warning that – in architecture – absence would always win a contest with presence.”

- Rem Koolhaas
“Field Trip: A(A) Memoir,” in S,M,L,XL

The “problem” of a post-war Berlin provided Koolhaas with an ideological playground upon which to play out ideas centered on architecture, landscape, and urbanism in the 1970s. With Oswald Mathias Ungers, Koolhaas endeavored on a workshop in 1977 aimed at addressing the island that had become Western Berlin, a political enclave with an incomplete urban fabric, a shrinking population, and a war-torn quality. (Ryan 2017, 109) Out of the workshop came a project called “The City in the City: Berlin, a Green Archipelago,” which proposed a Berlin composed of a “federation of urban entities with different structures, developed in a deliberately antithetic manner.” (Ryan 2017, 109) These architectural islands applied consistently across the landscape but remained distinct from one another typologically – whether based on works from early modernism or based on previous settlement patterns was a matter of debate between Ungers and Koolhaas.

In 2017’s The Largest Art, Brent Ryan argues that the project’s power is also its downfall. That the architectural content did not matter, Ryan argues, meant the project could be exploratory for Koolhaas and that a certain flexibility was baked into the concept. However, the scheme showed weakness at the urban scale; by “isolating discrete chunks of the city fabric and placing them into building-like entities subject to architectural control” the concept does not constitute a “beautiful, ordered, or comprehensible urban fabric.” (Ryan 2017, 110) Ultimately, argues Ryan, the project did not seem interested “in making their architectural assemblages cohere into something more than a collection of parts…the archipelago failed to recognize that pluralism in urban design could transcend an assemblage of monuments.”
The Green Archipelago serves as foreshadowing for some of the formalist tendencies masked by concepts which purport a certain flexibility in their spatial or processual organization within the landscape urbanist discourse. Koolhaas, perhaps the architect most repeatedly referenced by the landscape urbanists, evidences a desire to organize and remediate the ravaged landscape through formal design intervention at the urban scale. The conditions of the war “staged the ground” for the proposal of this sort of intervention, much like certain landscape urbanists point to Detroit and argue for landscape interventions there to serve a remediating role against the exploitative effects riven by Fordist modes of production and extraction. This perhaps misses what both Wilson uncovers in challenging the relationship between the symbol of the German forest and country’s national identity, and the landschaft Corner seeks to recover in his initial essay in 1999. From these three pieces, one can deduce that the specificities embedded in local culture not only richly informs theories of place, but that design’s greater aim must corroborate such theories in seeking to recover the “productive and participatory phenomena of the everyday, working landscape.”
Chapter 3: Examining the Landscape Urbanism Discourse

WHAT IS LANDSCAPE URBANISM?

The following section endeavors to outline how it has been defined by the authors who reference it, beginning with he who coined the term himself: Charles Waldheim. Waldheim, who has perhaps had the most at stake in the term’s development over time, has always maintained landscape urbanism as “a theory for thinking the city through the medium of landscape.” (Waldheim 2016, i) In 2006, he remarks something similar, with the claim that “For many, across a range of disciplines, landscape has become both the lens through which the contemporary city is represented and the medium through which it is constructed.” (Waldheim 2006c, 11) This is reinforced again in his 2016 book’s opening chapter: “Since the turn of the century landscape has been claimed as a model for contemporary urbanism,” following that claim with another suggesting this has led to the discipline’s “intellectual and cultural renewal.” (Waldheim 2016, 14) Waldheim argues that the grand renewal for the discipline has implications for the practitioner as well, stating “the potential for landscape as a medium and model for the city as a collective spatial project... In its most ambitious formulation, this suggests the potentials for the landscape architect as urbanist of our age... assum[ing] responsibility for the shape of the city, its built form, and not simply ecological and infrastructural exceptions to its architectonic structure.” (Waldheim 2016, 4) And in terms of what this shift in focus might do for the landscape architect’s knowledge, Waldheim says landscape urbanism “Allows a more synthetic understanding of the shape of the city, understood in relation to its performance in social, ecological, and economic terms.” (Waldheim 2016, 4)

These suggestions are echoed amongst landscape urbanism’s adherents, as well, though perhaps to a less vociferous degree than by Waldheim himself. Stan Allen, in 2001, was an early adopter of the concept, borrowing language from Waldheim to claim that “Increasingly, landscape is emerging as a model for urbanism.” (Allen in Waldheim 2016, 13) In his essay in 2003’s Landscape Urbanism: A Manual for the Machinic Landscape, Christopher Hight suggests that landscape urbanism requires “a type of ethos... suggest[ing] neither a new formalism nor a renewed emphasis on landscape in the city; not a theory of design, but promises to innovate at the level of design practice.” (Hight 2003, 23) Kelly Shannon agrees, citing Hight in her Landscape Urbanism Reader essay (Shannon 2006a, 146) while in another entry in the Landscape Urbanism Reader, Linda Pollak states that “Landscape urbanism has the potential to engage architecture in a way that urban design and landscape do not, by challenging architectural conventions of closure and control, which implicitly disavow knowledge of the various...
incommensurable dimensions of urban reality.” (Pollak 2006, 177) Christophe Girot echoes the break with past attempts at ordering the built environment, beginning his essay by starting that landscape urbanism is “the reactive child of all the teachings of our rationalist, functionalist, and positivist forefathers.” (Girot 2006, 89) Despite offering differing potentials depending upon who is defining the term, landscape urbanism is often described as an innovation, either in terms of its reconceptualization of former models of city formation or its usefulness in application to design practice. This is particularly evident in how each author seeks to distance it from the disciplines it was born out of.

Even Corner, certainly an originator of the discourse in some respects even if he was not the first to use the term, has defined it similarly over its life in the discourse. In the introduction to his 1999 book, *Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice*, he states, “Because of its bigness, in both scale and scope, landscape serves as metaphor for inclusive multiplicity and pluralism – synthetic ‘overview’ enabling differences to play out.” (Corner 1999c, 2) In 2003’s *Landscape Urbanism: A Manual for the Machinic Landscape*, he also agrees with Hight, suggesting, “Landscape urbanism is more than a singular image or style: it is an ethos, an attitude, a way of thinking and acting.” (Corner 2003, 58) Later still, in his essay for the 2006 *Landscape Urbanism Reader*, “Terra Fluxus,” he describes landscape urbanism as “a speculative thickening of the world of possibilities.” (Corner 2006, 21)

The use of thickening here is interesting as it comes from anthropological and sociological methods used to understand human behavior. Clifford Geertz described the practice of thick description “Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical.” (1973, 5) If landscape urbanism, as a discourse or practice, is the medium by which Corner’s imagined “speculative thickening” of possibilities is indeed in the vein of Geertz’ definition, then this might suggest Corner sees the discourse principally aimed at a cultural shift. Whether Corner seeks to define landscape urbanism in terms of its influence on constructed, engineered landscapes at the hands of the designer (landscape urbanist) or on its larger influence on reality and the imaginary, with landscape serving as a “cultural way of seeing,” (Corner 1999c, x) is explored in the following summaries of the seminal texts of landscape urbanism.

*Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Practice*

In 1999, James Corner published *Recovering Landscape: Essays in*
Contemporary Practice through Princeton Architectural Press as the culmination of various symposia and conferences that had taken place over the previous decade. As the book’s editor, he introduces the text in the first of two of his own contributions, “Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice.” In it, he provides the text’s raison d’être, stating he seeks to recover landscape both in terms of “recollection” and “invention,” or alternatively the “landscape idea” and “landscape agency,” respectively (Corner 1999c, 4-5) Corner’s focus is undoubtedly situated upon the design and construction of landscapes, but also their cultural value. He asserts the landscape architect’s role is not merely meant to reflect modern culture, but to shape it. Most importantly, while Corner pays homage to the “naturalistic” and “phenomenological” experience designed landscapes have engendered in the past, he states its “full efficacy is extended to that of a synthetic and strategic art form, one that aligns diverse and competing forces (social constituencies, political desires, ecological processes, program demands, etc.) into newly liberating and interactive alliances.” (Corner 1999c, 2) He blames a combination of nostalgia and consumerism for landscape practice’s complacent satisfaction with the simple preservation of space rather than pursuing execution of visionary, innovative projects. (Corner 1999c, 2)

Where can those seeking to engage with Corner’s idealized landscape practice look to for inspiration? Despite expressed concern for the restitution of landscape’s cultural dimension, Corner skips over the radical landscape activists of the 1960s and the landform art movement of the 1970s in favor of five young post-modern architects whom characterized the discipline’s star-power in the 1980s. He compliments Zaha Hadid’s deconstructivist drawing style, containing “imploded fragments of building matter settling into immense hillsides and regionally scaled infrastructures.” (Corner 1999c, 16–17) Rem Koolhaas, with OMA, is said to consider the synthesis of “building, landscape, and region” in “every project.” (Corner 1999c, 17) Peter Eisenman, often in collaboration with Laurie Olin, is noted for his “folded, single-surface ground planes.” (Corner 1999c, 17) Lastly, Bernard Tschumi’s Parc de la Villette is heralded for “reversing the traditional role of nature in the city, bringing the density, congestion, and richness of the city to the park.” (Corner 1999c, 17)

With this, Corner has established a new frame with which to view and assess landscape anew, with a set of precedents taken largely from a different discipline, thereby establishing architecture’s claim over the emergent reformulation of landscape. The book then sets out on its three established trajectories (“Part One: Reclaiming Place and Time,” “Part Two: Constructing and Representing Landscape,” and “Part Three: Urbanizing Landscape”), but the essays are more easily divided in terms of how Corner
Figure 1: Essays and Authors Contained in Corner’s Recovering Landscape
defines landscape’s recovery: redefining the landscape idea and discussing its agency. Christophe Girot bemoans a lack of landscape theory that helps to separate more distinctly ideas of nature and culture, introducing four “trace concepts” that seek to examine a site and reveal its hidden aspects. (Girot 1999) Some focus on the landscape idea as it has been formulated in terms of national identity; for Steen A.B. Høyer, Denmark is too content to preserve rather than transform its landscape because pressures of urbanization have dislocated the functionality inherent in agricultural practice. (Høyer 1999) Georges Descombes follows by describing his project, “The Swiss Way,” which was commissioned by the national government to help mark the 700th year of the Confederation of Switzerland in 1991. After suggesting that landscape’s recovery requires a shift in expectation or point of view, he describes the project’s main strategy as “amplify[ing] what’s already there” to “clarify the landscape,” which in turn would serve to allow those inhabiting the space to interpret it as they see fit while “amplifying the potentials of the space.” (Descombes 1999, 82) Alan Balfour is perhaps the most cautionary when describing the landscape idea as it applies to the “Octagon,” which comprises Leipziger Plats and Potsdamer Platz in Berlin’s historic city center. In tracing the site’s jarring transfigurations – “some intended, some created by catastrophe, some the byproducts of expediency,” Balfour cautions against a recovery of landscape that offers an ordering of the urban environment based on attachments to the past. (Balfour 1999, 87) Across these four essays, the “landscape idea” is demonstrated to encompass political, social, economic, and ecological conceptions of place.

When Corner references “landscape agency,” he’s meaning to suggest landscape’s performative capacity and the ways in which a designer might unleash a site’s working potential as opposed to cultivating its aesthetic. By extension, agency is also granted to the designer in how interventions are formulated and expressed, particularly in terms of graphic representation. In this vein, Sébastien Marot discusses a shift in attention towards interstitial spaces that envelope the increasingly densifying urban core amidst processes of urbanization. Setting out against the previously common call for landscape to act as a palliative sieve for the industrial city, Marot describes four principles which seek to inform investigation of the “sub-urban frontier”: anamnesis, preparation, three-dimension sequencing, and relational structuring. The sub-urban suggests both a reorientation of planning processes as originating from the outside and moving inwards, as well as an effort to “dig below the surface… to reclaim hidden and latent phenomena of places.” (Marot 1999, 56) Describing the historic Amsterdam Bos, Anita Berrizbeita describes the set of techniques its designers used to break from traditional conceptions of the “nineteenth-century bourgeois park,” instead embracing
processes of the industrialized city around it.” (Berrizbeita 1999, 188) Berrizbeita uses Michel Foucault’s concept of “exteriority” to assert that those experiencing the Bos are able to engage with its external productive capacity rather than meaning hidden in aestheticized forms. (Berrizbeita 1999)

In “Programming the Urban Surface,” Alex Wall foreshadows the popular format many future essayists concerned with describing landscape urbanism’s capabilities will adopt, rifling through a series of precedent projects. In this case, the projects are all European examples which fall between “the traditional categories of landscape and urbanism.” (Wall 1999, 233) After describing the ways the contemporary metropolis is shifting away from forms that characterize urban space towards the processes and networks that have drawn attention to new surfaces, Wall presents strategies for enhancing these spaces: thickening (solves technical problems like drainage and utilities while multiplying the range of uses), folding (or cutting, wrapping to form seamless geology between interiors and exteriors), new materials (“bring[ing] welcome diversity to the public realm), non-programmed use (surface with services and furnishings to be appropriated and modified), impermanence (program and function being the most changeable aspects of the city), and movement (reworking of corridors to embrace collective urban life). (Wall 1999, 244-246) Finally, Bart Lootsma’s essay seems to respond to the concerns raised in Kenneth Frampton’s seminal “Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance.” While the latter interprets Paul Ricouer’s suggestion that technology was a homogenizing force towards a singular monoculture, (Shannon 2006a) Lootsma is less cynical, describing strategies that ultimately seek to fulfill Ulrich Beck’s vision of individuals forming a society in which they achieve greater personal agency as well as a stronger sense of collective identity. Through multi-disciplinary collaboration along with innovations in mapping and information visualization, Lootsma argues for designers’ engagement with the “real world of market democracy and global forces” but to use their “critical and creative capacity to realign those conditions toward more socially enriching ends.” (Lootsma 1999, 273)

Jeannette Sordi, who wrote about the landscape urbanism phenomenon in 2015, wrote that Recovering Landscape “clearly framed the field of action of the discipline in relation to the emerging landscapes of urbanization … [t]he book soon became one of the most important references for landscape urbanists.” (Sordi 2015, 10) Coner’s later work with Stan Allen through his office, Field Operations, became reference points in and of themselves for those discussing landscape urbanism to point to in underscoring the landscape urbanist’s capabilities.
Landscape Urbanism: A Manual for the Machinic Landscape

James Corner solicited the help of Architectural Association (AA) chairman Alan Balfour in a few critical ways before Recovering Landscape was published. In addition to writing two of the essays in the book, Balfour provided the platform for Corner, who had been teaching for five years at the University of Pennsylvania in the Landscape Architecture Department, for the second of two major symposia that began to establish landscape urbanism as a full-fledged movement. Corner makes reference to these conferences in the opening acknowledgments of Recovering Landscape, crediting them for providing the foundational groundwork for the book to curate “an ambitious manifesto for landscape practice.” (Corner 1999d, x) The essays of Marc Terib, Georges Descombes, Christophe Girot, and Denis Cosgrove all originated here.

