



A Space Germinating in the Interstice Le 56 Ecointerstice





A Space Germinating in the Interstice

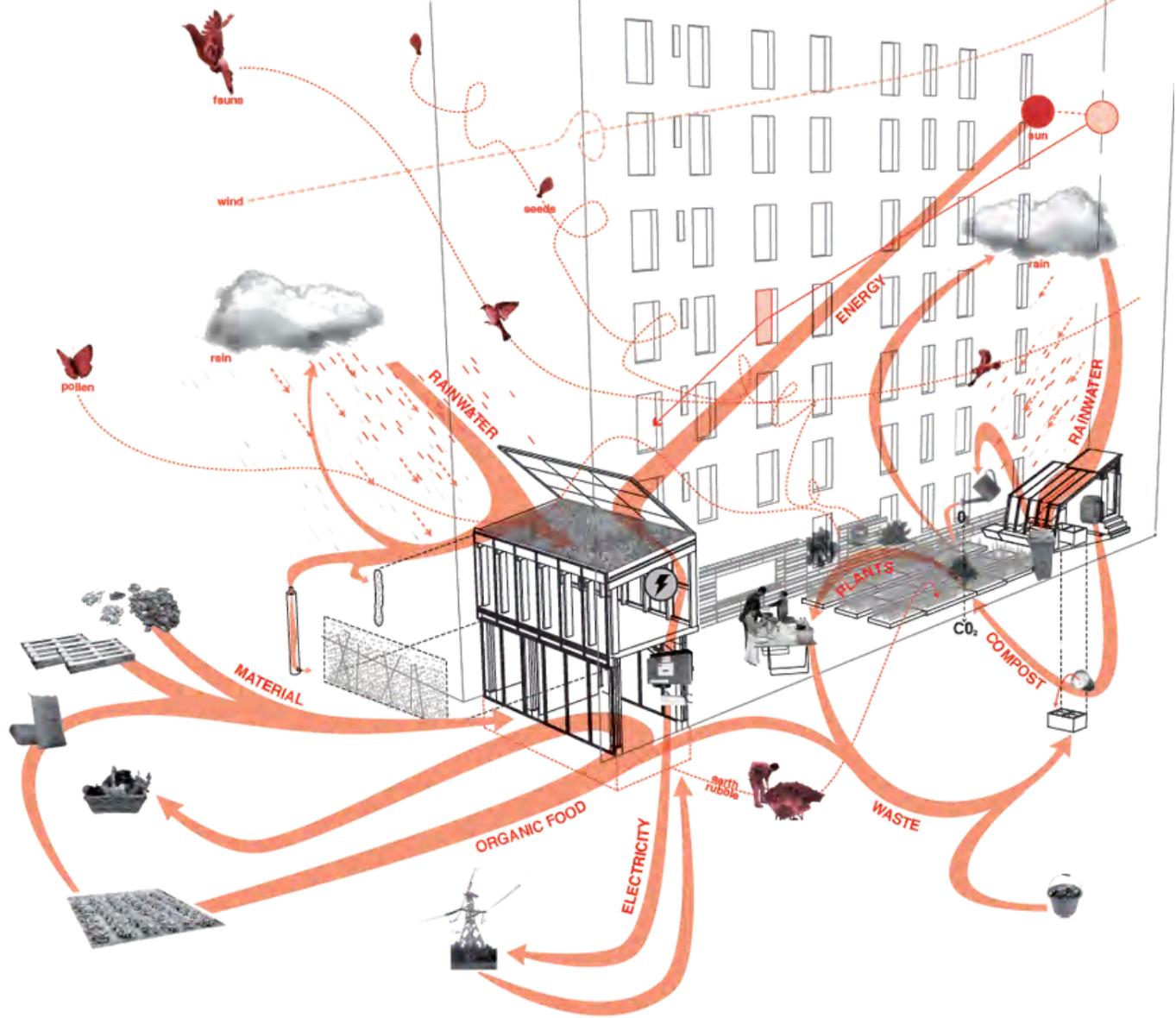
The places that are ignored are in fact the spaces most full of the memory of the city. These spaces seem to be outside of the daily flow, without any definition, without a mission and without identity. Yet they bear the traces of urban politics, social segregation and economic order. The Le 56 Éco-Interstice project, launched in 2010 at 56 Rue Saint-Blaise in the 20th arrondissement of Paris, took root in such a space. An urban void of about 120 m², abandoned for many years, has become a silent manifesto in which nature, man and time write together.

Le 56 should be considered as a practice of ecological transition rather than a landscape project.

This area, which was transformed with the participation of the residents of the neighborhood within the scope of the approach of “valorizing urban intervals” initiated by the Municipality of Paris in the 2000s, goes beyond the identity of an ordinary “community garden”. The point here is not to “design” a garden, but to live in it together. Recycled building elements, wooden platforms, compost areas, local plant species and bird nests are all part of a cultural reconstruction process that goes beyond functionality.

This transformation process is not driven by a top-down architectural practice, but directly by the initiative and labor of the local community. Landscape architects, biologists, carpenters, children, retirees, immigrants... Each of them has become both the designer and the user layer of this space. It is a process in which the boundaries between individual ownership and collective production are constantly renegotiated. The spatial organization of Le 56 Éco-Interstice is read not in terms of functional boundaries, but in terms of permeable surfaces where everyday needs intertwine. The space is shaped around three basic practices that develop layer by layer: producing, sharing and learning.

The first layer is the plant production area. However, the “agricultural” activity here is designed not as a pure yield-oriented activity, but as a way of living with nature. The ecological cycle established with rainwater collection systems, compost bins and local species redefines itself with the seasons. Planting something here means not only cultivating the soil, but also renegotiating climate, neighborhood and time. The second layer is a space for socializing. Simple seating platforms under the canopy are the grounds for neighborhood assemblies as well as daily encounters. Sitting here is not just resting, but making decisions together, discussing, and sometimes silently existing. At Le 56, furniture is not an object of urban comfort; it becomes a carrier of relationships.



The third and perhaps most transformative layer is the learning space. A small greenhouse structure, a workshop table and a set of simple tools transform the project into a living ecology school. From permaculture classes to seed swap days, from bird-watching events to recycling workshops, a wide range of knowledge is imparted through direct experience. This space transforms pedagogy from abstract narratives into a form of production in everyday life. Le 56 thus offers not a fixed plan, but a scenario that is rewritten every season and transforms with its users. And each use reconstructs not only a physical space but also ways of living together.

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Le 56 can be read as a kind of “micro revolt” against the spatial homogeneity imposed by urbanization. In a city such as Paris, which is shrouded in planning, the production of such an “improvisational” public space is quite rare.

Le 56 is a piece of the city where legal loopholes, bureaucratic openings and social solidarity come together. It shows the resilient face of everyday life and the possibility of co-existing with nature. Compared to similar examples, Le 56's position becomes even clearer.

Projects such as Prinzessinnengarten in Berlin or Jardins de Rubió i Lluch in Barcelona offer intellectual grounds for reuniting abandoned spaces in the city with natural systems. Le 56, however, proposes a more radical organization of everyday life. The users here are not just consumers, but producers, caregivers and collective decision-makers. In other words, Le 56 is the embodiment of the commons in space.

Perhaps the most instructive aspect of Le 56 is that it makes the concept of "maintenance" an architectural act. The sustainability of the space comes not from elegant details or expensive technologies, but from the neighbors regularly hoeing the soil every morning, filling the bird feeders and planting seedlings together with the children.

In this way, the project produces a ground that directly references Joan Tronto's theory of the ethics of care.

Architecture here becomes not only design, but also a practice of relational responsibility. In

this space where care is collectivized, social belonging is also strengthened. In addition, Le 56 produces a multi-layered social context as a common space where immigrants and residents of different generations can coexist. In a city where inequality is produced in space, it offers a micro-scale answer to the question of how a ground can be established for the daily production of equality.

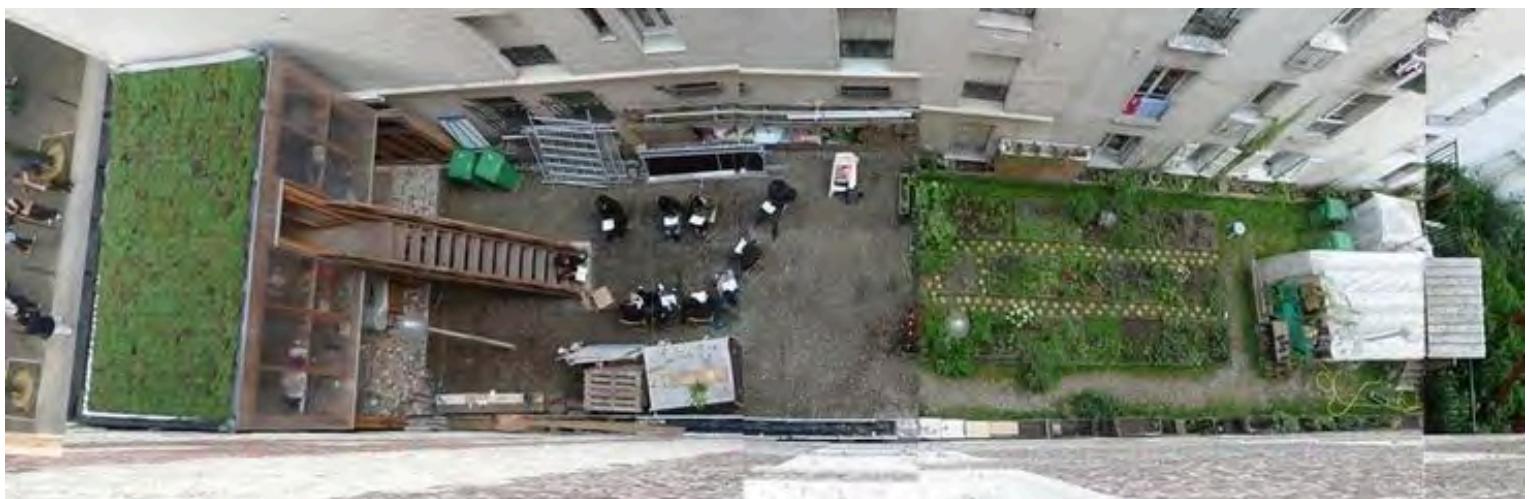


Le 56 Éco-Interstice makes visible the political potential of landscape architecture. Rather than a romanticized vision of nature, this project offers a concrete proposal for how a daily relationship with it can be transformative. In this sense, the space is not only a physical space, but also a common ground of thought and experience. Philosophically, the project offers a perspective that is in line with Murray Bookchin's theory of social ecology. Living in harmony with nature requires not only an ecological but also a social transformation. This transformation starts with small but effective interventions like Le 56. On the other hand, Henri Lefebvre's theory of the "production of space" provides an important framework for understanding the project. Le 56 reveals that space is not only constructed, but also continuously produced through socio-political relations and daily life practices. In this respect, the project can be considered not as a finished result, but as a living, evolving process.



Le 56 Éco-Interstice is a project small in physical scale but big in impact. It is spatially unpretentious but intellectually radical. As such, it forces architectural practices to ask the question:

"Is what you are making just a space? Or is it a way of thinking?" Le 56 reminds us that architecture can make sense not only through big projects, striking visuals and new materials, but also through simplicity, continuity, partnership and care. Every gap in the city can point to another possibility. **As small as the gap between a wall, but as vast as our urban imagination.**





Le 56 Éco-Interstice reminds us that architecture or landscape is not only a practice of producing form and function, but also a way of thinking. This small intervention, located in an interstitial space of the city, shows how the spatial can become a social and political proposition. While transforming a part of the urban fabric that has been devalued with labels such as “idle” or “dysfunctional”, it is not only a physical intervention; it also opens up a space of concepts, relationships and possibilities. Le 56 dares to politicize micro-scale ruptures in the city. In an environment where urban design is often associated with large-scale, top-down plans, this project emphasizes a view from below, the power of the local and the transformative effect of small interventions. On the edge of the city, in a forgotten gap, in a space that is neither fully public nor fully private, it proposes a new symbiosis. It is a proposal that redefines both the boundaries of space and the roles of the user.

The project demands a rethinking of our relationship with nature. Nature is not a “landscape” or a “backdrop” here; it is an entity that is intertwined with and shaped by everyday life. In this way, Le 56 also questions anthropocentric design approaches. Rather than dominating nature, it explores ways of living with it. In this context, landscape is not only the production of green space, but also a tool that reconstructs social life.

Murray Bookchin's social ecology approach offers an important ground in this context. Bookchin argues that the environmental crisis is not only an ecological crisis, but also a social one. According to him, a life in harmony with nature is only possible through an egalitarian and participatory reorganization of society

In line with this view, Le 56 proposes a structure that is open to participation, open to transformation and informed by the local context. The project represents an evolving process rather than a planned design. This calls us to rethink the forms of ownership, belonging and use of space.

Henri Lefebvre's theory of the “production of space” offers another key to understanding the socio-political dimension of the project. Lefebvre emphasizes that space is not only composed of physical objects; it is produced through practices, relations and representations. Le 56 operates precisely by bringing these three layers together: besides a physical transformation, it creates practices of collective use and a new intellectual representation of this space. In this sense, the project is not a fixed object, but a dynamic, layered process that evolves over time.

What makes Le 56 valuable is not so much that it offers a solution for the discipline of architecture or landscape, but that it asks a question: “How can we really make it possible to live together in the city?” This question becomes even more burning in the shadow of today's intense building pressure, privatization processes and the climate crisis. The project does not impose answers; on the contrary, it makes space. It offers a suggestion space that brings together the city, nature, the user and design.

In conclusion, Le 56 Éco-Interstice allows us to question not only what architecture or landscape is, but also what it serves. It reminds us that space is not only a formal or aesthetic entity, but also a reflection of social relations. This small intervention may not claim to be an alternative to large systems, but it is precisely in this modest form that it gains meaning: because change sometimes begins in a single interval.

SOURCES

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Paris Belediyesi Arşivleri ve Le 56 Proje Günlükleri

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ARCHITECTURE

mineral | abstraction | topography | rhythm | modernism



Mineral Roof Garden : A Modernist Layer on the Sky

the poetic and political gestures of roberto burle
marx's urban roofscape.

Zeynep Özçakmak | Istanbul Technical University , TR

Introduction

Implemented in 1983 on the roof of Banco Safra's headquarters in São Paulo, Brazil, Mineral Roof Garden is not just a landscape arrangement; it is a design manifesto where the boundaries between nature, art and urban life are delicately dissolved. With this project, Roberto Burle Marx transformed an artificial surface like a roof as if it were a canvas for painting, using the formal language of abstract art. Created with tropical plants, natural stones and colorful mosaics, this unique arrangement rises like a hidden piece of nature in the middle of the city.



Marx's strong artistic background and modernist design approach make Mineral Roof Garden a profound project not only aesthetically but also intellectually. The aim here is not just to create a green area; it is to question the relationship between nature and the artificial, and to redefine the way space is experienced. This garden, which emerges thanks to the rhythmic structure of colors, textures and forms, offers both a dynamic visual world and an alternative vision of nature within the city.



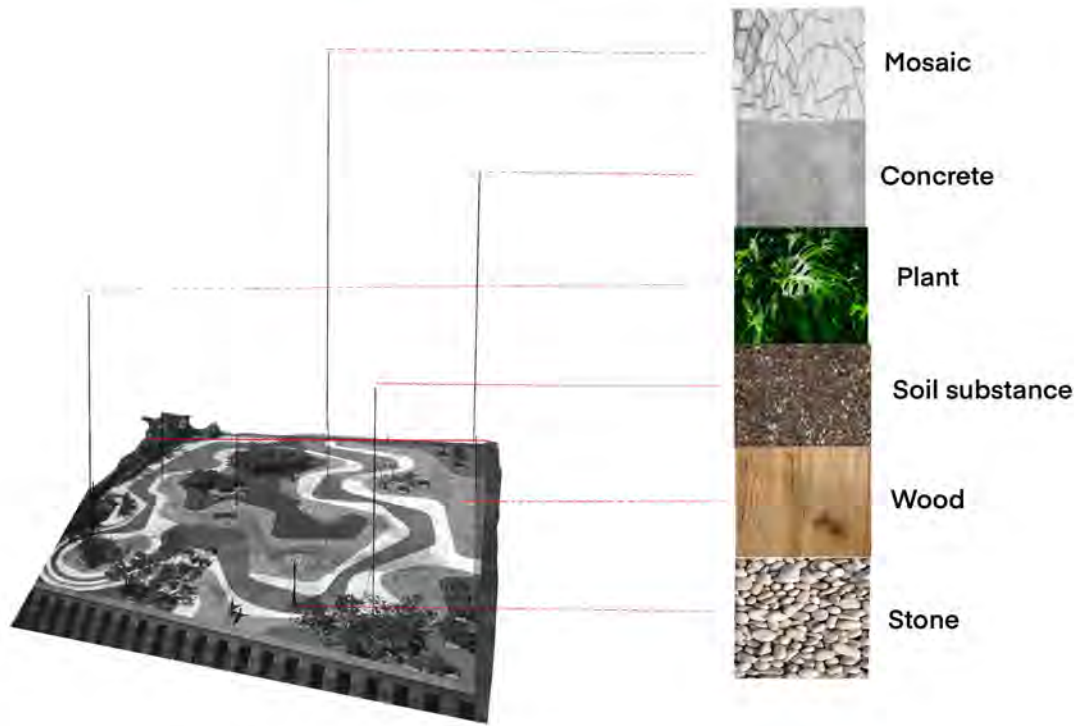
Although this garden is not open to public access today, it is still remembered as an inspiring example in the discipline of landscape architecture. Standing out as a bold proposal within the architectural understanding of the period in which it was produced, Mineral Roof Garden also responds to current themes such as sustainability, urban aesthetics and the connection with nature years in advance. The project reflects Marx's deep admiration for nature, his knowledge of plant composition and his strong connection with art in every detail.

Design Philosophy

Roberto Burle Marx sees landscape design as a form of art, rather than just arranging green areas. For him, nature is not something that should be copied exactly; it is a rich visual resource that should be reinterpreted and abstracted. Marx brought his knowledge of painting, music and botany to his designs, thus establishing a unique connection between nature and modern art.

According to MoMA's Brazilian Modernist publication, Marx thinks of landscape just like a painting. He creates an emotional yet modern composition with surfaces, lines and textures. This approach is clearly felt in Mineral Roof Garden. The combination of plants and stones, curvilinear paths and hard surfaces are placed in a controlled yet free manner, just like a painter's brush strokes.

In this project, Marx adds a natural yet constructed layer of life to the solid surface of the architecture. Each area of the roof is carefully planned with different surface textures and plant elements. Plant islands and curvy paths placed between the hard surfaces both guide the user and invite him to a surprising experience.



Marx's philosophy in this project is not to imitate nature, but to reinterpret the essence of nature in a modern language. In this way, the landscape becomes not just an environmental arrangement, but an artistic dialogue between humans and nature.

Design Components and Tactics

Burle Marx's Mineral Roof Garden project is the product of an approach that treats the top of the structure not as a "surface" but as an experiential, layered and living ground. However, the lack of access to comprehensive plans, sections or technical visuals in open sources regarding this project makes it quite difficult to directly read its architectural details. In this context, an original material diagram developed by our team working on the project constituted our main reference point in order to analyze the layers, textures and transitional relationships of the design.



In the diagram, elements such as the hard ground and soft landscape relationship on the surface, the connection details of different stone coverings, the drainage potential of the roof garden and the diversity of the plant texture were systematically addressed. Burle Marx's approach to the landscape as an abstract composition established not only with natural elements but also with materials reflects itself here with the fluid transitions of mineral textures and geometric forms.

The slope games on the surface, plant beds and walkways placed at different levels make the roof space multi-layered both functionally and aesthetically. The selection of plants is made in accordance with the soil depth and maintenance conditions; while the stones and mosaics used as surface textures point to Burle Marx's characteristic landscape collage approach. When all these elements come together, the roof garden becomes not just a view to be viewed from above, but a picture to be walked around in



(Marx's gouache drawing of a plan)

What Kind of Experience Does the Project Create?

Mineral Roof Garden has been approached with a very different approach than a conventional institutional roof design. Rather than being open to public access, this area has been designed as a private and controlled space. According to the information obtained, this roof garden is not currently open to visitors on a regular basis and does not function as any public tour or experience area.

However, this does not reduce the spatial potential and experiential value of the project. On the contrary, the limited access makes this place almost a secret space, suggesting a silent opposition to the dense urban texture around it. The winding paths and plant islands in the landscape covered with mineral surfaces leave organic traces that contrast with the geometry of the structure. Marx's pictorial language here becomes a form of experience: space is not resolved while walking, but as one steps.

This roof, which is not a recreational area in the traditional sense, goes beyond being a visual landscape and creates a spatial narrative. This special landscape, where the horizontal and the vertical, nature and architecture, accessibility and inaccessibility come together, also silently responds to the need for private and calm spaces that are often lacking in today's cities.

Environmental Response and Sustainability

Although designed in the 1980s, the Mineral Roof Garden exhibits a visionary stance on today's environmental crises. Roberto Burle Marx's deep respect for nature is not only an aesthetic inspiration in this project, but also the basis of an ecological approach. Unlike traditional urban roofs, this design aims to create a living, breathing surface instead of covering the surfaces with concrete.

The dense vegetation that contributes to the reduction of the urban heat island effect serves not only as a visual relief, but also as a biophysical layer that balances the microclimate. The natural stone and mosaics used as hard materials are designed with impermeable or semi-permeable textures that prevent water from accumulating on the surface. The plants chosen by Marx are native and resistant species of Brazil; this reduces the need for irrigation, eases the maintenance burden and establishes a life cycle in harmony with local ecosystems.

In this respect, the Mineral Roof Garden offers an early example of sustainable landscape architecture. The project advocates that nature should not be merely a decorative element but an active component of design. Although it does not exactly coincide with today's concepts such as green infrastructure, climate adaptation and nature-based solutions, it is an inspiration to their philosophical roots.

Critical Perspective and Conclusion

Mineral Roof Garden is much more than a contemporary landscape project; it is an expression of a way of thinking that blurs the boundaries between nature and art. Marx's relationship with painting, mosaic and modernist composition replaces the shattered traditional boundaries in this project with a new perspective. The roof becomes the "fifth facade" of a building, proving how impressive even a place that cannot be visited can be. Yes, this roof is not open to the public; but its very existence points to the invisible landscape layers in the city.

Although it is difficult to access the project's plan, section or detail images in today's digital environment, this deficiency contributes to the mysterious nature of the project. Mineral Roof Garden is a landscape that is felt rather than described. The material diagram developed by our team provides a tool to understand how this invisible design thinks. The weight of concrete and stone is balanced by the softness of plants; art and ecology are intertwined.

As a result, this project is not just a roof garden; it is one of the rare examples where Brazilian modernism, respect for nature and the poetry of design come together. Mineral Roof Garden has a timeless design language that can respond to both the conditions of the period and the needs of today.



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THE ECOLOGICAL TRACE



A Flat Landscape in the Sky

Reclaiming infrastructure through landscape in Manhattan

Design
Rabia Nur Peker

Text
Rabia Nur Peker



Urban Promenade

The High Line is an elevated linear park in New York City that exemplifies the adaptive reuse of industrial infrastructure for contemporary urban living. Located on the West Side of Manhattan, the project stretches approximately 1.4 miles from Gansevoort Street in the Meatpacking District to Chelsea and Hudson Yards. Originally constructed in the 1930s as part of the West Side Development Project, the High Line operated as a freight rail line until it was abandoned in 1980. The project was initiated in the late 1990s by Friends of the High Line, a grassroots organization founded by Joshua David and Robert Hammond. Their vision for preserving and reusing the rail line spurred a broader public and political movement. The city launched an international design competition in 2003, which selected the team of James Corner Field Operations (landscape architecture), Diller Scofidio + Renfro (architecture),

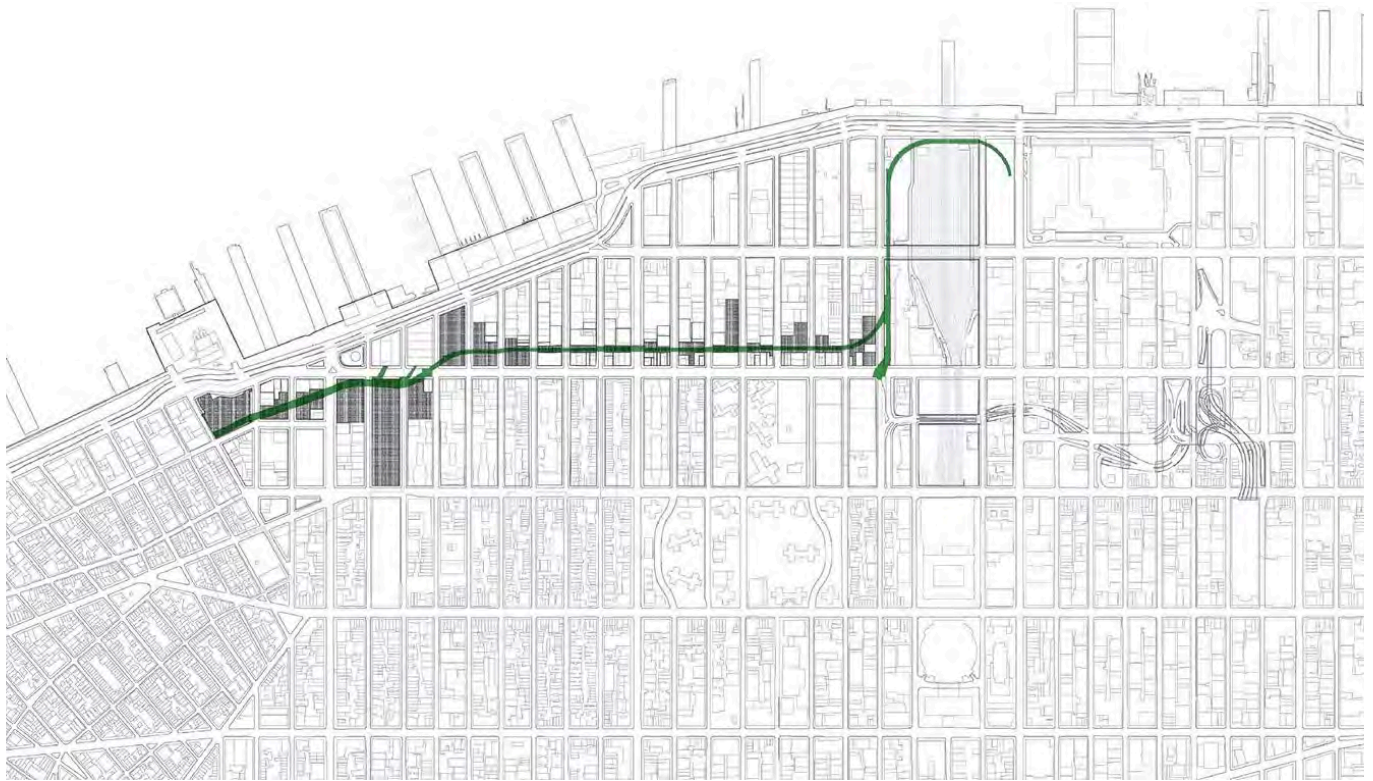
and Piet Oudolf (plant design) to lead the transformation. Construction was completed in phases: Section 1 opened in 2009, Section 2 in 2011, and the latest addition, the Spur, opened in 2019. The project was funded by a combination of public funds and private donations and is currently being

maintained by the High Line organization in partnership with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

At its core, the High Line reinterprets landscape architecture as a tool for urban repair. It integrates ecological systems, cultural programming, public art, and pedestrian circulation within a narrow infrastructure corridor. The design preserves historic elements such as the original rails while incorporating new materials such as modular concrete slabs, corten steel, and native planting zones.

The project promotes biodiversity, passive stormwater management, and seasonal variation in form and color.

The High Line
reclaims
forgotten
infrastructure
and transforms
it into a new
kind of public
space,
respecting the
site's industrial
past while
interweaving it
with the city's
ecological
future.



Once a relic of New York's industrial past, the High Line has become a global icon of landscape-focused urban renewal. Stretching 1.4 miles along Manhattan's West Side, the park reclaims a disused freight train and transforms it into a continuous public greenway suspended above the city.

Originally built in the 1930s as part of the West Side Redevelopment Project, the railroad was decommissioned in 1980. It sat abandoned for more than two decades, gradually being overrun by weeds, shrubs, and trees. In the late 1990s, local residents Joshua David and Robert Hammond founded the nonprofit Friends of the High Line to advocate for its preservation. Their vision: to transform a decaying infrastructure into an elevated urban park. An international design competition was launched in 2003. The winning team consisted of James Corner Field Operations

(landscape architecture), Diller Scofidio + Renfro (architecture), and Piet Oudolf (planting design). Their proposal preserved the High Line's industrial character while layering it with ecological, social, and spatial complexity. Construction took place in phases: the first section opened in 2009, the second in 2011, and the final section, the Spur, opened in 2019. The project has since won numerous awards and inspired a new typology: a linear park on repurposed infrastructure.

The High Line is not simply an adaptive reuse. It reframes how cities can interact with natural systems, industrial heritage, and public life. Not a park in the traditional sense, it is a hybrid space where movement, planting, and memory intersect.

What was once a steel line is now a green path in Manhattan. The line is visible—not in metal, but in movement, cultivation, and memory.





The planting design for the High Line, led by Piet Oudolf, deviates from traditional urban gardening. Instead of manicured lawns and hard-packed flowerbeds, it embraces the wild, the temporal, and the structural. Oudolf selected more than 350 species, many of which are native to the northeastern United States, based not only on their peak bloom periods but also on how they have evolved over time.

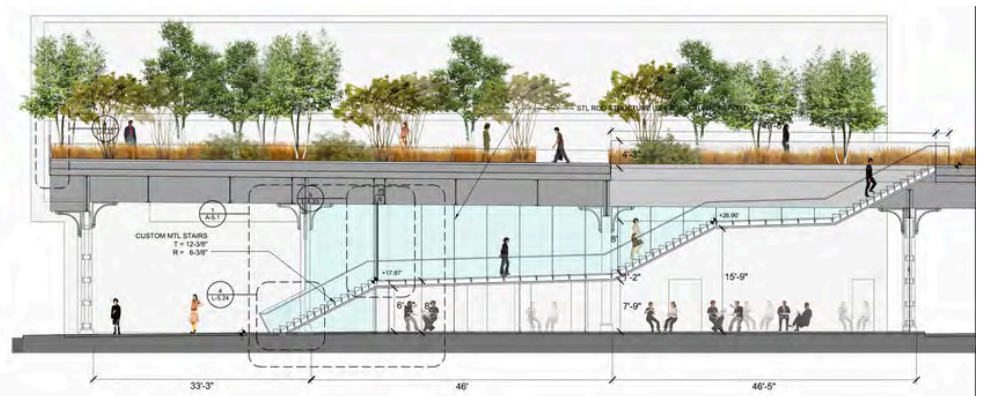
Grasses, perennials, and shrubs are arranged in drifting masses reminiscent of prairie ecologies. The planting strategy emphasizes structure, seasonality, and textural contrast. Plants are allowed to decay, seed, and regrow, suggesting the full cycle of life and death. This dynamic quality gives the High Line a unique temporal rhythm—a continuous flow that is different in each season.

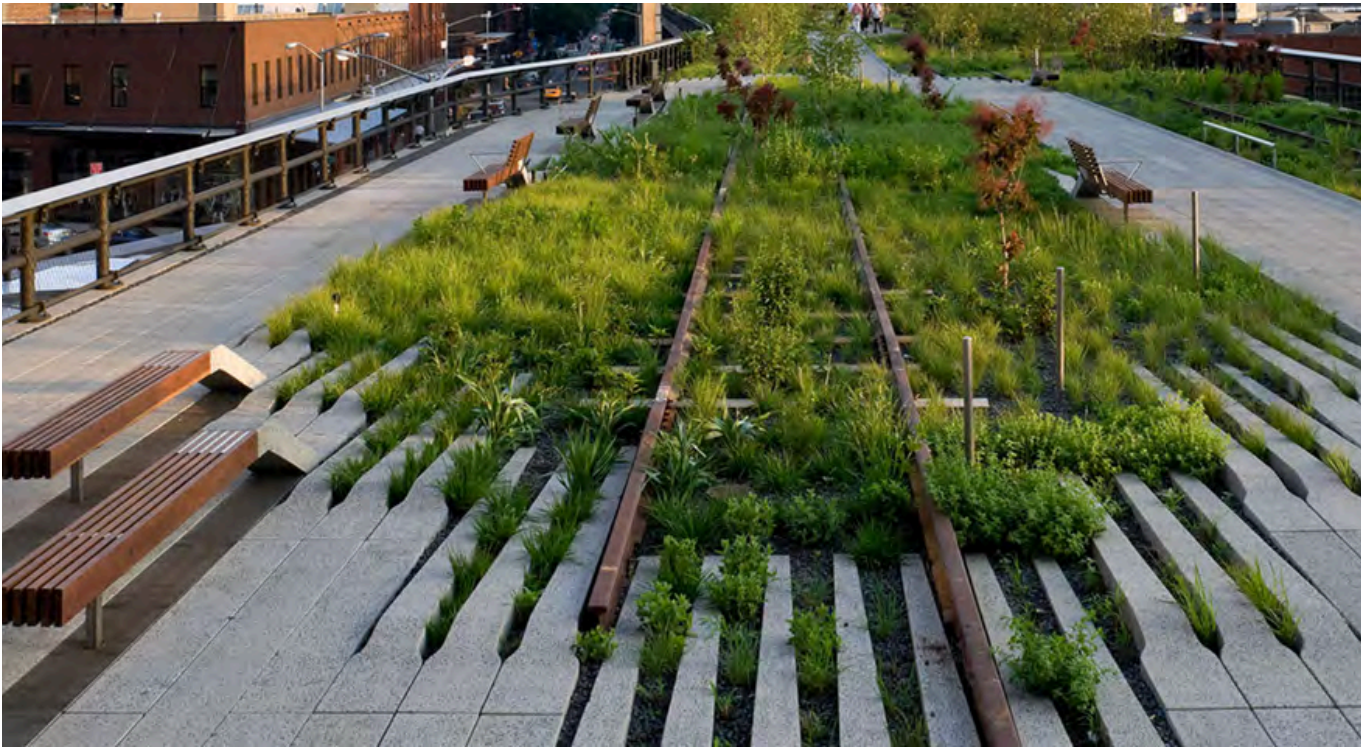
The design also integrates the site's industrial heritage. Original railroad tracks are preserved and embedded in the landscape. Modular precast concrete slabs sometimes separate and rejoin like rails to form walkways. These slabs blend into the planting beds, reinforcing the idea that nature and infrastructure can coexist.

Materials such as corten steel, salvaged wood and reclaimed concrete reflect the history of the site. Their patina and texture contrast with the softness of the planting, adding to the tactile and visual diversity of the space.

The design allows nature to permeate the hardscape. Moss grows in the joints, birds nest under the beams and the wind moves freely through the grass. Not a controlled garden, but a carefully curated wilderness.

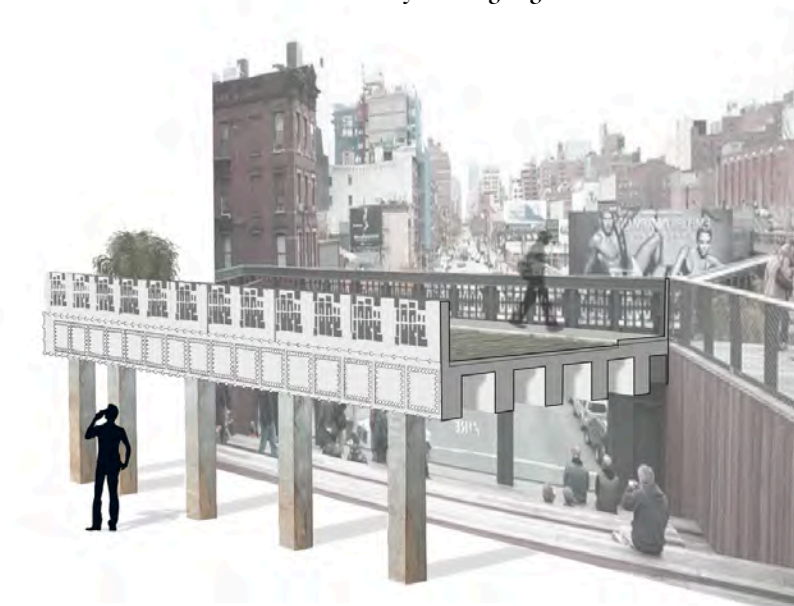
Here, decay is embraced, not erased. The landscape changes over time, celebrating the beauty of aging plants, rusting steel, and fading edges.





Walking the High Line is a spatial and sensory journey. The narrow width compresses circulation, making every turn and opening intentional. The park opens as a series of sections: shaded groves, open plazas, framed vistas, and immersive shrubbery. One of the most iconic spaces is the 10th Street Square, a stepped amphitheater carved into the viaduct. Here, visitors lean against a glass wall that frames the street below and transforms traffic into a spectacle. Other spaces include Chelsea Shrub, Gansevoort Forest, and Washington Meadows, each with its own unique vegetation and spatial character. Art is a key component. Managed by High Line Art, the park features rotating installations, murals, sculptures, and performances. These works activate the space and challenge the boundaries between everyday use and curated exhibition. Public programs include stargazing nights, dance performances, garden tours, and educational workshops. The High Line is more than a footpath; it is a platform for culture, learning and coming together.

Accessibility is seamlessly integrated. Elevators, ramps and wide paths ensure universal access without compromising design. Seating is built into railings, retaining walls and even plant beds, offering moments of pause. The movement from north to south is choreographed: narrow paths widen into vistas, dense vegetation gives way to open grass. The rhythm is cinematic and constantly changing.

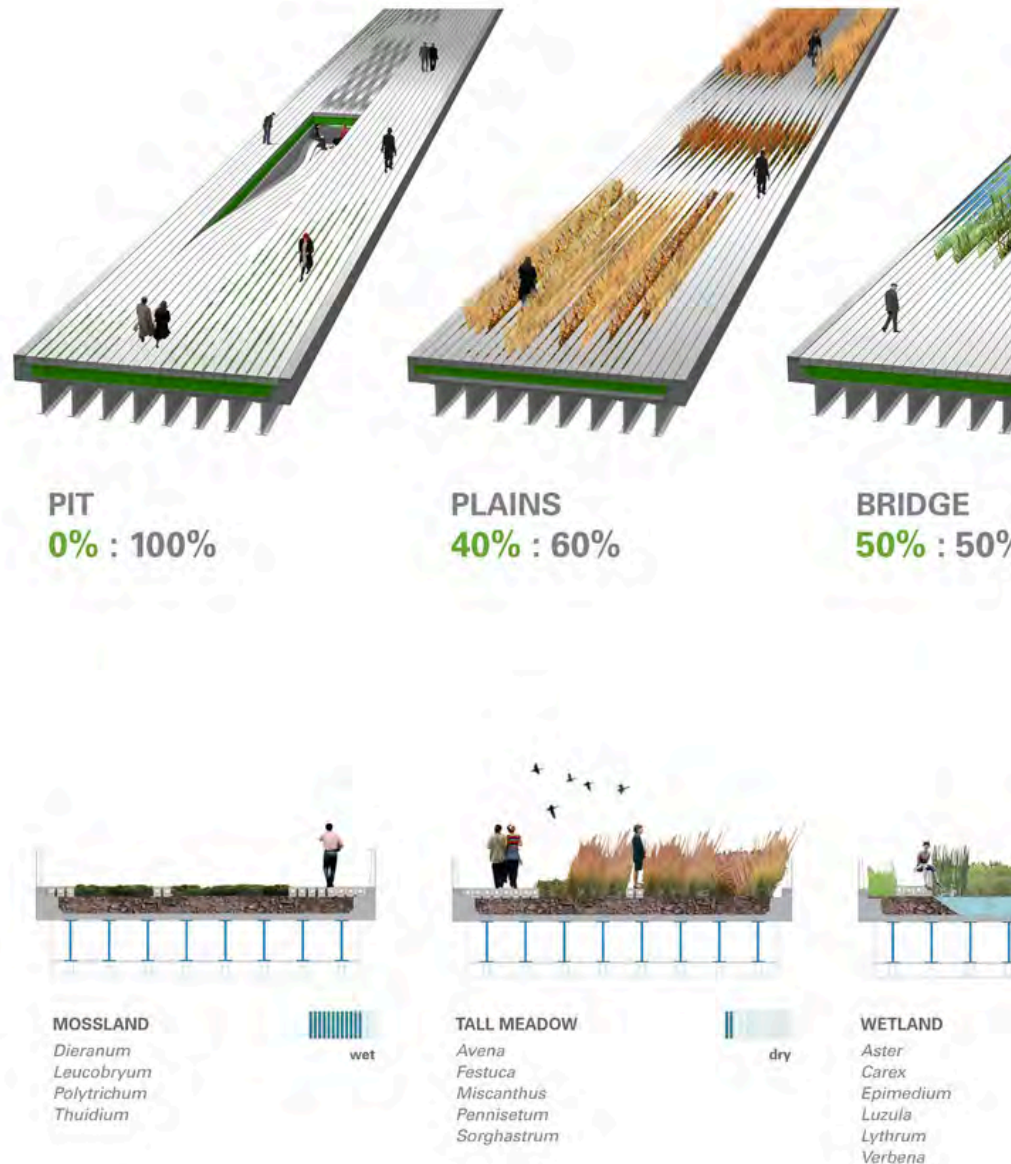


Walking the High Line is an evolving experience. The path constantly changes—sometimes narrow, sometimes wide—revealing new vistas and spatial rhythms at every turn. Shaded areas become sunny clearings, while dense plantings make way for outdoor seating. These changes guide the visitor's pace, inviting reflection and exploration. The journey becomes more than movement; it is a series of quiet moments shaped by light, texture, and sound.

Behind the aesthetic appeal of the design lies a complex ecological and structural system. The High Line supports rainwater retention, pollinator habitats, biodiversity corridors and passive cooling in a 10-metre-wide strip.

Rainwater is absorbed by layers of treated soil and permeable concrete. This reduces runoff, replenishes soil moisture and supports healthy plant growth. Rain collected in once abandoned ballast now feeds a resilient vegetation system. The original steel viaduct was preserved and adapted. This minimised demolition waste and preserved the embodied carbon of existing materials. Structural improvements included reinforcing beams, waterproofing slabs and integrating new decks without compromising the framework. Planting zones were raised or recessed to create microclimates. Taller trees provide shade, while sun-loving grasses dominate the open spaces. The result is a mosaic of living spaces in a compact footprint.

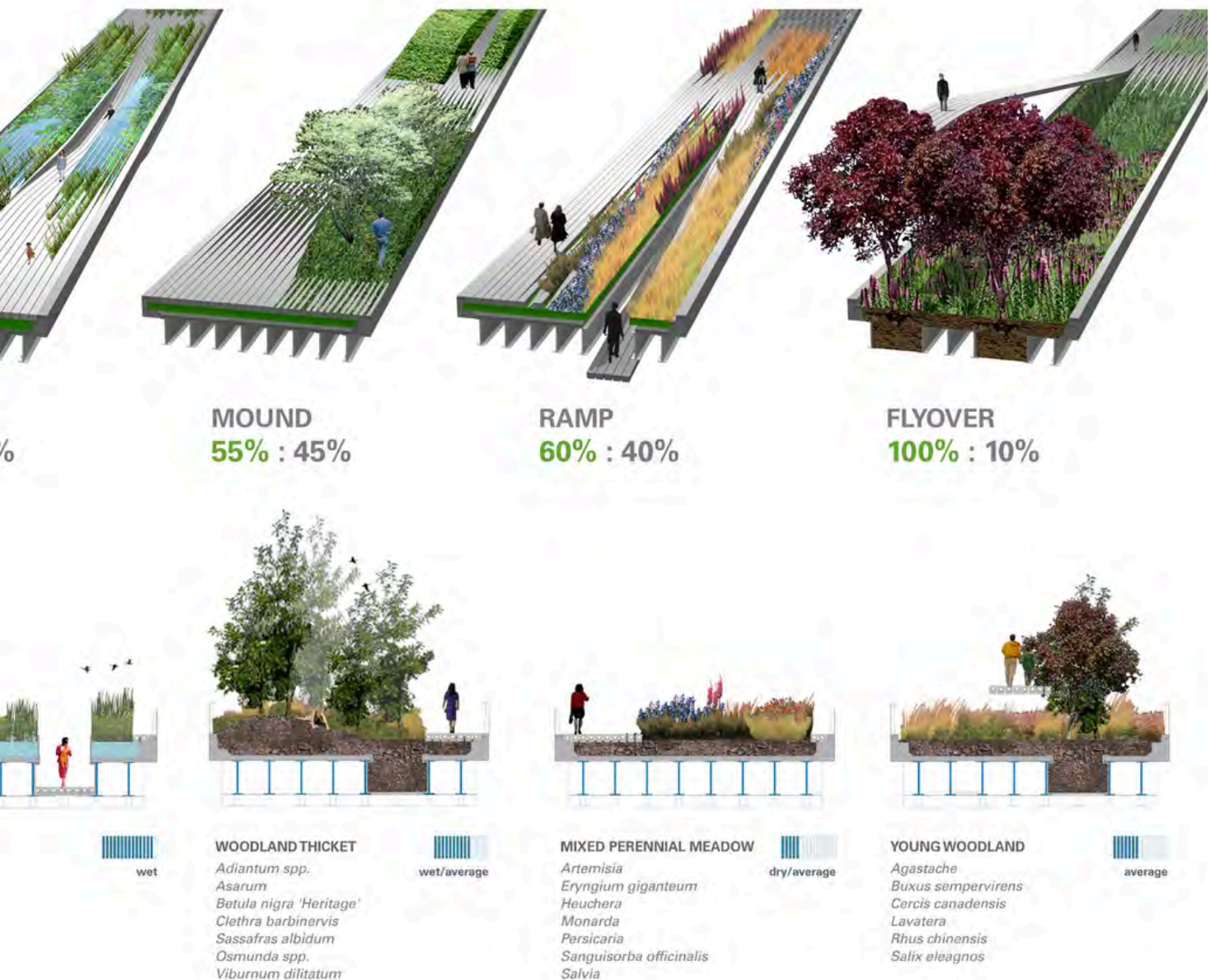
Birds, bees and butterflies have re-inhabited the corridor. Monarch butterflies migrate through the park in late summer. House sparrows nest in dense brush. The design encourages spontaneous ecologies. Corten steel planters oxidize over time and blend into the rusty palette of the railway. Wooden benches turn silvery tones. The materials age with the vegetation, reinforcing the theme of time.



THIS IS A STRUCTURE THAT DOES NOT RESIST NATURE, BUT WORKS WITH IT.

This is a structure that works with nature, not resists it. Beneath the High Line's poetic surface lies a complex ecological system designed to endure. Rainwater is captured and filtered through engineered soil layers, nourishing plants while reducing urban runoff. The reuse of the structure minimizes its carbon impact, while the plant palette creates microclimates for biodiversity. Trees shade walkways, moss grows in concrete joints, and birds nest in the rafters. It is an engineered landscape that lives, adapts, and ages with grace.

This is not just a park, it is an ecological machine. Water flows through the soil, plants breathe through the structure, and the old viaduct is revived.



Fifteen years after the opening of its first section, the High Line remains both beloved and contested. Its influence can be seen in urban projects around the world: The Bentway in Toronto, Seoul's Seoulo 7017, and Paris' Promenade Plantée all draw inspiration from its model.

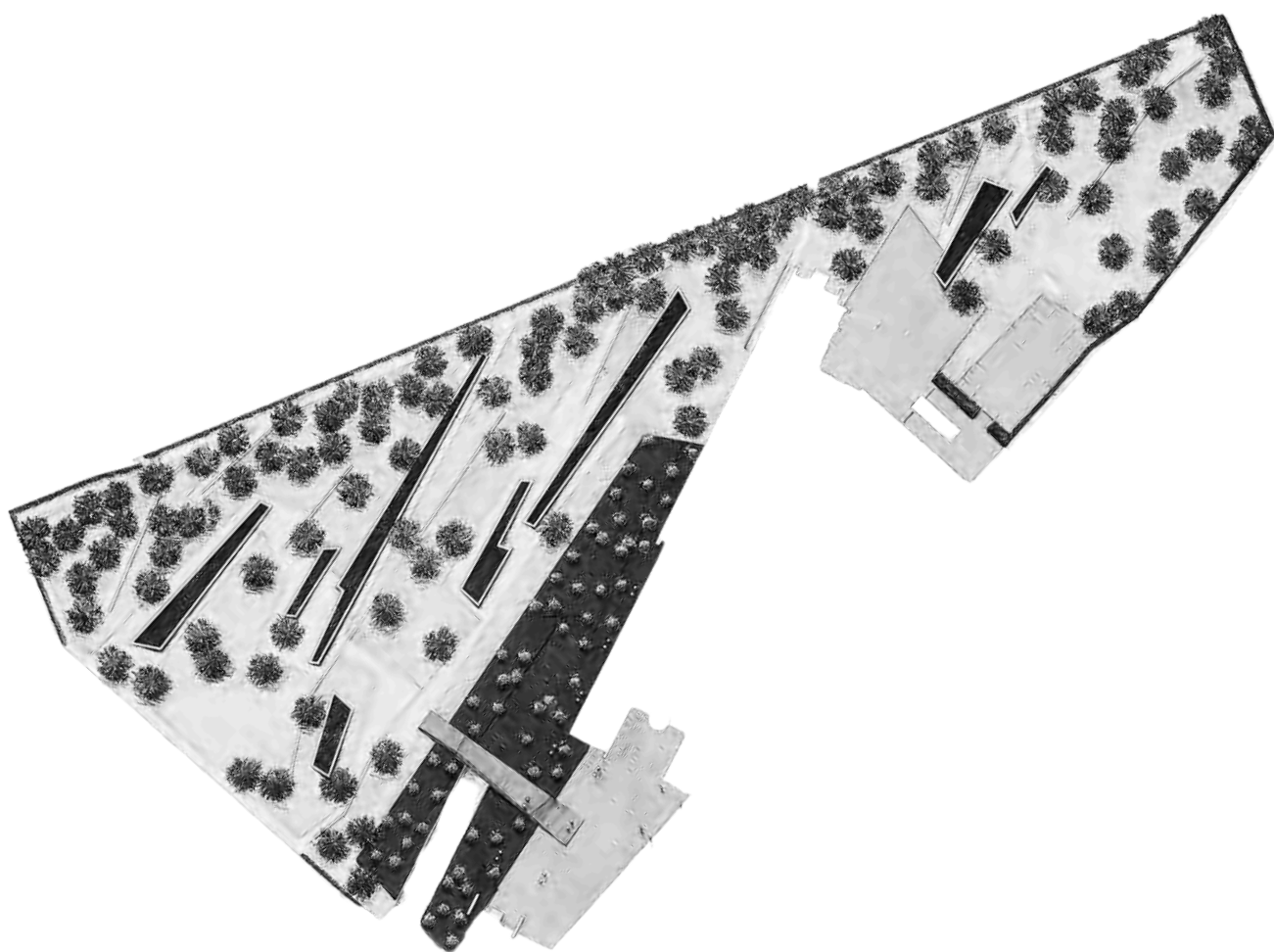
But the High Line has also raised questions. Critics argue that it has contributed to the gentrification of Chelsea and the Meatpacking District. Luxury developments have risen alongside it, raising concerns about displacement and inequality. In response, the High Line has expanded its public programming and access. The Spur, completed in 2019, includes a plaza for performances and social gatherings. The artwork explores themes of migration, identity, and climate change.

From a maintenance perspective, the park has become a thriving ecosystem. Oudolf's approach requires adaptive management—not just pruning and weeding, but also understanding how plants interact over time. Volunteers and staff now manage this living landscape.

Public use has changed, too. Some visit daily, others for events. A shortcut, a shelter, a classroom, a promenade. The park now holds a collective memory: early meetings, political protests, quiet lunches, and childhood explorations.

Ultimately, the High Line teaches us that infrastructure can be soft. That cities can embrace wildness. That time, decay, and community can coexist in public space.

The High Line remembers its past while opening itself to change. A place of continuity and transformation, bearing the marks of both steel and stories.



1293 JUNE 2025

No Walls, No Desks: The Interpolis Experiment
Inside Tilburg's architecture of trust / Movement as a spatial ethic /
Designing for uncertainty: flexibility over form /
Office without anchors /
Freedom, circulation, and the end of spatial control



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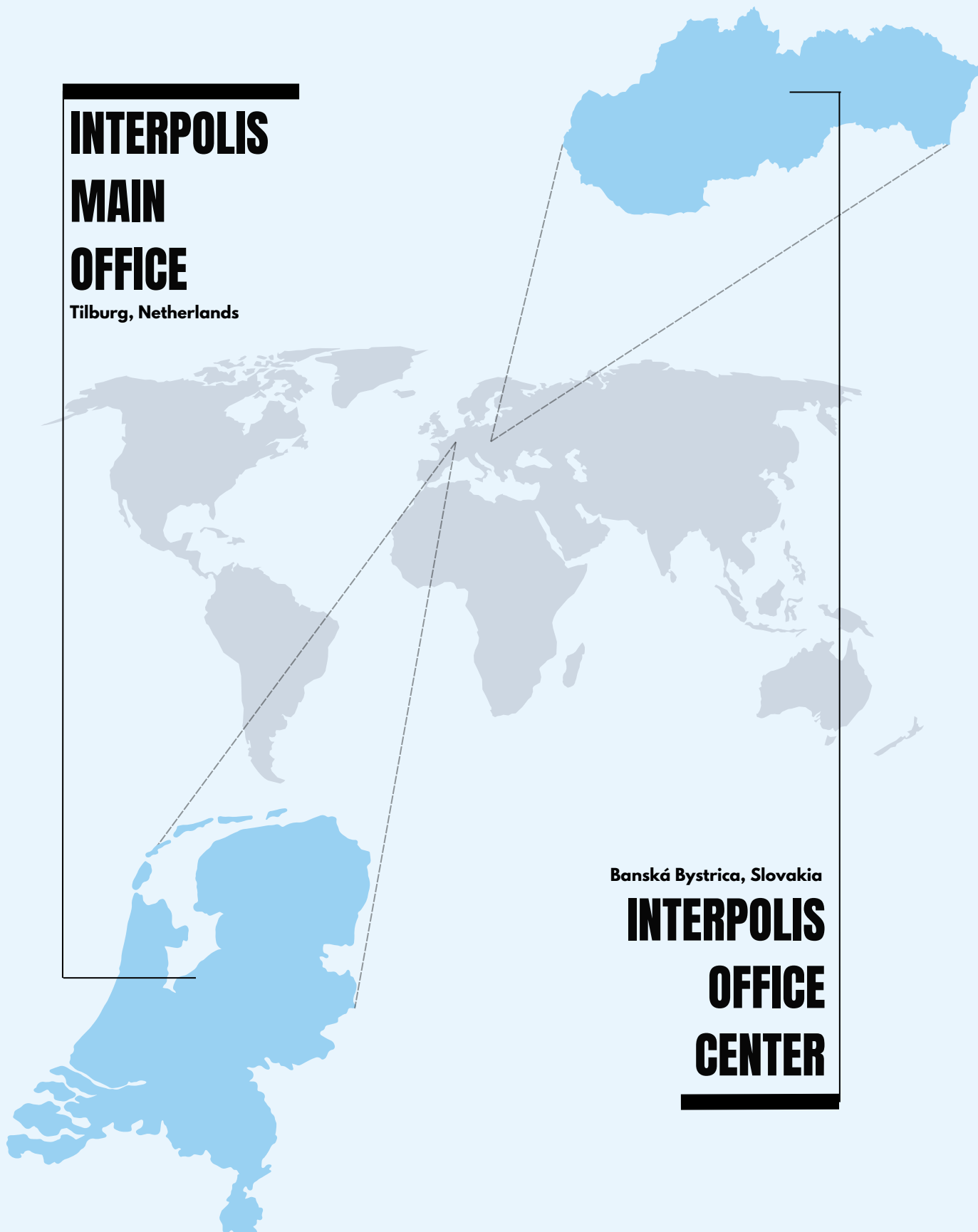
FRAMEWORK

INTERPOLIS MAIN OFFICE

Tilburg, Netherlands

Banská Bystrica, Slovakia

INTERPOLIS OFFICE CENTER



INTRODUCTION

A Radical Shift in Office Design Philosophy





INTRODUCTION A Radical Shift in Office Design Philosophy

THE ZONES ARE CAREFULLY LAYERED ACROSS SPACE, OVERLAPPING IN SILENCE, DISSOLVING BOUNDARIES AT THEIR EDGES.

In an era where the physical workspace is being redefined across the globe, few projects have proven as visionary or enduring as the Interpolis Headquarters in Tilburg, Netherlands. Far from a conventional corporate facility, this building stands as a spatial manifesto—one that challenged the deeply embedded norms of office culture at the turn of the 21st century.

The radicalism of the project lies not in formal experimentation or in futuristic materials, but in something far more subtle and profound: a complete rethinking of how architecture can enable trust, autonomy, and behavioral change. At its core, Interpolis was conceived not just as a place to work, but as a living system—a spatial infrastructure for a new way of being at work.



The traditional office environment—built around fixed desks, closed offices, and hierarchical control—had long served industrial-era needs. But by the 1990s, these models were no longer compatible with the shifting values of transparency, flexibility, and well-being. Digital technologies were decentralizing communication; social attitudes toward labor were evolving; and corporate culture was entering a new phase of self-reflection. Interpolis saw this shift not as a threat, but as an opportunity.



Interpolis Headquarters Interior

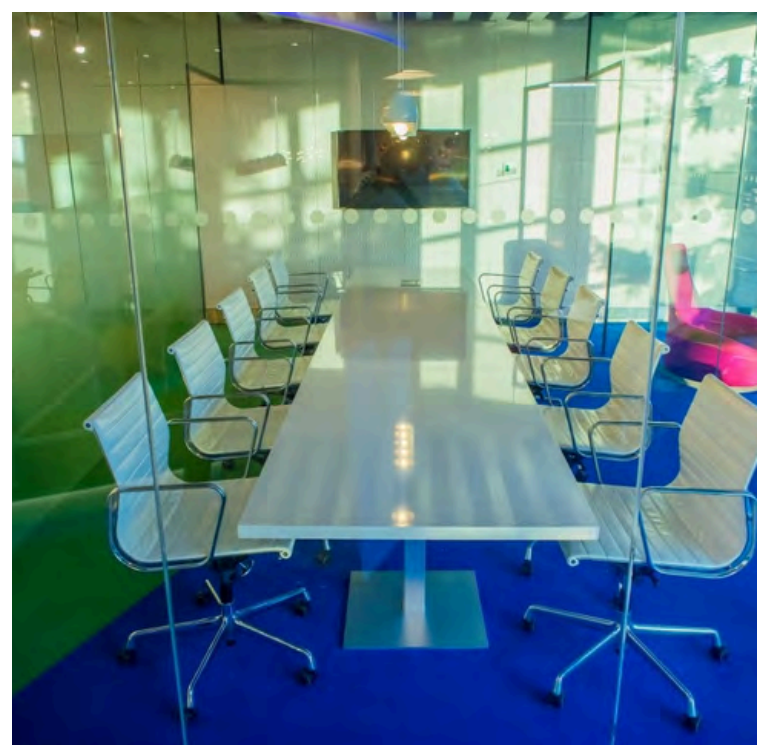


The decision to consolidate eight scattered office buildings into one centralized campus catalyzed this transformation. But rather than replicate the status quo in a newer shell, the leadership—together with architects and consultants—asked a bold question: What if the architecture itself could help people work differently? What if space became not an instrument of control, but a framework for freedom?

This essay unpacks how the Interpolis Headquarters responded to these questions—not only through spatial configuration, but also through its design philosophy, material atmosphere, and operational strategy. By exploring each layer of the project—from planning grid to garden lounge, from user behavior to post-pandemic relevance—we discover how architecture can shift not just walls and windows, but values, habits, and human dynamics.

Interpolis Office Center

Interpolis was not simply designed. It was composed—as a network of relationships between people, space, and purpose. Its legacy, now decades old, remains strikingly fresh, inviting us to rethink what we demand from our workplaces—and what they demand from us.



Interpolis Headquarters Interior

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

From Fragmentation to Unification: Why
Interpol Needed a New Home





HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

FROM FRAGMENTATION TO UNIFICATION: WHY INTERPOLIS NEEDED A NEW HOME



In the early 1990s, Interpolis—one of the largest insurance companies in the Netherlands—found itself physically fractured. Spread across eight separate buildings in Tilburg, the company's departments were disconnected not only by streets and courtyards but by communication delays, redundant infrastructure, and spatial inefficiency. Despite being a single corporate entity, its organizational body was quite literally in pieces.

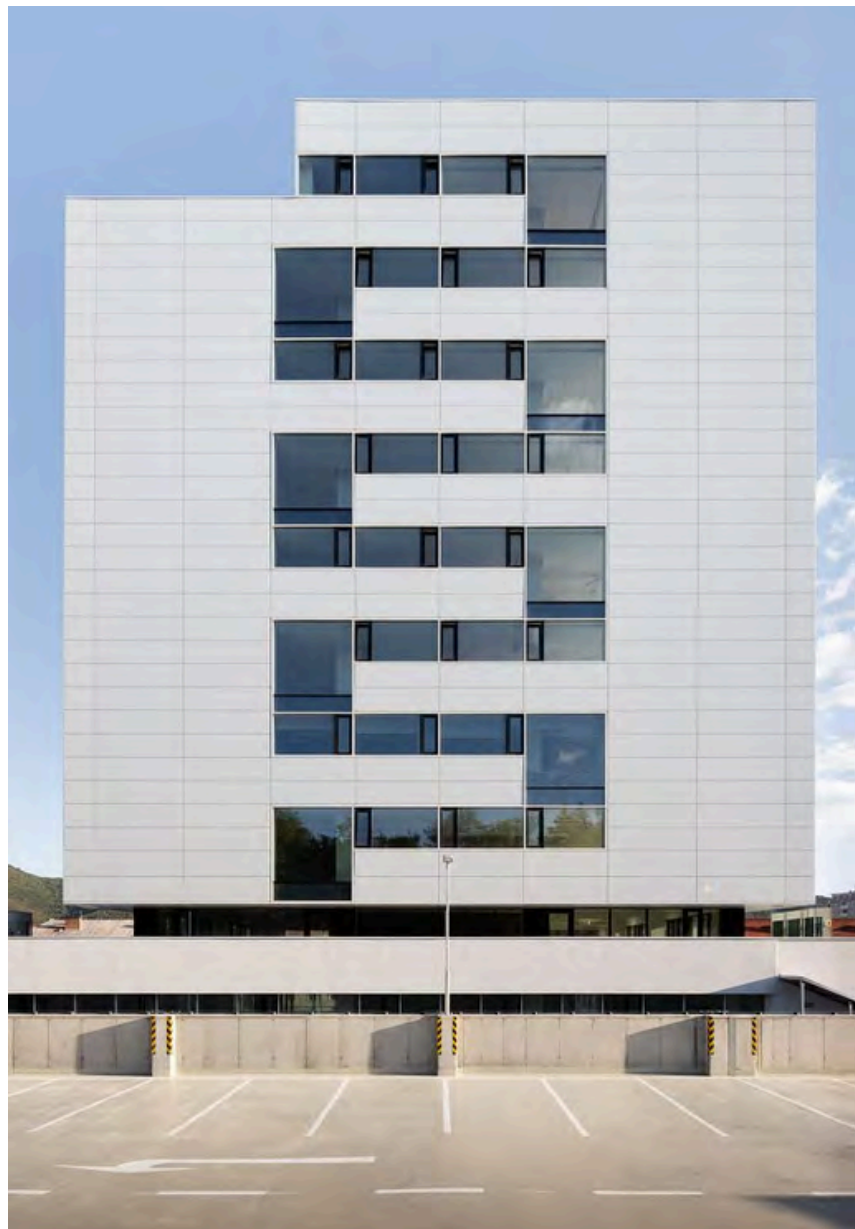


██████ The decentralization, a legacy of gradual growth, had begun to undermine internal cohesion. Meetings required travel between locations. Archives were duplicated. Technology integration lagged behind due to infrastructural incompatibilities. Informal encounters—those spontaneous moments of collaboration—were rare. And as corporate culture across Europe began to shift toward innovation, well-being, and efficiency, Interpolis realized that its spatial logic no longer aligned with its strategic vision.

The decision to consolidate into a single headquarters was not purely logistical—it was philosophical. It marked a shift from operational survival to organizational reinvention. The company saw its spatial restructuring as a way to symbolically and practically reframe how people worked, how they encountered each other, and how decisions flowed.

Tilburg, an industrial city in transition, became the stage for this transformation. The chosen site, adjacent to the central train station and the urban axis of Spoorlaan, was not just convenient—it was intentional. It represented connection. It signaled a desire to be open, visible, and engaged with the city. From the outset, the headquarters was imagined not as a fortress of administration but as a porous structure of interaction.

The commission that followed would lay the foundation for one of the most progressive workplace environments of its time. Architects and consultants were not asked to decorate a box—they were invited to rethink what a workplace could be in a post-industrial, digital, and human-centered economy. What resulted was not merely a building, but a new spatial identity for Interpolis: cohesive, transparent, and future-facing.



Interpolis Office Building



Interpolis Office Center

DESIGN CONCEPTS

and Main Ideas





DESIGN CONCEPTS and Main Ideas

TRUST, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACTIVITY- BASED WORKING

At the heart of the Interpolis Headquarters lies a radical redefinition of how architecture can support not just work, but the values behind it. The project does not begin with form or façade—it begins with a cultural premise: that trust is more productive than control. This philosophy shaped every design decision, from spatial organization to material palette, ultimately producing a workplace that doesn't enforce behavior but invites autonomy.

Interpolis rejected the standard corporate office layout of the 20th century: rows of assigned desks, fixed seating, private offices for managers, and invisible hierarchies embedded in spatial boundaries. In its place, the design introduced the principle of Activity-Based Working (ABW)—a spatial system where employees choose their working environment based on their task, mood, or need at any given moment.

The building is not a container of functions but a landscape of options. Quiet cockpit rooms offer enclosed focus zones; open tables support teamwork; lounge areas create informal exchange; and Club Houses blend leisure with connectivity. There are no assigned desks. There is no rigid floor plan. Instead, the layout encourages movement, choice, and fluidity.



Interpolis Headquarters Interior



Interpolis Interior



Interpolis Headquarters Interior



Transparency plays both a symbolic and functional role. Interior glazing allows for visual continuity across the workspace, reducing territorial behavior and promoting accountability through presence rather than surveillance. You can see others; others can see you—not to control, but to feel collectively present.

Materials support this philosophy. Glass, light-toned woods, soft textiles, and abundant greenery create an atmosphere that is warm, accessible, and open. Acoustic comfort is achieved without isolation; lighting is ambient rather than authoritative. The space doesn't demand productivity—it nurtures it.

Most importantly, the architecture repositions the user not as a passive occupant, but as a decision-maker. Where to work, how to sit, whether to isolate or collaborate—these become everyday freedoms rather than administrative policies. Interpolis understood that modern work was not about where you are stationed, but how you are supported. And this building, at every scale, becomes a quiet advocate for freedom, clarity, and mutual respect.



SPACE IN MOTION

Rethinking the Office as a Continuum





A SPATIAL SYSTEM WITHOUT ANCHORS

Interpolis Headquarters does not present itself as a building made of rooms—it functions as a continuous spatial experience, where the boundaries between zones dissolve into flows of movement, interaction, and autonomy. The traditional office, long composed of fixed desks and spatial hierarchy, is reinterpreted here as a system in flux. What replaces rigid organization is a carefully orchestrated landscape of zones without borders.

At its core, the architecture supports the idea that mobility within the workspace leads to mental mobility. In place of territorial desks or assigned rooms, the plan offers a diversity of environments: quiet cockpits for focus, open lounges for exchange, team zones for short-term projects, and club houses that blur the line between work and social rest. Each space is loosely defined—not by walls, but by material, light, and atmosphere. One transitions into the next, not through doors, but through mood.

The circulation is not merely functional—it is conceptual. Corridors are not just paths; they are links between mental states. One does not “arrive” at work in Interpolis—one flows into it. Movement is encouraged, not penalized. The very act of walking from one space to another becomes a re-centering process, a moment of reflection, or encounter. In this way, motion is designed into the architecture, rather than being a byproduct of it.



██████ The layout also resists hierarchy. There are no corner offices, no physical privileges tied to position. Transparency, both physical and organizational, levels the spatial field. Every employee, from executive to intern, has access to the same environments. This spatial democracy becomes a physical embodiment of the company's cultural values: trust, equality, and openness.

This architectural fluidity is supported by modular planning tactics. Spaces are adaptable, furniture is mobile, and even infrastructure is distributed to allow for future rearrangements. The office becomes a platform rather than a container—a living system that evolves with its users.

By rethinking the office as a continuum, Interpolis challenges the foundational logic of modern workspace design. It proposes not just a new layout, but a new philosophy of how space can be inhabited—fluidly, freely, and with intention.



Interpolis Headquarters Interior



Interpolis Headquarters Interior



LANDSCAPE

as Workspace





GARDENS, ROUTES, AND THE INNER ECOLOGY OF INTERPOLIS

The Interpolis Headquarters project reimagines landscape not as an external frame to the building, but as an active infrastructure of work. Here, gardens are not for ornament—they are operational agents. Routes are not just circulation—they are behavioral scripts. Nature is not outside the office—it is the office.

The central idea is simple but radical: landscape can structure the way people work. Outdoor and indoor green spaces are interwoven to create an atmosphere that blends productivity with calm. The transition from city to workplace is not marked by a sharp threshold, but by a gradual immersion into a cultivated terrain—one where walking, resting, thinking, and connecting are all part of the spatial rhythm.

The gardens curated by West 8 are not passive green zones. They define zones, anchor views, and modulate climate. Tree canopies soften light; planted berms absorb sound; gravel paths choreograph informal interactions. Benches placed under shade offer impromptu meeting spots, while walking trails invite movement between departments—breaking down silos through simple, spatial encouragement.

Interpolis Headquarters Landscape



Even the rooftop is not exempt. It is activated as a usable surface, turning vertical limits into social and ecological assets. It becomes a breathing layer above the office—a place for pause, perspective, and presence.

This approach goes beyond biophilic design. It's not about making buildings look natural; it's about designing work ecologically. Just as an ecosystem is defined by circulation, diversity, and interdependence, the Interpolis campus is structured to foster exchange, adaptability, and well-being. Landscape becomes a medium of movement, mood, and meaning.



Interpolis Headquarters Landscape Plan



Interpolis Headquarters Landscape

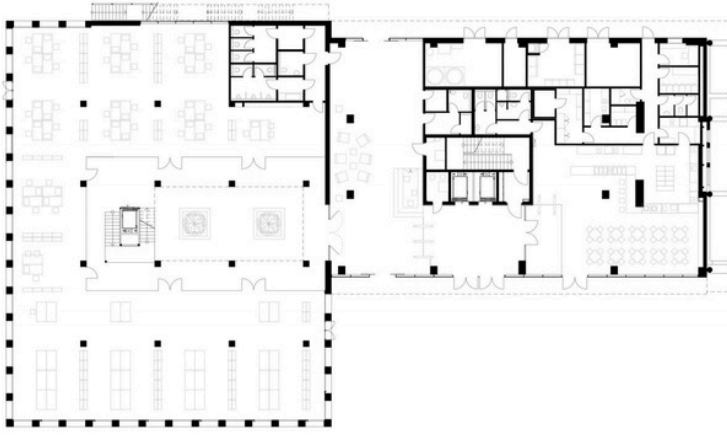
In this way, Interpolis transcends the conventional site plan. It doesn't sit on a landscape—it performs through one. Gardens and routes become more than supports for the architecture. They become part of the architecture's intelligence, shaping not just how people move, but how they feel, think, and collaborate.