Balfour, Chairman of the AA in London from 1991-1995, was succeeded by Mohsen Mostafavi, who carried these ideas forward in his own future work. In 1999, he along with Ciro Najle founded the AA’s Master of Landscape Urbanism program. The program’s aim, according to Jeannette Sordi, was “to focus on the construction of landscapes and processes through architecture and digital design, exploring the potential of transferring tools and practices typical of landscape architecture to urban design.” (Sordi 2015, 11) In 2003, Mostafavi and Najle published Landscape Urbanism: A Manual for the Machinic Landscape. The text combined essays by a number of architects, both practicing and in academia, along with student work from the AA that illustrated the concepts.

While Corner’s earlier text attempted to make a stark shift away from reverence amongst his contemporaries for the pastoral and scenic, Mostafavi begins his text with an attempt to meet Corner three quarters of the way. He does indeed argue that “urbanism relies as much on the construction of surfaces and voids as it does on the construction of buildings,” therefore necessitating the use of landscape as a “material device.” (Mostafavi 2003, 7) Calling the methods of landscape urbanism “operative,” he suggests the shift from an “image-based planning process” to something more machinic represents a move “from the picturesque to the productive operations of agricultural territory.” (Mostafavi 2003, 8) Thus, designers are forced to conceive of challenges pertaining to the timescales inherent in landscape in a less implicit, linear fashion. However, he also argues against a completely utilitarian conception of urbanism in terms of networks and infrastructure. “Networks and infrastructure of a larger landscape should not only bring to bear...(railways, roads, pavements), but their reflective and pleasurable responsibilities (scenery, driving, walking).” (Mostafavi 2003, 9)

Themes centered upon time, process,
and scale are carried throughout the text by a variety of its authors, with a concentrated eye on those in the field whom have put into practice the strategies discussed. Christopher Hight considers the ethos of landscape, conceiving of landscape urbanism less as a theory of design and more as a way to innovate at the level of design practice, making reference to the ordering properties discussed in Alex Wall’s aforementioned essay, “Programming the Urban Surface.” (Hight 2003) In a similar vein, Lawrence Barth takes aim at the urban plan and the planners who construct them: “The plan is not the expression of a subject – it marks the occasion for thought rather than its distillation. Neither does the plan stand as the representation of knowledge, however much it is obliged to incorporate and display the strata of knowledge. Plans are of necessity diagrammatic rather than representational.” (Barth 2003, 33) Barth seeks to “discover a heightened political and analytical significance for diagrammatic architecture” as it “moves more aggressively onto the terrain of urbanism.” (Barth 2003, 33) This cannot occur on “a single axis in which the plan leads inexorably to the built,” but must instead draw out questions that ask how the city is built and governed. (Barth 2003, 38)

In “On Landscape,” Alejandro Zaera-Polo circles back to Mostafavi’s conflation of the “machinic” with the agricultural, yet draws out how landscape has developed cultural and symbolic significance in parallel through cultivation of “monuments and gardens.” The increasing complexity of geometries in landscape practice, first by the English landscape designers of the eighteenth century, ultimately led the discipline astray, he argues. Instead of imitating the picturesque, he states that designers ought to “exploit complexity through coherence and consistency,” giving his own firm as an example in their design for Downsview Park in Toronto. Detlef Mertins also uses the Downsview Park competition as a reference point, marking a shift in the design of urban landscapes that embraces the “artificial” as much as it does the “natural.” He uses theory derived the study of self-organization to posit that processes that constitute dynamic systems must be understood and embraced to inform more strategic design decisions. Following this, Keller Easterling embarks on a lexicological redefinition of “error” to make the case for the architectural project, instead of “making its own world of data territories,” enter and engage the world where space “plays a pivotal role in global politics” and “leverages organizations of labour, natural resources and patterns of consumption.” (Easterling 2003, 156) Ciro Najle concludes the book by asserting that landscape urbanism is a cultural product, that architecture has acquired its “voluptuous” properties through a “convolutedness,” or “a serene state of continuous agitation,” (Najle 2003, 161) and that architecture is at risk of remaining a “subset of history… renouncing its innovative potential and confusing its condition as a ‘vehicle of modernization’ with a mere desperation
FIGURE 2: ESSAYS AND AUTHORS CONTAINED IN MOSTAFAVI/NAJLE’S MANUAL FOR THE MACHINIC LANDSCAPE
for stimulating modernity through the image.” (Najle 2003, 172) Notable, Najle foretells the direction of architecture’s eventual progression, suggesting its need to “interfere actively with performance... to intensify its exchanges with vaster ecologies and become itself ecological... to embrace dynamics beyond and before the human.” (Najle 2003, 173)

One of the more interesting aspects of *Manual for the Machinic Landscape* is its commitment to defining representational methods to be associated with landscape urbanism. This is characterized not just by the student projects illustrated throughout, but also in the essays written by contributors. Barth, for instance, in his discussion of the failings of the plan and the planners that use it, suggests architecture’s “pursuit of the diagram focuses largely upon its capacity to postpone or perturb the movement from drawing to building.” (Barth 2003, 33)

This recalls Lootsma’s essay in *Recovering Landscape*, wherein he describes Rem Koolhaas’s fascination with a quote said by the architect of New York’s Rockefeller Center, Raymond Hood: “The plan is most significant because all of man’s activities take place on the ground.” (Hood in Lootsma 1999, 263) Koolhaas extends this to understand a functionalist architecture not obsessed with form, but rather using the building as a frame for a repeated ground plane, or stack of floors, which structure human activity. (Lootsma 1999) Easterling continues this logic, stating that field of architecture can influence real world data territories and networks by looking outside the “operations and organizational logics that accompany not just the space of geometries and building envelopes but larger fields of deployment.” (Easterling 2003, 156-157) Thus, *Machinic Landscape* further draws closer the practices of architecture and landscape, with the architect (like Koolhaas) described as not merely possessing the tools in how to approach landscape design, but also as holder of the representational methods that are able to slow down the translation of drawing to building, suggesting a more complex drawing will engender a more thoughtfully constructed urban environment. Whether this is true or not, this argument places time in the architect’s hands, rather than a setting or a more nebulous “process.”

**The Landscape Urbanism Reader**

In 2006, landscape urbanism seemed to reach the height of its influence upon the publishing of the *Landscape Urbanism Reader*, edited by Charles Waldheim. Waldheim, who made an appearance in Corner’s *Recovering Landscape*, actually debuted the term “landscape urbanism” himself in 1997. Upon graduating three years after Corner from the University of Pennsylvania in 1989, Waldheim quickly rose through the ranks in academia. He made the jump from adjunct to Assistant Professor of Architecture at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where in 1997 he curated and exhibited the *Landscape Urbanism Exhibition* from April to June.
with support from the Graham Foundation. The exhibition moved to the Storefront for Art and Architecture in New York City in September of the same year. A review for the exhibition appeared in Landscape Architecture Magazine by Paul Bennett the following spring, entitled, “The Urban Landscape Gets its Due.” (Bennett 1998) The exhibit also made its way to Waldheim’s former stomping grounds of U. Penn. in 1997, three years before Corner became chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture there.

The Landscape Urbanism Reader separates itself from the approach taken by Mostafavi and Najle’s. Whereas the latter seems interested in justifying the discourse through referencing a broad array of philosophical texts paired with drawing techniques, Waldheim seems interested in developing the case for how landscape urbanism can transform the urban environment based on interpretations of the discourse’s core tenets embodied in completed projects of the past. Sordi refers to the process of ex post facto justification for addressing the discourse’s central concerns as constituting a “retroactive manifesto,” (Sordi 2015, 11) which Waldheim develops further in the text of his own to follow.

At the outset, James Corner, Grahame Shane, Richard Weller, and Waldheim himself all speak to how landscape urbanism is situated amongst its familial disciplinary forerunners. The essays together serve as a crash course in how the discourse emerged, underscoring its growing significance. In “Terra Fluxus,” James Corner covers a lot of ground, summarizing the infrastructural, ecological, temporal, and cultural aspects of landscape he and others have touched on previously. He talks simultaneously of landscape as a potential driver of the process of city formation (Corner 2006) while making reference to David Harvey’s condemnation of New Urbanism and modernism’s deterministic attempts to “control history and process.” (Corner 2006) He asserts that the “failure of planning” can be attributed to the “impoverishment of the imagination,” while suggesting public spaces are “firstly the containers of collective memory and desire” before they are “secondly…places for geographic and social imagination to extend new relationships and sets of possibilities.” (Corner 2006, 32) Richard Weller brings up a similar desired parallel in “An Art of Instrumentality: Thinking Through Landscape Urbanism,” which argues for conceiving landscape architecture as “a holistic enterprise” rather than relying too heavily on the sciences in order to be taken seriously. (Weller 2006, 71) Grahame Shane points out that landscape urbanism’s largest triumphs lie in its unbuilt precedents, (Shane 2006, 62) contending that the discourse does not yet begin to address the issue of “urban morphologies or the emergence of settlement over time,” instead focusing on their “disappearance and erasure.” (Shane 2006, 63)

Towards the middle of the text, writers
FIGURE 3: ESSAYS AND AUTHORS CONTAINED IN WALDHEIM’S LANDSCAPE URBANISM READER
begin to focus on the ways in which practicing designers might begin to apply the concepts central to landscape urbanism within their own work. Christophe Girot posits a way to break with the picturesque, previously responsible for “forward[ing] an understanding of landscape where movement was absent,” according to Michael Conan. (Conan in Girot 2006, 99) Girot suggests using representational methods that capture landscape change over time, which he teaches within his own program at ETH Zurich. Julia Czerniak, Linda Pollack, Elizabeth Mossop, and Clare Lyster each approach questions of site and scale to illustrate the ways in which landscape urbanism can perform operatively and promote the formulation of spaces that constitute the many moving parts that make up the urban environment. Julia Czerniak discusses site’s “specific organizational systems, performative agendas, formal languages, material palettes, and signifying content” of the most critical value when pursuing a new design. (Czerniak 2006, 107) Elizabeth Mossop discusses the regional planning work of Ian McHarg, a critical figure for landscape architecture and landscape urbanism, noting his ideology’s fixation on natural systems – geology, topography, hydrology, and climatic. Given that McHarg’s work presented strategies at the regional scale while landscape design often tends to be site-specific, Mossop articulates ways in which hybridity can be achieved between the two, echoing Weller’s idea of art and instrumentality, mediating the process-oriented methodology of McHarg with the social and cultural concerns embedded in the ecological focus brought to light by the likes of Michael Hough and Anne Whiston Spirn. (Mossop 2006) Linda Pollak presents a set of dichotomies (figure/ground, architecture/landscape, object/space, culture/nature, work/site) and suggests that the first in each paired set of terms is what’s foregrounded in our minds as the more critical consideration. (2006) The latter terms, that which she deems “environmental,” must involve a critical look at scale, the maintenance of which Pollak asserts is a “cultural construction identified exclusively with the measurable and known.” (Pollak 2006, 135)

The remaining essays take a systems approach at analyzing logistical networks and flows, including Clare Lyster, Alan Berger, Pierre Bélanger, and Chris Reed. Alan Berger discusses the materials produced as byproducts of the processes of urbanization and the spatial formations necessitated by them, arguing that the urban landscape demands a new conception of “public space” that incorporates “the complexities of the exchange process.” (Berger 2006, 235). Pierre Bélanger takes a different approach in looking at materiality, choosing to focus upon asphalt, from its historical uses and production to the current systems of its movement and management that form its own distribution of sites across vast regional territories (Bélanger 2006). Chris Reed ends the collection by discussing a role for practitioners that sees them embracing practicality and pragmatism in
working with municipal bodies towards redefining the public realm, casting the designer as an “urbanistic systems-builder,” forced to consider research, framing, and implementation along with design (Reed 2006, 283).

The *Landscape Urbanism Reader* makes the jump away from a fascination with representational methods towards consideration of what thinking through landscape urbanism means when conceptualizing the array of challenges presented by real projects. Corner somewhat embodies the role of the holdout here, positing in “Terra Fluxus” that landscape urbanism must involve the “landscape imaginary,” though this is discussed last in his list of themes he uses to describe landscape urbanism. The previous three themes (ecological, temporal, infrastructural) are given far greater attention by both Corner and the other essayists in the collection. Thus, what might be argued as the primary interest for Corner in *Recovering Landscape* is placed on the backburner here, as the more productive, “machinic” qualities of landscape are venerated over what their productive capabilities might mean for the people inhabiting spaces where designed projects are constructed.

*Landscape as Urbanism*

Ten years after the *Landscape Urbanism Reader* was published came Charles Waldheim’s intellectual follow-up, *Landscape as Urbanism*. In the decade after the publication of the *Landscape Urbanism Reader*, a number of the contributing authors found themselves publishing their own edited collections or authored texts, some for the first time. These include Alan Berger (*Drosscape*, 2006); Julia Czerniak (*Large Parks*, 2007); Chris Reed (*Projective Ecologies*, 2014); Clare Lyster (*Learning from Logistics*, 2016) and Pierre Belanger (*Landscapes of Infrastructure*, 2016).

Waldheim sets out to define landscape urbanism in a monographic account with help from the precedents he and his colleagues have historically relied upon, as referenced by his previous essay introducing the *Landscape Urbanism Reader*: “A Reference Manifesto.” Vera Vicenzotti has pointed out that Waldheim himself has argued that the “construction of a useful history” (Waldheim 2016, 6) has always been a “flank of the landscape urbanist agenda;” (Waldheim in Vicenzotti 2017, 77) hence, Waldheim seeks to construct this history through weaving together projects of the past with forward-looking pronouncements about the agency of the designer (acting as landscape urbanist).

In the book’s introduction, Waldheim makes the case for the project’s existence: “In constructing a general theory for rethinking the urban, this volume assembles a thick description of cases and conditions, sites and subjects… Taken together, these materials presuppose the ongoing act of theory making as a necessary element of disciplinary formation and reformation.”
(Waldheim 2016, 7) He continues, “The term ‘general theory’ in the subtitle signals the aspiration to offer a coherent and broadminded, if not comprehensive, monograph-book-length account of a subject that has been previously examined through journal articles or occasional anthologies of shorter, more episodic, projects and texts.” (Waldheim 2016, 7)

Thus, Waldheim charts territory that has been charted before, by himself and his colleagues across two decades of landscape urbanist discourse, to formulate the all-in-one-place reference guide on his own terms. He starts with “Claiming Landscape as Urbanism,” which begins with the post-modern critiques of planning in the 1970s and 1980s. (Waldheim 2016) He further reflects on the influence of the post-modernists in his second chapter, “Autonomy, Indeterminacy, Self-Organization,” working in “concepts of criticality through problematized authorship.” (Waldheim 2016, 8) Waldheim discusses planning’s alienation from design culture and landscape’s embrace of ecology in the following chapter, before zooming out to the logistical landscapes of the post-Fordist era, where he leans on the work of social justice theoretician David Harvey to explain landscape urbanism’s relation to the “economic structure of contemporary urbanization.” (Waldheim 2016, 9)

Waldheim then focuses on the example of Detroit, a city that has held his interest since his coinage of the term “landscape urbanism,” when his design entitled “Decamping Detroit” was showcased in 2001’s Stalking Detroit. (Shannon 2003) The fixation on Detroit as a forbearer of shrinking cities transition to a study of the work of Ludwig Hilberseimer, where distinctions between city and countryside were blurred. Aerial representation is considered, another former topic of interest for Waldheim dating back to his essay in Corner’s Recovering Landscape. In one of the final chapters, Waldheim argues that “the very origins of landscape architecture reside in projects of city building through infrastructure and ecological function” beginning with Olmstead’s planning of Manhattan above 155th street in the 19th century. (Waldheim 2016, 11) Finally, Waldheim concludes with a nod to “ecological urbanism,” his project’s “more precise” successor. (Waldheim 2016, 12)
CLAIMING LANDSCAPE AS URBANISM

AUTONOMY, INDETERMINACY, SELF-ORGANIZATION

PLANNING, ECOLOGY, AND THE EMERGENCE OF LANDSCAPE

POST-FORDIST ECONOMIES AND THE LOGISTICS LANDSCAPE

URBAN CRISIS AND THE ORIGINS OF LANDSCAPE

URBAN ORDER AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE

AGRARIAN URBANISM AND THE AERIAL SUBJECT

AERIAL REPRESENTATION AND AIRPORT LANDSCAPE

CLAIMING LANDSCAPE AS ARCHITECTURE

FROM LANDSCAPE TO ECOLOGY

FIGURE 4: CHAPTERS CONTAINED IN WALDHEIM’S LANDSCAPE AS URBANISM
Extending Thompson’s Ten Tenets

As Vera Vicenzotti has pointed out, a number of writers have attempted to distill down the central thematic elements that illuminate the ideas embedded in landscape urbanism, including Julia Czerniak in her essay in the Landscape Urbanism Reader, Richard Weller in an article in Landscape Journal appearing in 2008, and by Ian H. Thompson in Landscape Research in 2012. (Vicenzotti 2017, 76) Thompson in particular most helpfully breaks down the discourse into “ten tenets” that organize the thoughts of its many contributors. Thompson used two of the texts discussed here, the Landscape Urbanism Reader and Landscape Urbanism: A Manual for the Machinic Landscape, in addition to two journal issues dedicated in full to the topic of landscape urbanism, Kerb (no. 15) and Topos (no. 71).

Thompson coded and collected recurrent themes from these four texts, using them as the basis for identifying the following ten tenets. As an extension of Thompson’s methodology and findings, the ten tenets are incorporated here, quoting some of Thompson’s relevant commentary where it is most incisive. However, in order to corroborate these tenets with the four texts that serve as the basis for the analysis in this thesis, the excerpts and exposition below are an attempt to expand and critically deepen Thompson’s initial work.

Thompson’s Ten Tenets

1. LANDSCAPE URBANISM REJECTS THE BINARY OPPOSITION BETWEEN CITY AND LANDSCAPE

In discussing how the landscape urbanists frame this axiom, Thompson suggests that, “...the inclusion of some Romanticized nature within the city is at best an irrelevance, at worst a kind of camouflage or deceit which obscures the real conditions.” (Thompson 2012, 9)

As Elizabeth Mossop points out in her essay in the Landscape Urbanism Reader, this distinction was most clearly defined in two texts, Michael Hough’s City Form and Anne Spirn’s The Granite Garden, neither of which many of the main figures of landscape urbanism typically reference. However, in both texts the authors have tried to “synthesize the ecological systems approach with urbanism,” according to Mossop, by articulating a “more sophisticated conceptualization of cities and urban processes” and projecting onto that a more nuanced understanding of ecology and natural processes. (Mossop 2006, 169-170)

James Corner’s initial project, entitled Recovering Landscape, is centered around the idea of promoting a more expansive conceptualization of how the more commonly conceived images of landscape (the Romantic, the pastoral) must be combined with infrastructure, urbanism, and strategic planning in order to promote
a more relevant and socially-engaged discipline. The first step in such a process is breaking down these notions that nature, and by extension landscape, exist outside of the realm of the “urban.” Waldheim points out that this theme emerges from Corner’s being influenced by Ian McHarg’s Design with Nature as both a student and faculty colleague, yet “rejected the opposition of nature and city implied in McHarg’s regionally scaled environmental planning practice.” (Waldheim 2006d, 38)

The breaking down of this dichotomy is part of the landscape urbanism project all the way up through Waldheim’s 2016 effort, Landscape as Urbanism. Waldheim takes inspiration from Hilberseimer’s drawings for idealized regional networks, where settlement patterns are dictated not by a pre-formulated grid, but the natural environment’s topography, hydrology, and climate instead. (Waldheim 2016, 116)

2. LANDSCAPE REPLACES ARCHITECTURE AS THE BASIC BUILDING BLOCK OF CITIES. COROLLARY: LANDSCAPE URBANISM INVOLVES THE COLLAPSE, OR THE RADICAL REALIGNMENT, OF TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINARY BOUNDARIES

Referenced in Thompson’s own article, Corner states that “Landscape urbanism [is] … a response to the failure of traditional urban design and planning to operate effectively in the contemporary city.” (Corner 2003)

In the Landscape Urbanism Reader, Charles Waldheim makes this even more explicit. In a full-page spread depicting a densely populated and heavily engineered urban landscape (where Barcelona’s Ronda de Dalt meets Parc de la Trinitat), Waldheim places what could perhaps be considered his introduction’s thesis statement in large text to the right of the page: “Landscape Urbanism describes a disciplinary realignment currently underway in which landscape replaces architecture as the basic building block of contemporary urbanism. For many across a range of disciplines, landscape has become both the lens through which the contemporary city is represented and the medium through which it is constructed.” (Waldheim 2006a)

Graham Shane follows both Corner and Waldheim in the same text with the opening line of his own essay: “Over the past decade landscape has emerged as a model for contemporary urbanism, one uniquely capable of describing the conditions for radically decentralized urbanization, especially in the context of complex natural environments.” (Shane 2006) Shane has not only traced landscape’s emergent influence to the exact year landscape urbanism was coined as a term, but has also positioned landscape as the unique field capable of tackling the problems often discussed amongst architecture, urban design, and planning. (Shane 2006)

3. LANDSCAPE URBANISM ENGAGES WITH VAST SCALES—BOTH IN TIME AND SPACE

Richard Weller suggests the vastness with
which landscape urbanism is considered when he says “Landscape architecture’s potential power is vested in the grand narrative of reconciling modernity to place; but the contemporary city is no longer bounded, and therefore landscape architecture must track it to the ends of the earth.” (Weller 2006) He continues, “Landscape urbanism is therefore not just about high-density urban areas and civic spaces, it is about the entire landscape off which the contemporary global metropolis feeds and into which it has ravenously sent its rhizomatic roots.” (Weller 2006) He adds to this that the technology enabling aerial and satellite imagery helped to expand the imaginations of those thinking across regional territories towards landscape’s creative capabilities. Waldheim argues a similar point in his essay in Corner’s Recovering Landscape, Aerial Representation and the Recovery of Landscape (Waldheim 1999)

Waldheim reinforces what James Corner, Stan Allen, and others have said before him, remarking in A Reference Manifesto that “landscape is a medium uniquely capable of responding to temporal change, transformation, adaptation, and succession. These qualities recommend landscape as an analog to contemporary processes of urbanization and as a medium uniquely suited to the open-endedness, indeterminacy, and change demanded by contemporary urban conditions” (Waldheim 2006d)

Waldheim quotes Stan Allen as saying, “landscape is not only a formal model for urbanism today, but perhaps more importantly, a model for process.” And at the beginning of Waldheim’s 1999 collection of essays, he places an epigraph by J.B. Jackson: “A landscape is a space deliberately created to speed up or slow down the process of nature. As Eliade expresses it, it represents man taking upon himself the role of time.” (Jackson in Corner 1999d)

4. LANDSCAPE URBANISM PREPARES FIELDS FOR ACTION AND STAGES FOR PERFORMANCE

Thompson again points out Corner’s words here to exemplify this point. In Terra Fluxus, Corner suggests the work of a landscape architect should entail “the tactical work of choreography, a choreography of elements and materials in time that extends new networks, new linkages, and new opportunities” (Corner 2006, 31)

In some of Corner’s initial writing that led to the eventual development of landscape urbanism, he discusses the work of J.B. Jackson and John Stilgoe and their interest in where the term landscape is derived. The contrast between the Old German terms landskip and landschaft is slight, but meaningful, argues the three authors. Landschaft comprises a “deep and intimate mode of relationship not only among buildings and fields but also among patterns of occupation, activity, and space,” related to the German gemeinschaft, which “refers to those forms
and ideas that structure society in general.”
(Corner 1999a, 154)

In the same essay, Corner arrives at the crux of his argument: “I am arguing for the thinking through a program – not a description – that outlines the performative dimensions of a project’s unfolding.”
(Corner 1999a, 165-166) Here he cites Sanford Kwinter, who argued that “while diagrams themselves do not produce form, they emit formative and organizational influence.” (Kwinter 1998 in Corner 1999a) This point is heavily reinforced by the representational modes used by the post-modernists Corner favors; Koolhaas, Tschumi, Eisenman, Hadid, and Libeskind. It is worth noting that Corner does not go into the deeper theoretical territory explored by Kwinter, who jumps between Kant, Hume, Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, and others in explaining his advocacy for the diagram as an explanatory design method. Rather than point to other architects as examples, Kwinter favors those whom have “approached the incorporeal” with “very-little self-consciousness and sweeping brilliance,” including László Moholy-Nagy, filmmakers like Sergei Eisenstein and Stanley Kubrick, Buckminster Fuller, and Robert Smithson.
(Kwinter 1998, 59) Of these figures, Kwinter indicates what signified their brilliance was their ability to understand their role as intermediaries, with a “clear intuition of the interstitial space that they had to occupy in order to become diagrammatists…the space at once of synthesis, integration, and catastrophe…the space from which forms are launched and filtered, not made.”
(Kwinter 1998, 59)

5. LANDSCAPE URBANISM IS LESS CONCERNED WITH WHAT THINGS LOOK LIKE, MORE WITH WHAT THEY DO

Thompson points to two essays in the Landscape Urbanism Reader here: Weller’s essay, where he states that the landscape urbanist project advocates for “an ecology free of Romanticism and aesthetics” (Weller in Thompson 2012, 12) and Julia Czerniak’s contribution, in which she discusses the Eisenman/Olin collaboration for Rebstockpark (1991). Czerniak praises the “agricultural landscape typologies, such as drainage swales, fields and hedgerows, delivered a range of benefits including the conservation of rainfall, the cleaning of waste effluents, the improvement of air quality and microclimate and support for wildlife diversity” of the project. (Czerniak 2006, 115; Thompson 2012, 12)

6. LANDSCAPE URBANISM SEES THE LANDSCAPE AS MACHINIC

Thompson’s own analysis is especially helpful here. He points out that Mostafavi and Najle have avoided the words ‘mechanical’ and ‘mechanistic’, both of which may present negative connotations.
(Thompson 2012, 12) The “machinic” evokes Deleuze and Guattari’s A Thousand Plateaus, wherein the metaphor of the machine is used in a number of unique ways. (Thompson 2012) As mentioned previously, Kwinter has also made reference to Deleuze and Guattari, discussing the
machinic metaphor as an elaboration of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975), where the diagram can be separated from the concrete events it generates by existing in a class of phenomena called “abstract machines.” (Kwinter 1998, 59) This speaks to the landscape urbanists' desire to conceive of landscape as a system, “machinic” in the sense that an assemblage of working parts provides functionality. For example, if one piece of the larger system is ‘broken,’ as was the case in the damming of Boston’s Muddy River that destroyed the estuarial qualities of Olmsted’s initial design, then the entire system becomes compromised.