ARCHIVE

Plans, Diagrams & Photographs



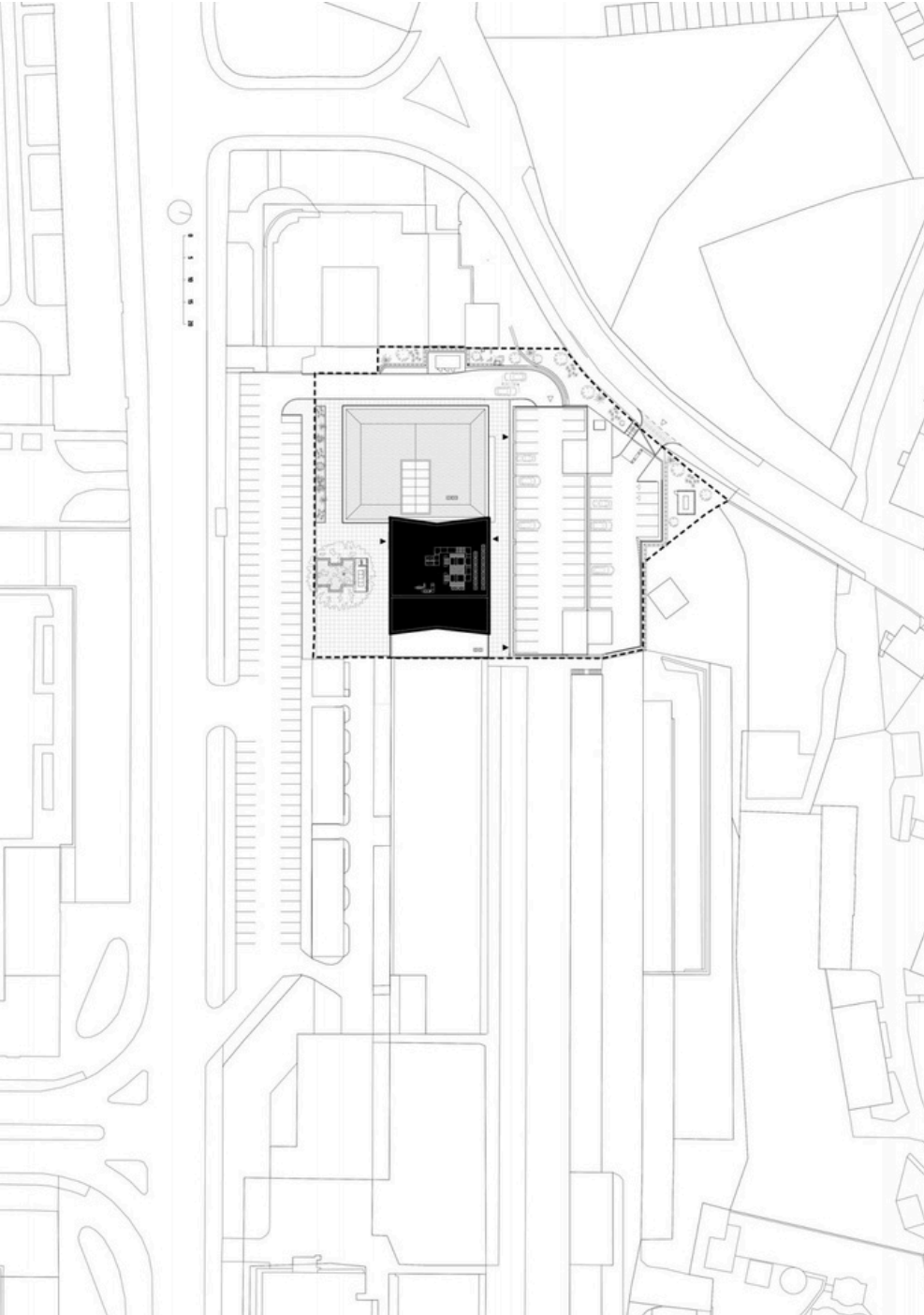




Plan

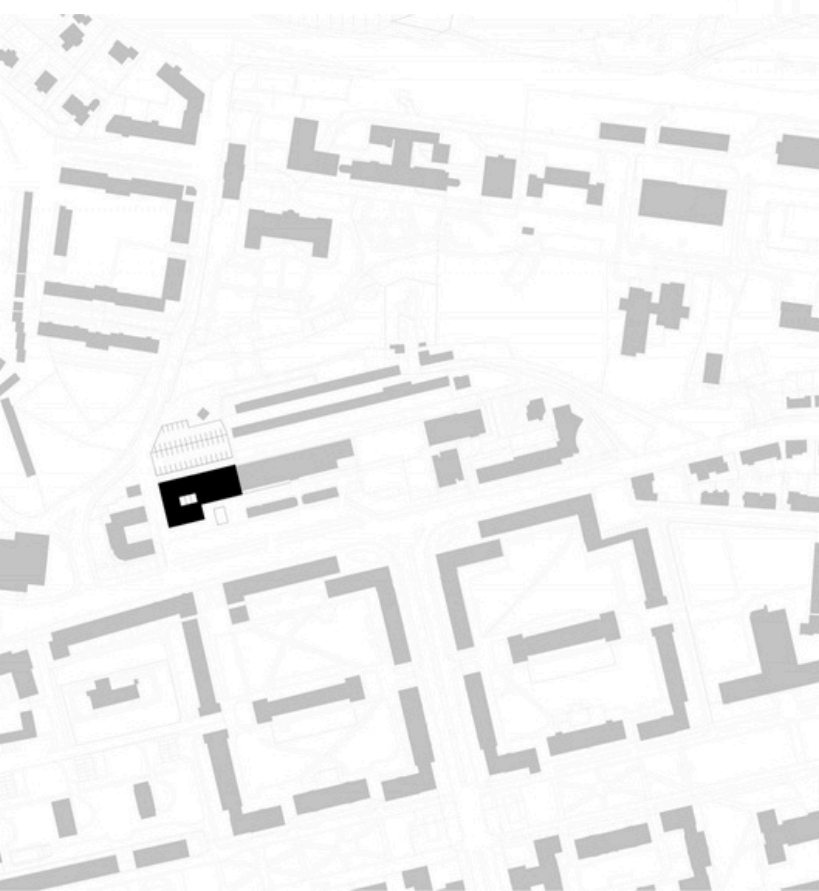
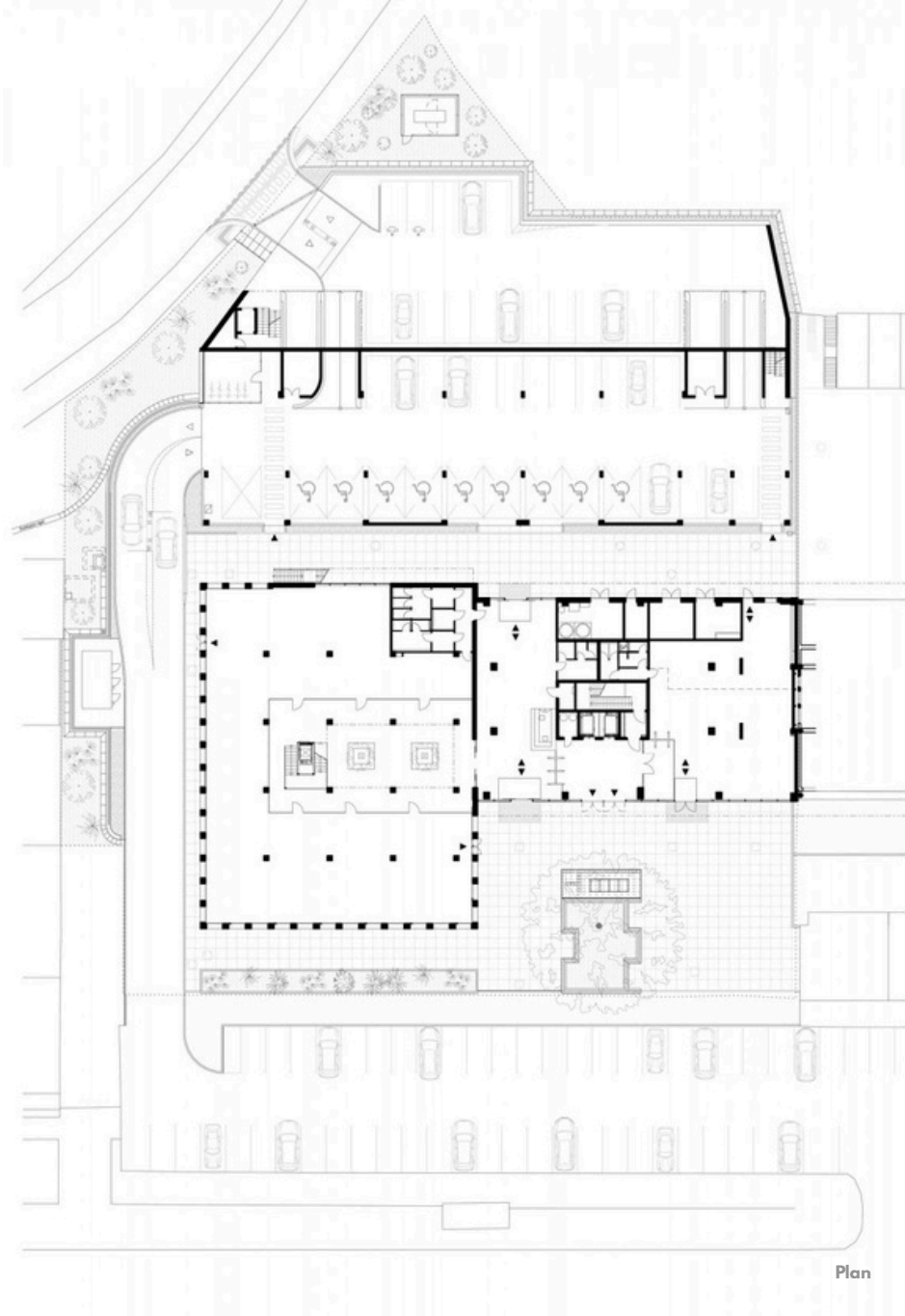
Archive Plans, Diagrams & Photographs

VISUAL ARCHIVE OF INTERPOLIS HEADQUARTERS

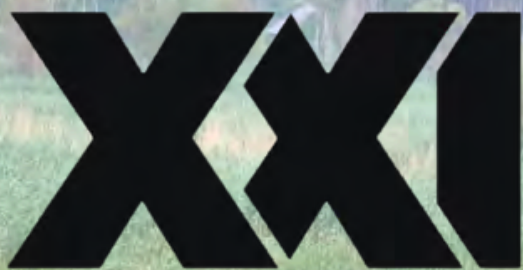


Site Plan





13.06.2025



The Breathing Wetland

Qunli National Wetland Park by Turenspace



Qunli National Wetland Park

Qunli National Wetland Park, located in Harbin, China. This storm-water project lies in the eastern outskirts of the city, covering a total area of approximately 34.2 hectares. As construction begins in February 2010 and started welcoming visitors in November of the same year, it quickly earned recognition from the Chinese Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development as a National Urban Wetland Park. The Project, designed by Turenscape, led by the founder of the firm, landscape architect Kongjian Yu, alongside a multidisciplinary team including architects, landscape architects, biologists, urban planners, environmentalists and engineers like Long Xiang, Han Xiaoye, Song Benming and Zhang Wenjuan.

The conception of this project in mid 2009 emerged as a response to urgent environmental challenges. Beginning in 2006, a 2,733 hectare new urban district, Qunli New Town, was planned to accommodate nearly 300,000 residents. 32 million square meters of building floor area will be constructed, leaving only 16% of the land as a green space. This imbalance led to significant ecological and hydrological risks, especially concerning stormwater management. The original task given by the client was to preserve this wetland, the landscape architect went beyond this task and proposed to transform the area into an urban stormwater park that will provide multiple ecosystems services.





Main idea

At its core, Qunli National Wetland Park tells a compelling story: that urban development and ecological restoration do not have to be in conflict they can thrive together. What was once a neglected and threatened wetland has been reimagined as a living infrastructure, proving that nature can deliver powerful, long lasting services for cities when given space to function. With a thoughtful and innovative design, the park controls floods, filters stormwater, restores biodiversity all without relying on expensive engineering solutions. As important as it is, the park invites people in. It is a place where ecological function meets human experience. In doing so, Qunli National Wetland Park not only heals the land but also redefines how cities can grow more wisely.



Design Components and Tactics

In this park, the design team implemented several thoughtful strategies that not only respond to the site's ecological challenges but also create a space for people to enjoy nature. Kongjian Yu emphasizes that cities should function as organisms, with parks acting as an ecological infrastructure yet the central part of the wetland was intentionally left untouched, allowing natural habitats to continue developing. Surrounding this untouched area, a cut-and-fill method was used to shape a ring of mounds and ponds, using minimal earthwork. This ring acts as a stormwater filtration system for a transition between nature and city. As the water moves through the ponds it filters before released evenly into the wetland. The mounds are planted with groves of native silver Birch trees (*Betula pendula*) with various heights, which create a dense woodland and enhance biodiversity.



(*Betula pendula*)

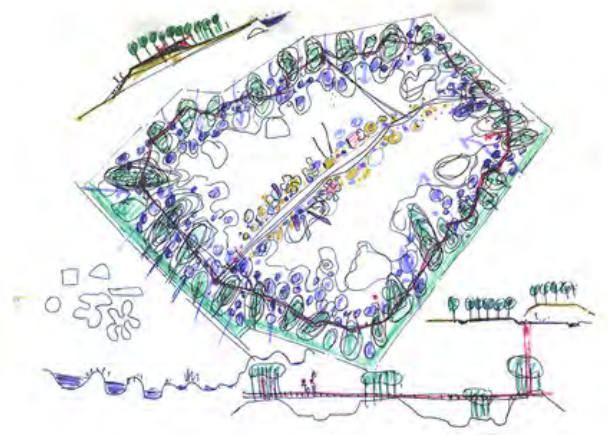
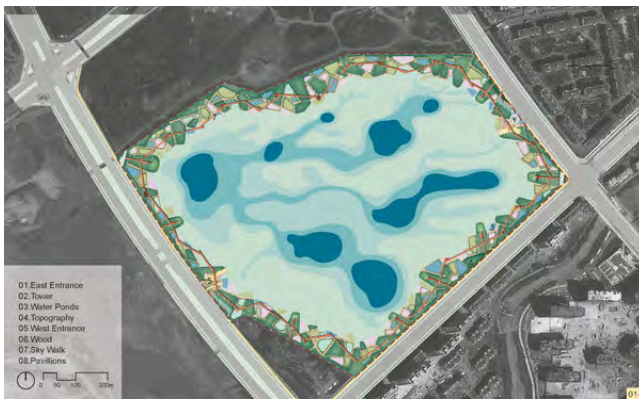


To encourage public engagement, the design integrates a network of winding paths that lead visitors through the ring of ponds and mounds, allowing them to have a walking-through-forest experience. Carefully placed platforms and seating areas along the ponds enable close contact with nature. Rising above the landscape is a skywalk, a suspended path that links the scattered mounds and provide a unique perspective allowing visitors to have an above the wetland and in the canopy experience. Along this sidewalk, five pavilions (bamboo, wood, brick, stone, and metal) serve as both sculptural landmarks and functional rest points. In addition, two viewing towers – one on a steel structure in the eastern corner, and the other a wooden, looking like a tree at the northwest corner- placed to creates moments for observation and reflections.

Performences and Outcomes

Since its opening, Qunli National Wetland Park has proven to be a remarkable model of ecological urbanism, supporting both environmental sustainability and social well-being. It is observed that the park has successfully retained and filtrate up to 500,000 cubic meters of stormwater, significantly reducing flood risk across a 3 squares kilometer area (10 times the area of the park). At the same time, through natural filtration processes, water quality has dramatically improved, and stables groundwater levels have helped restore the local water table. The ecological strategy, centered on the preservation of the wetland's untouched area and complemented by the introduction of newly planted forest belts and diverse vegetation, has significantly revitalized local ecosystems and contributed to a measurable resurgence in biodiversity. Today, the park provides a thriving refuge for a wide variety of wetland species, from birds to insects. Beyond its environmental impact, wetland serves as a public space for recreation and well-being. Visitors can have a quality and peaceful time while walking, jogging, birdwatching along thoughtfully designed paths and skywalks.





Response to Environmental Trends

Qunli National Wetland Park was ahead of its time... Years before china launched its sponge city initiative, Qunli was already revealed the power of nature based solutions in addressing complex urban water challenges like flooding. Instead of using expensive and complex engineering systems Qunli's design prioritized low tech, natural features like ponds, plants, and soil to absorb, clean, and slowly release stormwater. This forward thinking strategy not only manages water efficiently but also support biodiversity, climate regulation, and enhanced public health. As cities search for sustainable models of development, Qunli stands out with its green spaces and smart, sustainable solutions with many benefits. And what makes it even more impressive is that it can be easily replicated in urban areas globally especially in fast growing regions. If even 10% of urban land used similar green sponge systems, the flood risks could drop dramatically.



Design Philosophy

One of the main reasons Qunli National Wetland Park is so successful is its “nature first” design philosophy. What landscape architect and the owner of Turenspace, Kongjian Yu describes as “working with nature, not against it¹. Instead of replacing or controlling the wetland, the design team made a bold decision to protect its untouched center and build around it. This respect for nature become the foundation for the Qunli National Wetland Park. As we talked before, to bring this vision to life, experts from different fields, including landscape architects, environmental scientists, hydrologists, engineers and local community members worked together. The team focused on simplicity, minimizing heavy construction, using materials found nearby and designing features that would be easy and affordable to maintain over time. This kept costing low, while delivering a high impact result. Visitors experience the park through a rich series of layers. They can walk along quiet forest paths, sit beside calm ponds, or explore the landscape from above using elevated skywalk. These different levels let people connect with nature in many ways, up close, from a distance, or high in the trees. One of the iconic features of the Qunli National Wetland Park’s is the ring of ponds and mounds that surrounds the wetland. And this ring does not just look beautiful, it also helps filter stormwater, supports wildlife. Qunli National Wetland Park proves that with thoughtful design, cities do not have to choose between development and ecology. By respecting the landscape and involving the community, it has created a place that is both practical and beautiful, a model for future urban spaces around the world.



Awards

Qunli National Wetland Park has received widespread international acclaim for its groundbreaking integration of ecological restoration and urban design, earning numerous prestigious awards that reflect its global significance among its most recognitions is the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Award of Excellence in 2012 one of the highest honors in the field, celebrating the project’s visionary approach to integrating stormwater management with habitat restoration and public space design. The jury highlighted how the design successfully transformed a degraded, flood prone site into a multifunctional ecological asset that not only serves critical environmental functions but also enriches daily urban life. In 2015, Qunli National Wetland Park received the National Energy Conservation International Award, recognizing its contribution to sustainable development through low impact, energy-efficient infrastructure, these awards highlight not only the projects technical and aesthetic achievements, but also its broader influence on how cities can rethink the relationship between built environments and natural systems. Today, Qunli stands as a global reference point for nature based solutions and sponge city strategies, often cited in academic researches, environmental policy discussions. It continues to inspire designers, planners, and policymakers around the World as an example of how ecological sensitivity, community engagement, and design excellence can come together to address the urgent challenges of urbanization and climate change.



To conclude...

Qunli National Wetland Park is a great example to show how visionary design can catalyze ecological healing and urban resilience. Positioned at the intersection of landcape architecture, environmental science, and public engagement, the park offers a replicable blueprint for future cities striving for ecological harmony and sustainable living. Qunli National Wetland Park reminds us that the resilient infrastructure may just be the wetlands we already have. We hope to see more projects like this in the future...

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PLACES

Living Cities: The Social Role of Urban Design

Introduction

Cities are not just collections of buildings or structures they are the urban spaces that hold marks of lived experience and communal identity. In the age where public spaces are diminishing and private forces shape the city the design of the spaces becomes not only physical matter but also a social one. Located in downtown Portland, Oregon, Lovejoy Plaza, completed in 1966, is not just a example of landscape architecture at the same time as a essential response to the social dynamic, environmental awareness and transformation of urban life in that era. The plaza "Portland Open Space Sequence" designed by famous landscape architect Lawrence Halprin embodies a distinctive design philosophy that combines the Dynamics of water, topography and human actions.

With its effective concrete fountains, terraced seating areas and choreography circulation paths, the space provides tactile, experiential experience that was revolutionary for its time. This essay explains the conceptual principles, design elements and urban methods of Lovejoy Plaza, while also evaluating how its lasting influence engages with current environmental and social concerns—positioning it not merely as a reflection of its era, but also a guiding example for future public spaces.

The Influence of Lawrence Halprin

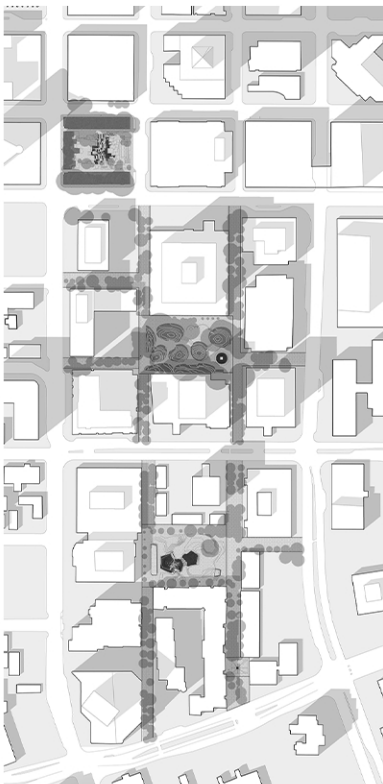
The design of Lovejoy Plaza was heavily affected by Lawrence Halprin. Halprin's education highlights ecological principles, and his work always featured the dynamic processes of nature. Although his strong relationship with choreography allowed him to integrate ideal human movement and rhythm into the design of spaces. This approach is obvious in Lovejoy Plaza, where water, topography and human actions come together to create a dynamic urban stage.

Design Collaboration

Both Charles Moore and William Turnbull who are in Halprin's team have influenced great impact on the project. Moore's architectural expertise enhanced the plaza's user-friendly and aesthetic qualities, while Turnbull's urban planning knowledge ensured the project harmonized with its broader city context.

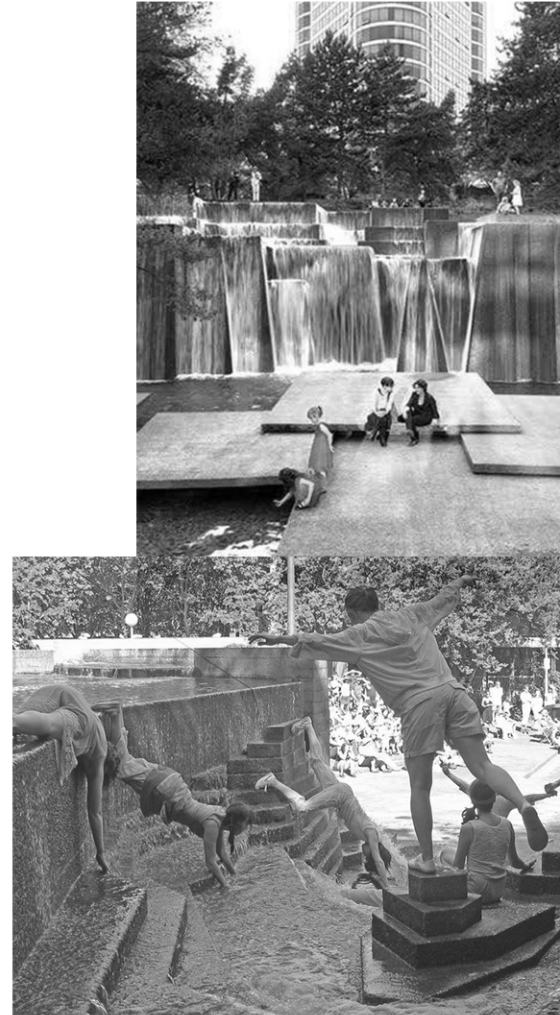
Urban Renewal Context

Lovejoy Plaza was designed as a part of South Auditorium Renewal Project in Portland during the 1960s. This Project aimed to reshaping the social and physical fabric of downtown area. However this Project also cause the demolition of neighborhoods and significant changes in the social fabric of local communities. With this context Lovejoy plaza emerged as a design that accentuated the importance of public space, simulated social interaction and sought to revive communal life in the city. Thus Lovejoy plaza is not only a architectural or landscape Project moreover as a critical and creative response to the urban transformation process of its time.



Nature and Human Interaction

Lawrence Halprin's design philosophy centers on creating an organic balance between nature and urban life. Halprin believes cities are not merely collections of concrete structures, but dynamic environments where human actions and natural elements interact. He understood landscape architecture not only as an artistic discipline, but also as a choreography of movement where human interaction with space is as significant as its form composition. This perspective allowed him to complete both ecological and social intent into his design process. In Lovejoy Plaza, Halprin aims to bring together urban environments and nature is demonstrated. The Project re-explains the blending of water, landforms and human activity to reflect natural dynamics. Water flows continuously throughout the space as a dynamic, living element, providing users an experience that keeps changing. The design of stepped seating and controlled path is meant to simplify social connections and lead visitors throughout the space. Halprin believed that public spaces should be more than just visually appealing. Public spaces should be where people come together and cooperate. Halprin's designs aimed to create environments that connect with people both physically and emotionally.



Spatial Experience and Material Composition

The most distinctive element of Lovejoy Plaza is the flowing water system shaped by bold concrete forms, evoking natural waterfalls. In his work, the complexity and diversity of nature are rethought so that city residents can truly experience them.

For Halprin, an effective landscape is both from the harmony between nature and culture. Lovejoy Plaza stands as a prime example of his philosophy, acting not only as a physical space but also as a center where social relationships grow and the urban environment coexists with natural process. Today, Halprin's ideas continue to shape sustainable and inclusive urban design, providing his vision to be as relevant now as it was over half a century ago.



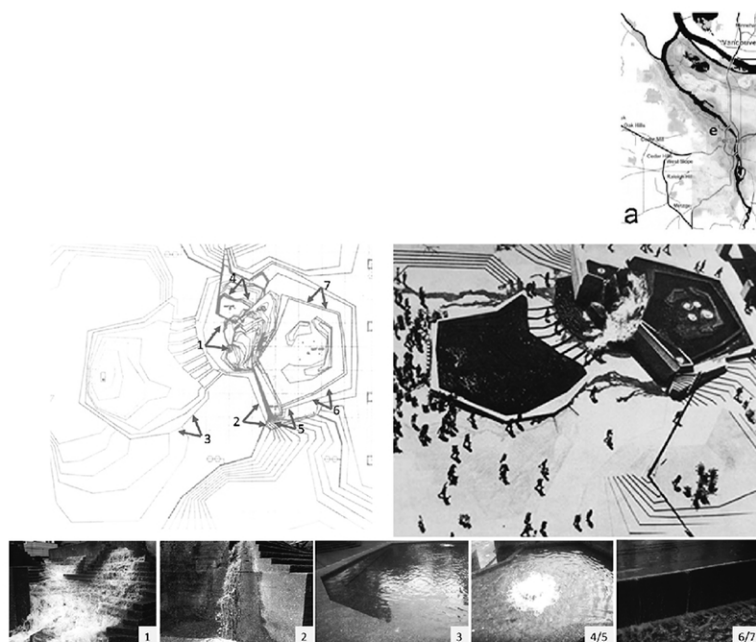
Cultural Role and Contemporary Relevance

Lovejoy Plaza was designed as a social gathering place. Halprin's understanding of public space aims for individuals not only to be present in the space, but to interact there and share the space as a common experience. This approach is directly related to the rising social movements of the 1960s. The time of building Lovejoy Plaza was when youth movements were on the rise in America and public spaces were becoming part of political discourse. Lovejoy Plaza became one of the areas of expression of the counterculture in the 1970s, reflecting the freedom and alternative community understanding in the city. Although the user profile has changed today, Lovejoy Plaza still continues to function as a meeting, resting and transition area for people from different walks of life. Thanks to its accessible structure and user-oriented design, it continues to be an important urban space that has maintained its publicity from past to present.



Although designed in the 1960s, Lovejoy Plaza has significant intersections with today's environmental debates. Halprin's design, which makes water the focal point of the space, aligns with today's increasing awareness of the water cycle. The water flowing throughout the space not only provides users with visual pleasure, but also raises awareness of natural cycles. This approach ties in with sustainability concepts such as urban water management and ecosystem-compatible design principles. But the Plaza also remains critical from an environmental perspective, with its heavy use of a critical material: concrete. While concrete has been criticized for its carbon footprint, Halprin's plank-marked surface and relationship with water give the material a sensory and contextual meaning, but this is an issue that needs to be reconsidered in terms of sustainability. Concrete is criticized for its environmental impact, but Halprin's use of plank-tracked concrete and its interaction with water makes this material more meaningful. However, the use of this material should be reconsidered in terms

of sustainability.

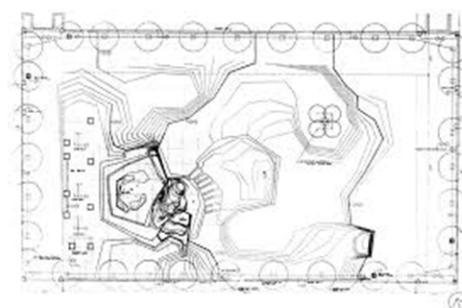


Concrete is criticized for its environmental impact, but Halprin's use of plank-tracked concrete and its interaction with water makes this material more meaningful. However, the use of this material should be reconsidered in terms of sustainability. Lovejoy Plaza not only reflects the urban design ethos of the 1960s, but is still an important source of inspiration for contemporary public space design. Lawrence Halprin's human-centered approach, his effort to create a space that works in harmony with nature, and his design approach that encourages public interaction are still strongly aligned with the concepts of sustainability and social inclusion. The Plaza goes beyond an ordinary public space with the movement of water, elevation changes, and use of materials, allowing users to experience and explore the space

In this respect, Lovejoy Plaza offers a participatory space model that strengthens social ties in urban life. On the other hand, when the legacy of Lovejoy Plaza is evaluated from a critical perspective, it becomes clear that it faces current problems such as social injustices caused by the urban transformation process and the shrinkage of public spaces under the pressure of private property. The vision of the 1960s is even more questionable today in the face of increasing economic and spatial segregation. It is obvious that participation. In this context, it is important that the Lovejoy Plaza design is a starting point for addressing these deficiencies in future urban projects. As a result, Lovejoy Plaza is not only an important and innovative urban design experience of the past, but also an important guide for sustainable, inclusive and interactive public spaces of the future.



This area offers a model that enriches public life with its sensory and spatial features that enable users to reconnect with nature. In addition, it continues to be a constantly evolving and inspiring source in the disciplines of urban planning and landscape architecture, both as a historical heritage and by adapting to the changing needs of today. Thus, Lovejoy Plaza continues to exist as an important example that contributes to the development of urban public spaces with both the strength it derives from the past and its vision for the future.





Urban Wild

no 205
2025

Learning Landscape

- **Nature
Reconstructed in
Manhattan**
- **Pedagogical
Landscapes for
Children**
- **Stone, Water, Light:
A Poetic Dialogue**
- **Seasonal Change as
Design Strategy**

Teardrop Park: Reconstructing Nature in the Heart of Manhattan

City or nature? Not at all. Only 0.7 hectares separate them. The city is encroaching, zoning rules, nature, play, and quiet are being replaced by concrete, glass, and traffic. Kids are glued to screens indoors, and trees are mostly ornamental. But what if a child finds their first stone here? A narrow opening, quiet, shaded, and alive, refuses to give way.

Teardrop Park is more than just a park. It's a subtle protest against urbanization. It's a playground without a beep, a landscape devoid of plastic, and a method for reintroducing nature. This is an ecological pause in a city known for its vertical ambition.

Teardrop Park is the city's poetic apology to nature and the kids growing up without it. It was created with 1,900 tons of stone from the Hudson Valley, intended for kids, microbes, and moss.



How did a lengthy slide, a few native plants, and a pile of rocks become a manifesto? Teardrop Park didn't intend to spark a revolution, but even a little patch of moss can feel radical in a world where nature must be planned.

A hidden garden

Located at the northern end of Battery Park City in Manhattan, New York, Teardrop Park is a 0.7 hectares (1.8 acre) compact city park. The park was opened to the public in 2004. It is situated on embankment land acquired from the Hudson River. Although the park is hidden in a small area, it has a strong nature hide in a crowded metropolis like Manhattan. Battery Park City, planned since the 1970s, is perspective-oriented with sustainable architecture and landscape plans.

The park is settled between Warren Street and River Terrace, surrounded by four high residential blocks. This location turns the park into a "hidden garden". The park is a hidden place, away from city life.



Urban Reconstruction and Nature's Influence

The main purpose of Teardrop Park is to create a micro living space for children where they can spend time in harmony and interact with nature. The park is designed by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA). It is enriched with the installations by artist Ann Hamilton. In the design process carried out with child development experts, a strategy focusing on pedagogical elements and natural processes was used.

The use of natural materials not only replaces artificial structures, but also provides an opportunity for exploration, tactile perception, and freedom in the children's world. In this park, children play with water, climb stones, and learn the texture of tree bark. Thus, the park is an educational, transformative public landscape area with a playground.



Space Organization and Spatial Fiction: A Comparative Analysis

Teardrop Park is divided into two main parts:

Southern Section and North Section.

Southern Section

This section, which has more shade, provides active play areas for children. There are many items such as a long stainless steel slide, theater steps of natural stones, two sandboxes, water playgrounds, and small trails. All of these elements function as natural experience materials instead of the plastic toys of traditional playgrounds.

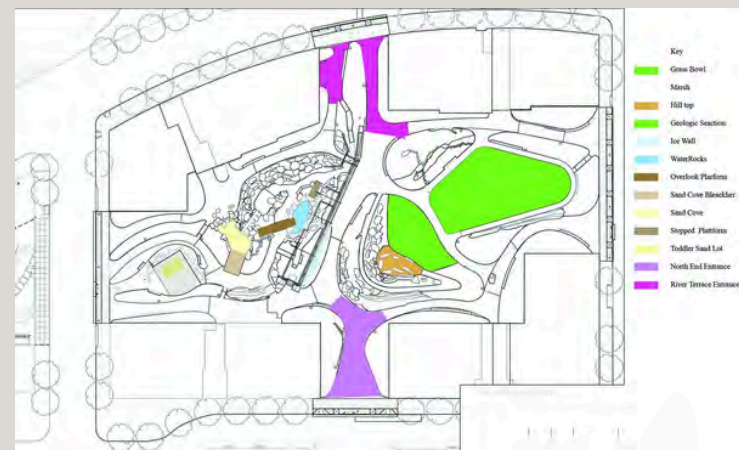
North Section

The northern section, which receives more sunlight, is a more open space for free play and repose. It is equipped with a large lawn area, wetland trail, stone collection area, and benches. In this section people can spend time enjoying nature, sit, look around, or explore the park's corners.

The 8.2-meter-high rock wall separates the two sections. This wall is a symbolic structure. It depends on an integrated water system to form icicles in winter. The tunnel in the middle strengthens the sense of crossing and exploration in the park relative to the Central Park underpasses.



Plan of the Teardrop Park



Topography and Spatial Depth

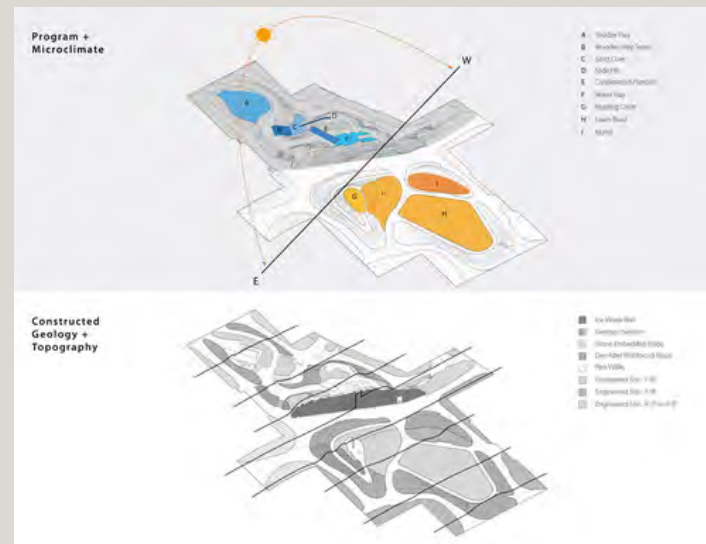
The topography of Teardrop Park is distinguished from the other flat-surface city parks. The goal of MVVA is to make the user feel like they are in a natural geography rather than a normal, ordinary urban void, even if they are in the middle of a crowded city. Curves, slopes, paths, and steps provide a dimensional depth and peace for adults while creating exploration for children. As a result, with each visit, visitors discover a new part of the park that provides them with different experiences and makes them feel like a newcomer.

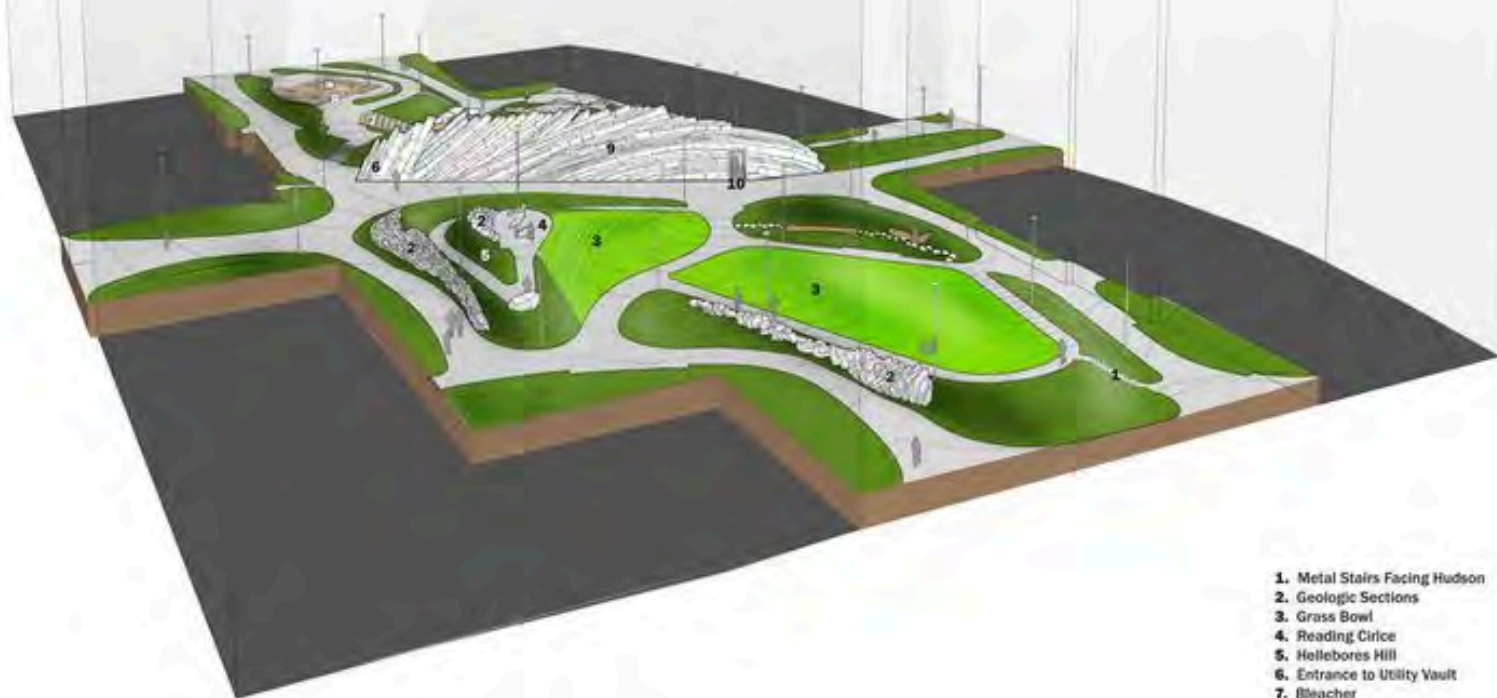
Topographic diversity contributes to absorbing noise pollution, providing visual privacy, and creating microclimate diversity. Although the park is surrounded by huge buildings, it functions as a passageway to different worlds inside.

Material Strategy and Local Identity

The use of materials was chosen to enhance the park's relationship with the local environment. 1,900 tons of natural stone (bluestone, granite, limestone) brought from the Hudson Valley region were chosen to emphasize not only aesthetics but also local identity. These stones lose their vitality over time, like other natural elements, and they visually contribute to the seasonal transformation of the park.

More than 50% of the materials were sourced from within a radius of 500 miles. As a result, carbon emissions from transport are reduced and the local economy is supported. Also, local sources provided Cedar wood was used in wooden seating elements.





1. Metal Stairs Facing Hudson
2. Geologic Sections
3. Grass Bowl
4. Reading Circle
5. Hellebores Hill
6. Entrance to Utility Vault
7. Bleacher
8. Sand Lot
9. Ice Wall
10. Tunnel

Forrestal Avenue



Working Drawing



Under Construction at Night



Planting: Ecological and Aesthetic

Balance

The plant design was developed according to the regional ecology. 88% of the plant species were native species. Shade-tolerant plants create microhabitats for birds, pollinators, and small mammals. Plants also provide visual pleasure to the user with seasonal color changes.

While species that shed leaves in the fall offer a rich range of colors, conifers such as pine and cedar maintain their green texture throughout the year. "Low-mow" lawns reduce the need for preservation and support the development of natural insect fauna. In addition, pesticides and synthetic fertilizers are not used to keep the soil healthy.

This vegetation also benefits the ecosystem. It contributes to ecosystem services such as water retention capacity, prevention of soil erosion, and improvement of air quality. Such multi-layered strategies emphasize the importance of integrating nature-based solutions into urban planning.(Benedict & McMahon, 2006).

Water Management and Energy Strategies

Teardrop Park is one of the parks that is a pioneer in environmentally friendly water management practices. The irrigation system is integrated into the gray water and rainwater recovery system in neighboring buildings. The recycled water from The Solaire building links up with the irrigation needs of the entire park.

Carpenter Norris Consulting designed the three heliostats in the southern extension.

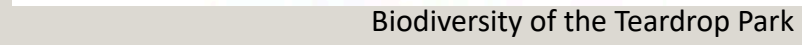
This system improves natural lighting by reflecting sunlight from the attic to the park to break the shade created by the buildings. Heliostats are an ideal implementation for integrating passive energy technology into landscape design.

Dialogue Established with Art

Artist Ann Hamilton's installations add poetic and sensory layers to the park's design. Inscriptions carved into stone surfaces enhance children's visual and tactile experience. These installations contribute significantly to developing spatial attention, engaging with imagination, and generating meaning, especially for children.

This conversation that art establishes with the natural environment is an important component of the production of meaning in landscape architecture.

The park, being in the city center, provides a livable environment not only for humans but also for birds, insects, microorganisms, and other animals. It serves as a stopping point for birds during seasonal migration periods. Selected plant species for bees, butterflies, and insects contribute to the urban pollination chain.



Biodiversity of the Teardrop Park

Social Use and Urban Belonging

Another important feature of Teardrop Park is that it brings people from different age groups together. While children are having a great time with their peers, recreation areas permit adults to be alone with nature and relax in the park. As a breathable space within the city, isolated from noise, the park becomes a valuable stop in daily life. Adults and children can blow off steam and refresh their minds here.