The word “machinic” appears to be a term born out of the landscape urbanist discourse itself. First appearing in the title and text of Mostafavi and Najle’s 2003 collection of essays, Mostafavi describes what’s meant by the term in his essay “Landscapes of Urbanism,” “the rules of the operative system incorporate both material and immaterial logics, affected by the network of forces both near and far, both local and global.” (Mostafavi 2003, 9) Instead of taking aim at the landscape urbanists’ most common targets, Mostafavi instead seeks to target Jacobsian advocacy for local knowledge and understanding as the principles by which cities are designed, suggesting much broader systems are at work above the hyper-local. (2003)

Barth, in *Diagram, Dispersal, Region*, circles back to Foucault and Deleuze: “If it is clear that the urban presents a machinic landscape still wanting analysis, it is equally clear Foucault’s work on governmental reason has opened a broad avenue of enquiry for such an investigation.” (Barth 2003, 37) Barth points out that “the point of Foucault’s analysis of the panopticon was not to derogate the prison but to question how our individualization had become a practicable political goal.” (Barth 2003, 37) He goes on to advocate for the diagram as a mobilizing force for a “lateral field of governmental reason, and which at the same time generates the punctual tactics of function and spatiality in well-defined areas of knowledge and practice.” (Barth 2003, 37)

7. LANDSCAPE URBANISM MAKES THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

According to Waldheim: “Contemporary practices of landscape urbanism reject the camouflaging of ecological systems within pastoral images of ‘nature.’ Rather, contemporary landscape urbanism practices recommend the use of infrastructural systems and the public landscapes they engender as the very ordering mechanisms of the urban field itself, shaping and shifting the organization of urban settlement and its inevitably indeterminate economic, political, and social futures.” (Waldheim 2006b, 39)

As Thompson mentions, Czerniak “advocates for the opening up of culverted rivers so that the hidden hydrology of the city can be restored to legibility”, citing as an example Hargreaves Associates’ project
for the Guadalupe River in San Jose, California. (Czerniak in Thompson 2012, 14)

8. LANDSCAPE URBANISM EMBRACES ECOLOGY AND COMPLEXITY

Julia Cerniak embraces the “ecological” metaphorically, quoted in Waldheim’s 2016 work as stating that “Ecology…provides a useful analogy for the complexity and diversity of urban processes.” (Czerniak in Waldheim 2016, 50)

Waldheim uses Czerniak’s quote to begin his chapter entitled “Planning, Ecology, and the Emergence of Landscape.” He states that if landscape is thought of as the impact of post-modernism, “modernist positivist discourse of the natural sciences has been supplanted, if not made redundant, by the notion of nature as a cultural construct. In that formulation, landscape architecture moves from a position of positivist certainty over the mechanisms of ecological function to a culturally relativist position of ecology as a model for understanding the complex interactions between nature and culture.” (Waldheim 2016, 50)

At an earlier time in the discourse, Richard Weller details a conceptual shift brought on by ecology, “synonymous with new and more sophisticated models of universal (dis)order such as chaos and complexity theory…Ecology is profoundly important not only because by progressing science from the measurement of mechanical objects to the mapping of non-linear systems it moves science closer to life, but also because it places cultural systems within the epic narrative of evolution.” (Weller 2006, 74) This leads to questions of meaning and value, questions of art, according to Weller. (74)

9. LANDSCAPE URBANISM ENCOURAGES HYBRIDITY BETWEEN NATURAL AND ENGINEERED SYSTEMS

Thompson points to Elizabeth Mossop here; in Landscapes of Infrastructure, she suggests that “there should be a relationship between the underlying structures of topography and hydrology and the major structuring elements of urban form,” such as the use of catchments as the basis for physical planning and regulation. (Mossop in Thompson 2012, 15)

Hybridity is discussed through projects of the past that seek to recover the true intent of historical designs, including Olmsted’s Emerald Necklace, which functioned as a naturally engineered system.

In “Liminal Geography and Elemental Landscape: Construction and Representation,” Denis Cosgrove concludes by saying that “Today, in landscape, as in every other field, intellectual and practical, the most intriguing questions lie precisely at the boundary – which is, of course, no longer a boundary – at the very point where such interactions and transitions occur: in nature at the ecotone, in society along the transgressive lines where identities merge and hybridity rules.” (Cosgrove 1999, 118)
Cosgrove is writing as the opening essay in the second section of Corner’s book, *Recovering Landscape*, where he goes on to suggest a “postmodern cosmography” may play a similar role to the premodern cosmography which provided the geometrical language through which landscapes were initially constructed. (1999)

10. LANDSCAPE URBANISM RECOGNIZES THE REMEDIAL POSSIBILITIES INHERENT IN THE LANDSCAPE

Waldheim speaks to OMA and James Corner Field Operations’ commissions for Downsview Park (2000) and Fresh Kills Park (2001), respectively: “…the body or work produced for Downsview and Fresh Kills represents an emerging consensus that designers of the built environment, across disciplines, would do well to examine landscape as the medium through which to conceive the renovation of the post-industrial city.” (Waldheim 2006b, 48)

Kelly Shannon, in discussing Kenneth Frampton’s concept for “Critical Regionalism,” ties together Frampton’s concept with Peter Rowe’s earlier advocacy for site-specific landscape as “an intermediary between built form and otherwise placeless surfaces of urbanization.” (Shannon 2006a, 144) She quotes Frampton, who says of Rowe, “… I would submit that… we need to conceive of a remedial landscape that is capable of playing a critical and compensatory role in relation to the ongoing, destructive commodification of our man-made world.” (Frampton in Shannon 2006a)
The Landscape Urbanism Discourse:
In Summary

Having traced Thompson’s footsteps and forged a path across the literature with some additional channels added and followed, there are three main takeaways that emerge concerning what the discourse of landscape urbanism seems to hold closest:

- The landscape urbanist is opposed to the construction of orderly binaries, favoring complexity.
- The landscape urbanist is concerned with a multi-scalar conception of process and time.
- The landscape urbanists’ landscape acts; its activation is constructed, visible, and/or remediating.

All of these points speak to the ways in which landscape is meant to be conceived as part of a number of broader systems, according to the landscape urbanists.

In addition, there are ways in which the landscape urbanist’s practices and methods are informed by the principles above.

- The landscape urbanist acts as stage manager, priming sites for action and setting scenes for change over time;
- The landscape urbanist acts as diagrammatist to illustrate process and to reject the linear, seemingly-objective truths; and
- The landscape urbanist acts as instrumental creative, constructing the idea of landscape through both science and art.

Across a wide range of opinions and visions for how landscape urbanism can shape the built environment and how that shape can be influenced by those practicing its ideals, these are the themes that emerge most prominently. In the next phase of research, these condensed tenets will be applied as separate streams of inquiry, which together will comprise each site’s comprehensive analysis. This will serve two functions: it will allow for the study and understanding of each site on its own merits, while also allowing the discourse a way into the sites that is tied strictly to how the sites developed, regardless of the influence of the discourse.
FIGURE 5: YORCKSTRASSE BRIDGES, PARK AM GLEISDREIECK. SOURCE: © A.SAVIN, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS
PARK AM GLEISDREIECK
35 HECTARES

TEMPELHOFER FELD
303 HECTARES

NATUR-PARK SCHÖNEBERGER SÜDGELÄNDE
18 HECTARES

FIGURE 6: ANALYZED SITES IN CONTEXT: SITE JUXTAPOSITION. DATA SOURCE: OPENSTREETMAP

FIGURE 7: ANALYZED SITES IN CONTEXT: BUILT FORM AND EXISTING RAIL LINES. DATA SOURCE: OPENSTREETMAP
FIGURE 9: TEMPELHOF SHUNTING YARD PLAN
SOURCE: http://hovamegyavonat.blog.hu/2014/02/15/elhagyott_palyaudvarbol_termeszetvedelmi_ter-ulet_a_berlini_sudgelende

FIGURE 10: NATUR-PARK SCHÖNEBERGER SÜDGELENDE PLAN
SOURCE: http://www.max-ley.de/zoos/zoo_51.htm
**Figure 8: Development Timeline, Natur-Park Schönberger Südgelände**

- **1910**: Work begins to expand Tempelhofer Shunting Yard.
- **1912**: The water tower is constructed.
- **1920**: The railway yard is frequent target of Allied bombing raids (with considerable destruction of technical equipment and buildings).
- **1942**: The Reichsbahn gradually ceases railway operations in Berlin's western sectors.
- **1972**: As part of an overall plan for west Berlin's freight transport, the Berlin House of Representatives approves planning for a freight and shunting yard here.
- **1979**: The results of an ecological expert report show that the Südgelände is one of Berlin's most valuable natural landscapes.
- **August 1983**: Public criticism of plans for a new southern railway yard grows, beginning of munitions clearing and termination of munitions clearing due to protests by Bl.
- **1980**: The Bürgerinitiative Schönberger Südgelände is founded.
- **1980**: Documents for a first planning approval process are opened for public inspection.
- **1984**: Members of the citizens' initiative and scientists develop an initial plan for an allotment area and Natur-Park on an almost 200-hectare site.
- **1989**: Survey and evaluation of vegetation and fauna is carried out by Oxicon through Buga.
- **1992**: Use of the southern freight yard is permanently discontinued.
- **1992**: The landscape programme becomes legally binding - securing landscape conservation, nature conservation, and recreation areas become planning objectives.
- **1995**: Exceeded that 18 ha of the Südgelände will be withdrawn from railway use and developed as a nature reserve and park.
- **1996**: Construction begins to transform the space into a nature reserve.
- **1996**: The protected area regulation comes into force.
- **1996**: The Allianz Umweltstiftung and State of Berlin sign a support agreement for 1.8 million Deutschmarks.
Chapter 4: Natur-Park Schöneberger Südgelände

INTRODUCTION / DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Natur-Park Schöneberger Südgelände was once part of the much larger Rangierbahnhof bei Tempelhof, a railyard built between 1880-1890, consisting of many parallel tracks for both inner-city express and long-distance trains alike. (Kowarik and Langer 2005) The site is approximately 18 hectares, the smallest of the three sites of study, and lies on the southern border of inner-city Berlin in the Schöneberg-Tempelhof district. With train service discontinued in 1952, the site was abandoned all but for a large hall for train car repair. (Kowarik and Langer 2005) This allowed for the development of a quasi-wilderness to spring forth from the untouched nature of the site, including a "richly structured mosaic of dry grasslands, tall herbs, shrub vegetation and individual woodlands" (Kowarik and Langer 2005, 288) Though much of the vegetation is typical of what is traditionally found within cities, a number of rare species can be found primarily within the dry grasslands, with over 366 vascular plants, 28 breeding birds, 49 variants of macrofungi, and 208 variants of wild bees and wasps. (Kowarik and Langer 2005, 290)

After much deliberation and debate between public actors amidst a protest campaign to secure the site as a conservation area, it was determined that the site was to be set aside to create a nature park as a compensatory measure for new railyards in the inner-city area. Grün Berlin Park und Garten GmbH commissioned planning group ÖkoCon & Planland with the park’s design. (Kowarik and Langer 2005) The masterplan took into account two main conflicts: conversation versus recreation, and the challenge of wilderness versus biodiversity. Thus, the plan aims to accomplish varying goals that sometimes seem at odds: uncontrolled development of new wilderness is allowed simultaneously alongside maintained open landscapes, particularly where rare species are present. Accordingly, visitor access is restricted to raised pathways 50cm above the landscapes in certain areas, while allowing free movement in other areas. Ramps and underpasses once serving the railroad tracks establish the path system on three different horizontal planes through the park. Sculptural works and functional steel elements of the park such as the raised pathway were the works of artists’ group ODIOUS. (Kowarik and Langer 2005)

The park was opened to the public in May 2000.

HOW IT’S DISCUSSED IN THE LITERATURE

Given that the park has been established the longest out of the three sites, it has had more time to receive attention and reflection from those within the discipline who’ve noted it’s unique development timeline and approach to preservation and integration with the city. In “Eulogy of the Void,” Christophe Girot (previously a contributor to the landscape urbanist discourse) wrote about the park along with
some of Berlin’s other void spaces that were experiencing a renaissance in the aughts. Girot starts with a question: “Are the challenges of landscape architecture in the city of Berlin comparable to any other European metropolis?” (Girot 2004, 35) He compares the site to that of a time capsule, “deliver[ing] its treasures only after several decades of gestation.” (Girot 2004, 38) He also makes mention of the park’s entrance fee, which stands at one Euro and exists for ecological purposes; “While Schöneberg Sügelände became the first public park in Berlin to charge an entry fee in order to limit access, ecological constraints determined and generated the entire space design and use.” (Girot 2004, 37) He speaks to the romantic image conjured by the nature that developed there, a rich biodiversity emerging in part because the trains previously traveling through the space carried with them a diverse species set, forming an “ecological postcard of the European post-industrial era extending all the way to the steppes of Russia and Siberia.” (Girot 2004, 37) Also, “the shear strength of spontaneous plants and trees offered a seductive romantic mélange full of past and present connotations.” (Girot 2004, 37) “This ‘non-designed’ project gradually acquired a strength and an identity of its own,” comparing the process to that of nearby Mauerpark. (Girot 2004, 38) Girot considers the park a “resounding success,” stating that while it offers a rich diversity in terms of history, ecology, and public control, it also exemplifies “the most eloquent argument of the ‘laissez-fair’ Berlin landscape ecologists over the ‘formalist Berlin’ landscape designers.” (Girot 2004, 38) He commends the space and the planning process for working with the “slowness and patience of ecological time.” (Girot 2004, 37) Separately, German Ecologists Andreas Langer and Ingo Kowarik have also both written extensively on the topic of post-infrastructural space and emergent ecologies that spring forth from these spaces. Their work informs all of the site analysis detailed in the following chapters.

**EDGE / MOVEMENT**

The most logical entrance to the park is the southern entrance, through the Priesterweg S-Bahn Station. It is the only entrance that is accessible to those with physical disabilities, as the other entrances are accessed by a tall set of stairs. Those taking the S-Bahn to this location have two options when they exit, right or left; to the left is the immediate entrance to the park, while to the right there are bicycle racks and a parking lot. There is a bus stop located just off the parking lot on Prellerweg.

The park is bordered on all sides by functional infrastructure. To the south, the Prellerweg highway is four to five lanes across, become wider as it turns to the north and becomes divided by a planted median strip running down the center. To the east of the park are three or four regional Intercity-Express rail lines that connect Berlin to the rest of Germany running in the north-south direction,
while to the west are the metro lines that form the network within the city. At each entrance there is a ticket machine, which visitors must deposit one Euro into in order to receive a paper receipt as proof of purchase. There are apparently staff which check that visitors have paid, though in experience detailed here, this was not the case for the few trips made. In fact, the gate to the north of the park was left open, seeming to suggest that payment was not necessary to enter, though signs were there to indicate that, in fact, it was. This northern gate leads to a set of stairs which are part of a bridge over the metro lines to the western Hans Baluschek Park, created in the 2000s, which contains play, picnic, and sport areas and are mainly cleared of any vegetation. Just to the west of this park are more than 2,500 allotment parcels, grouped in 26 different colonies, the largest allotment grounds in Berlin. This is down from the number originally there at the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century there, when 8,000 small plots existed, chipped away over time from various urban development projects. (District Office Tempelhof-Schöneberg 2018)

For the most part, the dense tree lines block sight of the rail lines and the highway, the latter of which the park is elevated above. The rail lines to the west of the park have trains running on them with quite a bit of frequency, yet these are often heard and not seen because of a berm that acts as a visual barrier between the rail lines and the less elevated nature path on the western side of the site. Only when visitors are on the elevated natural path that runs along the center of the site, or in some of the lookout spaces dispersed throughout, can they see trains passing, and this is typically through dense tree plantings. To the eastern side of the site is a clearing, which is part of the nature conservation area in the center of the site, and some cleared space to the north as well, which allows visitors to see some of the urban fabric the lies beyond the site’s bounds (an IKEA is a distinct landmark visible to the northeast that springs to mind). To the north, the park’s bound is the gate that connects the site to the Hans Baluschek Park; everything to the north of this point is made inaccessible by a tall wire fence.

The site’s movement throughout is mainly restricted to the footpaths and elevated walkways provided by site’s design. This design decision was made for the sake of the preservation of the site’s biodiversity, which is discussed in the following section. The elevated walk is approximately six feet wide and about a half to three quarters of a foot from the ground. The elevated path sometimes diverts away from trees that would’ve had to have been cut if the path were to move linearly. It exists in the center of the park over the nature conservation area. The rest of the park is deemed a landscape conservation area, and foot traffic is encouraged to remain on the path network. Some of these paths are a bit wider or a bit narrower, ranging from three to nine feet in width depending on where you are; the northwestern path is the widest, while the path in the center of the
park that connects the tops of the two rail tunnels is the narrowest.

PROGRAM

The park's program principally revolves around three things: the consumption of the image of nature, the preservation of the landscape's ecology, and the representation of the site's history.

The program manifests as “the consumption of the image of nature” in terms of the way the landscape is represented, maintained, and how the experience is curated to position the visitor as that of a voyeur, an onlooker being invited to witness something supposedly simple, yet remarkable: the untouched. In fact, what's made clear through the development of the site is that the way the landscape is expressed now is the result of a great many decisions preceding its current state, between ecologists studying the site, city staff determining the site's future use, the various publics around the site resisting its return to rail, and the infrastructure that had laid atop the site before its uses were being considered anew. Thus, the park represents the image of a “return to nature,” or what has been described as “fourth nature,” or a type of new wilderness defined by Ingo Kowarik as “woodland succession on urban industrial sites.” (Kowarik and Langer 2005, 287)

The existence of this image of nature is the program itself; it's meant to be taken in, photographed, walked amongst – but in a highly controlled manner. The rules of the path network are made explicit, so despite the site's size of 18 hectares, the space feels much smaller because of the tree canopy and the restrictions around free movement – the longer route is around 2.7 kilometers long, while the shorter, wheelchair-accessible route is 1km long. (Grün Berlin, n.d.) There are benches, clearings, elevated platforms and places to rest and observe all along each kind of path, inviting the spectator to take in the sights. The long path connects the two lawn clearings in the site, which are the only spaces where movement is unrestricted, making ideal, small areas for picnics or lounging.

The preservation of the biodiversity on the site is a form of program that does not much involve the visitors of the site. Of course, the vast breadth in terms of the plant and animal species which call the site home are an attraction to visitors, but aside from an educated eye that's able to identify some of the visible variety, the 30 species of breeding birds, 57 spider species, 95 wild bee species, 15 grasshopper species, more than 350 plan and 49 mushroom species inhabiting the space are known more to the site's staff than the casual onlooker. (Grün Berlin n.d.) Nevertheless, the space features rows of placards, as seen in FIGURE 11, which discuss the site's biodiversity and speculates upon the routes these species might have taken to arrive in the Natur-Park. A moss garden exists below an elevated path on the southern-most part of the site.
The representation of the site’s history is then mainly relegated to objects that have been maintained from its previous use as a railyard, but there are really two ways in which the site’s history is evoked. The second are the site’s sculptural elements, created for the site in conjunction with ÖkoCon/planland’s site plan for the project by the artist’s group ODIOUS. These sculptures, including an “accelerator tube,” a staircase, a Belvedere, elevated lookoutts, and the elevated walkway itself, all contribute to a certain aesthetic experience, with the rusted steel and specific, angular geometries contributing to the park feeling as though it is a space that is sourcing imagery from a few different era; comprising not one time capsule, as Girot suggested, but many. While these objects will be discussed in slightly more detail in the following section, there is one that’s worth noting here. On the site’s western edge is the Tälchenweg, which runs along an old railroad route and is lower than the rest of the site, makes for a shaded walk and runs underneath what is left of the constructed tunnel that the rail line previously ran through. The tunnel and its adjacent retaining walls, constructed of large concrete bricks, have provided surface for a large amount of graffiti, with artists spraying every surface imaginable. This is allowed, but the spraying of plants is strictly forbidden, and some of the artists defend this rule in their art. The walls are expressive of a kind of history of a different variety from the kind curated by the rest of the park, with layers of paint suggesting an accumulation of “history” in its own right, giving form to the human need for creative expression in a place that forces a number of restrictions upon those who find themselves there, acting as the invited guests of the species inhabiting the space.

**RELICS**

There are a number of relics on the site, some featured prominently, while others seem to be given less attention. Examples of the latter include a few signal towers which have fallen into ruins; it seems that their level of decay is indicative of an ethos that governs the entire space: let things lie as they are and develop or devolve as they will. This could also represent an aestheticizing of the “return to nature” rather than a commitment to let the signal towers simply fall apart.

One of the more prominently featured relics is a locomotive, to the left of the park’s main entryway lawn and placards. There’s a large amount of gravel on the footpath here, allowing visitors to take in the site of the train in its full glory, presenting as larger than one might expect it to be. According to the site’s informational placards, the “water cranes, lampposts, and sections of track provide a nostalgic touch.” The most obvious structures are the largest, including the two rail tunnels on the site, both of which present the opportunity for visitors to stand atop them and take in the surrounding views; the former locomotive hall, housing a rotating set of exhibitions and which stands next to a 50-meter-high water
tower. The Brückenmeisterei building is dwarfed by the size of the locomotive hall but is located nearby, currently outfitted as space for the administrative offices on site. Finally, the turntable is one of the oldest in Germany, and is put into action on a formal tour of the site.

SYNTHESIS

In Recovering Landscape, Alex Wall points out in his introduction that European park examples have begun to fall between the traditional categories of landscape and urbanism, suggesting certain designs began to “signal a shift of emphasis from the design of enclosed objects to the design and manipulation of larger urban surfaces.” (Wall 1999) He also remarks upon the increased presence of “instrumentality” appearing in designed landscapes, something Richard Weller bases his own essay upon in the Landscape Urbanism Reader. (Wall 1999; Weller 2006) To Wall, this instrumentality is indicated by the landscape functioning as “connective tissue,” organizing the dynamic processes and events that take place upon them, supporting “new relationships and interactions.” This is all to describe the urban park as moving away from projecting the image of the pastoral and moving towards enabling function, drawing a parallel to the “dynamic agricultural field.”

Wall is not alone in this suggestion. Agriculture is referenced and favored over the pastoral across the landscape urbanist literature; Corner admonishes
the latter in the preface of the same text, citing it as the very thing he seeks to recover the landscape idea from invoking (Corner 1999c). In “Recovering Landscape as a Critical Cultural Practice,” he calls it “passive.” (Corner 1999b)

Natur-Park Schöneberger Südgelände complicates the simple division between the pastoral and the engineered. On the one hand, it presents “nature” as scenery, to be consumed in a rather simplistic fashion by the onlooker, who is meant to take in the surroundings in dazzling wonderment. Yet the landscape is “worked,” as well, in the sense that is decidedly maintained by a human presence for the purpose of preservation. The idea of preservation is appealing to the visitor and was a clear objective from the communities which advocated for the space to be dedicated to nature, but the ramifications of this decision cannot be seen by the naked eye in all of its complexity and intricacy; thus it exists in idea form for the human onlookers and those aware of the space’s existence, but the space exists for all of the other species present as natural habitat. In this sense, too, the site is “worked” by the species which find themselves there, by the biotope itself, on (mostly) its own terms.

Figure 11: Triptych / Natur-Park Program
Photographs by Author
FIGURE 12: NATUR-PARK RELICS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUTHOR
FIGURE 13: DIAGRAM / NATUR-PARK SCHÖNEBERGER SÜDGELENDE PROGRAM MIX

FIGURE 14: DIAGRAM / NATUR-PARK SCHÖNEBERGER SÜDGELENDE EDGE
FIGURE 15: TEMPELHOFF AIRPORT, JULY 1945
SOURCE: DOD/MIL-AIRFIELDS.DE

FIGURE 16: PLAN: TEMPELHOFER FELD, MAY 2016
SOURCE: GRÜN BERLIN TEMPELHOFER FELD ENTWICKLUNGS-UND PFLEGEPLAN
Figure 17: Development Timeline, Tempelhof Field

- **1909**: Opening Wright's Air Shows (Tempelhof Field)
- **1921-1924**: Established field park on northern edge of grounds
- **1924-1929**: Airport construction
- **1930s**: Demolition of Columbia House
- **1933-1934**: Gastapo prison

**Periods:**
- **1939**: Airport construction gradually halts due to war
- **1940-1945**: Dive bomber construction, forced labor camp
- **1945-1993**: U.S. Air Force assumes control of airport
- **1948-1949**: Air lift in response to Soviet blockade
- **1951**: Civil air traffic resumes
- **1953-1957**: Children of GDR refugees families and deprived families flown out to Federal Republic for holiday visits
- **1971**: Peak traffic time period of the airport, servicing ~5.5 million passengers
- **1980**: Tempelhof classified as a historic monument
- **1993**: Handover of the airport by US Air Force to Berliner Flughafengesellschaft
- **2000**: Public discussions begin
- **2007-2009**: Temporary park opens
- **2010**: "Pioneers" groups begin piloting projects
- **2014**: City-wide referendum vote on future use
- **2015-2017**: Tempelhof houses 1,300 refugees (Syrian civil war)

**Timeline Years:**

**Legend:**
- Perceived open space
- Perceived infrastructure
- Actualized open space
- Actualized infrastructure
- Military
Chapter 5: Tempelhofer Feld

INTRODUCTION / DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE:

Tempelhofer Feld has lived many lives over the course of Germany’s history. Once an airfield for the likes of pioneering aviators like Orville Wright, the 300-hectare site has wavered between infrastructural use and open space since. A small airport was constructed over a period of four years in the 1920s as a place for an estimated four million passengers to pass through per year, a staggering amount for the time. (Gründ Berlin n.d.) During the time of Nazi occupation of Germany and its surrounding territories, plans for a monumental airport to replace the smaller structure began to come to fruition, overseen by Albert Speer, the Nazis’ head architect. (Copley 2017, 702) While construction was halted during WWII, the space also played the role of Gestapo prison (Columbia House on adjacent property) and a forced labor camp up until the conclusion of the war. The U.S. Air Force assumed control of the airport once Berlin was split between soviets and the allied countries and coordinated the 1948’s air lift in response to a Soviet blockade. Eventually, the field became an airport once again, and in 1995, the building was classified as a historic monument. (Gründ Berlin n.d.) The airport ceased operations in 2008 mainly due to technical issues and long-term plans to close all three of Berlin’s airports in favor of a large airport that is still in the process of being completed.