One of the aspects of the park open to criticism is that it creates an "overly private" feeling. The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) finds the park inadequate in terms of access, observability, and social density. However, the user analysis of the Natural Learning Initiative claims that especially children return to the park frequently and experience the space positively.



Transformation Over Time: Seasons and Aging

The design of the park has an attractive understanding that evolves over time. Stones become mossy over time, plants grow and take different forms, and the erosion of wooden surfaces allows the space to change like a living organism. This process also results in the deepening of the relationship between the user and the park.

Icicles that form on rock walls during winter make the seasonal water cycle visible. Blooming trees in spring and dense foliage in summer offer different layers of experience throughout the year. This seasonal cycle transforms the park from a static design object into a constantly evolving ecological system.



Educational Potential and Ecological Literacy

The park is not only a playground for children but also an area for observing nature, learning about ecological processes, and interacting with nature. The wetlands, stone surfaces, plants, and living organisms that they can directly observe have high pedagogical potential.

Collaborating with schools and teaching ecology lessons in the park strengthens the bond that children establish with nature. Such direct experiences support ecological literacy skills and form the basis for future conservation behaviors.

Conclusion: A Silent Dialogue Established With Nature

Teardrop Park offers a multi-pronged landscape experience in a small area. It responds to the hardness of the city with a soft, natural language. Combining biodiversity, sustainability, user experience, and cultural layers, this park demonstrates that nature can be rebuilt in urban life. In the words of Michael Van Valkenburgh: "This park may be the place where a child meets the first stone, discovers the water for the first time, and plays his first game with nature." This vision makes Teardrop Park an experiential space, not just a public space.

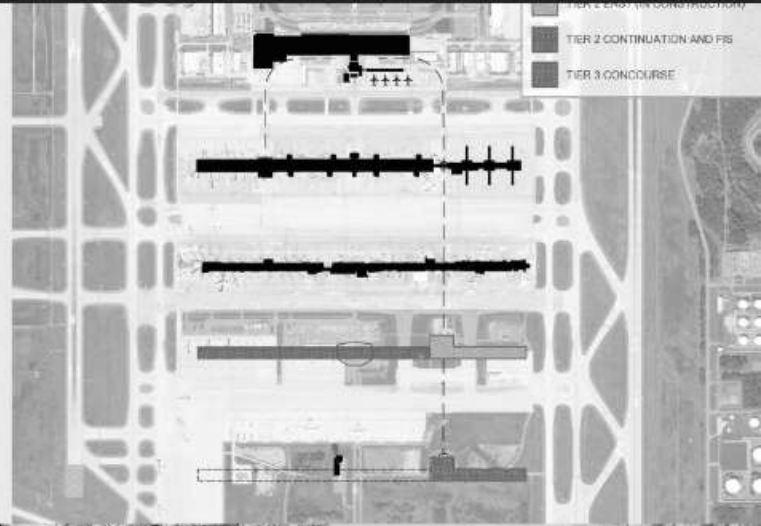


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Archiving Structure: Reshape Public Space, Configure Access



Knight Architects, 2025, Canada

Large-scale infrastructure, and public realm transformation and how civic spaces serve communities in the 21st century. Shaped by ecological references and inclusive public space.

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Friz Lang, Metropolis, 1927, Germany

**‘the most important thing about architecture
is arriving in new worlds, rather than returning to old ones’
Rem Koolhaas**

One may wonder if he had the spectacular urban visions of sci-fi cinema in mind. In sci-fi, directors are able to construct entire universes and, crucially, test how they function. Films like Metropolis and Blade Runner offer the opportunity to both critically reflect on our contemporary environments and to explore possibilities for the future of our cities.

Through presentations, screenings and discussions with experts and practitioners drawn from a range of fields, this Study Day explores the fertile two-way traffic of ideas between sci-fi cinema and architecture, urbanism and planning.

STEEL YARD PROJECT

ALIVE AND PRESENT

ecological transformation
of industrial residues: brown area
reproduction

Morris Beacon Design, civil engineers
EA Engineering, environmental engineers
Structures Workshop, structural engineers
Griffith + Vary, electrical engineers
KMDG, landscape architect
Providence, Rhode Island

HOW TO DEAL WITH RUN UP ISSUES?



The decline of heavy industry in North American cities has left behind numerous underutilized and environmentally compromised sites. These post-industrial lands, often termed brownfields, present not only ecological challenges but also opportunities for community-centered reactivation. One example of such transformation is The Steel Yard in Providence, Rhode Island — a 3.5-acre former steel fabrication site converted into a public arts and industrial education campus. Providence Steel & Iron Company, the site functioned for nearly two centuries as a center of industrial production. Following its closure, the land was left with contaminated soils, deteriorated infrastructure, and limited public access.

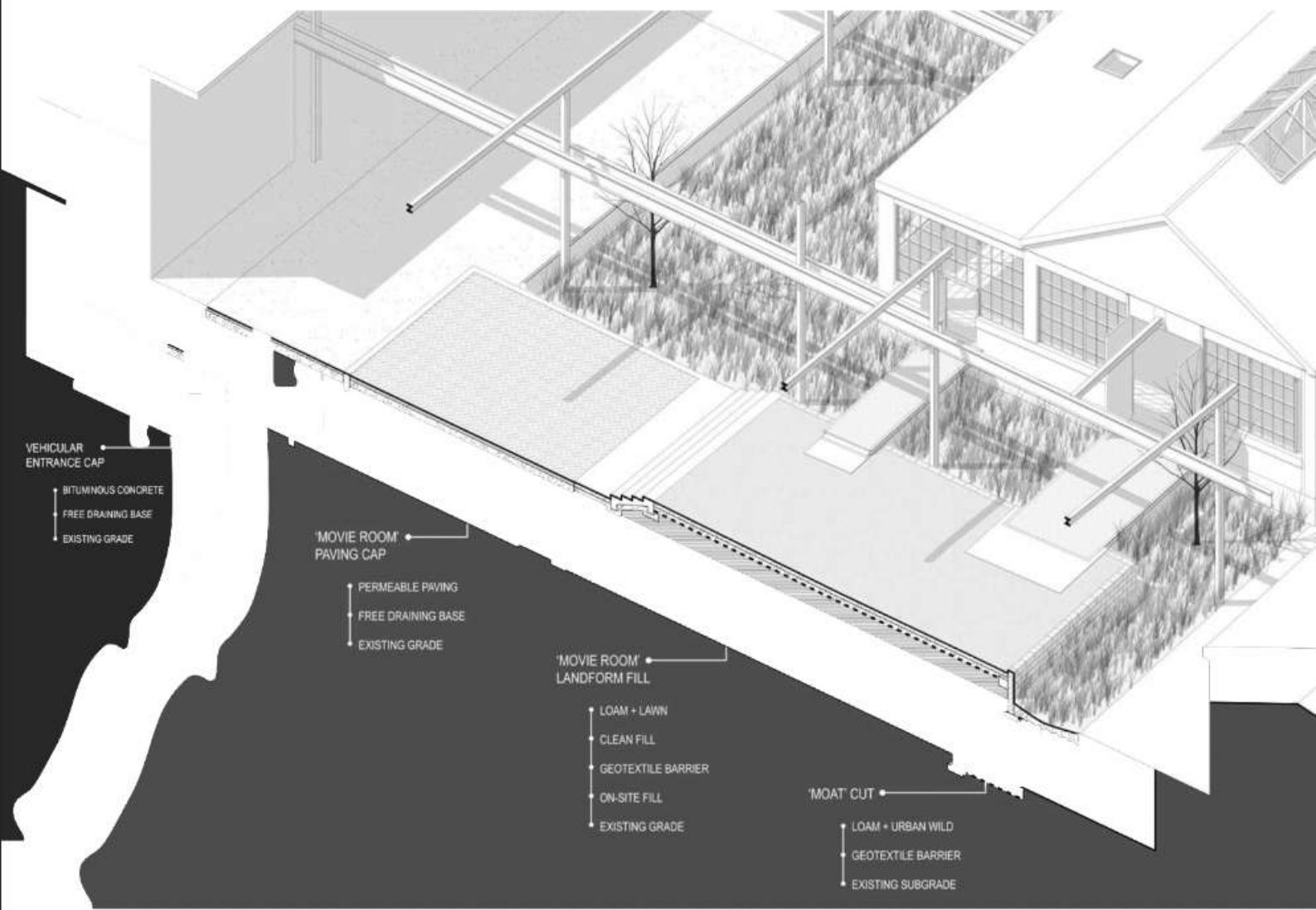
Brownfields are lands previously used for industrial or commercial purposes that have become contaminated, limiting their potential for redevelopment. These sites often contain harmful substances like heavy metals or petroleum-based pollutants left behind from past industrial operations. Redeveloping such sites is critical for revitalizing urban areas, especially since brownfields frequently occupy prime locations but remain unused due to environmental hazards and regulatory challenges.

The Steel Yard in Providence, Rhode Island, illustrates an effective approach to rehabilitating a brownfield through sustainable landscape design and community engagement. This 3.5-acre site, once a steel manufacturing yard, was abandoned with polluted soil and derelict infrastructure after the factory closed. Instead of undertaking full soil excavation—which is often costly and environmentally taxing—the project employed an in-place soil capping strategy. This involved covering the contaminated ground with clean fill to isolate pollutants while preserving the site's existing topography and reducing environmental impact.

It complements the needs of the area with using the surroundings such as water resources. These interventions transform the degraded site into a functional and environmentally resilient landscape.

The project also preserves and celebrates its industrial heritage by retaining structural elements and providing spaces for arts education and vocational training, such as the Weld-to-Work program. This not only increases community participation but also promote economic empowerment.





MATERIAL MATERIAL MATERIAL!

In The Steel Yard, the choice of materials connects the site's industrial history with sustainable design. Steel is the main material, used both for structure and as a symbol of the site's past. Old steel parts like beams and trusses were kept and reused. The rust and weathering are left visible to show the site's authentic industrial character.


Concrete is used in areas with heavy use, like workspaces and walkways, because it is strong and long-lasting. This helps keep maintenance low and supports the project's sustainability.

The project also uses recycled and locally sourced materials. Salvaged steel is reused for building parts as well as furniture and art pieces, reducing waste and preserving the site's story.

To manage rainwater sustainably, permeable paving and gravel allow water to soak into the ground instead of running off. This also helps reduce heat buildup in the area.

Native soils and plants are used in landscaped areas and bioswales. These plants help filter water, support local wildlife, and turn the formerly polluted industrial land into a green, healthy space.

Overall, the materials used in The Steel Yard tell the story of the site's industrial past while supporting environmental care and community renewal.

The background image is a photograph of an industrial space. It features large, dark steel beams and a yellow overhead crane on the left. A person is walking on a raised platform in the center. To the right, there's a building with a red door and a corrugated metal roof. The sky is blue with some clouds.

The Steel Yard successfully combines old industrial steel structures with modern systems to create a flexible space for art, education, and community use.

The project carefully preserves original steel elements like beams and columns from the former factory. These strong steel parts support heavy equipment and open workshop areas. Reusing them saves resources and keeps the site's industrial character alive.

The layout offers large, open spaces supported by steel frames, allowing activities such as welding, forging, and sculpture-making. Movable walls and modular workstations make it easy to change the space for individual projects or larger events.

Since much of the site is open-air, natural ventilation is maximized with open sides and high ceilings, reducing the need for mechanical airflow. Covered areas have durable roofs and drainage systems to protect users and equipment from weather.

Safety is a priority: exhaust systems remove fumes, fire prevention equipment is in place, and the design carefully separates heavy equipment routes from pedestrian paths.

Stormwater is managed with bioswales and permeable surfaces that help water soak into the ground, reducing runoff and pollution. This sustainable approach fits well with the project's environmental goals.

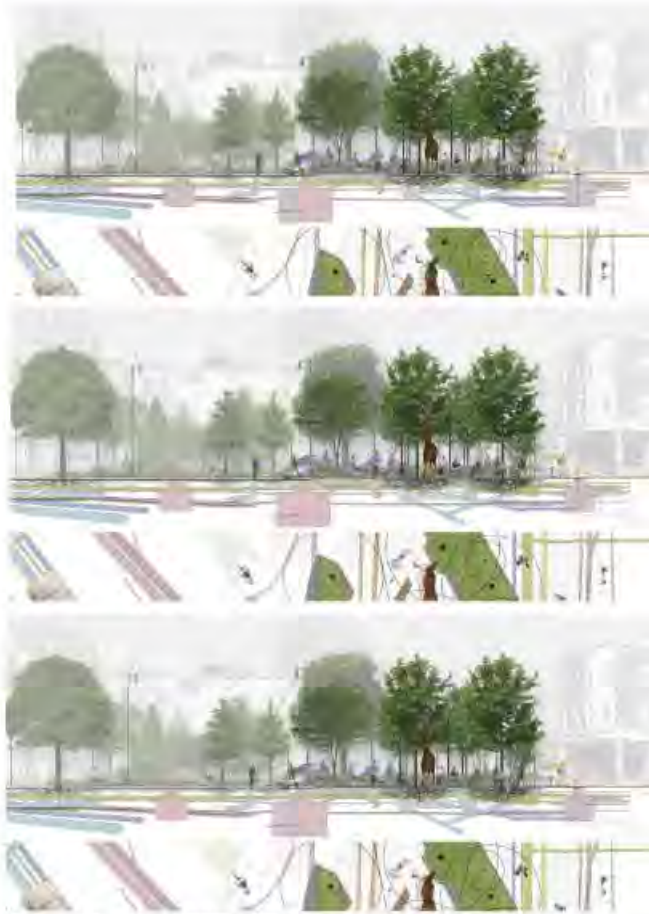
In short, The Steel Yard combines historic structures and modern design to create a safe, adaptable, and sustainable space that honors its industrial past while supporting community creativity.

Architects Behind The Steel Yard

The architects behind The Steel Yard are Kennedy & Violich Architecture (KVA), a firm based in Providence. KVA is known for working on projects that focus on sustainability and preserving historic buildings.

For this project, the KVA team focused on keeping and reusing the old steel structures. This helped reduce environmental impact and kept the industrial feel of the site. They also made sure the space would be flexible and functional for art workshops and other activities.

KVA worked closely with the local community to make The Steel Yard more than just a building—it's a place where people can come together. By combining art, education, and making things, they created a space that is both environmentally friendly and welcoming.



Inman Square, K/MDG, Massachusetts

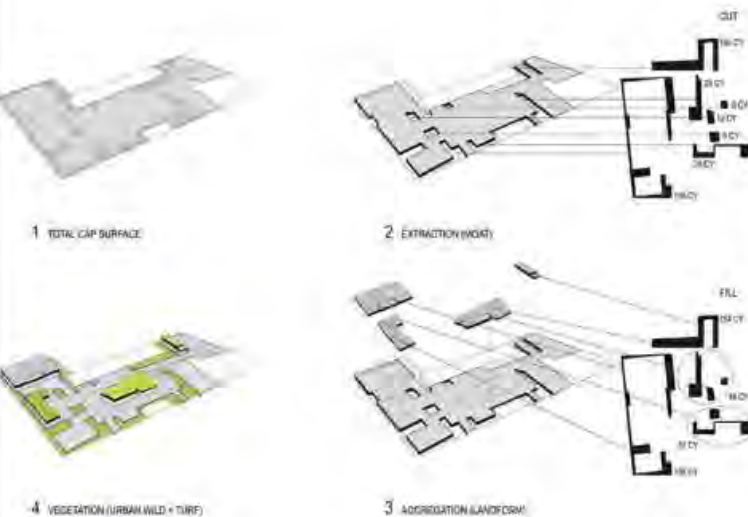
In short, Kennedy & Violich Architecture showed with The Steel Yard how old industrial spaces can be transformed into modern, useful places for communities.



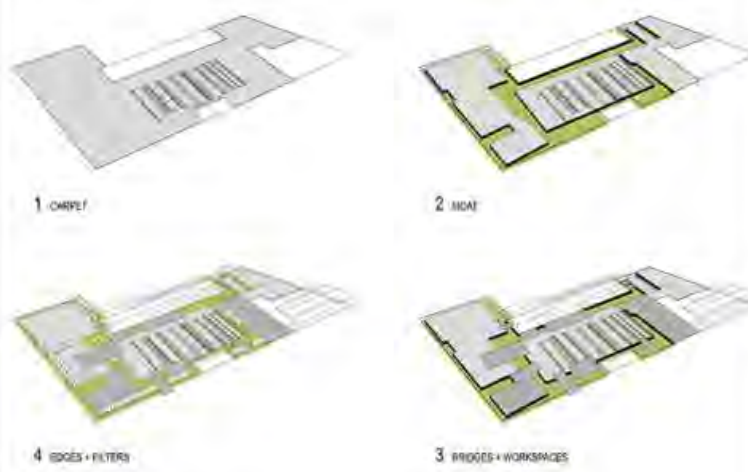
Re-birth: Rise From The Ashes



EVENT DIAGRAMS



REMEDATION STRATEGY



ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

The Steel Yard in Providence represents a compelling case of adaptive reuse, where an abandoned industrial brownfield was carefully transformed into a vibrant hub for artistic production, education, and community engagement. The site, characterized by deteriorated steel structures and contaminated soils due to decades of industrial activity, posed significant environmental and structural challenges prior to intervention.

The regeneration process began with comprehensive environmental remediation to address soil contamination and ensure user safety. Simultaneously, a preservation strategy was employed focusing on stabilizing and rehabilitating the original steel framework—beams, trusses, and columns—thereby maintaining the material and symbolic integrity of the industrial heritage. This approach effectively conserved embodied energy and reduced the carbon footprint associated with new construction.

Spatially, the project introduced flexible, open-air workshop zones designed to accommodate a range of metalworking practices including welding, forging, and sculptural fabrication. The integration of modular partitions and adaptable workstations enables spatial reconfiguration, supporting diverse user groups and events while fostering collaborative creativity.

Sustainability was embedded throughout the design, notably through the implementation of permeable surfaces and bioswales to manage stormwater onsite. Native vegetation was introduced to restore ecological balance, enhance biodiversity, and contribute to the site's aesthetic and environmental quality. These strategies exemplify a holistic approach to urban regeneration that aligns environmental stewardship with cultural revitalization.

In sum, The Steel Yard exemplifies how the thoughtful rehabilitation of industrial brownfields can reconcile historic preservation with contemporary functional needs. It stands as a model for sustainable urban redevelopment, balancing environmental responsibility, cultural continuity, and social inclusivity.

The Steel Yard in Providence is a distinctive example of adaptive reuse that successfully merges historic preservation, community involvement, and environmental sustainability. When placed alongside similar projects, both shared principles and unique characteristics become evident. For instance, The 606 in Chicago transformed an old railway into an elevated park and trail system, revitalizing an industrial corridor with a focus on public access and green infrastructure. Unlike The Steel Yard, which emphasizes active artistic production and metalworking workshops, The 606 primarily serves as a recreational path promoting connectivity and leisure. Similarly, The Tate Modern in London converted the Bankside Power Station into a renowned art museum. While both projects preserve significant industrial architecture, their purposes diverge: Tate Modern offers curated indoor exhibitions for a broad audience, whereas The Steel Yard provides open-air, adaptable spaces specifically designed for local artists practicing metal crafts. In terms of ecological restoration, The Steel Yard's approach to managing stormwater and reintroducing native plants parallels Gas Works Park in Seattle. Both sites transform former industrial brownfields into green, accessible public spaces while maintaining elements of their industrial past.

Overall, The Steel Yard sets itself apart by combining heritage conservation with hands-on metal arts education in an outdoor environment. While sharing goals with projects like The 606, Tate Modern, and Gas Works Park, it uniquely sustains traditional industrial crafts as an active cultural practice within the community.

BETONART

Beton, Mimarlık ve Tasarım | Concrete, Architecture and Design



an architectural response to the pandemic : parc de la distance

**Rana
Bakan**

Throughout history, major pandemics have affected health systems, cities, and public spaces. The one that is the most recent, COVID-19 pandemic affected the whole world in 2020. And it once again revealed how critical green spaces, parks, and public areas are, especially when people were confined to their homes. As the concept of social distancing became an essential part of daily life, architects began working to come up with solutions that would respond to the innovations brought by this change. As people longed to reconnect with nature, new solutions were needed to maintain physical distance. Parc de la Distance, designed by the Austrian architecture studio Studio Precht, is one of the most remarkable and innovative public park projects of this period.

The project started with a couple of questions regarding the pandemic: “What would a park look like and how would it function if it takes the rules of social distancing as a design guideline? And what can we learn from a space like this that still has value after the pandemic?”¹ Parc de la Distance was designed especially during the first months of the pandemic, when Vienna’s famous parks such as Schönbrunn and Belvedere were closed.² With this project, Chris and Fei Precht, founders of Studio Precht, aimed to create a space where urbanites could safely meet nature and be alone for a short time. This project was planned in 2020 for an empty and undulating plot of land in the Austrian capital Vienna, but it has not been implemented yet.



¹ Tom Ravenscroft
<https://www.dezeen.com/2020/04/16/studio-precht-parc-de-la-distance-social-distancing-coronavirus/>

² Shristi Nangalia
<https://www.stirworld.com/features-studio-precht-designs-parc-de-la-distance-a-park-for-physical-distancing>

“After the pandemic, the park is used to escape the noise and bustle of the city and be alone for some time. I lived in many cities, but I think I have never been alone in public. I think that’s a rare quality,” said Chris Precht.

Just as he said, it’s such a privilege to be alone in public, especially in big cities like Vienna. That’s why the main idea of Parc de la Distance is to turn the need for social distancing created by the pandemic into a design opportunity. The park is an escape not only during the pandemic, but also afterwards for those who want to enjoy a short retreat with nature and escape the crowds while doing so. At this point, the inspiration for the park’s design comes into play. The park’s plan mimics the swirling ridges of a fingerprint. Parallel lanes spiral toward a central fountain, symbolizing the source of life and inner balance. Thanks to this concept, visitors have access to multiple parallel pathways, allowing them to walk in a public space while remaining distant from crowds and close contact. The 90 cm wide fences and vegetative barriers placed between these parallel pathways prevent visitors from coming into physical contact with one another. Since the fences and barriers are different heights, visitors sometimes feel surrounded by nature, and other times they can look out over the whole park. “Sometimes visitors are fully immersed in greenery, and other times they emerge over the hedge to see across the garden,” says Fei.³ The gates placed right at the entrances and exits of the paths let people know if the path is occupied or empty. It also helps prevent people from running into each other inside while enhancing both the safety and comfort of visitors as they take a enjoyable walk. Visitors leave this

place feeling refreshed both in body and mind after the time they spend here. It’s the perfect place to have some alone time and rest and you get the chance to connect with others if you want to.

The pathways guide visitors from the edge of the park toward the center and then back out again. It creates a pattern of movement that is both individual and collective at the same time. Each path is about 600 meters, and it takes about 20 minutes per route in average but not to forget it might differ depending on individual pace.⁴ The paths are covered with reddish granite gravel, which is a material that provides a striking visual contrast. It also allows visitors to hear the footsteps of others. In this way, even if they cannot see one another, visitors are reminded through its crunching sound that they are not alone in the park. The paths wind their way to a fountain in the middle of the park.



3 Shristi Nangalia
<https://www.stirworld.com/s-ee-features-studio-precht-designs-parc-de-la-distance-a-park-for-physical-distancing>

4 Shristi Nangalia
<https://www.stirworld.com/s-ee-features-studio-precht-designs-parc-de-la-distance-a-park-for-physical-distancing>



The park's design mixes two different garden styles: the organized look of French Baroque gardens and the calm feeling of Japanese Zen gardens.⁵ We can see this two styles mix in the way the plants are arranged and in the shapes of the fences. Instead of following new trends, the park focuses on the lasting beauty of nature and classic garden styles. The Baroque style adds order and elegance, while the Zen style brings calmness and helps people relax. And when these two styles get together they make the park a peaceful place for everyone to enjoy. Local elements play a central role in the design of Parc de la Distance. The plant species used in the park are carefully selected to fit the unique ecological conditions of the region. The way plants are chosen makes sure they stay healthy and live a long time. It also helps the park look natural and fit well with the area around it. The park's design is carefully made to show the city's culture and nature. This helps the park have its own special identity that fits the place

where it is. Most of the ground coverings and other building materials used in the park are bought from local suppliers. This helps make the park more sustainable and easier to take care of. Using local materials also reduces harm to the environment and supports the city's economy and community.

The park helps the city's environment in many ways. Its thick plants absorb more carbon, support local wildlife, and make the city cooler by reducing the heat island effect. Using local plant types also makes the ecosystem stronger.

This holistic design approach enables Parc de la Distance to be more than just a green space; it gives the park a distinct character and identity that is unique to its location. The park is carefully designed to match both the natural environment and the local culture. By choosing plants and materials that are suitable for the area, the park helps protect nature and makes maintenance easier. This thoughtful design creates a balanced space where people can -

⁵ Christele Harrouk
<https://www.archdaily.com/937801/studio-precht-imagines-a-park-for-physical-distancing-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

enjoy nature, and the environment is respected. The park supports both the needs of the community and the health of the local ecosystem.

According to Precht, the need for such spaces will continue to increase even after the pandemic. He expresses his thoughts as follows: “This pandemic has taught us that we need more places to get away to. Instead of banks, traffic and office blocks, city centres should be redesigned with parks, wilderness and plants. We hope that Parc de la Distance gets accepted to bridge the gap soon”.⁶

The park offers a safe open space during times of social crisis, while also providing an opportunity for individuals to retreat and escape from the city during normal times. In this way, it makes an important contribution to mental health and social welfare in urban life. It stands out as an integrated system that combines nature, human movement, social distance, and aesthetics. This project, is an important example that shows that public spaces should be kept open with safe and creative solutions instead of being completely closed, especially in extraordinary conditions such as pandemics. In order for such projects to become widespread, city administrations and social habits need to adopt this new understanding.

The modular nature of the park’s design enables flexible adaptation across a variety of urban and suburban contexts. Whether implemented in a dense city center or a quieter residential area, its underlying

principles remain applicable, ensuring accessible green spaces regardless of location.

Because of this adaptability this project can be implemented to any place and adapting it to a different place wouldn’t be a problem, which makes the project a valuable reference for other cities facing similar challenges.

One of the best things about projects like Parc de la Distance is how they can bring people together and make everyone feel included. When architects design parks like this, they often talk with city leaders, local people, and experts about the environment. This way, the park can really match what the community needs and wants. Having more green spaces in cities is also important for fairness. During the pandemic, we saw that not everyone had a safe park or garden that they could take a little walk to and that having that is such a privilege.

Owing to this period, planners and architects got aware of the need to build cities that can adapt to unexpected changes. By building parks that are open and easy for everyone to use, cities can help close this gap and make life better for all people. With all these features, Parc de la Distance has already written its name in the history of architecture and urbanism as an inspiring example of the need to create more nature, silence, and individual space in the centers of cities. In the end, Parc de la Distance is special because it shows a new way to think about public spaces. It’s not just a response to the pandemic, but a plan for the future.

⁶ Shristi Nangalia
<https://www.stirworld.com/see-features-studio-precht-designs-parc-de-la-distance-a-park-for-physical-distancing>

June
15th
2025

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Kokkedal Climate Adaptation
Cemrem Tan 020230517



A City's Stand Against the Climate Crisis: The Case of Kokkedal



Picture 1: Perspective view of project

Climate change is no longer a problem of the future—it is something we face today. Heavy rains, floods, weak infrastructure, and growing social problems are putting cities under serious pressure. The Kokkedal district in northeastern Denmark, near the Usserød River, is a clear example of how these global issues can affect local communities. For many years, this 69-hectare area struggled with both environmental and social challenges.

Floods caused damage to buildings and streets, but they also made daily life harder and increased feelings of insecurity. This neighborhood includes apartment blocks, two large public housing complexes, a school, a daycare center, and a nursing home. Over time, it became known for crime, lack of safety, and social tensions.

To solve these problems, the Climate Adaptation Kokkedal Project was launched. Its aim was not only to protect the area from floods but also to make the neighborhood a better place to live. The project focused on managing rainwater more effectively and creating more green areas where people could meet, relax, and feel connected.

Nature was not seen as a threat, but as part of the solution. Thanks to this approach, the project became more than just a technical fix. It helped build stronger community ties and created a safer, more pleasant environment for everyone.

Kokkedal's story shows that local climate solutions can also bring social benefits—and that caring for the environment and the community can go hand in hand.



Picture 2: Bird's-eye view of project

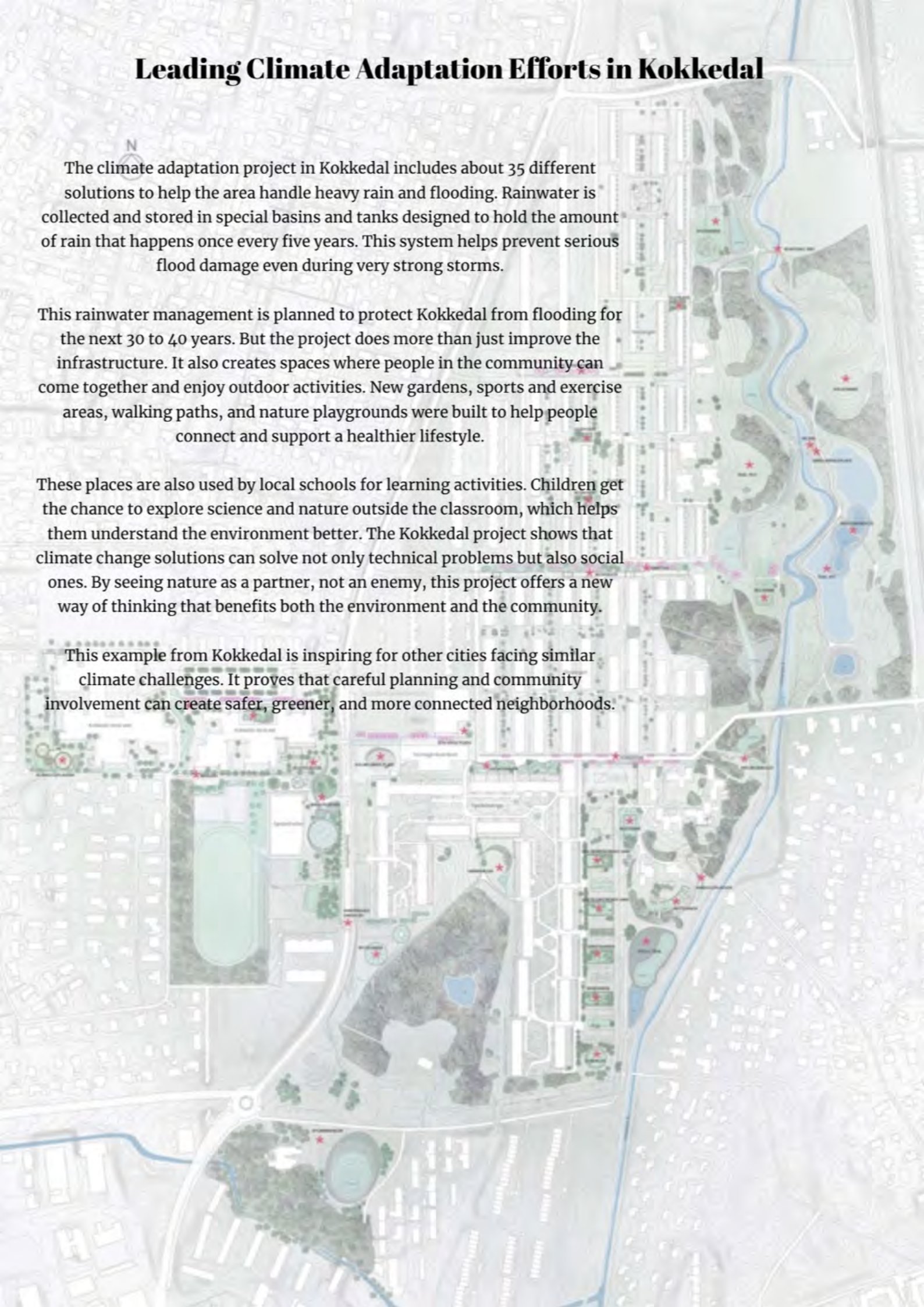
Leading Climate Adaptation Efforts in Kokkedal

The climate adaptation project in Kokkedal includes about 35 different solutions to help the area handle heavy rain and flooding. Rainwater is collected and stored in special basins and tanks designed to hold the amount of rain that happens once every five years. This system helps prevent serious flood damage even during very strong storms.

This rainwater management is planned to protect Kokkedal from flooding for the next 30 to 40 years. But the project does more than just improve the infrastructure. It also creates spaces where people in the community can come together and enjoy outdoor activities. New gardens, sports and exercise areas, walking paths, and nature playgrounds were built to help people connect and support a healthier lifestyle.

These places are also used by local schools for learning activities. Children get the chance to explore science and nature outside the classroom, which helps them understand the environment better. The Kokkedal project shows that climate change solutions can solve not only technical problems but also social ones. By seeing nature as a partner, not an enemy, this project offers a new way of thinking that benefits both the environment and the community.

This example from Kokkedal is inspiring for other cities facing similar climate challenges. It proves that careful planning and community involvement can create safer, greener, and more connected neighborhoods.





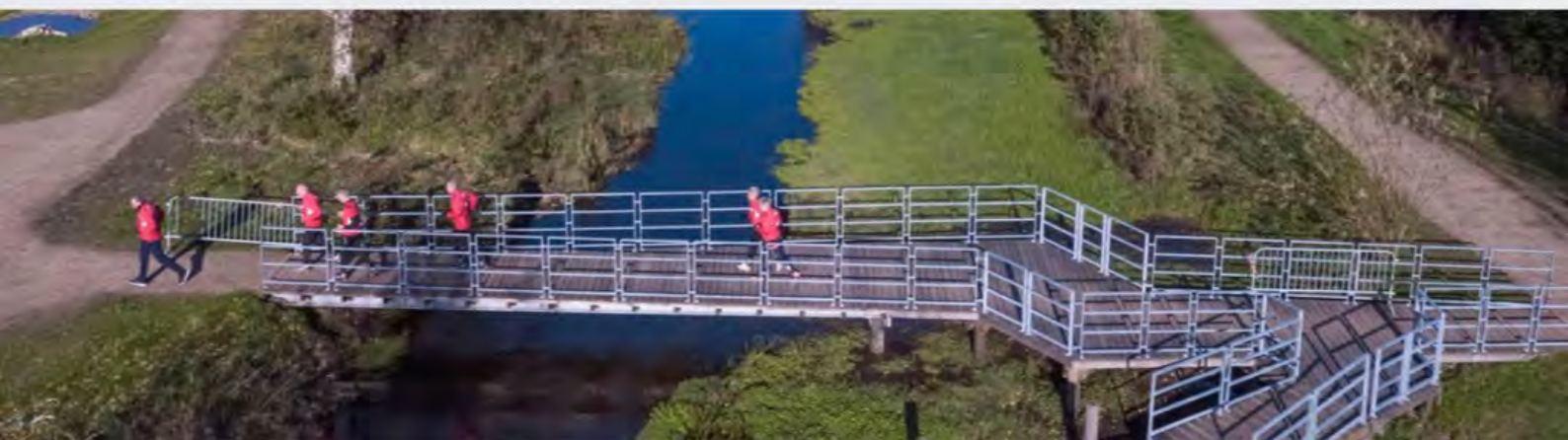
The Dance of Water and Nature in Kokkedal


Before, rainwater was hidden underground in pipes. Now, water management is done on the surface, creating new places for people to enjoy. In Kokkedal, you can see the water moving from small basins to soak-ways and trenches, all the way to the big basins and the Usserød River. The rainwater is cleaned as it passes through special areas like rain gardens and basins.

Blue and green areas are now important parts of Kokkedal's landscape. The water in the Usserød stream used to be dirty and out of balance. Thanks to work restoring nature, the water quality is better, there are more kinds of plants and animals, and the area is now full of life.

Also, many green basins or dry ponds have been made in parks and other places. This adds different kinds of plants and makes the area more beautiful. For example, there is a group of special gardens, like the Moroccan Garden, with basins that hold rainwater. These basins can fill up with water when needed, making the garden even more interesting.

Kokkedal's way of managing water turns it from just a technical job into a lively part of the city. This helps nature and people live better together. It is a good example for other cities with similar problems.





Reconnecting with Nature in Kokkedal

The climate adaptation project in Kokkedal is not just about fixing problems with rainwater. It is also about changing how the neighborhood looks, feels, and works. The project connects different parts of the city, brings nature closer to people, and creates new spaces where people can enjoy daily life.

Flood protection is still a big part of the project. But now, there are also new public places like open squares, sports areas, walking paths, and meeting points. These places help people feel better, stay active, meet others, and feel like they are part of a community. It's not only about building systems—it's also about building stronger human connections.

This new way of living with nature makes people feel more connected to their neighborhood. They care more about where they live. These open, green spaces also help people feel safer. When a place is full of life and used often, it becomes more peaceful and secure.

The changes in Kokkedal show that climate projects don't have to be only technical. They can also improve daily life. This project puts people, nature, and social life at the center. It creates a place that is useful, but also enjoyable. A place where people feel good, live together, and stay close to nature.



More Than a Project: How Life Changed in Kokkedal

The climate adaptation project in Kokkedal did more than just solve a technical problem. The new urban spaces not only help manage rainwater, but also bring new energy to the neighborhood—culturally, socially, and visually. A recent research study shows that this transformation has made a deep and lasting impact.

Today, Kokkedal's public spaces feel open, welcoming, and much more social. One of the most powerful changes is that more women and girls now use these areas. Where some people once felt like outsiders, they now feel safe and included. The project has made the neighborhood feel more like home for many.

Residents also say they feel closer to nature. The green areas have become spaces for big gatherings, events, and daily enjoyment. Families relax in the parks, children play freely, and neighbors meet more often. These spaces are no longer just green—they are alive with community life.

There is now a new spirit of openness and connection in Kokkedal. People are using the urban space in ways that strengthen social ties. This shows how climate projects can do much more than protect against flooding—they can help people feel better, safer, and more connected.

In the end, the Kokkedal project proves that urban planning is not just about solving problems. It's also about creating better places to live. It reminds us that technical solutions and human needs can work together to build stronger, more livable cities.