Beginning in September of 2007, conversations were coordinated by Berlin’s government as to the future use of the space. Following this was a design competition, which the design firm Raumlabor won in 2010, that saw the opening of the space as a park space with “pioneer” groups piloting projects, all as part of a campaign to imagine future uses for the site. On March 6, 2013, the “Masterplan Tempelhofer Freiheit,” developed by the architecture group ASTOC and the landscape architecture firm GROSS.MAX was presented at a public conference in Berlin. The city-sponsored plan included housing around the perimeter of the site (leaving the central park space in tact) and was voted upon in a referendum by the residents of Berlin in 2014. The residents of Berlin passed the referendum that forbade development on the site, in effect rejecting the plans for housing, and embarrassing politicians and developers alike and potentially costing the city millions. The referendum states that the park will remain as is for at least ten years, at which point another vote may be possible. From September 2014 to May 2016, Berliners worked together with the Senate Department for Urban Development and the Environment and Gründ Berlin GmbH to draw up a development and conservation plan for the park. (Gründ Berlin n.d.)

HOW IT’S DISCUSSED IN THE LITERATURE

Tempelhof has long been the fascination for many landscape architects and has
found its way into the landscape urbanists’ gaze as well.

In his 2016 effort, Charles Waldheim dedicates an entire chapter to the investigation of “Aerial Representation and Airport Landscape,” in which he makes reference to Tempelhof: “Since the canonical case of Downsview, international design competitions have invited landscape and urbanism proposals for a host of redundant airport sites in cities around the world. Recent projects for airport conversions in Berlin, Germany (2012); Reykjavik, Iceland (2013); Quito, Ecuador (2011); Caracas, Venezuela (2012); Casablanca, Morocco (2007); and Taichung, Taiwan (2011) are indicative of this tendency. In each of these cases, the finalist projects collectively embodied the aspirations of landscape urbanist practice. Eelco Hooftman / Gross.Max.’s competition-winning project for the conversion of Berlin’s Tempelhof Airport; Henri Bava / Agence Ter’s proposal for Casablanca; Luis Callejas’s proposals for Quito and Caracas; and Chris Reed / Stoss Landscape Urbanism’s proposal for Taichung Gateway Park are notable evidence of the fecundity of landscape urbanist practices for the abandoned airfield.” (Waldheim 2016, 154)

Despite this, Waldheim continues by saying that “while the redevelopment of abandoned airfields as large landscape projects is clearly relevant to the projective potentials of landscape urbanism, the much more challenging project is for the conception of the operational airfield as a landscape in its own right.” (Waldheim 2016, 154)

In 2013, The Harvard Graduate School of Design held a conference and exhibition, curated by Charles Waldheim and Sonja Dümpelmann, entitled “Airport Landscape,” aimed at presenting practices through projects “for the ecological enhancement of operating airfields and the conversion of abandoned airfields.” (Harvard Graduate School of Design 2013)

The conference provided a platform for Eelco Hooftman of GROSS.MAX to present his lecture about the design for Tempelhof, entitled “Tempelhofer Freiheit: A Prairie for the Contemporary Urban Cowboy.” (Harvard Graduate School of Design 2014)

The project was not realized, voted down by Berlin residents less than a year later.

EDGE / MOVEMENT

Like Natur-Park Südgelände, Tempelhof is bounded by operational infrastructure on nearly all sides. The site has three sets of two points of entry: two to the west (Tempelhofer Damm), two to the east (Oderstraße), and two to the north (Columbiadamm). The former airport building stands as the recognizable icon associated with the newly-founded park, but entrances to the park are located on either side of the building, with none allowing access directly through the building itself. Given that the building itself is the largest structure in Europe by surface area, this can make entry to
the park feel like a journey unto itself, particularly if a visitor misses a helpful sign. Signage is placed in strategic locations, such as outside of the hangar at the exit from at least one of the U-Bahn stops (Paradestraße), to direct visitors to the nearest entrance. One might imagine such a huge space – Tempelhof clocking in at an estimated 386 hectares – as having a more porous boundary. But given its former status as a site of infrastructure, particularly one that previously held military operations, barriers including tall fencing, walls, and other obstructions remain. To the south of the site is a rail line, connecting two stations, Bahnhof Tempelhof (which borders the park on its southwest corner) and Hermannstraße. A metro station is on the other side of the Schillerkiez neighborhood to the park’s east, U Leinestraße.

Unlike the Natur-Park Südgelände, Tempelhof’s path network provides for a number of different ways to move about the site. Though some areas restrict movement (three fenced-in dog runs, the fenced off area outside of the hangar, and the starling preservation areas) skateboarding, in-line skating and bicycling, or jogging are allowed and encouraged on the paved paths; there is a six-kilometer path which encircles the site expressly for these purposes. The park is open from sunrise to sunset, when gates presumably block access. Most of the fields themselves are available to move about freely within, with a four-kilometer space for dogs walking outside of the dog run areas.

The areas surrounding the site include of a variety of types of businesses, housing, and open space. The western side of the sites includes offices to the north, and a mix of businesses to the south of the street as one approaches Bahnhof Tempelhof, including restaurants, beauty and hair salons, florists, and newsstands. Viktoriapark is a green space to the northwest of Tempelhof past the Platz der Luftbrücke and borders Park am Gleisdreieck, the last site which will be investigated here. To the north of the site sits a theater space in the U.S. constructed Columbiahalle, followed by some housing, allotment gardens, and a private sporting facility. At the eastern end of Columbiadamm is the Volkspark Hasenheide, as well as the Somerbad Neukölln public swimming pool. The Schillerkiez neighborhood is to the east of the site, which contains housing and some bars and restaurants closer to Hermannstraße to the east.

PROGRAM

The park’s program comprises a massive amount of activities, many of which are dictated or guided by very few traces of physical form across the site’s vast landscape. Program is dictated by a number of temporary projects, a number of suggested ways to use the space via the site’s signage, and the historical elements that seek to educate the average park visitor about the historical significance about the site’s variety of uses for over a century. Some of the prescribed uses
include various sporting activities, which are made possible at the northern edge of the site with table tennis tables, a soccer field, basketball courts, tennis courts, and baseball fields, and a skate park / granite sculpture. Suggested uses, according to the Tempelhofer Feld’s site plan include: cycling, skating, wind sports (kiteboarding and kitebuggy), lawn bowling, and model cars. Additionally, the site offers both year-round refreshments and temporary/mobile refreshment stations, along with barbeque areas. There are observation points around the perimeter of the site as well, often directly adjacent to the entrances.

The park is divided programmatically into two distinct areas: the central meadow area and an outer programmatic ring. The central area comprises two thirds of the total area of the site, 202 hectares, bordered on either side by the taxiways. The outer meadow ring, the remaining 101 hectares, contains some preservation area, but can be used for recreational purposes – kite flying, picnics, barbecue, et cetera. In addition, the outer ring is intended for temporary uses, civic initiatives, and other park-like programs.

An “Information trail” marks 20 commemorative and memorial sites with texts and historic pictures that explain eras in Tempelhofer Feld’s history to visitors. The trail’s placards are mostly clustered around the northwestern edge of the park, but all remain situated around the perimeter of the site.
According to the informational material provided at the site: temporary projects were chosen by a jury made up of members from the fields of politics, administration and civil society. In a two-phase process around 38 projects were initially chosen in the areas of gardening, education, art and culture, sport and the neighborhood were selected from around 270 applications. There are currently a total of 19 projects on Tempelhofer Feld. Some of these are represented in Figure 20.

The temporary housing of refugees and asylum seekers occurs on site on either side of the airport hangar in sealed areas complete with mobile facilities, made possible through a refugee accommodation law on February 4, 2016.

RELICS

The relics have, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, received little attention from formal planning documents since the 2014 referendum. The relics include a former shooting range, a former ammunition bunker, former air traffic control stations, an old plant nursery, a generator hall, a former DVOR system, and former weather stations, and an old airplane bomber used during World War II. Some relics are tied to the U.S. military occupation of the site as a training grounds and for coordinating operations like the historic airlift after World War II. Others commemorate the site’s long history as an airport. All of these relics have a chain link fence surrounding

FIGURE 19: TRIPTYCH / TEMPELHOFF PROGRAM
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUTHOR
them, some of which extend far beyond the relic itself, with a pink sign demarcating what the relic is. According to reports from Grün Berlin GmbH published in early 2015, there are some relics which constitute brownfield sites, including the former shooting range, a site containing tank storage for jet fuel, and a waste incineration plant. A priority for planners in future discussions is to identify a plan for how to remediate certain sites which contain damaged grounds or soil pollution. (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umwelt und der Grün Berlin GmbH 2016)

SYNTHESIS

Tempelhof has been a space that has been dictated by time and process for the last decade. Perhaps due to its enormous scale, communities living within Berlin likely imagined an impossible cultural loss were they to allow over 300 hectares of space in the center of their city be divided up and distributed amongst the city’s stakeholders according to their interests. The city, on the one hand, is seeing the city’s needs and representing its interests by suggesting affordable housing be placed on the site (4,700 homes), with a large section of recreational open space remaining for at least the near-future. But the prospect of an initial loss is perhaps what convinced local communities to act so forcefully for keeping the space as is, as represented by the “100% Tempelhofer Feld” citizens movement that rose up against developing atop the decommissioned airport. (Shead 2017) Skepticism towards process may have led residents toward the sentiment that they were “giving an inch” and the city was “taking a mile,” while also feeling that the city would not be well-equipped to realize such grand plans for the space, considering the struggles making headlines over the airport meant to replace Tempelhof elsewhere in the city. (Julien 2017)

Process is embraced by the landscape urbanists, particularly when represented diagrammatically. This presentation of how processes might expect to evolve, especially in consideration of ecological processes (Corner 1999b; Waldheim 2016) or bureaucratic management and coordination, (Lyster 2006; Reed 2006) is purportedly meant to advise all those who are to be informed of a design’s intern that such processes were accounted for in the design. A thin line, however, separates the diagram as a decoration merely suggestive of a project’s complexity from something that truly informs those reading documents in attempts to ascertain valuable information in the form of concrete next steps. If landscape is meant to supplant planning and architecture as the discipline most equipped to structure the future’s urban development, can the practice rely on simple evocations? Exactly how much processual complexity is the right amount to make evident in a space’s design? And what timescale is most appropriate for such an effort – when does projecting far into the future begin to cross into speculative fiction instead over informed estimation?
were subjected to terrible tortures. It held more than 8,000 political prisoners, many of whom

COLUMBIA HAUS
Tempelhof airport was an American air force base until the

ecological issues and our future reactions to nature. Here everyone

The nature Mini ART Golf community garden project created a place where

TREFFPUNKT REISEN/UNGSGESELLSCHAFT
This open-air decoration of a school and kindergarten group also includes recycled materials and a small "green"

FORESTALLY-FRIEDLANDER BERZ
This open-air decoration of a school and kindergarten group also includes recycled materials and a small "green"

GARRISON CEMETERY
The garrison cemetery was on the north-eastern edge of Tempelhofer Feld and contained over 278,000 flights to West Berlin to keep its

TEMPELHOFER FELD AS A DAY-TRIP DESTINATION
When the Soviet Union blockaded West Berlin the Allies reacted

GRÜN-BERLIN GmbH
The association is open to all those interested in Jugger and anyone

KULTURGate Tempelhof e. V.
KULTURGate Tempelhof e. V.

DINGADU-TALENTE SCHULE
DINGADU-TALENTESCHULE is a unicycling and circus school with

TEMPELHOFER FELD AS A DAY-TRIP DESTINATION
The Sky was blue! In the Lernort Natur children and their

a.Naturerziehung im Britzer Garten
The installation by the interreligious Treffpunkt Religion und

Albatros gemeinnützige Gesellschaft für soziale und gesundheitliche Dienstleistungen
The Stadtacker project is an exhibition project with a wide range of

Mobilcenter Berlin rents pedal-cars, pedal-karts, go-karts and

Grüner Berlin e. V. association invites visitors to "Come together, start

GEMEINSCHAFTSGARTEN ALLMENDE-KONTOR E. V.
The association is open to all those interested in Jugger and anyone

SEMINARIOGARTEN
The installation by the interreligious Treffpunkt Religion und

SCHMIDTGUARDEN
The installation by the interreligious Treffpunkt Religion und

Albatros gemeinnützige Gesellschaft für soziale und gesundheitliche Dienstleistungen
The Nature Mini ART Golf community garden project created a place where

GRÜN-BERLIN GmbH
When the Soviet Union blockaded West Berlin the Allies reacted

the field here as a meeting point and training and competition centre.

The support for vocational training in the field of bicycle technology. Park

school groups, families and corporate events). Those interested in participating can do so

parking and a space for self-organised and creative activities.

GARRISON CEMETERY
In the 13th century their territory extended from Marienfelde to

The Stadtacker project is an exhibition project with a wide range of

the name "Pilots' quarter" and its streets named after pilots.