An aerial photograph showing a wide river channel with a winding, meandering waterway. The riverbanks are lined with dense, low-lying vegetation in shades of green and brown. To the left of the river, a multi-lane road with several cars is visible, bordered by trees and a sidewalk. To the right, there's a paved path and more vegetation. In the background, a suburban neighborhood with houses and trees stretches towards a hazy horizon under a cloudy sky.

PLACES

Places: Forum of Design for the Public Realm
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Ecological Repair

Unlock The Alameda Creek

Ada Eylül Aldede



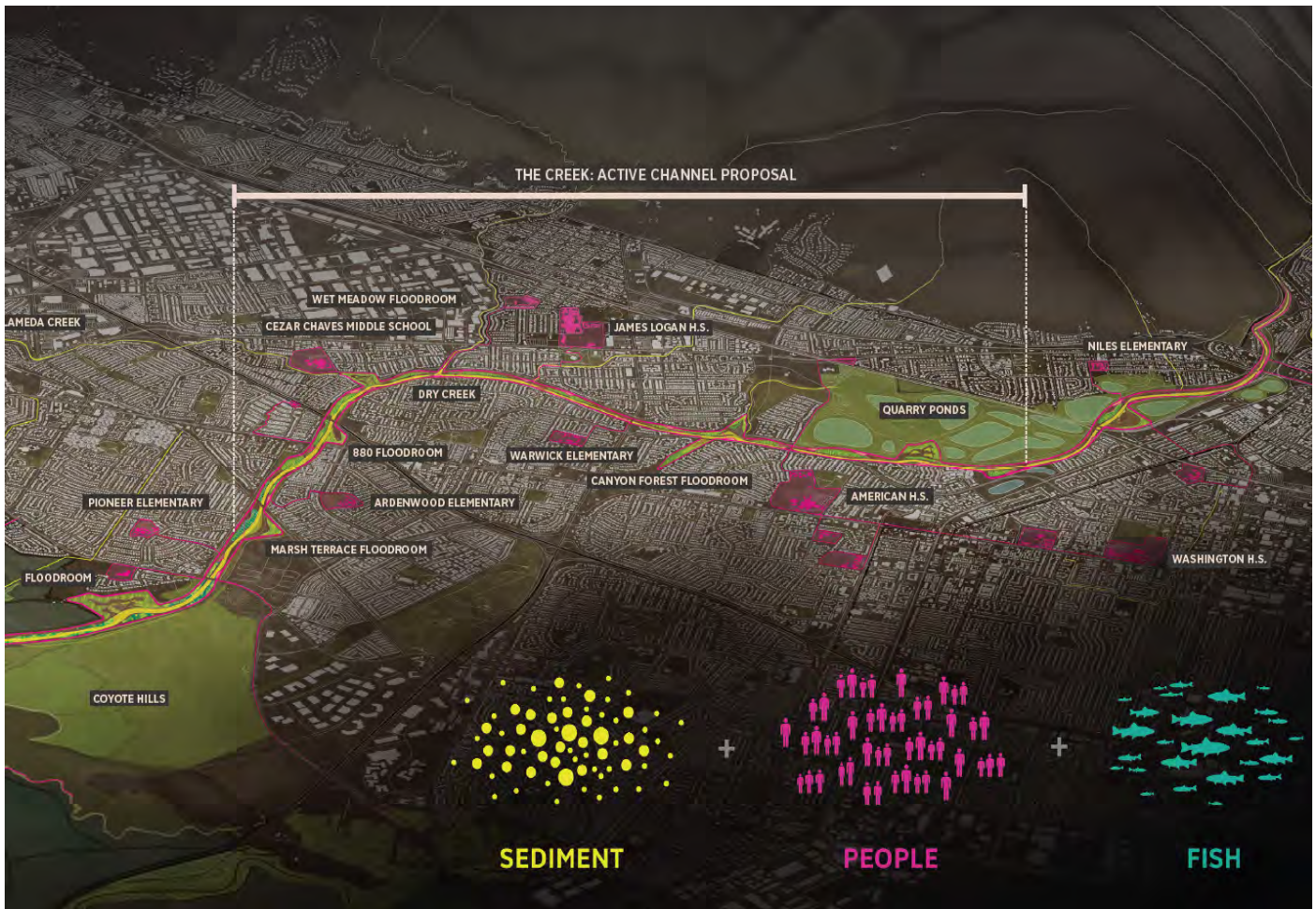
Alameda creek, the largest tributary at San Francisco Bay, Creek is fed by a 633 square mile watershed, connects a network of natural and constructed infrastructural elements, like downstream sills and upstream dams. In the 1970s Alameda creek was channelized; the aim was to protect the neighborhoods of Fremont, Union City, and Newark from extreme floods. As a result this intervention blocked the creek, changed its natural course, and damaged the ecosystem. The creek used to feed the tidal bayland with sediments, was an important resource for the community, and provided a migration route and habitat for fish and other species. Unlock The Alameda Creek project aims to restore these functions. Even though the creek can't completely return to its

original state, the project addresses the present issues and prepares for the future climate change impacts.

Public Sediment for Alameda Creek

Public Sediment for Alameda Creek created by the SCAPE team's submission for the Resilient By Design: Bay Area Challenge. Resilient by Design was a collaborative design challenge in the Bay Area focused on building resilience to sea level rise, flooding, storms, and earthquakes.¹ The SCAPE Landscape Architecture's team includes Arcadis, the Dredge Research Collaborative, TS Studio, the UC Davis Department of Human Ecology and Design, Cy Keener, and the Architectural Ecologies Lab. In 2019, the State of California gives the project \$31.4 million implementation funding. Public Sediment aims to "unlock" Alameda Creek by restoring the natural flow of sediment from its headwaters to the baylands,

Above: The Unlock The Alameda Creek Project by SCAPE; Pubic Sediment Team



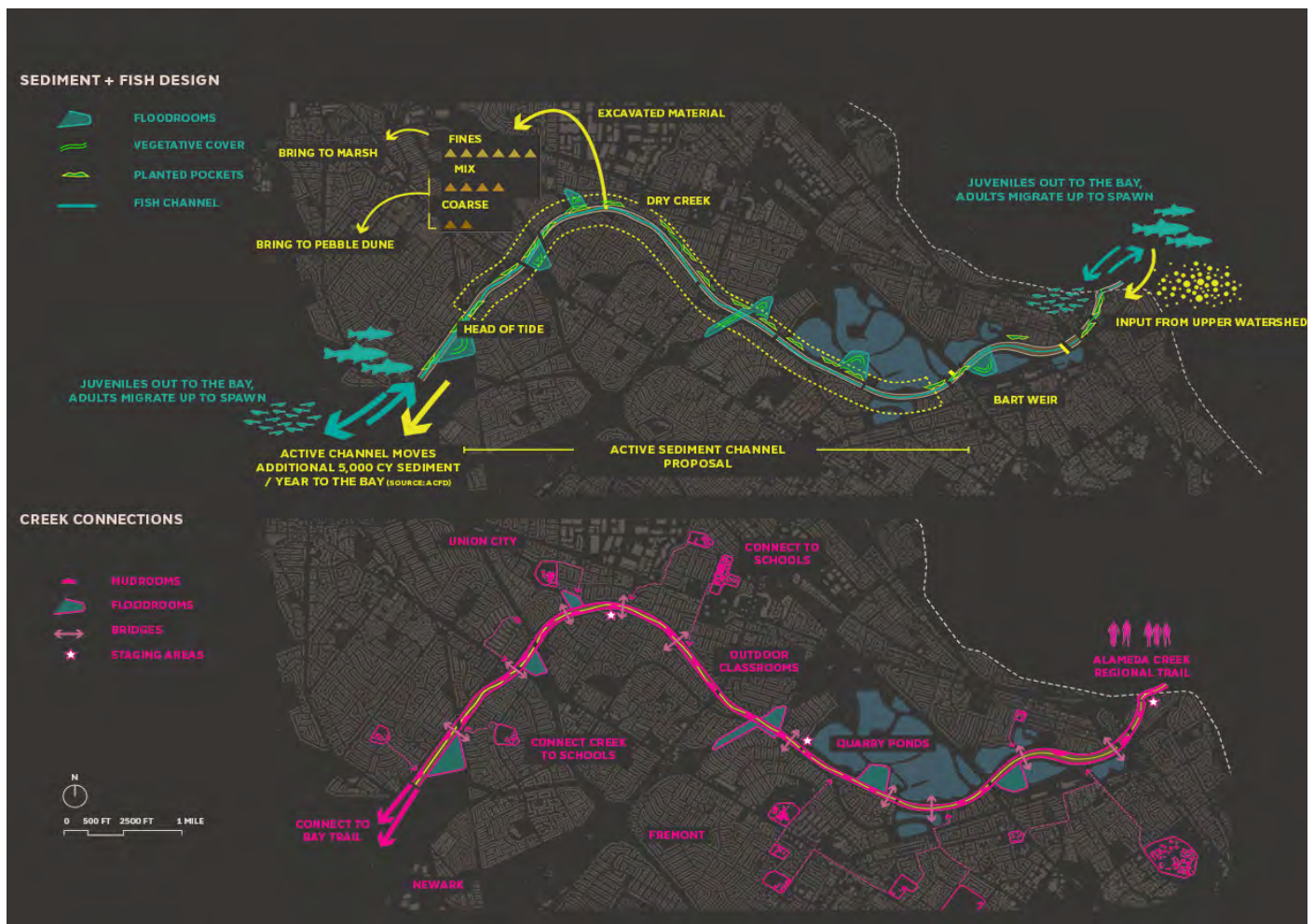
helping to maintain the vital marshes and mudflats that protect San Francisco Bay. By looking beyond the shoreline and addressing the full extent of the Alameda Creek watershed -the Bay's largest tributary- the project handles climate resilience at an ecosystem scale. It reconnects migratory fish with their traditional spawning habitats, presents the creek as a floodable creek corridor, and creates an awareness for both ecological systems and sediment as a resource.

Design With Mud

“Designing with mud” means that sediment is not a waste that needs to be thrown away, but a public resource to be preserved and shared.² The team treats sediment as a public resource, and designs it with mud. They aim to connect the uplands and the lowlands with a series of sediment actions: to har-

vest, retrofit, and remove dams, to unlock tributary channels, and to tries new methods of mud placement that use currents to move mud in the Bay. Unlock The Alameda Creek is a project that links Creek and the Bay and provides a sediment supply to the baylands for sea level adaptation and provides community spaces that physically connect with the Creek and the Bay. When the Creek was a channel only 40% of the sediment which enters the channel reached the Bay. The remaining sediments were trapped in the channel and resulted in flooding. Also structures in the channel affect the sediment deposition patterns. Structures like sills, rubber dams, and bridge piers reduce the capacity of sediment transportation. The team used vegetation to

Above: Map of The Alameda Creek by SCAPE; Public Sediment Team.



stabilize the channel to move more sediments during regular floods and make the channel deeper and sloped. This new construction allows people access the creek safely, introducing more diverse vegetation with plan pockets.

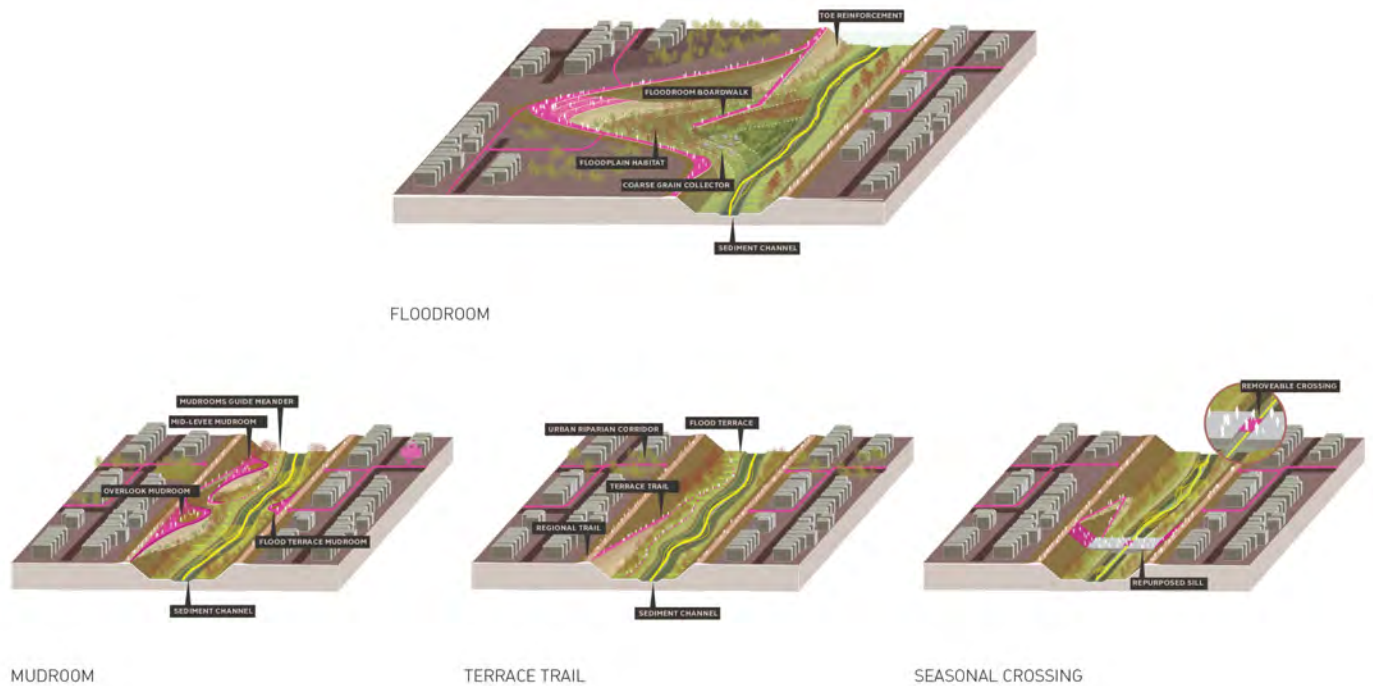
Making Sediment Public

Despite the presence of well-used trails, the channelized form and levee infrastructure of Alameda Creek physically separates the cities of Fremont, Union City, and Newark. Historically the creek was a social place and an ecological corridor. After the channelization the creek has been transformed into a restricted zone with limited public access. Unlocking Alameda Creek is as much a cultural act as an ecological one. The design introduces four types of public space: Mudrooms, Floodrooms, Terrace Trails, and Seasonal Bridges. These spaces are designed to adapt with

the seasonal flooding. These features create a flexible network that provides safe access to the creek corridor. By transforming the linear flood channel into a more diverse and accessible landscape, the interventions improve neighborhood connectivity, restore the ecological aesthetics of the creek, establish opportunities for public engagement and educate the community about sediment processes.³

Mudrooms are designed for people and create access to creek and located within the levees of Alameda Creek. They are small spaces that are strategically placed along the creek. They are built in various elevations and sported by a living levee system that controls the erosion and offers different interactions with the water, some of the mudrooms are high and dry, some of them are low and muddy. Mudrooms create urban access points for the creek, connected with schools and parks. In flood season they close the lower mudrooms for safety. In addition to creating a public used area their placement aligns with sediment dynamics, helping shape and sustain the creek's

Above: Maps that show sediment, fish design and creek's connections by SCAPE; Public Sediment Team.



meandering sediment channel.

Floodrooms are the setback levee areas that expand the creek's floodplain within available spaces along the urbanized corridor of the channel. These areas significantly increase the floodplain's ecological capacity by creating new flood terrace habitats that support a broad range of riparian species, provide rest and refuge zones for native and adapted fish and bird species. Floodrooms are at a safe distance from the creek's primary current so it allows public usage. Floodrooms have boardwalks and pathways for public access and are open throughout the year. They offer a park-like environment that both serves the humans and the non-human species and supports biodiversity and community engagement in creek maintenance.

Terrace Trail is a path that can be accessed during dry seasons, enabling people to enter and move along the creek. The trail provides access points for vegetation maintenance, especially near baffles and planted pockets, supporting ecological management and public engagement with the restored creek environment.

Seasonal Bridges are small movable pedestrian bridges that are located every half mile along the creek. The creek maintains low, manageable flow during the majority of the year and allows accessible and safe crossing with these bridges in dry seasons. In flood

season they are either removed from the channel or folded and locked in place. Seasonal bridges provide equitable access for surrounding communities.

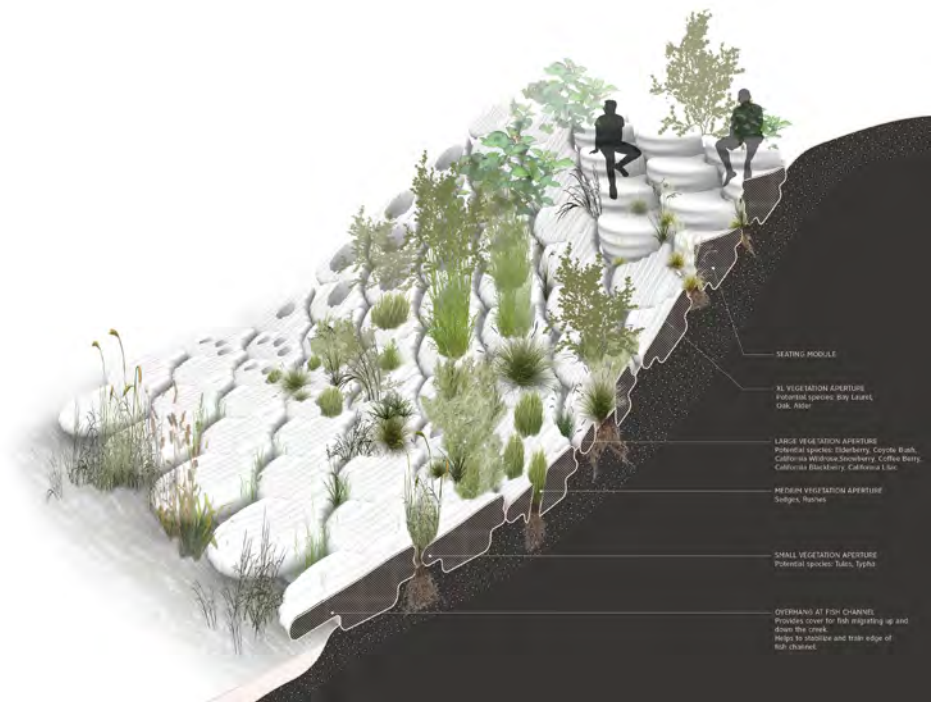
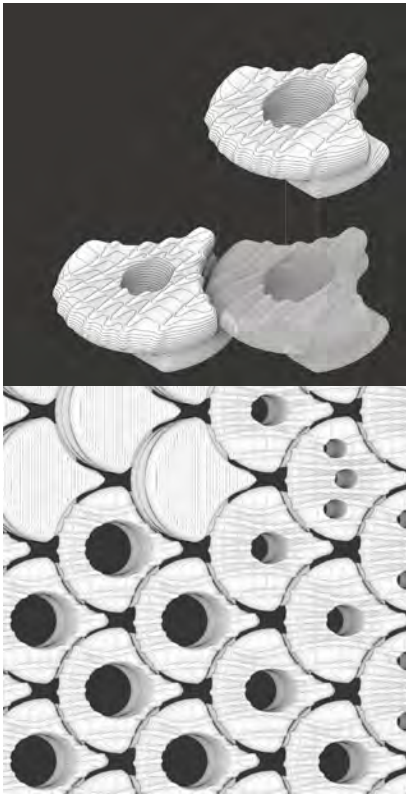
Design for fish

A lot of fish species need a healthy creek to survive. Channelization, dam constructions and barriers limit the passage of these fishes. The team focused on steelhead trout because their life cycles depend on the bay. They construct fish ladders and access routes at key places such as Bart Weir and Rubber Dams. To increase the passage chance of the fishes and maintain consistent streamflow during key migration periods, they excavate and stabilize deeper fish channels within the sediment channel. Moreover, integrated areas like Floodrooms and Mudrooms, these spaces create floodplain habitats for fishes.

Living levee

The Living Levee is created with concrete units that form a stabilizing layer along the creek's edge. This structural system provides stability to the reshaped creek banks while also accommodating both human access and contributing to the ecosystem with the establishment of vegetation. By blending hard

Above: Drawings of Mudrooms, Floodrooms, Terrace Trail and Seasonal Crossings by SCAPE; Public Sediment Team.



infrastructure with ecological function, the Living Levee supports erosion control, enhances habitat potential, and transforms the levee edge into a more accessible and resilient interface between land and water. Digital modeling is used in the design of the Living Levee module to optimize its shape for multiple functions: supporting plant and animal habitats, allowing public access, and reinforcing channel edges to facilitate effective sediment movement. By collaborating with biologists and ecologists, the design process enables micro-scale adaptation and testing of surface textures, and helps to see the requirements for specific plant and animal species.

Monitoring

Unlock Alameda Creek proposes a phased ecological monitoring strategy. In the short term, new sensing stations will be placed in tidal zones to study sediment movement and determine the potential breach spots. Long-term monitoring expands parallel with the living infrastructure to investigate critical questions related to changes in sediment dynamics, creek morphology, and ecological health. The goals are to establish baseline data, align with existing research efforts, and make environment monitoring

visible and accessible to the public. The project team held events in the creek area to see how people used and observed this space and how they wanted to use it. Team synthesizes these feedbacks and suggests new features for the ecosystem while engaging the community, students, and residents in this evolving environment.⁴

For too long, Alameda Creek has been seen only as a flood control channel. The Public Sediment Team has worked to reimagine the creek as a living system. Unlock Alameda Creek is more than a restoration project; it is a redefinition of how we shape, share, and sustain our urban waterways. By reconnecting sediment flows from the upper watershed to the baylands, The project addresses ecological fragmentation through new fish channels and expanded floodplains, while introducing a layered public realm that invites people back to the creek. Unlock Alameda Creek transforms a rigid flood control corridor into a living system. It creates space that is not only for migrating fish and shifting sediments, but also a space for the community, education, and long-term stewardship. Alameda Creek connects communities diverse in race, ethnicity, age, and income linking them to each other and with the Bay. The project is a collaboration of design and science, it shows the importance of the sediments and how valuable it is. The project won a lot of important awards; ASLA

Above: Living Levee and its units by SCAPE; Public Sediment Team.



Professional Awards: Honor Award – Analysis & Planning (2019), ASLA-NY: Honor Award - Analysis, Planning, Research & Communications (2019), The Architect's Newspaper: Best of Design, Honor Award - Representation (2018) and AIA California Council: Merit Award - Urban Design (2018).

Notes

1. Resilient by Design, <https://barc.ca.gov/>
2. SCAPE / Landscape Architecture DPC, *Public Sediment Volume II Public Sediment for Alameda Creek*, p. 20
3. SCAPE / Landscape Architecture DPC, *Public Sediment Volume II Public Sediment for Alameda Creek*, pp. 50-60
4. www.scapestudio.com, www.scapestudio.com/projects/public-sediment

Above: The Unlock The Alameda Creek Project by SCAPE; Pubic Sediment Team.

JUNE 15, 2025

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE MAGAZINE

NOVARTIS PHYSIC GARDEN

A Healing Landscape in the Heart of Basel

BOTANICAL NARRATIVES

Medicinal plants as spatial storytellers in a pharmaceutical context

IN SITU LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Ecological layers and microclimate design in a corporate campus

TAXONOMIC DESIGN

Plant selection as cultural, scientific, and environmental expression

RESPONDING TO CLIMATE

Adaptive planting schemes and resilient outdoor microenvironments



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A HEALING LANDSCAPE IN THE HEART OF BASEL

NOVARTIS PHYSIC GARDEN

The traditional scope of landscape architecture has undergone significant transformation during recent years. The practice of landscape architecture now serves as a communication tool which conveys ideas through storytelling while creating intellectual and emotional connections with people. The Novartis Physics Garden located within the Novartis Campus in Basel Switzerland demonstrates the modern approach to landscape thinking. The garden designed by Günther Vogt and his team during 2015 transforms abstract concepts into tangible spatial encounters. The garden creates an experience which encourages visitors to use nature as a tool for thinking.

The Novartis Campus stands as an exceptional facility because its corporate design resembles a modern architectural museum. The campus showcases buildings designed by Herzog & de Meuron and Frank Gehry and Tadao Ando among other world-renowned architects. The entire campus demonstrates Novartis's commitment to research and innovation through its design excellence. The Physics Garden presents a unique experience within the carefully designed campus environment. The garden establishes a peaceful area that contrasts with the active landscape of productivity.

The design of Vogt focuses on conceptual and abstract elements instead of traditional ornamental plants or leisure activities. The garden design draws inspiration from historical "physic gardens" which served as Renaissance-era spaces for studying medicinal plants. Vogt transforms the traditional botanical focus into physical concepts through landscape elements that represent gravity and time and motion and uncertainty. The spatial arrangement together with materials and experience sequence functions as the main focus instead of the plants.

The garden consists of three separate areas which create different spatial and sensory interactions for visitors. The first garden zone features a sunken circular depression that receives shade from surrounding trees and has earth berms forming a ring around it. The floor of this area consists of basalt stone while its vegetation includes mosses and ferns and other plants that thrive in shaded conditions. The garden space transforms your spatial perception right away. The circular descent creates a silence that envelops the surrounding environment. This space creates an inward pull which resembles emotional gravity. The experience resembles a black hole encounter more than anything else. The enclosed space creates a temporal slowdown which makes the external world seem far away during brief moments.

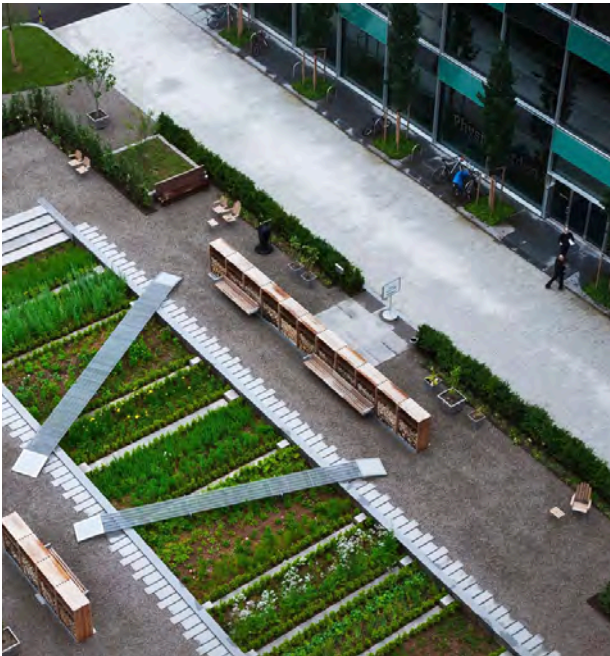
The garden undergoes a complete transformation when moving towards its outer sections. The space contains a purposeful linear path which guides movement in a focused direction. The walking surface transforms into fine gravel while the plants grow upright in an organized manner with tall grasses that sway in the wind. The garden section focuses on guiding visitors through space. The transition from the sunken inward space to this area creates an immediate shift because it pulls visitors forward instead of downward. The transition occurs from gravitational forces to forceful motion. The path rhythm and plant repetition work together to create a sense of advancement which guides your movement forward.

The third area of the garden disrupts the established order that existed in the previous sections. The ground in this area consists of scattered broken stone slabs and mirrors and irregular plantings. The reflective surfaces produce unusual light reflections which create distorted or fragmented reflections of your appearance. You can easily experience physical and visual instability when standing in this area. The garden section aims to replicate the unpredictable nature of quantum physics through its broken ground surfaces which replace fixed rules with probabilistic outcomes. The experience creates a sense of destabilization through a process that stimulates your senses while challenging your perception of what you see and how you move.

The main advantage of Vogt's design emerges from his refusal to provide explanations. The garden lacks any signs or information panels or forced explanations for its visitors. The garden enables you to experience these ideas through your physical interactions. The sunken zone creates a sensation of gravitational force. The path leads you forward with a sense of progression. The mirrored space creates an unpredictable environment that feels fragmented to the visitor. The space allows visitors to think while they interpret or simply observe throughout their experience.



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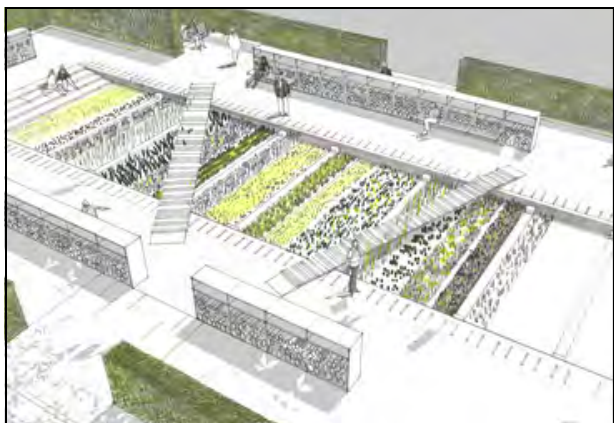
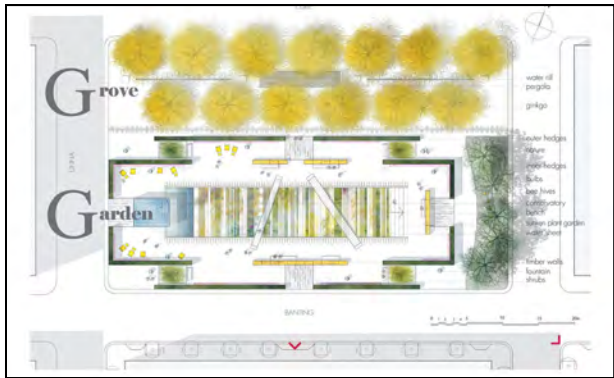
<https://www.archdaily.com>

NOVARTIS PHYSIC GARDEN

The Novartis Physics Garden fulfills both poetic and intellectual objectives while implementing contemporary environmental values. The garden features plants which were chosen because they thrive in local conditions instead of using exotic species that need extensive care. The Basel region native plant species dominate the garden since they need minimal care and water. The garden maintains a minimal environmental impact because of its plant selection while establishing a peaceful bond with its surrounding campus landscape.

The corporate environment finds particular significance in this approach. Most office campuses use their outdoor spaces as facilities for eating lunch and taking calls and holding brief meetings. The outdoor spaces typically present a combination of sterility and decorative elements and programmed activities. The Physics Garden distinguishes itself from other outdoor spaces in its design approach. The space does not entertain or distract it engages. The space requires visitors to transition from their work tasks into contemplative thinking. Such a valuable experience stands out in the current fast-paced efficiency-driven work environments.

The most revolutionary aspect of this space emerges from its ability to slow down all activities. The garden shows that thinking functions as a design method while excellent design both constructs physical environments and guides human focus. The Novartis Physics Garden achieves success through its dual function as a landscape while creating a peaceful enduring intellectual statement.





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Solana Ulcinj

Solana Ulcinj: Where Nature, History, and Innovation Meet for a Sustainable Future

Located near Ulcinj, the southernmost town of Montenegro, Solana Ulcinj is a unique place that blends human history with nature in a rare and fascinating way. At first glance, the site may seem like a simple salt flat — a man-made area with salt pans, old buildings, and machinery. But behind this industrial landscape lies a rich story about how humans and nature have interacted, shaping the environment into one of the most important resting spots for migratory birds in Europe and beyond.



Historical Background: From Industrial Salt Production to Ecological Treasure

Solana Ulcinj, originally known as “Bajo Sekulic,” was created in the 1920s during the era of the former Yugoslavia. The government at that time chose this area for industrial salt production because of its ideal climate — hot summers and constant winds that speed up water evaporation, a crucial step in producing salt. Between 1926 and 1934, salt pans, buildings, and machines were constructed, and salt harvesting started in 1935. The site expanded several times to meet increasing demand, eventually covering nearly 15 square kilometers. This made Solana Ulcinj one of the largest saltworks in the Mediterranean region. However, its significance goes far beyond size or industrial output. Over decades, this human-made environment gradually transformed into a rich habitat for many species, especially migratory birds. Seawater pumped into the salt pans carries tiny microorganisms, which form the base of a complex food chain attracting a remarkable variety of birds.



Today, Solana Ulcinj is home to approximately 250 bird species — that is nearly half of all bird species found in Europe. Among them, 70 species are protected under European Union laws. The site is not only an industrial relic but also a vital stopover for migratory birds traveling thousands of kilometers across continents. Its importance is recognized globally, and it is one of Europe’s top nature reserves.



Environmental Importance

Solana Ulcinj is a very important place for nature protection worldwide. It is recognized by the Ramsar Convention, which is an international agreement to protect wetlands that matter globally. This area is part of the Mediterranean region, which is special because of its unique natural environments. The European Union's Habitat Directive and the Emerald Network under the Berne Convention also protect this region. Solana Ulcinj is one of the largest salty and brackish wetlands along the eastern Adriatic coast. Every year, the nearby Bojana-Buna River floods the area during certain seasons. This flooding is very important because it helps keep the wetland healthy. It allows the land to hold water naturally and supports the salty pans and wet habitats that many plants and animals rely on. Without this seasonal flooding, the balance of the ecosystem would be disturbed, and many species could lose their homes.



Challenges: Economic Decline and Ecological Risks

Despite its natural importance, Solana Ulcinj has faced significant challenges, especially in recent decades. The political and economic turmoil following the breakup of Yugoslavia had a strong impact on the salt production industry. The company managing Solana Ulcinj went bankrupt in 2005, and salt harvesting stopped completely by 2012.

Without regular pumping of seawater, the balance of the ecosystem began to deteriorate. The salt pans, which depend on controlled water flows, started to degrade, and many habitats became vulnerable. Infrastructure like dikes, buildings, and machinery is now fragile and decaying. Facilities for birdwatching, including observation towers and a small museum, have been damaged or fallen into disrepair. Poaching has become easier with less protection, threatening the bird populations that depend on the site.

For the local community, these changes also had economic consequences. The saltworks once provided jobs and economic stability for many families around Ulcinj. After the closure, many people lost their livelihoods, increasing social and economic difficulties in the region. At the same time, the potential for sustainable tourism and ecological development remains largely untapped.

Socio-Economic and Cultural Dimensions

Solana Ulcinj is not only an environmental site; it is deeply tied to the local people's lives, culture, and identity. The history of salt production is part of the community's heritage, and preserving this legacy is important for cultural pride and education.

There is a growing awareness that the area can be revitalized in a way that benefits both nature and people. Eco-tourism, especially birdwatching, can attract visitors and create new economic opportunities. Local businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, and tour guides, can thrive if the natural environment is well preserved and properly managed.

However, careful planning is required to balance tourism development with environmental protection. Too much or poorly managed tourism could harm fragile habitats and bird populations. Collaboration between government bodies, conservation groups, local communities, and businesses is essential to create a sustainable future.



The Solana Ulcinj Project: New Visions for an Old Landscape

Recognizing the complex challenges and potential of Solana Ulcinj, an international project was launched and presented at the 2016 Venice Architecture Biennale under the theme "REPORTING FROM THE FRONT." This project gathered four architectural and design teams from around the world to develop innovative ideas for the site's future, addressing environmental, social, economic, and cultural aspects.

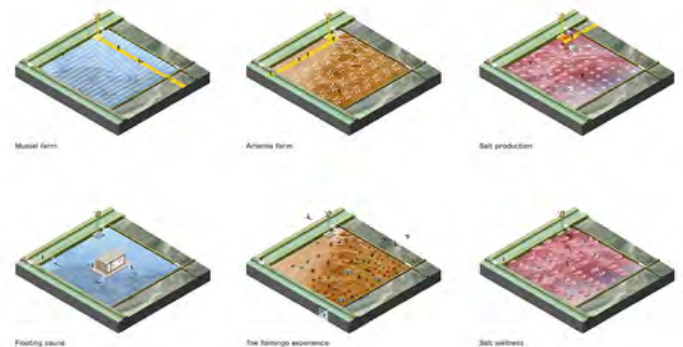
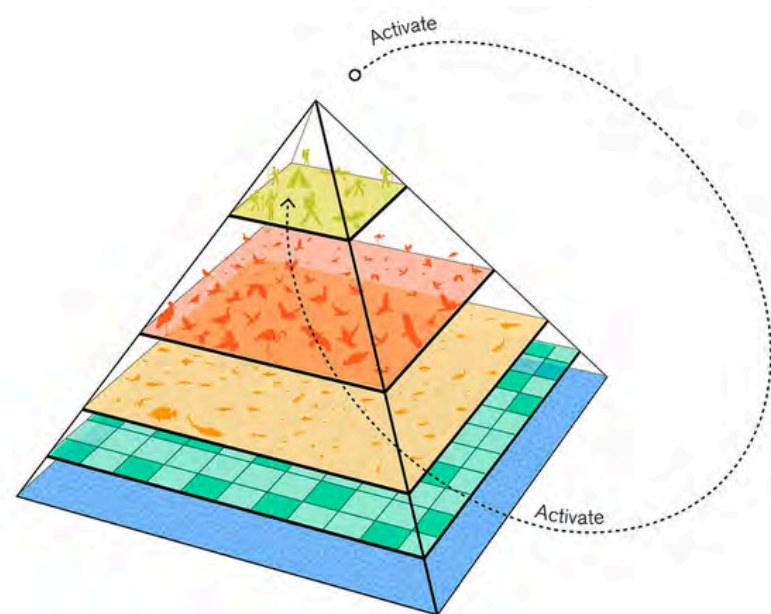
LOLA Landscape Architects: “The Cloud of Saline Species”



Based in Rotterdam, LOLA Landscape Architects proposed a nature-centered vision to increase biodiversity by improving salt sedimentation processes. Instead of pumping seawater only in summer, they suggest circulating saltwater year-round. This would create a wider variety of habitats, attracting even more bird species.

Their idea is not to compete with global salt producers by mass production, but to develop a special, high-quality salt sold at premium prices. This would be done sustainably, with advanced robotic harvesting on a small part of the site.

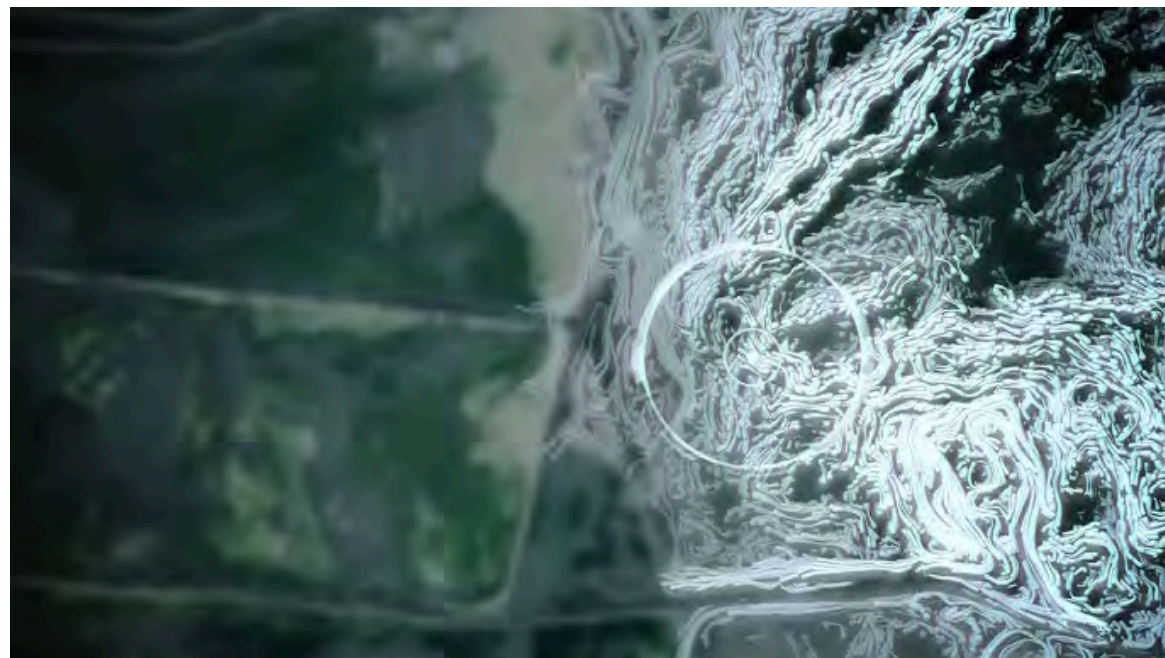
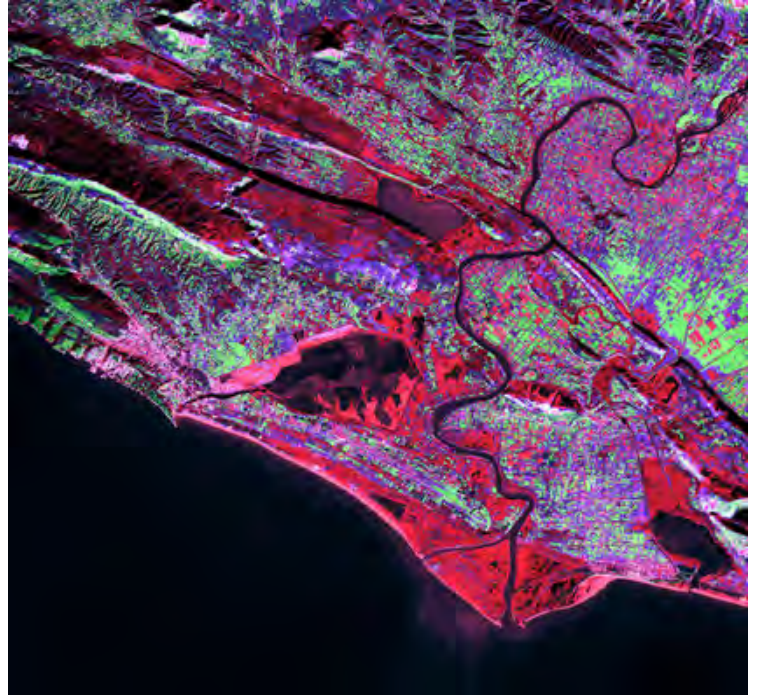
In addition, they plan to renovate old industrial buildings to create spaces for leisure and eco-tourism, such as birdwatching centers, saltwater floating pools, and mud baths. New facilities like floating saunas, observation towers, and overnight cabins would be added. Carefully designed paths and waterways would allow visitors to access the site's edges without disturbing sensitive areas.



ecoLogicStudio: “Solana Open Aviary”

This London-based studio imagines transforming Solana Ulcinj into a vast open bird sanctuary where birds and people coexist freely, without cages or nets. Their vision is grounded in cutting-edge technologies such as digital bird tracking, satellite monitoring, and robotics, which can help manage the site with precision.

ecoLogicStudio also emphasizes that Solana Ulcinj is part of a larger network of salt flats across Europe and North Africa facing similar environmental issues. To protect migratory birds and their habitats, they propose creating an international organization with global funding dedicated to safeguarding these critical landscapes collectively.

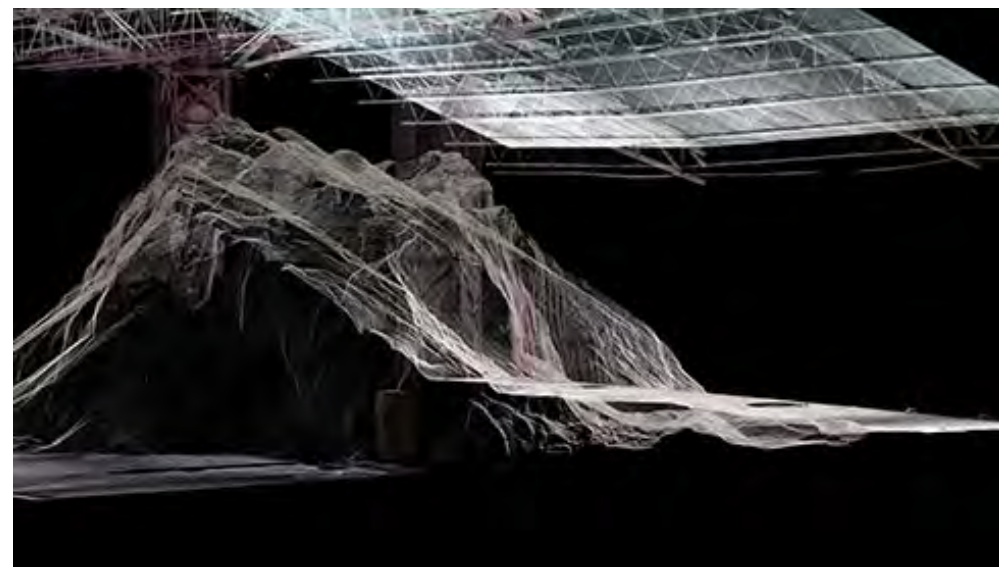


LAAC and artfabrik: “Coexistence”

The Austrian firm LAAC and Viennese studio artfabrik took a poetic and artistic approach. They created a detailed 3D laser scan of Solana Ulcinj and produced animations showing how nature and technology can blend and transform into one another.



Their vision challenges the traditional idea that nature and human-made environments are opposing forces. Instead, they suggest they can coexist harmoniously. They also propose building a new museum and reusing existing buildings to preserve the site’s industrial character while giving it new life.



The Path Forward

Solana Ulcinj is at an important turning point. Its rich natural environment, history of industry, and the local community all need to be carefully balanced to create a future that lasts. This place is a great example of how people’s history and nature can live together and help each other.

The new ideas from the design teams show that with careful planning, teamwork, and creativity, it is possible to protect this special habitat. At the same time, they can help the local economy grow and honor the culture of the area.

If done right, Solana Ulcinj can become a lively place again—where thousands of birds rest and flourish, visitors enjoy nature and history, and local people find new chances for sustainable development.



Conclusion

Solana Ulcinj gently reminds us that nature and human life are closely linked—they're not separate worlds but parts of the same story. It shows that when we honor this connection and work hand in hand with nature, we can create places where both wildlife and people feel at home and flourish. This is a beautiful lesson in how care and respect can bring balance and healing to our world.

For me, the future of Solana Ulcinj holds real promise. It calls for thoughtful, creative approaches that protect its unique natural wonders while embracing the rich history and culture of the people who live there. It's about more than just protecting the land—it's about breathing new life into the wetlands, supporting the local community with sustainable opportunities, and inviting visitors to experience the magic of nature and history coming together.



In a time when the environment faces so many threats, Solana Ulcinj offers hope that people and nature can thrive side by side. It takes patience, respect, and imagination—but when done with heart, it can become a shining example for communities everywhere. A place where we learn not just to save the land but to live in harmony with it, cherishing its gifts today and for generations to come.

SOURCE

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THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW
OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
AND URBAN DESIGN

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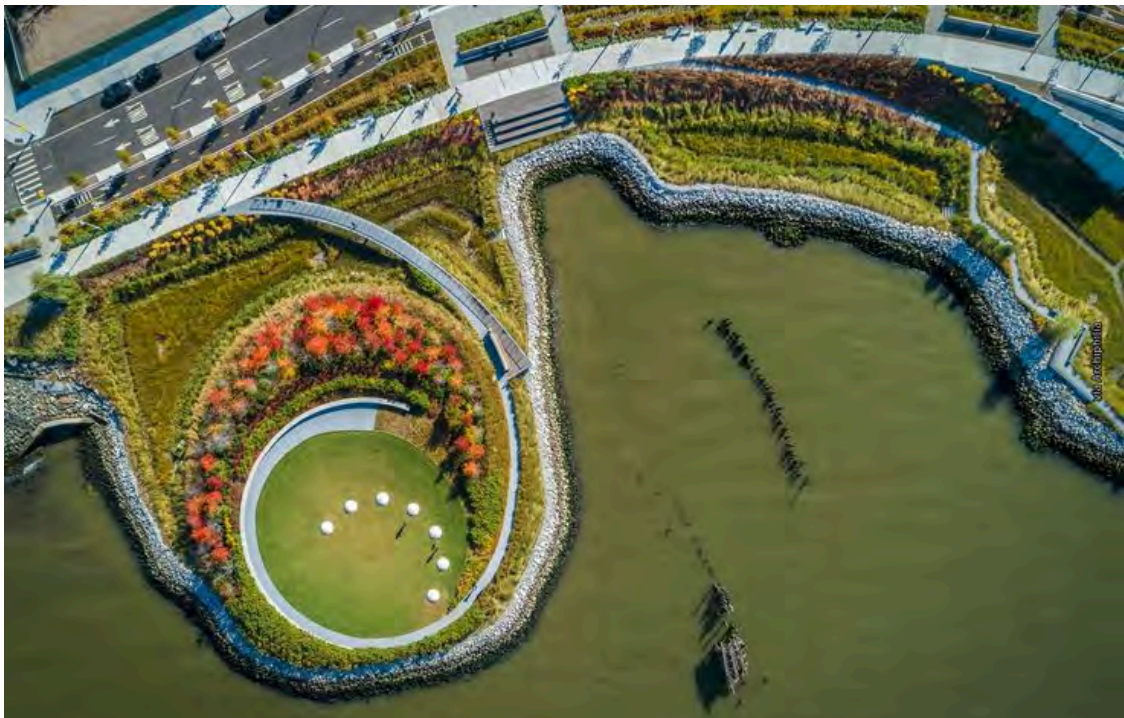
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Adaptive By

*In a city that once chose
concrete over life, this park
quietly asks: how much
longer can we afford to
ignore the land that
sustains us?*

Nature



A walkway coils from the main path into a newly formed island, where a lawn is verged by a public art piece by Nobuho Nagasawa.

Hunter.s Point South Waterfront Park Phase II, located in Queens, Long Island City, New York, was completed at 2018 as a reformist public landscape project. The design team included landscape architects from SWA/Balsley, architects from WEISS/MANFREDI and engineers from ARUP. Before, the site was an industrial zone that was corrupt and unused. Together these teams aimed to convert this underutilised space to a vibrant public park, touching climate resilience, ecological restoration and sustainable urban life.

The search for nature is both a physical and emotional need in a hyper-crowded city like New York. This project offers a solution for this problem by bringing salt marshes, native trees and natural vegetations. Here, trees are not only aesthetic or shading elements but also living systems which capture carbon, stabilise the soil and support water cycle. This reforestation helps to restore ecological functions and act like a protective barrier against global warming impacts.

The project helps visitors to feel better mentally and shows that urban landscape design is not just making things pretty, it is also about healing the environment and society by bringing back a place that was polluted and abandoned before. In this way, it tries to answer two of the most serious challenges of our time: the climate crisis and growing disconnection between humans and nature.

Protection By Design

One of the most important parts of the park is the wetland area, which helps to clean the water and protect the land from rising sea level. These wetlands are modern restoration of the site's original form, which was a freshwater marsh before industry. Along a gently sloping path, the architects put angled concrete parts that act like sea wall and shelter the wetland zone.

A winding path leads the visitors around the marsh and brings them very close to water's edge. Architect Michael A. Manfredi says it feels like „walking on water“ because of how close you feel to the shore, creating stronger bond with natural environment. This lower path is also a soft protection system because when there is very heavy rain or sea rise, this part of the path can be covered with water on purpose so that higher areas and nearby neighbourhood stays safe.

Restored wetlands provide a soft resiliency barrier while harking back to the area's original freshwater marsh ecology.



“One of the highlights is the dramatic cantilevered overlook, which not only offers panoramic views of the Manhattan skyline but also brings back the site’s maritime memory with its sculptural shape.”



Perspective

The design choices strengthen the emotional link between the visitor and the city across the water, making the skyline feel almost touchable. The park becomes not only a place to sit, but a place to look out and connect with the city, with others, and with the landscape itself. In the background, the New York City skyline stretches across the horizon, with the Empire State Building clearly visible.



Experience and Activities



There is not only a showcase of ecological resilience but also really a large space which is open and good for active public using. The park has open grass areas that serve as gathering spots for picnic, community events and informal sport activities. Biking and walking paths make visitors to explore the landscape and support healthy life style. Water features and play areas also gives children a safe place that makes the park popular for families with children at the warmer times. With these design choices, the park gives contribution to collective well-being

Rethink

Hunter.s Point South Waterfront Park Phase II represents one of the positive tries for making nature visible again in cities, but at the same time it opens questions about the limits of such projects. The design clearly wants to show how nature and city can meet together in harmony, but in reality the problems of the environment are much bigger than one park can answer. Wetlands and marshes are nice steps for soft resilience, but they can not solve the rising sea levels alone. Also, while the designers used ecological components like native trees or bioswales, the park could benefit more if it was designed as a part of a bigger blue-green network, instead of standing like an isolated solution. We see similar cases in sponge city concepts in Asia, where water systems work as a whole with the city.

Green

The parks material choices, like the concrete sea wall or sloped paths that let water enter in heavy rain, are clever, but they still depend on hard infrastructure. It shows how cities still struggle to trust in soft systems fully. There is also the social side. The park is made for everyone, but when we think about the fast gentrification of the area, we must ask: does this kind of green space really stay open for all communities? Or does it become a tool that pushes the original residents out? Projects like this must be more than just green decoration — they need to be a part of a bigger change in how we think and build our cities. Without this, we risk making parks that are beautiful but disconnected from the deeper environmental and social challenges of today. In the end, the real goal must be not only to create green spaces but to reconnect all urban life with nature in a stronger and more fair way.



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Boston Children's
Museum

PLACES





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Boston Children's Museum

Burcu Durmaz

BOSTON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

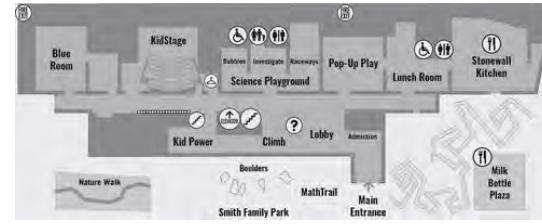
**Public Space where Design Meets
Play and Learning**

Design For Children, The Future For The City

Architecture is not only about producing buildings, but also the emergence of healthy structures that appeal to the eye by using science and art in a balanced way. This both shapes social relations and improves the quality of life. The role of fun environments that increase creativity in the spiritual and physical development of children is also great. It is of great importance that it is easily accessible, safe, educational and inclusive, which puts children's colorful worlds and happiness at the forefront. In this context, the Boston Children's Museum can be shown as a public space proposal.

This is the oldest children's museum in the world, founded in Boston Massachusetts in the United States in 1913. It was moved to its current address in 1979 and turned into a learning center for children by re-functioning an old industrial warehouse. Since its establishment, the Boston Children's Museum has been an institution that has constantly redefined the boundaries of learning and play concepts for children. This building, which has a history of more than a hundred years, is not only a museum, but also a pedagogical space, a social meeting space and an experience laboratory that demonstrates the impact of design on child development.

The project is located in the developing Seaport district of Boston, on the banks of the Fort Point Canal. The conversion of old warehouse buildings reflecting the industrial past of the Seaport district is also an example of Boston's sustainable urban transformation policies. Thus, the building has come to life again with contemporary functions while preserving a historical layer. Location selection; waterside access is very strategic in terms of integration with public open spaces and public transport links. The public pier, pedestrian paths and open spaces around it allow the museum to establish strong relations with the city. Since it is accessible by public transportation by location, it is not isolated from the city, but rather integrated into the living urban fabric. This settlement makes it possible for children and families to access the museum as part of everyday life.



The Location of the Project and the Urban Context

Project Location : Seaport District, Fort Point Channel Coast, Boston, Massachusetts, United States

Year : First installation 1913, Relocation 1979 (current building), Renovation 2007

Design Team : Cambridge Seven Associates

Design Philosophy and Pedagogical Approach

The basis of the museum design is the question of how to contribute spatially to the active learning processes of children. The approach of Cambridge Seven Associates is to strengthen the decoupling between play and learning through space. For this purpose, flexible and layered spaces have been created where children can touch, explore and interact.





Material Use and Sensory Experience

Architecturally, the building respects both its industrial past and has been enriched with contemporary interventions. The original brick facades of the building have been preserved; in the choice of materials, emphasis has been placed on surfaces that enrich children's sensory perceptions and evoke a natural feeling. Wood, glass, metal, and recycled materials stand out both aesthetically and environmentally. The interior design has been planned according to the children's scale; low railings, soft floors, clear directions and colorful surfaces have created environments where children can walk safely. The circulation areas are flexible, allowing free movement of children.

The use of natural light and indoor-outdoor transitions are also quite successful. Water playgrounds provide multi-sensory stimulation by combining sound and movement decoupling. Ecological awareness is transferred in a natural way through such experiences. In addition, designs that provide maximum benefit from natural ventilation and daylight have been used in terms of the sustainability of the structure.

Today, sustainability and social inclusiveness are at the forefront of the design of educational and

gaming venues. The Boston Children's Museum is also responding strongly to these trends. With the LEED Gold certified renovation process, the building has been reconstructed to minimize its carbon footprint. Mechanical systems with high energy efficiency, natural ventilation, and optimal use of daylight support these goals. In addition, the museum's programming approach also responds to today's environmental concerns. Educational programs such as "Green Trail" aim to give children sustainable living habits.

Inclusion and Social Participation

The Boston Children's Museum attracts attention not only for its architectural qualities, but also for its programs that promote social inclusion. The museum provides an inclusive public service with applications such as entrance discounts for low-income families, accessibility solutions for individuals with disabilities, and bilingual information boards. At the same time, it is constantly interacting with the community by organizing workshops, educational programs, and weekend events aimed at various social groups. The outdoor spaces, for example, the wooden pier, the playground, and the green areas are designed to be open to the public. Even these areas emphasize that the museum is for everyone. Thus, the building becomes not only a learning space, but also a community space.

The main design purpose of the museum is based on the principle of "learning through play". According to this understanding, children's access to information should be achieved not only by visual or auditory means, but also by touching, experimenting and interacting in a way that supports children's sense of curiosity. For this reason, the museum moves away from the classical exhibition structure and presents a spatial fiction in which children can participate actively, make decisions and explore. Play, education and social interaction are considered decoupled together. The museum not only offers a content, but also gives children the opportunity to think, dream and act together.

The Boston Children's Museum brings together all these contemporary deceptions. While the re-functioning of an existing structure encourages the efficient use of environmental resources, it shows the importance of special planning and pedagogical design for children.

In addition, the museum's structure, which is open to everyone, reveals the spatial value of social justice in the city. With these features, the project can be considered as an important example for the design of public spaces for children in the future.

Spatial Organization and Flexibility

The Boston Children's Museum is a powerful example that shows that spaces designed for children should not only be fun, but also thought-provoking, educational, and inclusive. This structure supports the processes of play, learning, and social bonding through design. At the same time, it responds to the most up-to-date environmental and social trends of today with the principles of sustainability and inclusiveness.

The proliferation of such spaces belonging to children in the city, which they can explore freely, is critical for a healthier, more inclusive and sustainable urban future.







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ECOSYSTEM
DESTRUCTION DUE
TO THE
ANTHROPOCENE

-Balance is possible

A BIRD LANDSCAPE

-How is it possible?

LAYERD SYSTEMS

-Beauty of nature and
safely reach their
destinations

Symbiosis

A Symbiotic Threshold:

Lingang Bird Airport

the idea of living in ecological harmony



In today's rapidly developing world, ecological degradation has become an inevitable result with the concreting of everywhere. Therefore, architectural responses to environmental concerns are more critical than ever. Airports are also one of the most important reasons for the disruption of this ecological balance. The massacre of nature caused by their construction in huge areas and the effects such as the intersection of flight routes with bird migration routes cause great damage to the ecology. Under these conditions, Lingang Airport offers an alternative solution for nature and the environment. It is a harmonious balance point for people and bird ecologies

Ecosystem destruction due to the Anthropocene



Balance is possible

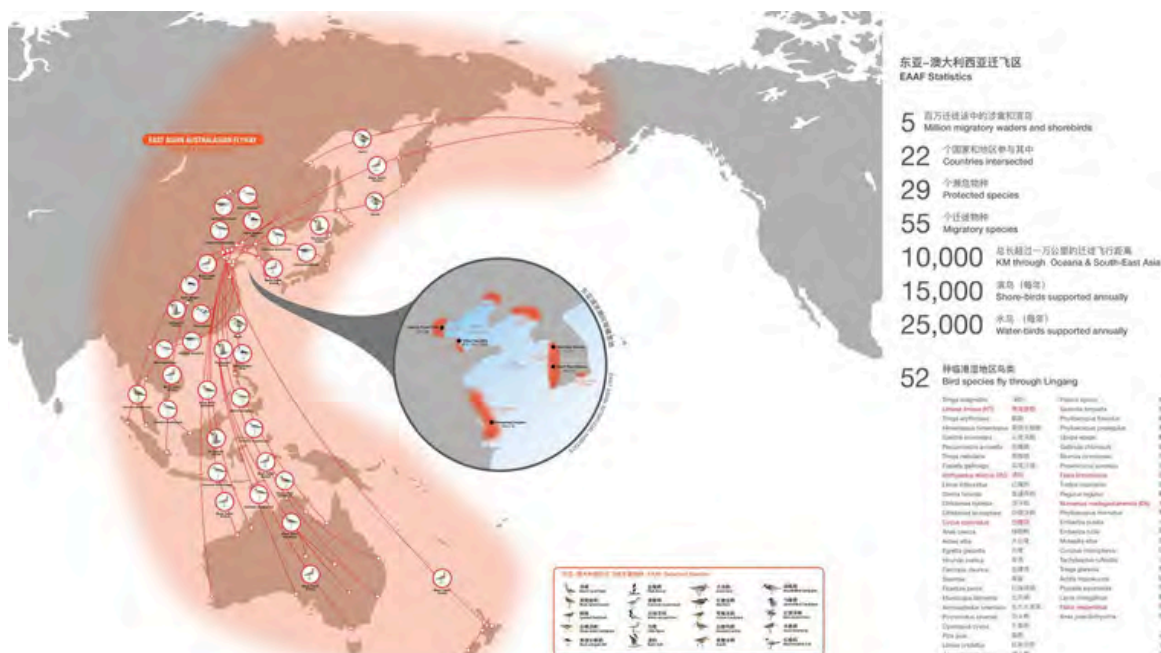


This project, built in the Lingang district of Shanghai, is at the service of birds and people as a bird sanctuary, an observatory and an airport. It is a project that shows that constructive effects can be made rather than destructive effects on nature. This article examines the design philosophy of the project, its formal features and how it adapts to the environment.

How is it possible?

The Lingang Bird Airport project has become a necessity with the rapid development of Shanghai. However, due to its natural beauty and location, alternative construction methods had to be developed for the airport that was to be built in this city. This project, developed by a studio called 100architect, which aims to integrate nature into public spaces with experimental solution methods and is known for these projects, finds a solution to the ecological problem at the intersection of intense human mobility and seasonal bird migrations.

Shanghai is located on the East Asia - Australia Migration Route, which is used by more than 50 million birds every year. With the increase in land values and rapid urban growth, the natural habitats where birds can take a break on this busy route are gradually decreasing.





A bird landscape

The project has ceased to be a full-scale airport project and has become a structure that has become a bird landscape, a public observatory. It has become a metaphor for a landscape area where people and birds arrive, rest and live together.

However, the Lingang area offered a unique opportunity for the airport, which has also become an intense need for people. Instead of consuming the land for only logistical purposes, the architectural team imagined an airport that hosts natural systems instead of displacing them.



The philosophy at the heart of the project is the idea of living together in ecological harmony. Traditional airports are engineering products designed with maximum efficiency and almost no consideration of non-human life. Lingang Bird Airport reverses this logic and asks: What if an airport were designed with the needs of birds first and then of humans?

What if an airport were designed with the needs of birds first and then of humans?



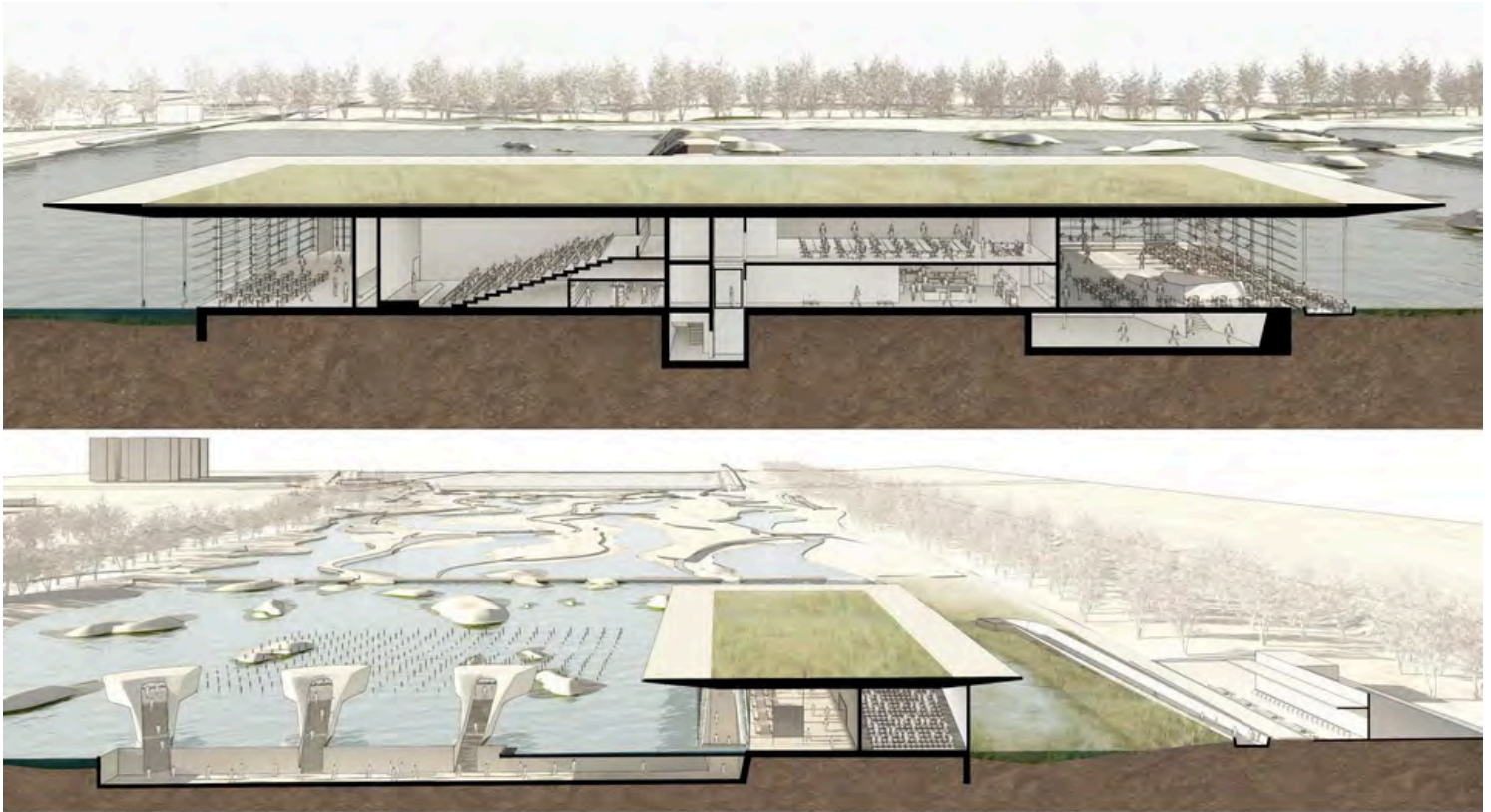
Design Philosophy

This profound question guides the entire strategy of the project.

It prioritizes quiet areas, safe landing pools and vegetated corridors suitable for migratory species within the airport.

Instead of hard surfaces and noisy areas, this is an airport designed with vegetated roads, low-reflectance materials to avoid birds' response and sections suitable for nesting.

Beauty of nature and safely reach their destinations



The influence of man and nature is inevitable in this airport. However, in order to prevent destruction, visitors are not allowed to roam freely on the site; instead, they can roam around inside via elevated walkways and observation platforms. Thus, without disturbing the birds at ground level, people can both get lost in the beauty of nature and safely reach their destinations with the airport.

This design, which constructively addresses ecological problems, creates a deeper public awareness of the loss of biodiversity in today's world, together with the spatiality it creates. Here, visitors experience the natural life they actually do not care about closely, and learn by seeing the destruction they create. This learning experience is not given to people just by seeing; visitors do not just walk in this area, they move slowly and silently - just like birds.

Lingang Bird Airport consists of layered systems that simultaneously respond to ecological, experiential and urban needs. Therefore, it was designed under quite complex and difficult conditions.

The airport primarily needs hydrological integration. The construction site consists of an interconnected water body consisting of shallow ponds, seasonal wetlands and streams. These wetlands provide ideal living conditions for water birds and also serve as natural drainage and temperature regulators.

The plant areas are arranged according to the natural structure of the site. It consists of long grasses for nesting, low bushes for feeding and sparse trees for perching. The airport's planting areas use native plants instead of exotic species, which is important in terms of enhancing local biodiversity and also reducing maintenance requirements.

Human structures, such as observation towers and shelters, are quite simply a form. It is also designed. The materials are selected for low reflectivity and low heat conduction, and the forms are geometric but unobtrusive. These structures are designed not as buildings but as observation tools that increase awareness.

Layered systems



In addition, the planning avoids huge areas like in traditional airports. There is no “main terminal” in the classical sense. Instead, a decentralized spatial ecology consisting of a micro-scale terminal, observation points and rest areas is created - reflecting the dispersed logic of bird migration.

Be an ecological mediator



In an era when ecological destruction is rapidly increasing, Lingang Bird Airport brings a new approach to the balance between nature and people. Instead of optimizing speed and control, it slows down and calms down. The importance of this structure is not only its high functionality, but also its statement that architecture can be an ecological mediator.

Environmental design principles

The project is consistent with various contemporary environmental design principles:

Nature-Based Solutions (NbS): Utilizes natural systems such as wetlands, vegetation, and water flows for needs such as temperature control and providing a livable habitat for living things.

Resilient Urban Design: Adapts to migration routes and wetland dynamics caused by climate change by demonstrating flexibility in land use.

Multi-Species Urban Design: Goes beyond anthropocentric planning (the idea that humans are at the center of everything) and allows birds to be equal stakeholders in spatial planning.

Pedagogical space

The project also functions as a pedagogical space. It allows children, especially those living in cities, to experience wildlife as an ornament and change their perspectives. This experience is of vital importance in developing empathy for ecology and natural life in children and later adults in the long term.



From a policy perspective, Lingang Bird Airport is a prototype for integrating biodiversity into large-scale urban planning. As cities grow, they must confront the ethical and ecological consequences of this growth. Such projects show that growth can mean not destroying nature but coexisting with nature.

What if...?



Lingang Bird Airport is not a project created with a classical engineering and architectural approach, but rather a project for an infrastructure approach that learns from ecological systems rather than conquering them. By prioritizing habitat over hardness, rhythm over rigidity, and existence over efficiency, it redefines what infrastructure design means in this era of extinction.

This project makes us ask the following questions: What if every airport were also a shelter for living beings, just like this airport? What if every bridge, road or dam were also a natural habitat? Lingang Bird Airport cannot answer all of these and similar questions, but it can breathe new life into the destructive effects of humanity.

Resources



McGregor Coxall proposes wetland "bird airport" for northern China

McGregor Coxall has won a competition to design a wetland sanctuary in Tianjin, China, offering...

5 Comments · Mar 20, 2017



Lingang Bird Airport

Funded by the Asia Bank and led by the Tianjin Economic-Technological Development Area (TEDA) the Lingang Bird Sanctuary is an ambitious project to deliver a flagship ecological wetland precinct.

McGregor Coxall



Lingang Bird Airport

This project showcases the exciting opportunity that exists when we reclaim spaces within our cities for critical habitat.

Projects · May 28, 2019

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Ivy in Concrete

One day, I noticed ivy creeping out of small cracks in a concrete wall by the side of the road. It was probably something I’d passed by many times without a second thought. But this time, I paused. It made me wonder: are spaces, voids, and traces of life ever truly abandoned? Or do they simply wait—quietly holding on—until something, or someone, brings them back into being?

To me, Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord is a place born from that very question. Once a site buzzing with the heat and noise of iron and steel production, the old factory is now still. Yet even in that stillness, a small flower growing at its edge feels like something waiting to hatch—an egg full of untapped potential.

Unlike many post-industrial sites that are erased, paved over, or forgotten, Duisburg-Nord was given a different kind of future. It wasn’t treated as a ruined shell, but as a layered structure—one that could continue telling its half-finished story. With careful, controlled changes, it has become a space where memory and possibility coexist.

Peter Latz and his team didn’t just green the site or clean it up. They created a living space that understands what it means to be empty. They strengthened the site’s contrasts—between structure and nature, ruin and life—through adaptive, interactive design. The result isn’t just a park that welcomes nature, but a place that remains in deep contact with people. A place that knows a space without life and interaction is nothing but a void.

And the park doesn’t know yet what else it might become—or whom it might host.

Duisburg-Nord is more than a park. It’s not just about green spaces or recycled materials. It’s a quiet understanding that real change takes time. That layering, not replacing, builds true continuity. This is not just reuse. It’s metamorphosis.

*“Life rewrites the ruins.
Slowly, collectively and
without permission.”*



Post Industrial

Before the ivy



Duisburg-Nord in Ruhr

Located in the heart of Germany's Ruhr region, Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord was once very different from the peaceful park it is today. From the early 1900s until 1985, this place was a loud, intense center of iron and steel production. Furnaces burned hot, cranes worked day and night, and the whole area was shaped by industry and hard labor.

When the factory shut down, silence took over. The space was empty, quiet, and seemed forgotten. But it wasn't truly lost. In the 1990s, as part of the IBA Emscher Park project, a new idea began to grow — one that didn't involve starting from scratch. Instead of erasing the past, Peter Latz and his team wanted to work with what was already there. They believed that the rusted steel, cracked concrete, and old structures still had something to offer.

Their aim wasn't to remove, but to reimagine. The old industrial parts weren't seen as waste — they became the base for a new kind of life. Through careful reuse and letting nature return, the site slowly started to breathe again. Weeds and moss crept over walls, water filled empty tanks, and plants grew in cracks where machines once stood.

This change wasn't about covering things up. It was about reading the story the place already told, and adding to it. Tracks, pipes, and tanks stayed where they were — not as ruins, but as parts of the new landscape. Slag basins turned into still pools that reflect light. Old ore bunkers became places to climb, and new walking paths wound through the old structures. People were invited to move through the space without forgetting what it once was.

Time is visible everywhere here. Rust leaves marks. Broken roofs let in shafts of light. Moss spreads slowly. Nothing is hidden — the past lives alongside plants and people, forming a layered balance of memory and nature.

Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord is more than just a park. It's like a living memory, where history, ecology, and design come together. It doesn't just tell its story — it lets you walk through it, feel it, and see how steel and soil, memory and change can live together.

Usually, old industrial sites are handled in one way: tear everything down, clean the area, and start again. People remove what they see as waste, clean up pollution, and try to erase all signs of the past. But Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord took a very different approach.

Here, the design started by looking carefully at what was already there. The remains of the ironworks—pipes, tanks, silos, and railway tracks—were not seen as trash to throw away. Instead, they were kept and used as parts of the new space, both physically and atmospherically.

Before any design work began, nature had already started to take back the site. Ivy climbed the walls, grasses and moss grew in cracks, and rainwater collected in old basins, creating small natural habitats. These changes helped guide Peter Latz and his team in their design decisions.

The plan respected what was already present—both in materials and history. Instead of forcing a new order, changes were made carefully. Old paths were kept and used again. Big structures like blast furnaces and bunkers were adapted with only small changes. The goal was not to erase the site's past, but to build on it.

The ruins were not hidden or fixed up in the usual way. Rust, wear, and decay stayed visible and became part of the park's character. Lighting, walking paths, and plants were designed around the old buildings, showing them off instead of covering them up.

The park does not try to rebuild the past or hide it. Instead, it works as a place of continuity, where old industrial parts support new uses—like cultural events, recreation, and nature. This layered reuse gives the park a new identity while keeping its history alive.

MACHINERY TO MOVEMENT

Today, Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord is more than just a preserved site — it functions as a dynamic public space where people interact with the remains of industry in unexpected ways. Spread over 230 hectares, the park avoids rigid zoning. Its layout feels open and responsive, allowing different uses to unfold naturally across time and space.

At the center stands the Blast Furnace Complex, once a hub of iron production. It is now a climbable structure, open to exploration. Visitors walk up stairs, rest on metal platforms, and follow old catwalks. The original function is no longer visible, yet the physical presence remains. The act of climbing turns a former production system into a new kind of movement — one shaped by curiosity, not labor.

Nearby, the Gasometer, a former gas storage tank, has been adapted into an indoor diving center. This conversion merges past and present in a direct spatial way: the structure is still there, but the experience inside is completely transformed. Scuba training happens in a space that once stored volatile energy — now it holds water and breath.

Open spaces between the structures host events throughout the year. One of the most well-known is the Nordstern Amphitheater, used for open-air concerts and festivals. The industrial surroundings amplify the atmosphere. The rough materials and wide scales offer a stage that doesn't need extra decoration — the setting itself becomes part of the performance.