DINGADU-TALENTESCHULE
DINGADU-TALENTE SCHULE
DINGADU-TALENTESCHULE is a unicycling and circus school with

why is the sky blue? In the Lernort Natur children and their

were transported on over 278,000 flights to West Berlin to keep its

The garrison cemetery was on the north-eastern edge of Tempelhofer

third" emerged out of an online dialogue in 2007 and was

Die Globale e. V.
The support for vocational training in the field of bicycle technology. Park

NORDISCH AKTIV – KURS- UND VERLEIHZENTRUM
Nordisch aktiv – Kurs- und Verleihzentrum
Nordisch aktiv – Kurs- und Verleihzentrum

DINGADU-TALENTESCHULE
DINGADU-TALENTE SCHULE
DINGADU-TALENTESCHULE is a unicycling and circus school with

why is the sky blue? In the Lernort Natur children and their

the field here as a meeting point and training and competition centre.

the field here as a meeting point and training and competition centre.

people from the Neukölln neighbourhood can meet on Tempelhofer

PARKING AND A SPACE FOR SELF-ORGANISED AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES
GEMEINSCHAFTSGARTEN ALLMENDE-KONTOR E. V.
The association is open to all those interested in Jugger and anyone

GETTING TO TEMPELHOFER FELD
The Sky was blue! In the Lernort Natur children and their

GARRISON CEMETERY
In the 13th century their territory extended from Marienfelde to

DINGADU-TALENTESCHULE
DINGADU-TALENTE SCHULE
DINGADU-TALENTESCHULE is a unicycling and circus school with

GARRISON CEMETERY
The garrison cemetery was on the north-eastern edge of Tempelhofer

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Steckdose Kreuzberg enables visitors to experience electric-powered

GRÄBERFELD (ISLAMITISCHES)
The name "Pilots' quarter" and its streets named after pilots.

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M.I.N.T. GRÜNES KLASSENZIMMER
M.I.N.T. GRÜNES KLASSENZIMMER

Mobilcenter Berlin rents pedal-cars, pedal-karts, go-karts and

why is the sky blue? In the Lernort Natur children and their

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www.dieglobale.org, info@dieglobale.org

tempelhof relics

PROJETS
FIGURE 22: DIAGRAM / TEMPELHOFER FELD PROGRAM MIX

FIGURE 22: DIAGRAM / TEMPELHOFER FELD EDGE + RELIC
FIGURE 24: GLEISDREIECK RAILYARD, 1943
SOURCE: © LAND BERLIN

FIGURE 25: PLAN: PARK AM GLEISDREIECK, 2014
SOURCE: © ATÉLIER LOIDL
**Figure 26: Development Timeline, Park am Gleisdreieck**

- **1838-1952**: Functional rail, Dressner Bahnhof, Potsdamer Bahnhof, Anhalter Bahnhof
- **1940s-1970s**: Due to WWII, land used as trash heap
- **1970s**: Citizens defeat proposal for motorway
- **1992-1994**: Environmental assessments; citizens request ecological nature preserve
- **2000-2010**: Present

**Key Events:**
- **1995-2005**: Dividing regulations and framework, contract disputes between municipalities, real estate bodies, and community groups
- **1999**: Berlin open space network concept developed
- **2003**: Waldeinsamkeit awarded
- **2006**: Public consultations; Atelier 1001 wins design competition
- **2007**: Yvco buys the property
- **2011**: Opening of Ostpark
- **2013**: Opening of bottleneck connector
- **2014**: Wings German landscape architecture award
- **2015**: Metropolis competition

**Colors:**
- Perceived open space
- Perceived infrastructure
- Actualized open space
- Actualized infrastructure
- Military
INTRODUCTION / DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE:

In comparison to Tempelhof, Gleisdreieck has had a much more gradual transition from infrastructure to open space, though the transformation has not been seamless. Similar to Schöneberger Südgelände, the area was first contained a functional railyard. In the decades after World War II, the land was used as a trash heap for approximately three decades; this preceded another few decades of negotiations about what the site would ultimately become. First there was a proposed motorway in the 1970s, followed by environmental assessments and a request from the public to convert the space into a nature preserve in 1992. That same year, the space was needed for logistical concerns related to the rebuilding of Potsdamer Platz. Between 1999-2005, negotiations between municipal agencies, real estate and community groups occurred, culminating in surveys being conducted within a 20-minute walking distance of the park, with a 25% response rate. After a series of public charrettes, the firm Atelier Loidl won the right to design the space in 2006. Construction began in 2010, with the park opening in phases thereafter: Ostpark in 2011, Westpark in 2013, and the Bottleneck Connector in 2014.

The park’s design attempts to support a wide range of uses through the variety of programmatic elements woven throughout the space. Leonard Grosch, the chief designer behind Gleisdreieck for Atelier Loidl, has discussed the importance of collective memory and how spaces must function as “heterotopias” in order to construct narratives effectively. (Grosch and Petrow 2015) In addition, Grosch cites Edward O. Wilson’s concept of “biophilia” in stating that humans have an innate need for connection to all living things, which the park aims to provide through curation of a variety of “natures”: second nature (its allotment gardens), third nature (landscaped areas), and fourth nature (vegetation on fallow lands). (Grosch and Petrow 2015) The park’s programming includes relics of past uses and the introduction of new elements, with a focus on atmosphere and legibility in each sub-space.

HOW IT’S DISCUSSED IN THE LITERATURE

The designer himself, Leonard Grosch, wrote a book with Constanze Petrow detailing the design intention, a retroactive history of the thought processes that went into the formation of the park entitled Designing Parks. Grosch summarizes his overarching design goals as follows: “I … undertake to create spatially distinct, socially exciting open spaces that remain flexible over time and are atmospherically concentrated and clear in form.” (Grosch and Petrow 2015, 14) In the text, Grosch adopts a number of principles from across the urban design literature, including Jane Jacobs (on variety in cities), William
H. Whyte (on program variety and triangulation), Rachel and Stephen Kaplan (on the need for understanding and discovery in the landscape), Jan Gehl (on ground rules for lively spaces), Edward O. Wilson (on the concept of “biophilia”), and Elizabeth K. Meyer (on nature’s presence in urban landscapes leading to mindfulness). (Grosch and Petrow 2015) Whether this acts as a strategy to convince the reader of the author’s pluralistic approach, Groch’s book frames the development process according to how the designer himself wishes this history to be represented.

Though not in response to Grosch’s text, another book about the park’s development process and results was published by Andra Lichtenstein and Flavia Alice Mameli in 2015, containing essays and interviews concerning how the park’s transition from infrastructure to park space impacted themselves or the residents of the city around them. In one of the essays contained in the book, the Head of the Department for Ecosystems and Plant Ecology at the Institute of Ecology at Technische Universität Berlin, Ingo Kowarik, weighs in on how urban wilderness became possible in the park. Kowarik, who has written on all three of the spaces discussed in this thesis, poses the question: “Is Gleisdreieck Park merely a Berlin oddity… or a park concept indicative of the future?” (Kowarik 2015, 216) He concludes his chapter by stating that in the planning processes specific to Gleisdreieck and Natur-Park Südgelände, “The genius loci counted. This included wild nature as much as artefacts of the former railway facilities and, especially at Gleisdreieck, views of the urban landscape. At Südgelände the park was mostly there, so there was no need for a competitive process. The planning work was based on what was already there, a matter of providing access for people and designing guidelines for the management of vegetation and the protection of cultural relics The multi-stage competitive procedures for Gleisdreieck Park were … more extensive and, in combination with the participation processes, unique to date.” (Kowarik 2015, 220)

EDGE / MOVEMENT

Grosch states that integration with the city is one of the park’s core tenets. He states in his book, “what is characteristic of parks in the twenty-first century is how intensively they are interwoven with the surrounding urban space. Instead of the self-reference that was inherent in many parks of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, parks today are no longer the “other” in the city but rather urban locations with spatial openness and multifaceted relationships to the urban surroundings.” (Grosch and Petrow 2015, 182) As mentioned, Grosch calls upon respected urban designers and planners of the past to underscore his points; in this case, he mentions Jane Jacobs’ concept of border vacuums, Jan Gehl’s discussion of soft edges, and Richard Sennett’s advocacy for permeable borders as animating forces for how to conceive of the oddly shaped park’s edge. (Grosch and Petrow 2015)
The park’s edge is splintered along its three separate geometries, which form a cumulative whole but provide for a variety of edge conditions around the perimeter of the space. The park is bordered on its northern edge by Landwehr Canal, which separates the park from Tilla-Durieux-Park, a stretch of green that leads to nearby Potsdamer Platz. This northern section of the park is bordered to the right by Flottswellstraße, with housing complexes directly adjacent to the park’s green space, making sighting somewhat difficult from the neighborhoods on the other side. The northern part of the park narrows as it moves northward, creating a small outcropping for the northern edge’s entrance, cause it to be rather inconspicuous. To the northeast is a large parking garage, which blocks sight lines to the east. The center of the northern Westpark contains entrances along its western edge, with entrances set back amidst the tall housing blocks bordering either side at Kurfürstenstraße, Pohlstraße, and Lützowstraße. There is one entrance on the eastern edge of Westpark from Luckenwalder Strasse, but the entrance is just beyond a highway viaduct and takes a turn such that the park is essentially impossible to see from the street.

The border on the eastern edge of Westpark and the eastern edge of Ostpark is a line of active rail that moved underground at the midway point of the Westpark; thus, this is where the connect between the two parks is forced to occur.
The connection doubles as an access road, with some adjacent sites still empty voids. The road is fairly narrow along the edge of Westpark but winds and widens somewhat upon approaching Ostpark from the north. The road is used by cyclists, rollerbladers, runners, walkers, dog walkers, skateboarders, and the like, some of whom are using the through road on longer journeys while others circle around the park itself, which maintains a frenetic energy along the corridor. The park seems to partially embrace its closeness to the running rail line, with visibility reduced only by a chain fence that is almost startlingly close to the lines. This road extends down and connects the Bottleneck Connector (Flaschenhalspark) farther to the south. Shooting out to the east of this path are a number of the trails leading to the path network structuring Ostpark. The Ostpark’s northern edge also points to the Landwehr Canal but does not quite reach it, with the Deutsches Technikmuseum acting as an adjacent northern barrier. There are three points of entry to the east of Ostpark, one to the north, and one to the south. The entrance points east are more easily visible to the street than those on the western edge of Westpark because the urban fabric continues on the opposite side of the street (Möckernstraße) rather than directly atop the park itself. The Yorkstraße entrances seek to form a kind of plaza space with two large openings inviting passersby into the park with two sets of stairs on either side of the street along with long, gently sloped ramps. Because of the grade change, the park is only visible because of the touches

FIGURE 28: TRIPTYCH / GLEISDREIECK PROGRAM
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUTHOR
made to this space, which also contends with the Yorckbrücken bridges overhead and a busy Yorkstraße street full of cars and without a nearby crosswalk. The sidewalks leading to the plaza-like concrete rectangular cutouts are rather narrow, allowing a visitor to take stock of where they are only upon their being directly in front of them.

Flaschenhalspark’s only other entrance is its southernmost point, at the intersection of Monumentstraße and Am Lockdepot, which intersects above the park space itself. A ramp and set of stairs make the park accessible from this point. The western side of the Flaschenhalspark is bordered by the north-south line of rail that ran along the western side of the Ostpark, while the eastern side of Flaschenhalspark is bordered by a discount store, a supermarket, and an auto repair shop.

PROGRAM

The sheer breadth of programming offerings on the site rivals that of Tempelhofer Feld, but are largely formalized across the park’s environment rather than existing as resident-led initiatives. In Grosch’s text, he differentiates the different areas according to their thematic grouping: formalized play, including playgrounds, table tennis, bocce; sports, including formal (beach volleyball, basketball, soccer, and the skater bowl), informal (certain paved areas with markings, sandy open space) and in between (the play topography in the
Westpark) spaces; sports fields; a fitness park with equipment geared towards the elderly; and various types of open green space not fit for sports activities: a dog run, community gardens, allotment gardens, and forested green space. (Grosch and Petrow 2015) In addition, there are set pairs of oversized swings throughout the park.

Curating spaces for all ages seems to have been a thoughtful consideration throughout the park’s design. There are different types of playgrounds with different unique elements specific to each space and curated for different ages: “Nest,” in the north of Westpark, is geared towards small children up to six years in age, along with the “Children’s Room,” to the north of Ostpark. South of this space in the Ostpark is the “Forest of Poles,” a playground aimed at children aged 6-12. There are also spaces for “experiencing nature,” according to Grosch (165), which are formalized in the sense that they are fenced off areas containing natural elements that could be made into play tools with a bit of imagination, such as pieces of wood, stone, and other elements. (Grosch and Petrow 2015) The “Wooden Shack,” on the Westpark’s western edge, contains a play area for infants up through children aged twelve. These are all located in close proximity to food stands, taking into account that parents with children may wish to have such services near where their children are likeliest to play. In the center of the park is a place designed for teenagers, along with the Flaschenhalspark’s southern tip, which includes a basketball court underneath the highway running perpendicular to the park. These spaces seem to consider the teenager’s need to have gathering spaces that are somewhat secluded from the prying eyes of adults and children alike, a space to be themselves amidst the awkwardness that accompanies this stage of youth. The skater bowl and sporting courts provide this space for some, but the adjoining wall has been donated to graffiti artists as well, perhaps in the hopes that if a space is provided on site for such activity, spraying won’t occur elsewhere for fear of disturbing the choreographed aesthetic schema.

The park’s main north-south and east-west axes provide a diversity of views and activities for passersby, which seems to be a primary way in which the park is utilized. Given its odd shape and central location in the city, it’s easy to imagine the space either providing a scenic detour or a convenient throughway for many Berliners on their way somewhere else. In either case, runners and cyclists can race alongside the trains heading in the north-south direction, or can take in the vast lawn spaces and forested wilderness and allotment areas running east-west.

RELIC

Relics are kept to a minimum on the site, but the design seems as though it wants to make strategic reference to them in a select few locations. The running rail lines serve as an aesthetic supplement to the
park’s curation of a number of different surface and path treatments; in some cases rail lines are left as they were, in others they are filled in with concrete with only the top of the rail itself exposed, lying smooth with the fill. There are pieces of track distributed about, many near the path network, and are positioned in such a way that they seem to be sculptural in quality, placed there for effect, rather than in an attempt to replicate authenticity of where lines had previously ran. However, one line runs from the Flaschenhalspark up through the Ostpark, and visitors can still see the connection over the Yorkstraße, pointing to the bridges’ previous function. A certain kind of ‘relic’ that is seemingly maintained from the site’s previous use are the retaining walls surrounding the site’s perimeter. There was seemingly little effort to flatten the site’s topography (which had likely been altered previously to accommodate its former infrastructure), thus necessitating the maintenance of the retaining walls, which keeps the entirety of the site at a different grade from the surrounding street network.

SYNTHESIS

In Sebastien Marot’s discussion of sub-urbanism in Corner’s Recovering Landscape, he states, “That landscape as a larger milieu is rarely subject to the control of a single authority means that the forms of relational structuring cannot be so formal as they are vehicles for negotiation and mediation (among neighboring constituencies, management authorities, etc.)” (Marot 1999) Interestingly, this seems to express an alignment with ideas expressed throughout the rest of the landscape urbanism discourse while breaking with it simultaneously. On the one hand, Marot is suggesting here that a single authority could not possibly dictate what occurs within a specific site nor what transpires around it. Though this seems to be an obvious statement, others within the discourse seem to take up a position that runs counter; Charles Waldheim, in particular, conceives of the landscape architect becoming the urbanists of our time, (Waldheim 2016, 205) It has become conventional to think of urbanism and landscape as opposing one another--or to think of landscape as merely providing temporary relief from urban life as shaped by buildings and infrastructure. But, driven in part by environmental concerns, landscape has recently emerged as a model and medium for the city, with some theorists arguing that landscape architects are the urbanists of our age. In Landscape as Urbanism, one of the field’s pioneers presents a powerful case for rethinking the city through landscape. Charles Waldheim traces the roots of landscape as a form of urbanism from its origins in the Renaissance through the twentieth century. Growing out of progressive architectural culture and populist environmentalism, the concept was further informed by the nineteenth-century invention of landscape architecture as a ”new art” charged with reconciling the design of the industrial city with its ecological and social conditions. In the late twentieth and early twenty-
first centuries, as urban planning shifted from design to social science, and as urban design committed to neotraditional models of town planning, landscape urbanism emerged to fill a void at the heart of the contemporary urban project. Generously illustrated, *Landscape as Urbanism* examines works from around the world by designers ranging from Ludwig Hilberseimer, Andrea Branzi, and Frank Lloyd Wright to James Corner, Adriaan Geuze, and Michael Van Valkenburgh. The result is the definitive account of an emerging field that is likely to influence the design of cities for decades to come (Waldheim 2016) suggesting a power akin to that of the architect during modernism’s deterministic approach to the built environment. This power, however, inspires an entirely different reaction when it manifests in, say, New Urbanism. (Waldheim 2006b)

Kelly Shannon also outlines Marcel Smets’ concept of uncertainty and advocacy for a different set of instruments towards urbanism at the landscape architect’s disposal. With these instruments, (the grid, casco, clearing, and montage) Smets preferences not a lack of clarity but an indeterminacy in regards to how future development might articulate itself. (Shannon 2006a, 146) Shannon describes what Smets is getting at here with her suggestion that, “minimal interventions seek to render more evident what is already there and incorporates the particular site into its larger setting.” (Shannon 2006a, 146)

Both of these remarks suggest the difficulty not just faced by Grosch and Atelier Lloidl in the establishment of a place with a variety of formal programmatic elements that seek to activate the space, but for the landscape urbanists as well. Can a theoretical formlessness apply to spaces where a great many interested stakeholders wish to see themselves and their interests represented within the space? Is a site, particularly one adopted from an infrastructural use, at risk of fostering the border vacuum condition Jacobs speaks of? How much does the establishment of certain forms deemed necessary begin to dictate the design of a site’s overall program? In other words, is it possible to appease one audience through formal interventions, and not others?
FIGURE 30: GLEISDREIECK RELICS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY AUTHOR
FIGURE 31: DIAGRAM / PARK AM GLEISDREIECK PROGRAM MIX

FIGURE 32: DIAGRAM / PARK AM GLEISDREIECK RELIC + EDGE
Chapter 7:
Conclusion

LANDSCAPE URBANISM: WHAT’S LEFT UNRECOVERED?

This research sought to outline what landscape urbanism has come to mean, in theory and in practice, by examining its central tenets as encapsulated by a set of built projects. However, there is time worth spent on what landscape urbanism did not become, what was left on the table by those contributing to the discourse with threads that were left unsewn into the larger project.

Anita Berrizbeita asks a simple yet provocative question towards the end of her discussion of the Amsterdam Bos Park in Corner’s 1999 collection, Recovering Landscape. Berrizbeita makes the case for shifting towards consideration of landscape as “system of production,” focusing on the way it works rather than its scenic qualities. This is a theme presented repeatedly within the discourse and is not revolutionary in and of itself, but Berrizbeita then veers into territory more seldomly considered by the landscape urbanists. In a section entitled Object/Subject, she states “A reconceptualization of the landscape object is, by necessity, accompanied by a reconceptualization of the subject with which it is engaged…the reunification of formal composition in favor of an emphasis on the system of production induces a change in the relations between the designer and the work and between the perceiving subject and the park.” (Berrizbeita 1999, 196) This is reiterated through invocation of Fredric Jameson, where Berrizbeita suggests design must work to foreground “the organization of the means themselves over any particular aesthetic end.” (Berrizbeita 1999, 197) She then poses the question: “Who is, then, the subject that the modern park seeks to address?” (Berrizbeita 1999, 197)

Berrizbeita ultimately lands on the dual function the Bos Park serves in allowing for the cultivation of individuality “as by the requisites of the new collective nature of modern life,” where the private individual exists in a dialectical relationship with the social.” (Berrizbeita 1999, 198) It is the park’s productive capacity that allows the subject to straddle these two worlds and enjoy the fruits of both in simultaneity. Whether or not the Amsterdam Bos lives up to the author’s projected potential is not what’s been studied here, but the way in which Berrizbeita discusses the objective of the designer is unique. The designer is not foregrounded in the design’s end but embedded in its means, present neither through formal programmatic elements nor a diagrammed scheme detailing the designer’s near-clairvoyant command of processual knowledge. Rather, the park is made meaningful through its use, its significance becoming activated by the ways in which it strives towards constituting a collective identity amongst its communities of users.

Mohsen Mostafavi, though one of the few major contributors to the discourse with an edited volume of essays that
expanded the discourse’s reach, also holds a unique position amidst the landscape urbanists. Mostafavi’s main appearance in the discourse’s literature is in his own essay for Machinic Landscape, which differs significantly from the rest of the text despite serving as its introduction. Whereas the essays in Machinic Landscape offer a mix of bold theoretical connections tethered to discussion and examples of representational methods, Mostafavi himself is much more interested in exploring the landscape urbanism idea which is not steeped in theory, but rather remains accessible to those who regularly consider the experiential qualities of urban space. “Instead of a nostalgic yearning for lost models of public space, monuments, piazzas, we should imagine, support, and construct alternative models of urbanism that are open to, and encourage, participation by all citizens.” (Mostafavi 2003, 9) The reference to democratized space is more than a throwaway phrase, for Mostafavi restates and reinforces his exact meaning in the conclusion to the essay, “Landscape urbanism will in future, with its temporal and political characteristics, set the scene (albeit momentary) for democracy in action.” (Mostafavi 2003, 9) In discussion of materiality, Mostafavi nods towards the importance of both the physical vs. the conceptual and the permanent vs. ephemeral qualities that structure urban space, which in turn “provide new opportunities for the redefinition of the public sphere.” (Mostafavi 2003, 9)

Finally, Corner’s initial ambitions for the recovery of landscape do not seem to integrate seamlessly with the ways in which landscape urbanism’s trajectory has been realized by the discourse’s successive authors. Corner held onto the idea of the landscape imaginary through his contribution to 2006’s Landscape Urbanism Reader, suggesting public spaces are “firstly the containers of collective memory and desire” before they are “secondly…places for geographic and social imagination to extend new relationships and sets of possibilities.” (Corner 2006, 32) Here, the planner is blamed for the lack of imagination that has stifled the productive design of public space, which is a line of argument many others throughout the discourse pick up.

What role does the planner play in issues relating to design of public open space? Some answers reside with the analysis of the post-infrastructural sites dissected previously, through which a handful of important themes emerge.

WHAT’S BEEN LEARNED

First, the conditions inherited by the analyzed projects are reinforced through their reconceptualization. The airport is still fenced in; the railyard still elevated or sunken, depending on the course the track took; and sites are splintered or enveloped by still-functional infrastructure woven into the surrounding urban fabric. These conditions speak to a larger pattern inherent across projects that seek to transform sites that previously held
infrastructure, industry, or otherwise require remediation. In all of these cases, planning not only acts as an intermediary between the various publics these newly constituted open spaces will potentially abut, but also ushers along the process by which remediation and operationalization are resolved over time.

Second, with any space comes a certain amount of contestation. Claims over the rightful use or ownership of space often are made long before the involvement of a designer. Consequently, with spatial contestation comes the need for planning. By zeroing in on the designer’s influence on constructed projects, the landscape urbanist discourse does a disservice to the larger process involved in their formation, despite paying lip-service to the complexity and flexibility that is characteristic of landscape urbanist projects. Only so much flexibility can be etched into the diagram, and only so much detail can originate from a single source before a design scheme falls victim to the same sort of formal determinism that has been weaponized by planners and architects of the past, a point oft-cited by the landscape urbanists.

Gleisdrieck, an example of a space attempting to accommodate the vast needs of varying publics through a formalized program set, is the result of a long public debate that dictated some of the criteria used to choose the winning scheme for the site’s design competition. Ultimately, the winning design by Atelier Llodl was the one that appeared to adhere most closely to the requests made by the public. Tempelhof, going the opposite route in presenting the un-designed, 100% Tempelhof that offers little in the way of formality and instead favors a rotating cast of ‘pioneer projects,’ is also the result of a separate protracted debate, preceded by those of Gleisdreick and Natur-Park. Both of those processes had sewn enough distrust amongst residents against the ambitions of the local government that by the time a referendum vote took place, the public will had mobilized quite forcefully against any city-driven attempts to carve up the space. Ultimately, however, planning prevailed in the establishment of an ongoing process that decides the site’s use collectively through continual participation and democratic input. Design is mobilized in small doses, with creativity embedded in impermanence, as landscape urbanism often suggests as an ideal but rarely conceives as a viable option.

Finally, across each site, what history does the relic tell? In What Time is This Place, Kevin Lynch problematizes the relic. “Ancient things seem most impressive in one of two contexts: either quite isolated, in some wild and lonely place, hidden or high, or in intimate contact with contemporary life, embedded at the center.” (Lynch 1976, 170) The latter would seem to be a better match for the three parks, but oddly in each case, relics have the quality of being “hidden in plain sight,” with Tempelhof’s scale creating a vast discovery landscape, while Gleisdreieck and Natur-Park mostly embed their ‘ruin’ fragments within the
heavily forested “wilderness” of each site.

Undoubtedly, however, each site’s location in Central Berlin allows the relics to brush up against “contemporary life, embedded at the center.” With this, Lynch continues: “There are many engaging structures in which an older framework was remodeled for contemporary use and esthetic advantage was taken of the resulting contrast of form... This approach is not preservation, although it implies attention to history. It may mean destruction, and certainly modification. It requires an interpretation of history that may be in error and may change from generation to generation. The selection of the remains whose visual presence should be amplified is a consequence of that interpretation.” (Lynch 1976, 170–171) The impact of such decisions indeed presents daunting consequences, with Lynch offering a suggestion for how to approach the problem. “Near-future hopes and fears should be traced on present surfaces. Venice should be seen to be sinking... The signs of past and future would be material for esthetic contrast and coherence. Expecting the cyclical return, Yeats rebuilt the tower at Ballylee, and then he wrote on it:

‘...and may these characters remain, when all is ruin once again.’”

Ultimately, the aims of landscape urbanism are commendable. This research has meant to provide a perspective from a “sympathetic skeptic” (Vicenzotti, 2017, 75) in order to both strengthen its theoretical underpinnings and offer a critical position on its larger aims as a discourse, especially as these aims are transmuted through new iterations of the same discussions concerning landscape theory and practice. Perhaps landscape urbanism’s most critical error is that its reflection on past projects tends to consider designed solutions as too much the product of the designer themselves, rather than illustrating the impact the combination of the conditions inherent within sites mixed with the social conditions that enabled a designer’s involvement have on completed projects. Each of these realities are essential roles for the planner, perhaps the role most suited for the complex aspects of time ingrained in sites which experience similar transformations. It is conceivable that the planner and designer, rather than remain at odds, make greater strides towards facilitating spaces that help remind us of our collective identity, working together to trace near-future hopes and fears on present surfaces.
Bibliography


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