Other parts of the site support everyday uses. Old rail lines have become broad paths for cycling, walking, and skating. The old slag basins have turned into shallow water areas, attracting birdlife and creating moments of calm. Playgrounds made from repurposed industrial parts give children a tactile way to engage with the site's material history — steel, bolts, and pipes become tools for learning and play. The site also features a historic roller coaster and the park's highest sandcastle, both adding playful and unexpected elements that contrast with the industrial past and invite visitors to explore with curiosity.



Blast Furnace: climbable industrial structure



The Duisburg-Nord Gasometer:

A former gas storage tank transformed into a unique industrial landmark and diving site.



Nordstern Amphitheater: An open-air concert venue nestled among industrial ruins, where the historic setting enhances the live experience.





The voids of industry
have become frameworks
for collective presence.

FLEXIBLE DESIGN

One of the most remarkable things about Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord is how sustainability is built right into the site itself. It's not about making everything look brand new or perfect, but about working with what already exists and sometimes accepting that things don't always go as planned. Peter Latz's approach goes beyond just technical solutions. He focuses on systems that can adapt, breathe, and respond to changing conditions over time.

For instance, the park's water management is not about installing entirely new pipes or drainage systems. Instead, it reuses old industrial basins and tanks—large containers once holding toxic waste—to collect and filter rain water. These reservoirs now help support wildlife and plants, while also cooling the surrounding environment. It's a clever way to transform pollution into a resource, but it hasn't been without challenges. Sometimes water collects unevenly, or unexpected plants grow, reminding us that nature doesn't always follow plans.



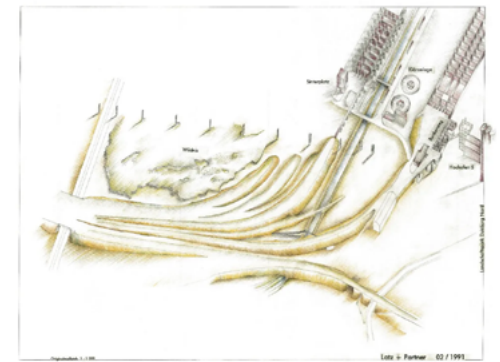
Structural plan of Duisburg-Nord:
The structural layout reflects how former production lines now host gardens, paths, and recreation zones.



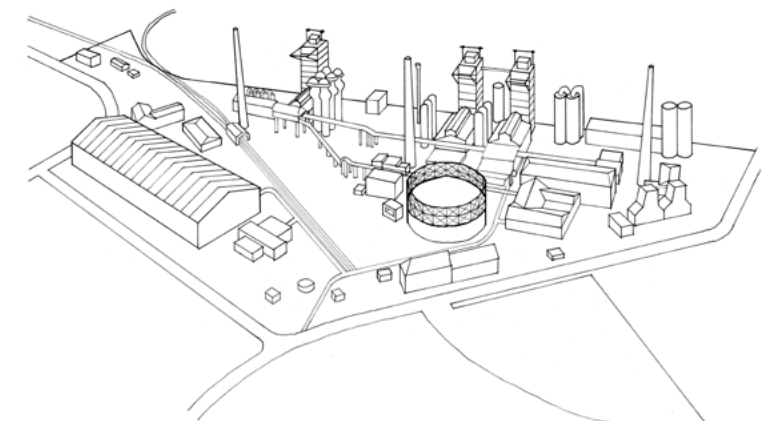
Open retention basin for rainwater reuse and habitat regeneration.

The park's railway tracks are another example. Rather than removing all the old rails, some sections were converted into paths for walking and cycling.

Others were left untouched, with grass growing through the gaps. These rails serve as both functional routes and reminders of the park's industrial past. It's a way of honoring history without freezing it in time something that can feel messy or unpredictable, just like life itself.



Historic railway lines integrated into the park's circulation and ecological network.



Axonometric site analysis.



Grass quietly reclaiming forgotten spaces.



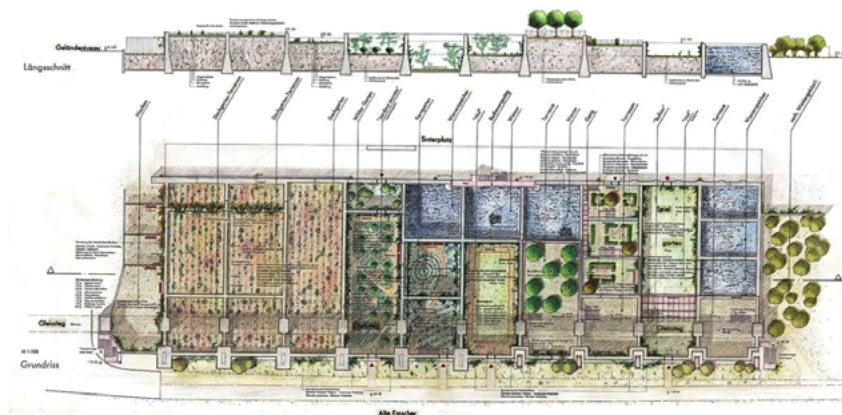
Controlled Wildness: Nature's Slow Return

Instead of formal, neat gardens, Landschaftspark embraces controlled wildness. Moss spreads over rusted metal, ivy climbs broken walls, and native grasses grow between old structures. This isn't neglect, it's a choice to let nature slowly come back. This reflects succession, where early plants prepare the ground for others. It takes patience, since nature doesn't always grow as planned.

Some sections are left untouched, where grasses and weeds push through concrete cracks. This is called natural colonization, happening in a disturbance regime, areas disturbed by human activity but recovering naturally. These edges create diverse habitats, known as the edge effect, increasing biodiversity.

A clear example is Sinters Park, the former iron ore sintering hall. Rather than demolishing it, its open skeletal frame remains, creating a special microclimate. Hardy pioneer species grow on the rusty beams and concrete platforms. This is a form of adaptive reuse, where industrial heritage and nature coexist. It shows nature's resilience: its ability to survive and thrive in harsh conditions.

Plants don't just fill empty spaces; they transform them, climbing steel and weaving through concrete. Not everything grows perfectly, but these imperfections are natural. Sustainability here means finding a balance, allowing nature and human intervention to work together.



Sinter Park: A dynamic green space revitalizing former industrial grounds through adaptive landscape design and ecological restoration.



Sinter Park's stone-gate entrance marks the threshold between industrial past and natural renewal.

Over 700 plant species have been documented at Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord — nearly 50 of them endangered (Keil, 2019). Many thrive in post-industrial conditions like poor soils and rubble. The park's diverse microhabitats, from dry walls to concrete voids, now serve as quiet refuges, showing how design can support spontaneous ecological recovery.

At night, lighting by Jonathan Park highlights cranes and towers softly, turning old industrial structures into glowing "skeletons." This mix of light and shadow creates a special experience, making visitors feel connected to the site's history in a poetic way. The park keeps its rusted beams and worn surfaces as part of its material palimpsest, showing layers of time instead of erasing them. This supports ideas of decay and renewal, important in ecological succession and post-industrial landscapes.

Duisburg-Nord acts like a living archive where visitors feel history through space and materials. Jonathan Park's lighting design also respects the industrial past by emphasizing structural elements without overwhelming the site. His carefully positioned lights accentuate textures like rust and peeling paint, creating moments where history and art intersect. This approach encourages visitors to slow down and engage thoughtfully with the landscape at night, transforming the park into an immersive, sensory experience.

The nighttime illumination complements the daytime ecological functions of the park, such as water collection in former slag basins and natural plant succession on steel platforms. This dual experience—day and night—reinforces Duisburg-Nord's role as a space where history, nature, and human presence coexist in layered harmony.

“The nighttime lighting emphasizes the industrial heritage, strengthening the identity of the space and offering visitors a historical experience.”





“Once looping with speed and thrill, the old roller coaster now rests in stillness: its spiraling curves echoing the energy that once flowed through its steel spine.”

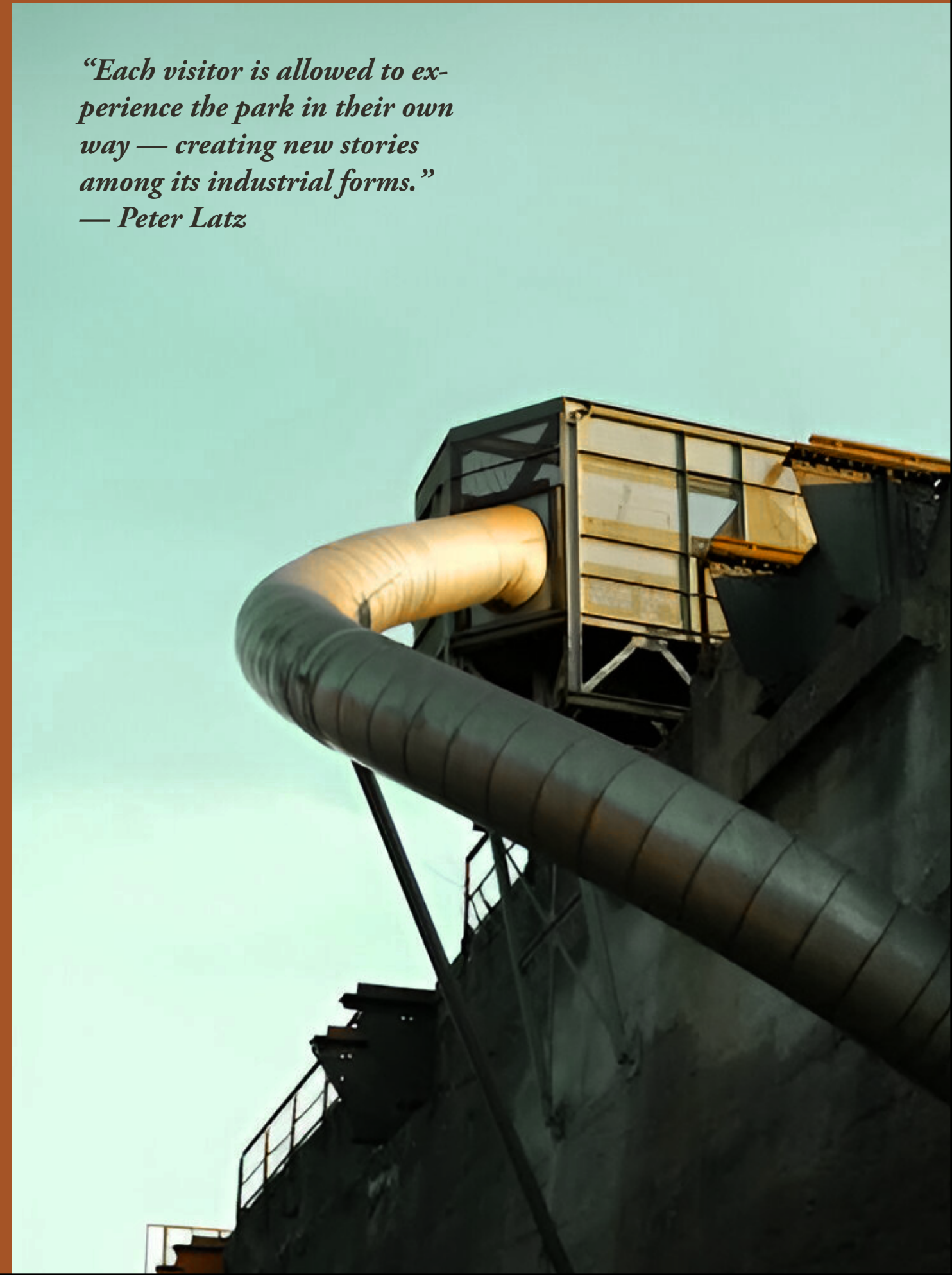
More than just a transformed industrial site, Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord stands as an inspiration for designers worldwide. The park has received numerous awards, including the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award and recognition from the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA).

These honors reflect its success in combining heritage preservation, ecological sustainability, and public engagement in a unique way. Duisburg-Nord serves as a model for how old industrial spaces can be creatively reused, fostering biodiversity, cultural memory, and community life all at once.

Its innovative approach inspires designers and cities around the globe to rethink the relationship between nature, history, and urban space. Rather than erasing the past, it invites us to live with it — adapting, growing, and evolving together.

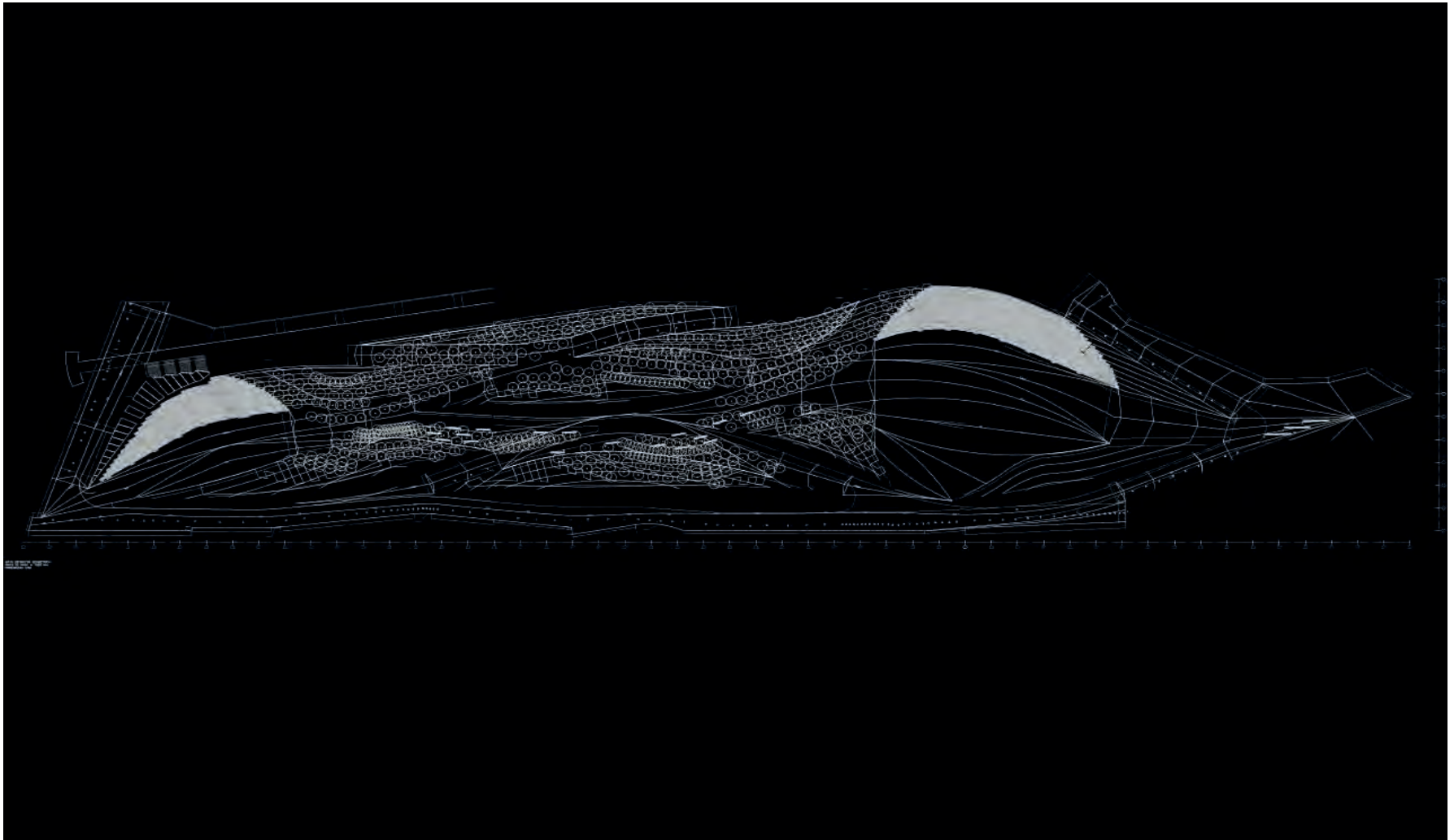
What if more places embraced this spirit of transformation and resilience?

“Each visitor is allowed to experience the park in their own way — creating new stories among its industrial forms.”
— Peter Latz





SOUTH EAST COASTAL PARK



South-East Coastal Park
(Parc del Litoral Sud / Parque del Litoral Sur)

Project Name: South-East Coastal Park

Location: Barcelona, Spain

Coordinates: 41.3899° N, 2.2066° E

Architectural Firm: Foreign Office Architects (FOA)

Founding Architects: Farshid Moussavi, Alejandro Zaera-Polo

Project Dates: 2000–2004

Client: Ajuntament de Barcelona – Barcelona City Council

Scope: Landscape design, public space redevelopment, coastal rehabilitation

Site Area: Approximately 14 hectares

Context: Urban transformation project developed within the framework of the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures

Landscape Concept: Dune morphologies, porous topography, ecosystem regeneration

Primary Materials: Concrete, steel, local stone, permeable paving

Photography: Iwan Baan, FOA archives

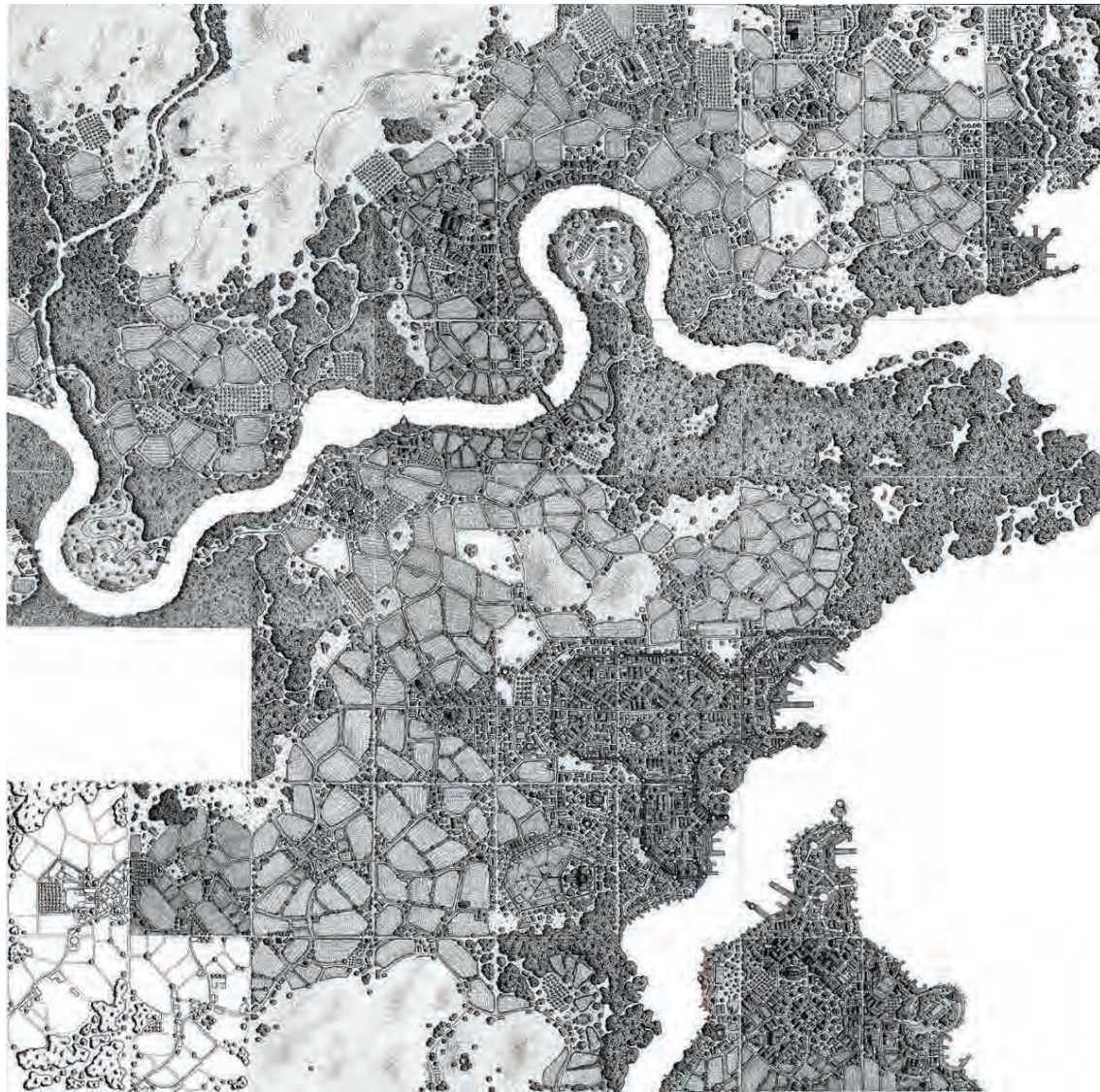
Published In:

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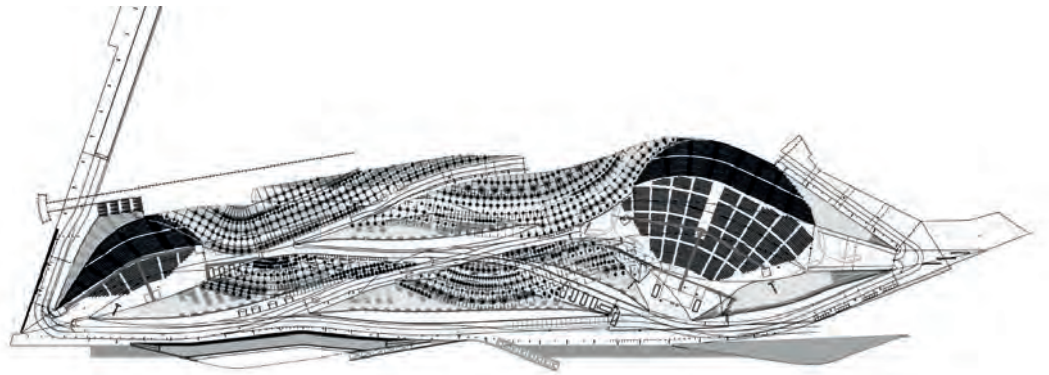
– Forum Barcelona 2004 Official Catalogue

BARCELONA COASTLINE



The southeastern coastline of Barcelona had long existed within an urban fabric that had turned its back on the Mediterranean. Throughout the 20th century, this coastal strip was occupied by industrial facilities, waste generated by infrastructure, and transportation networks, causing it to lose almost all of its natural character. The process of reclaiming and redefining the identity of Barcelona's coastline began to develop toward the end of the 1990s. However, the area we are examining remained excluded from these developments for a much longer time. Since the early 20th century, this zone had been deprived of its natural ecosystem due to port expansion projects, and public access had been increasingly restricted. It became an area that people could neither see nor reach—yet one that was continuously exploited by existing industry. That remained the case until the Forum Universal de las Culturas.

The South East Coastal Park Project is one of the initiatives planned for the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures held in Barcelona. The designers aimed to create an alternative to consistent or inconsistent geometric forms—whether rational or organic in nature. The project was conceived to reestablish the broken link between the city and the sea. The coastline, previously degraded and damaged by industrial use, has been redesigned and reimagined to take on a new ecological and social role. The park is a man-made intervention that nevertheless seeks to preserve organic and natural forms. In doing so, it not only functions as a social space but also strives to initiate a new form of communication with nature.



3. Design Strategy and Landscape Tactics
As previously mentioned, the central design approach of the plan involves meticulously crafted topographies that appear natural. These artificial landforms are positioned within a specific system, yet their distribution across the surface evokes the expansive sensation of mountain ranges. The orderly yet harmonious design offers the user a clear and uncomplicated route, while simultaneously allowing for spontaneous and unexpected encounters. This systematic distribution is built around gently sloped walking paths, rest areas, and activity nodes. Each topographic element serves both as a visual aesthetic and as an active component in a broader functional narrative. These strategies and decisions transform the landscape from a mere surface into a living, evolving organism.





4. Public Use and Spatial Experience
 The park's spatial layout is shaped by a system that caters to different age groups and activity types. Walking and jogging paths, as well as areas for cycling and skateboarding, are organized into shared or separate zones depending on user needs. Shaded seating areas, scenic observation points, and open-air performance spaces enhance and enrich the user's experience. Through this strategy, the park becomes a dynamic space in constant flux, yet also incorporates rhythms that allow for stillness, rest, and contemplation. Users construct their own personal experiences within this rhythm and are given opportunities to form a unique, individual connection with the design through their interaction with various programmed functions in the park.



5. Material and Construction
Material choices were made in alignment with the project's approach to integrating with nature. These selections support and perpetuate the park's method of communication with the environment. The changeable and dispersible nature of sand has been utilized to create ever-shifting, dynamic surfaces. This flexibility and variability allow for both functional diversification and visual richness. Landform modeling techniques were employed to generate artificial dunes. Thanks to these methods and design choices, an infrastructure was established that is both aesthetically pleasing and structurally continuous. Compacted surfaces act as invisible systems that regulate surface water flow, maintaining ecological performance without visual intrusion.



6. Section and Plan Interpretation

At the lowest layer of the park lies water movement; circulation paths are located in the middle; and the vegetative layer crowns the top. This vertical hierarchy not only creates a visually appealing composition but also ensures ecological balance between design and nature. Upon analysis, the areas in contact with the urban fabric appear more intensively programmed, while the sections closer to the sea adopt a more sparse and open arrangement. This contrast allows for varied user experiences and enables the park to host different functions at different times of the day. The South East Coastal Park is not just a design; it offers a platform that reinterprets the relationships between nature, the city, and its users. In this respect, it continues to function as a dynamic, multifunctional, and environmentally conscious public landscape.



On the Silent Language of Space South East Coastal Park approaches architecture not as a fixed form, but as a process that unfolds over time. One of the strongest emotions this project evokes is the presence of a design that stands its ground—yet remains quiet, unobtrusive, and gracefully withdrawn. Within this landscape, functions and aesthetic concerns do not shout, do not dominate, and do not dictate. Instead, the design invites the user into a natural flow, while simultaneously maintaining its own presence through a subtle and consistent language. We encounter a design attitude that is humble, as often seen in contemporary architecture, yet unwilling to erase itself. The topographies shaped by the idea of dunes offer more than just a natural reference; they present a notion of time, foregrounding the process itself. Everything within the park is temporary—but intentionally so. Paths curve like the wind, open areas become moments of pause, and nothing remains static. The relationship between the controlled aspects of the design and the changing dynamics of nature is skillfully orchestrated. According to my analysis and personal impressions, South East Coastal Park does not acknowledge the traditional boundaries of landscape architecture—instead, it acts as though these boundaries do not exist, redefining the ground on which design can stand. Through this method and its criteria, the park offers an original and sustainable dialogue between nature, city, and user—one that evolves, diversifies, and matures through time. To walk through the park is not to observe a design, but to dissolve into it. This is a deep and beautiful way to transform architecture into a personal experience.



LOWER DON LANDS

Using holistic landscape solutions to revive
flood security

Water-Oriented Frameworks in Contemporary Cities

Planning through water logic in an era of climate
volatility

Borders That Move With the City's Pulse

A living conversation between land and liquid

Resilience Starts With What We Build Today

Where future city plans must embrace nature's
unpredictability

An aerial photograph showing a large-scale urban redevelopment project along a waterfront. A wide, dark blue waterway runs vertically through the center of the image. On the left side of the waterway, there are several long, narrow land parcels, some of which are covered in green vegetation and others in construction materials. A prominent curved landmass is visible in the lower-left quadrant. On the right side, a dense urban area with various buildings and structures is visible. In the background, a large, hilly area with sparse vegetation rises above the city. The overall scene depicts a major infrastructure and urban planning project.

A new hope:

reconnecting
Toronto with
nature and its
surroundings.



The Lower Don Lands as an Active Link

Embracing a landscape-oriented approach, the Lower Don Lands initiative reconnects the city of Toronto with the Don River, aiming to address contemporary urban and environmental pressures through comprehensive design interventions. By integrating flood mitigation strategies, enhancing ecological diversity, and thoughtfully restructuring urban spaces, this project establishes a seamless interface where the built environment and natural systems coexist harmoniously and supportively.

Location: Situated precisely at the intersection where the Don River meets Lake Ontario in Toronto, the Lower Don Lands occupies a strategic position critical to the city's ecological and urban infrastructure.

Year: The planning phase for the project commenced in 2007, marking the beginning of a thoughtful and deliberate process to reclaim and regenerate this urban area. Concrete steps towards construction and substantial physical improvements have been actively ongoing since 2018, highlighting a transition from conceptualization to tangible ecological and urban transformation.

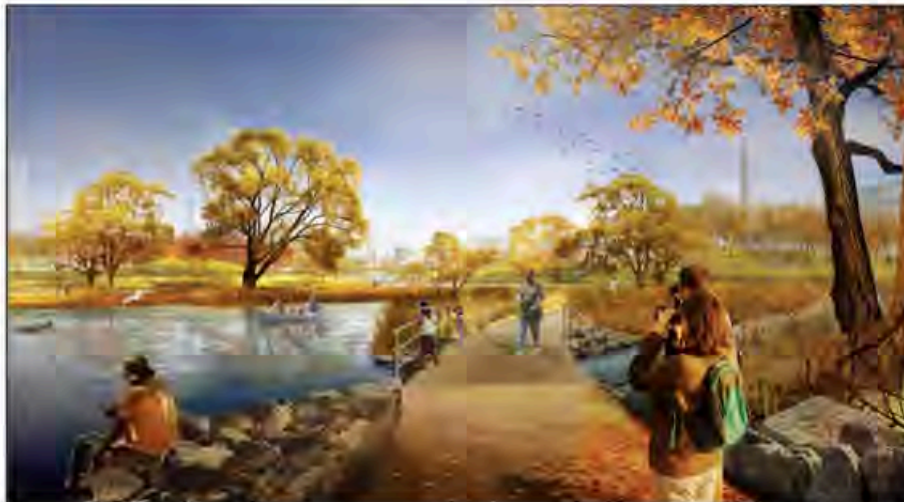
Design Team: Under the principal guidance and strategic direction of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVVA), the project's multidisciplinary design collaboration includes prominent contributions from West 8, known for their expertise in innovative urban landscapes, and Urban Strategies, specialists in holistic city planning and urban revitalization. This diverse team brings together a wealth of knowledge, expertise, and creative vision, ensuring a dynamic and resilient outcome.

Context: Historically characterized by excessive concrete structures, pollution, and severe ecological degradation, the mouth of the Don River previously represented an area disconnected from both ecological functionality and community engagement. The Lower Don Lands project seeks to reverse these adverse conditions by restoring natural ecological processes, thus

transforming what was once an environmentally compromised area into a thriving, resilient, and sustainable waterfront landscape. This redevelopment not only revitalizes the ecological systems inherent to the river but also enriches Toronto's broader urban fabric, creating accessible and vibrant spaces for community use, ecological education, and recreational activities. Consequently, this ambitious regeneration effort not only addresses past neglect but also positions the Lower Don Lands as a key contributor to Toronto's long-term sustainability goals and urban resilience.

MATERIAL MILESTONES

GRACE FARMS GROWS AN INITIATIVE
ON ETHICAL SUPPLY CHAINS WITH
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE.



The Lower Don Lands project reimagines the Don River as an essential organizing principle in shaping the broader urban context of Toronto. Under the leadership of MVVA, the natural dynamics of the river dictate the layout and organization of public spaces, seamlessly integrating ecological objectives with practical urban use. Green spaces, which initially serve passive ecological purposes, are re-envisioned as vibrant, multifunctional infrastructures supporting sustainability and promoting social engagement.

Central to the project's innovative approach are three principal design strategies, each bridging the gap between ecological restoration and urban development ambitions.

1. A pivotal component involved reshaping the mouth of the Don River to more authentically reflect its historical course. Creating a newly excavated valley that directly connects to Lake Ontario has significantly enhanced the river's capacity to handle floodwaters naturally and efficiently. This intervention not only mitigates flood risk but also rejuvenates the surrounding landscape.

The design incorporates carefully terraced banks, intricate meandering pathways, and expansive wetland areas. Collectively, these elements recreate a functioning river delta, fostering improved ecological health, biodiversity, and natural habitat regeneration. This dynamic restoration not only enhances the river's ecological integrity but also serves as a visible and accessible natural environment for residents, encouraging increased public awareness and interaction with the river ecosystem. Defensive Terrain Configuration for Water Management

To protect nearby areas from infrequent but powerful storms, a significant berm was created alongside the Keating Channel. Its multifunctional design includes recreational trails, natural greenery, and contour changes that promote public engagement. Embedding Civic Life with

Urban Design

This innovative urban model integrates commercial and residential growth with natural water management systems and pedestrian-friendly connectivity. By moving away from conventional city planning methods, it approaches urban design as an intertwined network of constructed and ecological elements. Public spaces are strategically designed to fulfill hydrological roles by capturing, moderating, and cleansing stormwater runoff. Utilizing a diverse range of sustainable and functional materials—including gabion walls, bioswales, native plant species, and permeable paving—this approach harmonizes ecological processes with aesthetic considerations.

Streets within this urban framework serve dual purposes, simultaneously accommodating various transportation modes and effectively managing stormwater.



Core Principles and Structural Overview

Central to the Lower Don Lands initiative is the revitalization of an overlooked

undervalued river, repositioning it as a fundamental driver in Toronto's urban planning strategy. This endeavor simultaneously promotes ecological restoration and leverages landscape design to shape the city's future trajectory. The project distinctly prioritizes:

- Adaptive infrastructure capable of responding flexibly to environmental changes

- Comprehensive planning aimed at strengthening community resilience
- Establishing a robust urban identity rooted in environmental and social sustainability
- Achieving economic vitality and community prosperity through strategic, design-driven development initiatives

By viewing the landscape as both protective infrastructure and an organizing framework, the Lower Don Lands project adopts a flexible and adaptable approach. This method reflects a shift away from decorative or purely aesthetic landscapes towards practical and continuously evolving spaces that meet real needs.



1. Addressing Modern Environmental Challenges

The Lower Don Lands project aims to repair previous ecological damage and protect the area from future climate-related threats. It is designed with the understanding that natural systems need active support and protection to recover and thrive. Instead of being just visually pleasing, the landscape in this project actively helps solve environmental issues

Managing Flood Risks Through City Planning

Toronto is increasingly vulnerable to flooding because of changing weather patterns and more frequent extreme storms. Recognizing this, the designers of the Lower Don Lands have significantly rebuilt the Don River's channel. This new design allows the river to handle large amounts of water during extreme storms safely, greatly reducing the risk of flooding to nearby homes and businesses.

Additionally, the project has carefully designed the floodplain areas. Using advanced computer models, designers studied how water moves and behaves in these spaces. This helped them create areas that not only manage floodwaters effectively but also improve environmental health. These areas support plants, wildlife, and overall ecological balance, enhancing biodiversity. At the same time, they provide attractive, welcoming places for residents and visitors to enjoy.

This practical approach turns what could be problems into opportunities. The landscape serves multiple roles at once, from flood protection and ecological restoration to improving public spaces. This combination creates an environment that adapts well to changing conditions and benefits the whole community. The project's success lies in its ability to balance ecological needs with urban life, making the Lower Don Lands a great example of sustainable and resilient city design. It also demonstrates how cities worldwide can better manage natural disasters and climate change impacts by thoughtfully integrating nature into urban planning.



Developing Sustainable Urban Frameworks via Nature-Driven Ties



Landscape Oriented Ecological Repair

Before its renewal, the Don River was practically cut off from ecological function — constrained by rigid concrete channels and surrounded by land that was heavily contaminated and unable to support any meaningful life.

Urban Growth Plan That Prioritize Both Development and Nature



The new design brings back vibrancy through native ecosystems, stormwater integration, and landscape restoration, linking the river once again to both the environment and the urban community it serves.

- 17 hectares of wetlands have been brought back to ecological function
- * Thousands of native trees — totaling over 30,000 — were added to enhance biodiversity

- * Aquatic habitat design was informed by collaboration with field ecologists

*

With a focus on native species revival and intentional integration into Toronto's broader ravine landscape, the biodiversity corridor strengthens ecological pathways and enables the long-term stability of ecosystems, creating a robust environmental system that spans both local and regional scales.

Built in accordance with the sustainable planning criteria of LEED-ND, this project prioritizes walkable environments, efficient land use, and integration with public transportation. In addition, its use of naturalized green infrastructure systems enables stormwater to be effectively stored and treated within the site itself, thereby lowering environmental impact and enhancing both the ecological and visual performance of the area.



Nature-Fueled Energy Transforming the Urban Fabric

Throughout the development, sustainability was a clear priority — exemplified by the recycling of excavated soils, the reduction of hard surfacing to support green infrastructure, the deliberate planting of climate smart vegetation, and the integration of industrial site features into public space narratives.

General Conclusion

The Lower Don Lands project in Toronto presents an innovative vision of city planning that emphasizes the environment as a fundamental component in urban design. Traditionally, rivers within cities have been perceived mainly as threats due to flooding. However, this approach transforms the Don River into a valuable urban asset. Instead of resisting or controlling the river, the design actively integrates it as a crucial infrastructure element, safeguarding the city and improving the quality of life.

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architecture
design
culture
art
June-July
2025

Red Ribbon Park, China

Landscape Architecture, Park Qinhuangdao
Turenscape
Qinhuangdao 2007

Qinhuangdao, China

Red Ribbon Park

Tanghe River Park

The Red Ribbon is a 500 metre long feature in the park. It combines lighting, seating and wayfinding with nature. The design preserves much of the natural river area and shows how a simple idea can dramatically change the landscape.

Design Team

Kongjian Yu
Ling Shihong
Chen Chen
Niu Jin
Hong Wei
He Jun
Ning Weijing
Li Yao

Design Office

Turenscape

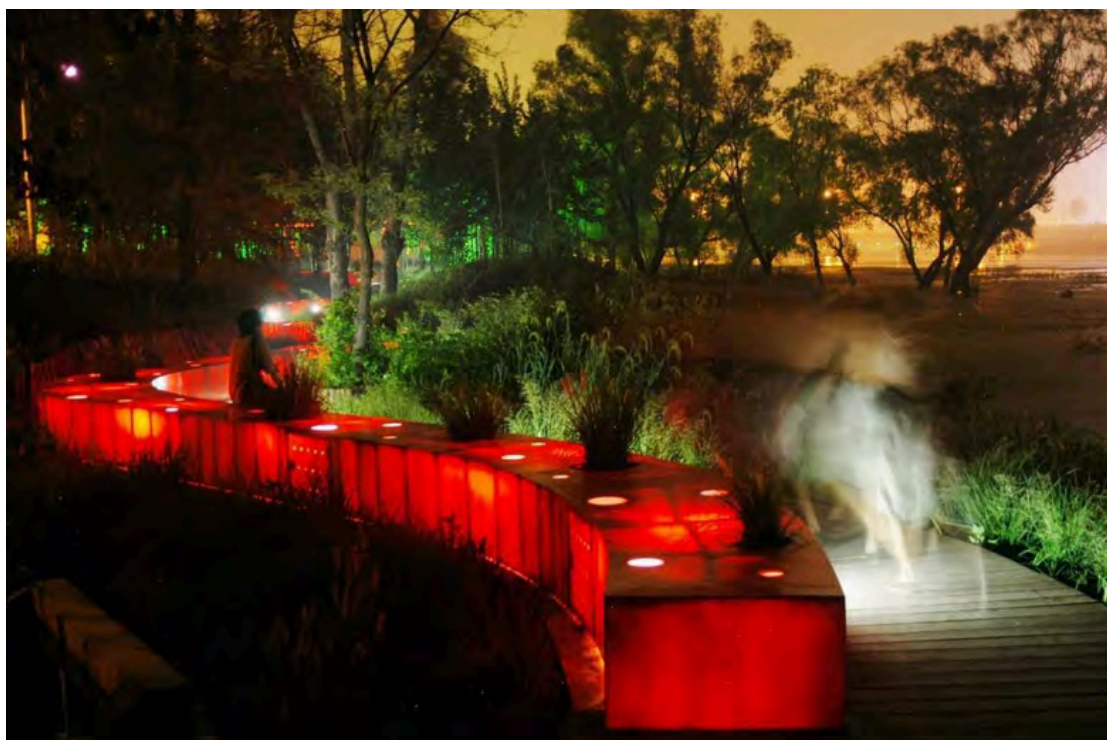
Architects

Liu Xiangjun
Long Xiang
Yang Zhenrong

Date of construction

2006

Located on the banks of the Tanghe River in Qinhuangdao, China, Red Ribbon Park is an example of landscape architecture that artistically expresses ecological sensitivity. The Tanghe River area, historically important as a natural habitat and drainage corridor, experienced many years of industrial neglect and urban expansion until the park was restored, leading to an ecological and cultural revitalization. Designed by Turenscape under the leadership of Kongjian Yu, the park transforms a once neglected natural riverbank into a functional public space. Red Ribbon Park exemplifies how landscape architecture can be inclusive, sustainable, and visually impactful through simplicity, minimal intervention, and respect for nature.

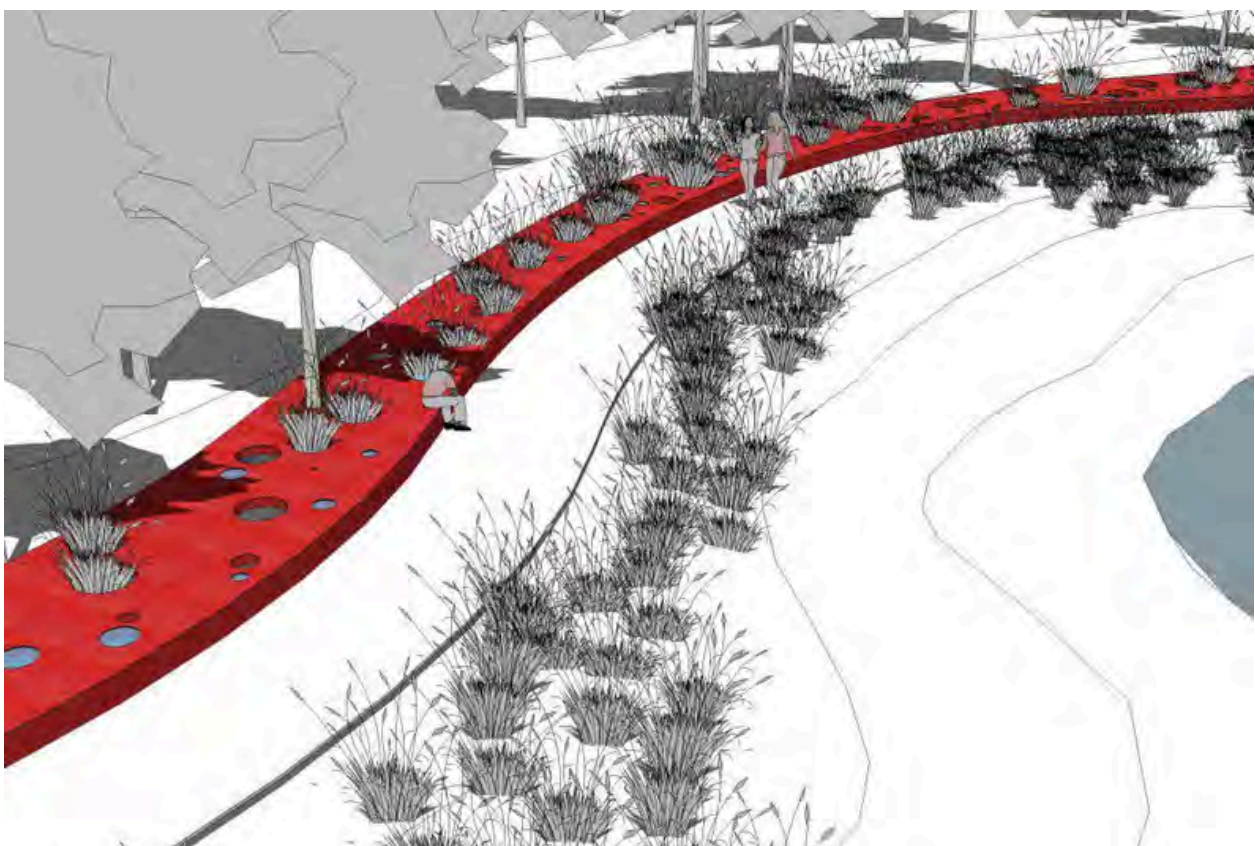


The Red Ribbon

ASLA Design
Honor Award in
2007,
International
Architecture Award
in 2008,
Waterside Design
Annual Honor
Award in 2010

This park is named after the 500-meter thick red ribbon that defines its character; it is made of fiberglass and concrete. With the help of parametric modeling, the team precisely created the fiberglass ribbon, used less material and ensured structural stability by following the natural bends of the river. It has four functions: path, seating, lighting and visual guidance device. Designed by Kongjian Yu of Turenscape, the park is designed to promote environmental protection and urban public life in Qinhuangdao. It allows people to interact with the riverside without damaging the natural environment. In this article, we examine its design thinking, spatial and material implementation, environmental strategy and how it connects people to nature.

The Red Ribbon Park, finished in 2007 in Qinhuangdao, China, is a public landscape project developed by the innovative firm Turenscape, under the direction of Kongjian Yu. It serves as an example of how human use and nature can coexist in urban design. Before the park was developed, the site had been used as a landfill and was filled with abandoned structures, irrigation equipment, and water towers. The goal of the project was to reuse the space in a positive way while preserving the natural beauty of the Tanghe River corridor.



Completed in 2007, Red Ribbon Park in Qinhuangdao, China, is a prominent public landscape designed by Turenscape and led by renowned landscape architect Kongjian Yu. The project is widely regarded as an example of a successful balance between human activities and nature conservation. Prior to its redevelopment, the area was neglected and served as an unofficial waste dump, filled with broken irrigation systems, water towers and debris, making the area unsafe and unattractive. Long-term neglect has caused environmental damage and diminished the natural appeal of the Tanghe River corridor. The project aimed to transform this underused and damaged land into a vibrant public park while carefully preserving the river's natural ecosystem. Instead of clearing the entire area, the designers chose a minimal intervention approach, preserving the existing vegetation and landscape features. Now, the park provides a valuable green space for the community and highlights the importance of ecological restoration in urban design. The project has served as a model for other cities facing similar problems with polluted riverbanks and neglected urban environments.

Red Ribbon Park is special because of its clever and careful use of space. The designers used native plants to help local animals and insects. These plants grow well in the area and do not require much water or chemicals. This helps keep nature healthy and supports birds, bees and other small animals. The shape of the park also follows the natural flooding of the Tanghe River. Instead of stopping the river, the design allows water to enter some areas during rainy times. This helps clean the water and prevents the ground from being washed away. It also means that the park does not need large pipes or machines to move water, which is good for the environment. To build the famous red ribbon, the designers used fiberglass, a lightweight but strong material. This helped reduce damage during construction and ensured that the ribbon would last a long time. Thanks to these clever and green choices, Red Ribbon Park is not only a place for people to enjoy. It is also a place where nature and people live together peacefully and where visitors can learn how to protect the environment.



The design philosophy of Red Ribbon Park clearly demonstrates Turenscape's belief in treating the landscape as a kind of infrastructure and following the principles of ecological urbanism. The design celebrates nature rather than concealing or controlling it. The river and floodplain are kept in their natural state and play a central role in shaping the overall experience of the park. The designers chose to use native plant species that adapt well to the local environment and do not require much maintenance. This choice not only helps the park remain sustainable, but also allows it to change naturally with the seasons, making it feel alive all year round.

The main feature of the park is its bright red ribbon structure. It is made of smooth fiberglass and supported by concrete foundations. The red color was deliberately chosen to create a strong contrast with the greens and browns of the natural surroundings. The ribbon gently follows the curves of the riverbank and has built-in lighting, so visitors can safely use the park even after sunset. Its continuous, flowing shape feels like a part of the landscape, despite being clearly prominent.



Apart from the ribbon, the rest of the park is left mostly in its natural state. There are only a few simple paths, and most of the native plants have been preserved or reintroduced. Rather than adding numerous artificial elements or decorative features, the designers focused on highlighting the beauty of what already existed, such as the river, trees, and grassy areas. This strong visual contrast between the man-made ribbon and the natural landscape creates a unique identity for the park, making it a special place where design and nature work together in harmony. To help both the soil and wildlife, native plants such as Chinese willow and reed grass were placed along the river banks to provide seasonal nesting sites for birds.

Benches, lights, and signs are embedded in the ribbon design. This unified method cuts down on visual clutter and creates a sense of unity. The red ribbon acts as a sculptural object, gently guiding visitors while attracting them. Red Ribbon Park demonstrates sustainable design. The park is often called a place where man-made features and the natural landscape are united in a soft, inviting way that encourages peaceful exploration. It uses native plants that require little water or special care. These plants are adapted to local climate and soil. This conserves water and supports biodiversity.

Before the project, the area was little used. There were no paths, seating or lighting. After the project, it became a vibrant public space. People come to walk, relax and enjoy the view. The park is made for relaxing and meeting people, so it welcomes all kinds of visitors. The ribbon allows people of all ages to easily navigate the park. This project shows that good design doesn't have to be costly or complicated. A well-executed idea can transform a place. The park now serves as a model for other cities looking for affordable and sustainable public space improvements. The red ribbon also serves as a landmark. It is easily visible and helps people remember the area, giving the park a unique identity.



The way the park manages rainwater is based on natural processes rather than heavy engineering. When heavy rains cause the Tanghe River to overflow, the floodplains in the park absorb the extra water and reduce its speed, which lowers the chance of damage to the surrounding land. This natural flooding also helps prevent soil erosion and supports groundwater recharge by letting rainwater soak through the ground. Because of this smart use of the landscape, the park avoids building expensive and complicated drainage systems that can disrupt ecosystems. Plants and soil act as natural filters, cleaning the water before it returns to the river. The park's red ribbon is made from durable fiberglass materials that last a long time and don't require much maintenance, making it environmentally friendly. Parametric design tools were used in shaping these fiberglass parts, which helped reduce waste during construction. Besides water management, the park carefully protects native vegetation, creating habitats that provide food and shelter for local wildlife. This combination of environmental care and public use makes the park a good example of sustainable urban design.

Green spaces reduce heat, support wildlife and improve mental health. They also allow small animals to move around the area. Red Ribbon Park includes all of these benefits. It is more than just a park; it is part of the broader idea of cities working closely with nature. The design includes annual flower gardens in white, yellow, blue and purple to support natural vegetation. The bright red structure stands out amidst the pastel green natural surroundings. The red ribbon symbolises the graceful flow of the river, showing the constant movement and vibrant energy in the park; at the same time, its bold colour interacts dynamically with the serene green surroundings, creating a visually striking and balanced scene. Turenscape's philosophy is based on landscape urbanism, treating the landscape as a vital part of the city rather than decoration. These parks are essential for healthy urban living



Red Ribbon Park is changing the way people view public spaces. It combines simplicity and impact, art and practicality. It serves as both a local and global example. With urban growth and fewer green spaces, such projects have become a must. Turenscape applied ecological thinking, environmental respect and human-centered design to develop a park for people of all ages that is loved by visitors. Red Ribbon Park is more than just a ribbon; it creates a meaningful, beautiful connection between people and nature, showing how gentle care and small touches can renew nature. A prominent example of ecological urban planning, Red Ribbon Park has gained global respect and contributed to the development of landscape architecture internationally.


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MFO Park

THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN

Oh, hi there!

I'm topos, the leading international magazine for urban planning from Munich, Germany. For me, everything revolves around the sustainable city of the future. Online, I spend 365 days a year dealing with the question: how will we live sustainably, healthily and technologized in the world's future metropolises? In addition to my home www.toposmagazine.com, I am published four times a year as a print magazine (that's what you are holding in your hands right now!).

I address everyone who is interested in the smarter, greener city of the future and who works in, on and with the city. My readers include CEOs, mayors, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, engineers, digitalization specialists, researchers – simply everyone that is interested in urban development!

My great passion is finding and analyzing solutions for the city of the future. Solutions that city planners, companies, start-ups and of course the cities themselves find to respond to challenges such as digitalization, climate change, mobility, population growth and poverty.

In addition to our cover stories in the printed edition, you will find online the most important stories and news from the world's largest and most influential cities, portraits of the foremost international projects around the globe, new solutions and innovations for the city of tomorrow, as well as interviews with international city makers.

Nice to have you here, let's change the world together!



Transforming Industrial Ruins into Living Spaces

Walkways and platforms were built inside the structure, allowing visitors to use the structure on multiple levels.

COVER

PHOTO: Franz Grünewald



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Ecological and Sociological Transformation in an Industrial Zone:

In this issue, I will describe one of the most impressive examples of this, the MFO Park in the Oerlikon neighborhood of Zurich. On the site of the 19th century Oerlikon Machine Factory (MFO), MFO Park is a highly original and impressive public space sprouting up amidst industrial ruins.

Designed by Bernard Hunziker and Burckhardt & Partner, the park resembles a vertical garden with vines, hanging plants and colorful flowers rising from its metal structure.

In addition, the steel scaffolding used in the architecture of the park creates a new and green breathing point in the urban fabric without breaking the connection with the past.

With this story of change, MFO Park aims to create new forms of interaction between the city, architecture and people.

It offers a rich and multi-layered environment where people socialize with each other, spend time among the pergolas surrounding the area, children play, adults breathe and rest, birds and insects find a habitat.

In this issue of Topos, MFO Park's vertical structure, rich vegetation and careful spatial organization make it not only a physical escape, but also a critical and intellectual platform to better understand the transformation process. In this issue, I have aimed to address these values of the park more closely under the headings of environmental, sociological and ecological goals, etc. I hope to offer new perspectives that will enable us to think more deeply about the relationship between human, nature and the city. Finally, for me, this research has been a valuable and inspiring journey that reinforces the hope that urban design can offer unique examples of what is possible when it is designed without separating people and nature. I wish you a wonderful reading experience.

SINEM KARTAL
Editor-in-Chief
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Bringing an Industrial Area to Life

Bringing industrial fabric into public life is a very important and transformative approach in urban design and landscape architecture. The transformation of defunct and idle industrial buildings such as factories, warehouses or production facilities into green and public spaces where the public can breathe, constitutes a valuable and effective intervention in many respects.

This process allows for the creation of new functional and ecological values, while preserving the material and immaterial remnants of the past. Such parks connect discontinuous green networks in the urban fabric and offer new habitats for biodiversity. Moreover, this transformation reinforces the sense of belonging of the local population, keeps urban memory alive and establishes an important link between the past and the future.

In the transformation of industrial lands into parks, the preservation and repurposing of the original structures is highly effective. Keeping metal scaffolding, load-bearing grids or the remains of warehouses as the backbone of the landscape reinforces the original character of the design, while creating new spaces that reflect the spirit of the time and integrate with public life. In conclusion, works such as MFO Park are valuable projects that aim to make the changes in the urban fabric more sustainable and inclusive, emerging at the intersection of ecological, architectural and social approaches.

Originally a heavy industry site, the Oerlikon Machine Factory (MFO) was a powerhouse for the production of locomotives and heavy machinery in the 19th and 20th centuries.

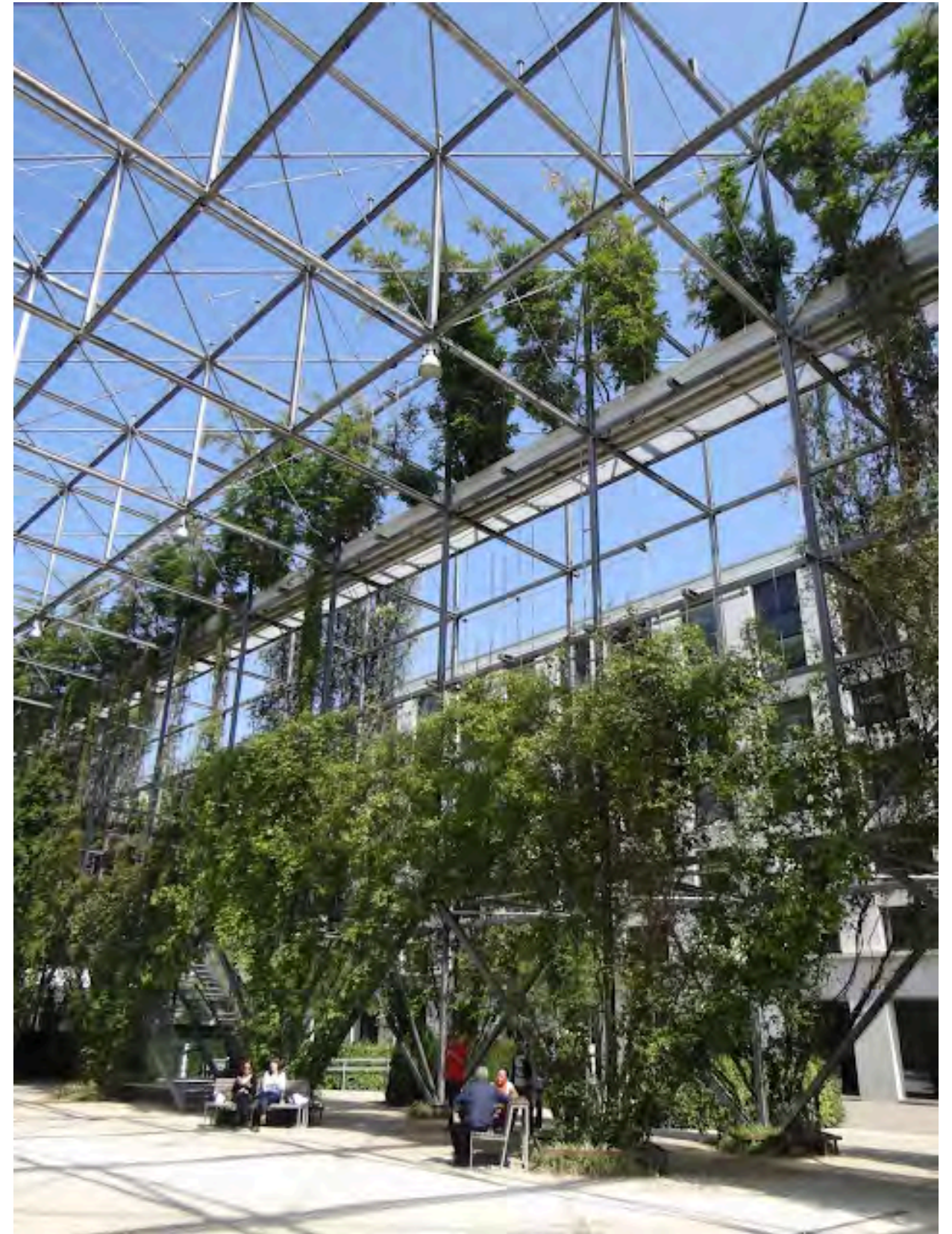
The MFO Park was built entirely between the industrial structures here. The original intention was to make this valuable and central land available to the public as the area was losing its function over time.

MFO Park was designed with the aim of turning such a gray and idle area into a green and public space.

Leading Zurich architects such as Bernard Hunziker and Burckhardt & Partner and landscape architects Raderschall Partner are behind the project. Static and engineering services were provided by Basler & Hofmann.

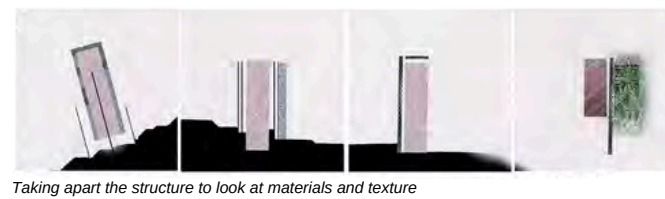
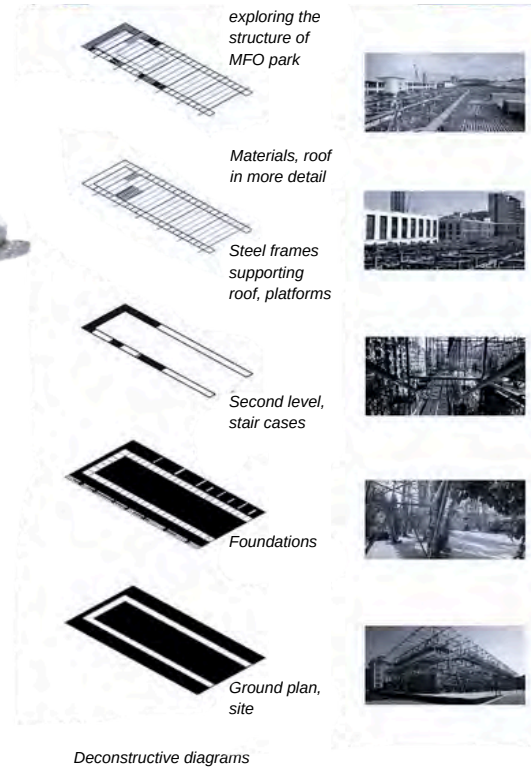
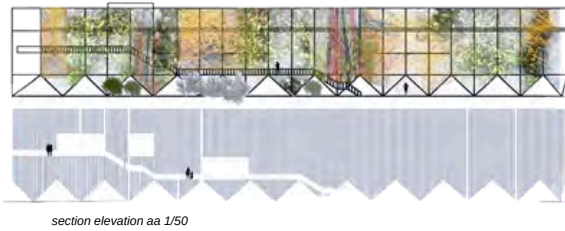
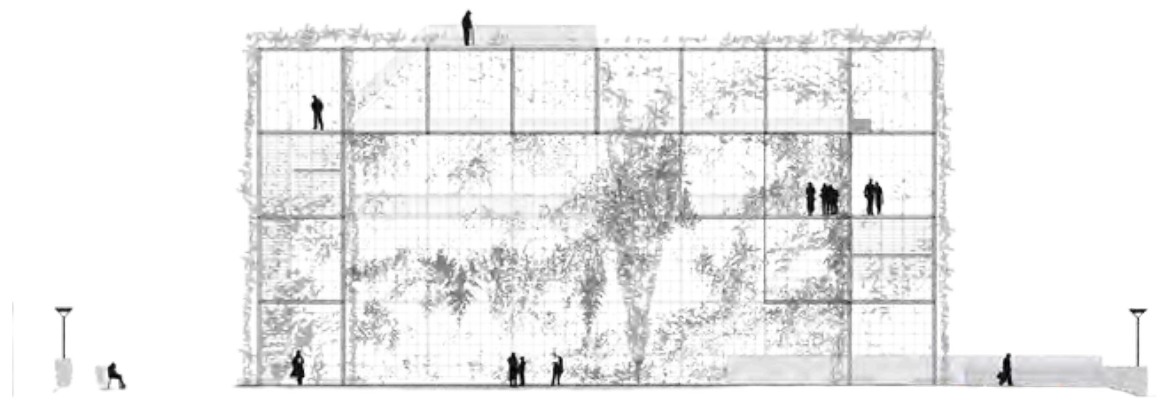
The design team's goal was to enrich the industrial lines of the past with new functions and greenery without erasing them.

The resulting park is a highly original and impressive public space, where nature, architecture and public life are woven together through metal structures and vines.



Posted 17th September 2012 by Leo Naegele





In order to better understand the industrial infrastructure and dynamics of the park, we can easily analyze the material and texture properties of the building with various design programs.



The metal structure and the cold and rigid material language become organic and changeable with the vegetal texture.

As vines and climbing plants ascend within this grid, the structure evolves over time into a living, shady and microclimatically rich, multi-layered public space.

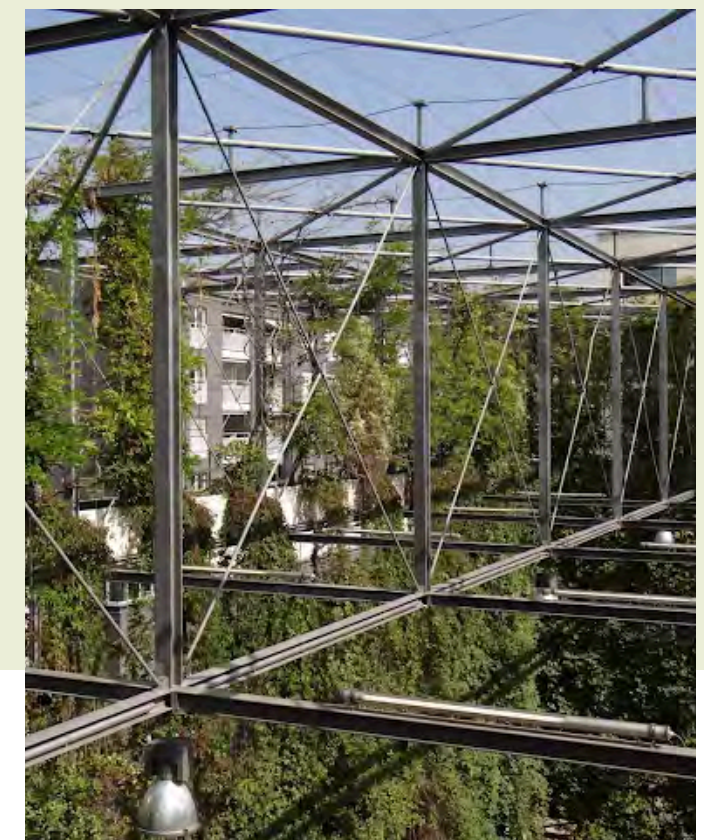
With this relationship between the supporting structure, vegetation and public function, MFO Park represents both permanence and flexibility in the urban fabric.



One of the most characteristic features of MFO Park is the architectural setup of its load-bearing structure.

Designed by Bernard Hunziker and Burckhardt + Partner, this structure forms the backbone of the public space with its load-bearing elements fed by the industrial texture.

The grid texture between the vertical and horizontal elements acts as a carrier and guide for the plants, while the repetition of the structure provides spatial rhythm. Such a textural and structural approach integrates the industrial memory of the park's past with new functions in today's public life.





Interface between Structure and Nature

The vertical garden is one of the most important design elements that form the architectural structure and public fabric of MFO Park.

Climbing and hanging plants are wrapped around metal supports to create a green screen - a screen that provides shade and privacy, while adding richness and depth to the space. Such vegetative structures allow for the display of plant textures on vertical planes that are not possible on horizontal surfaces.

The vertical garden offers microhabitats created between various vines, flowering plants and green textures.

The vegetation allows insects, birds and pollinator species to take shelter in this space, contributing to ecosystem services and biodiversity enhancement. Such green structures reduce temperature and improve air quality in the urban heat island, while enhancing the sensory and aesthetic quality of the public space.

The vertical garden at MFO Park is not just a green wall, but part of the structure that shapes the entire experience of the space. Over time, climbing plants cover the metal frame, creating a kind of living façade that offers shade, privacy and a sense of being surrounded by nature. This vertical layer of vegetation changes with the seasons and allows visitors to experience natural cycles. It also plays an important role in cooling the space, filtering the air and supporting urban biodiversity.

Ecological Goals

One of the most important goals of MFO Park is to bring nature back to the city.

The vines and plants growing on the metal structure provide shade, fresh air and habitat for birds and insects.

This creates a cooler and cleaner environment around the park, allowing people to breathe in the crowded city life.

With this approach, MFO Park is a very valuable example of how green textures can make a difference in cities.

Posted on 10th September 2012 by Julia

Location: MFI-Park, James-Joyce-Weg, 8050 Zurich, Switzerland



These green textures rising from the metal supports create an effective interface between the architectural structure and natural elements.

The vertical garden softens the rigid and industrial structures and brings them closer to the human scale, creating new and effective connections between nature and the environment.

As a result, this design allows for the creation of more livable spaces in the urban fabric.



Location: MFI-Park, James-Joyce-Weg, 8050 Zurich, Switzerland

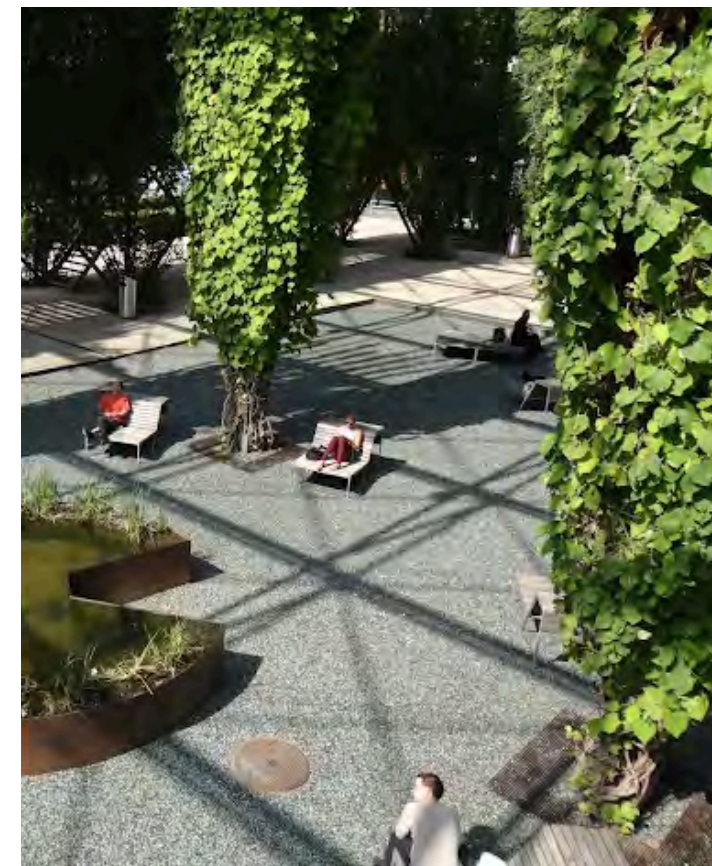
Posted on 10th September 2012 by Julia



Location / Switzerland — Zürich — Type / Parks — Post-Industrial — Built / 2002 — Show on Google Maps /
 Published on July 12, 2009
 Designer: Raderschall
 Location: Zürich / Switzerland

Contributing to the Sociability of Public Life

MFO Park allows locals and visitors to spend time together. The local community can use the space for events, markets, performances and exhibitions, making urban life shareable and collective. Such public gathering spaces connect and reinforce social life and foster a sense of urban belonging and coexistence.



Social life in MFO park

The MFO park also hosts theater performances, open-air film festivals, concerts and public events.

It was opened in 2002 and serves as a meeting point for true nature lovers. Many office buildings in the area take advantage of the park's ideal location and office workers come here for their lunch breaks. I think it is a great place for lunch.

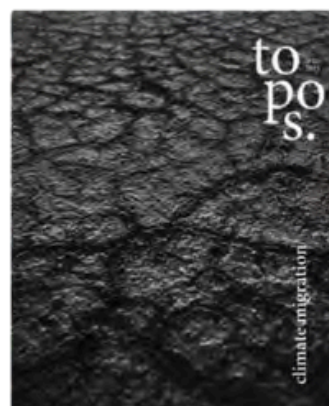
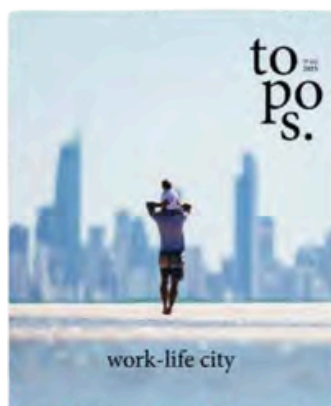
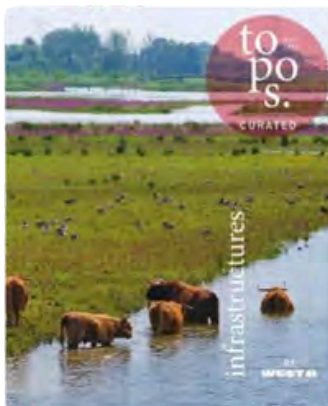
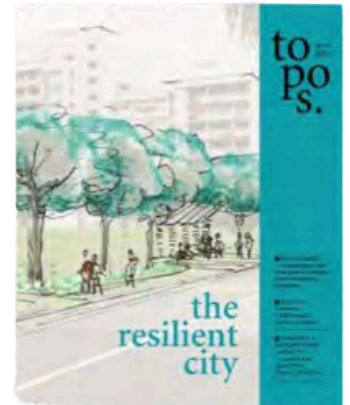
Social Life, Seating Areas and Visitor Experiences

One of the most striking aspects of MFO Park is its ability to bring people together and foster a rich social life in a previously industrial environment. The park's seating areas - from benches nestled among the greenery to small corners protected by its metal framework - allow both locals and tourists to stroll, relax and explore their surroundings.

Visitors not only have the opportunity to connect with nature, but also to observe and interact with the community that spends time in the space.

This space makes MFO Park a place where different stories intertwine and a new, shared experience emerges.





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A CONNECTED, IMERSIVE AND AUTHENTIC PANDA TRAIL

Chengdu is located in the Sichuan Province, which constitutes the world's most significant contiguous area of panda habitat. Designed by Hassell, the project It changes our perspective on the relationship between humans and nature and offers a new perspective.

Human-nature interaction is no longer defined by hierarchical sharpness. The connection we establish with nature and wildlife is now being reconsidered and evaluated not only in the context of protection but also through landscape and urban planning. A project has been developed that aims to establish a new relationship between humans and nature in the transition areas of the city where nature is slowly starting to take control. Australia-based architecture and planning office Hassell considering these issues has undertaken a comprehensive project called 'Panda Land'. Developed in 2018, this project was combined in three important areas: Beihu, Dujiangyan and Longquan Mountain in Chengdu, China. Chengdu is one of the most critical panda habitats not only in China but also in the world.

This 'Panda Trail' aims to redefine human interaction with wildlife while combining animal protection, public education, ecological restoration and ecotourism. Another purpose of this design is to have visitors experience this design as explorers rather than tourists, thus reducing and blurring the sharp hierarchy between nature and wildlife and humans. In the Panda Land project, visitors are often positioned to watch the pandas from below, which differentiates the observation points from those of traditional zoos and sends a strong message: This time we are under observation. This creates an interactive landscape design that involves the user. In this way, the project does not only create an architectural structure but also uses it as a tool to influence and direct behavior.

The visitor-animal relationship is addressed from a different perspective and reconstructed; it symbolically downgrades the position of humans in nature and in this regard, Andrew Wilkson emphasizes that: "By locating animal enclosures away from the main paths...positioning animals at higher level than the visitors, we can start to dissolve the common idea of humans being dominant over nature."

This comprehensive design includes a number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including Giant Panda Sanctuaries. Three area three narrative. The project spreads over a wide area of 3 regions. Each region offers a different narrative and each represents a different form of relationship with nature. Beihu emerges as the region where learning begins because it contains museums, research centers and educational areas. Therefore, it is one of the areas where public participation is most intense. Takes the visitor directly from the city environment and directs her to nature. We can define the 2nd region, Dujiangyan, as the place where pandas can be observed. In this region, due to the rugged topography, observers' perspectives constantly change, making visitors 'explorers'. This less densely populated area offers visitors the feeling of 'adventure' and 'discovery' with its intertwined walking paths. Longquan Mountain Region is another area, which is a research and education area. It focuses on the restoration of degraded forests and lands and is also designed as an international nature campus. As you wander between these regions, participating in the design, you get to know the natural life more closely and reconsider your own perspective at every step.

There are many elements in the project that take the design beyond being a mere landscape design. The cultural centers in Beihu were designed together with the local people and help the society take an active role in the protection of natural life. In addition, the educational areas include areas where research-oriented learning environments are offered. These make the project a pedagogical architectural proposal. The main issue in this project is to think together with nature. Waterways, paths and walking paths are designed not only to facilitate transportation but also to provide this experience to visitors without interfering with nature and ecological systems.



Visitors become part of the design,
blurring the sharp boundaries
between wildlife and humans.



All projects today claim to be sustainable. Sustainability means not disrupting or interfering with the natural flow. Panda Land does not define this only through 'green roofs' or 'solar panels', we have already said that the real issue is to think together with nature. In the Panda Land design, the walking paths made of bamboo do not harm the soil, plants or living things. The waterways on the banks of the river are designed not to interfere with the natural passages and movements of both people and animals. In other words, a functional and sustainable design has been created.

They are a smarter way to connect with wildlife. The project's master plan draws heavily on how people interact with and perceive wildlife. Andrew Wilkinson, HASSELL Director and project leader said, "By siting animal shelters away from major roads, limiting the visibility of exhibits through key openings, and placing animals higher than visitors, we can begin to challenge the widespread idea that humans dominate nature."

The reason why Panda Land is important and remarkable is that architecture is not only a practice of producing objects but also a translator between ecosystems. This project demands not only spatial thinking but also systemic thinking. Hassell's approach in this design is holistic and creates a new narrative in the nature-city relationship. It proposes a permeable, continuous and socially shared language without sharp hierarchical boundaries.

However, it is inevitable that such a large and wide-scale project will raise some questions in minds. Can a level of relationship with nature really be established? Or is the "form of surveillance" just changing? Is the promise of ecotourism still turning into a consumption-based experience? How will post-project maintenance and management continue?

These questions are long-term success thresholds and are of critical importance for this project.

Apart from these questions, the fact that the project received various awards confirms its importance in the field of architecture.

5 ASPECTS OF "PANDA TRAIL" “寻迹熊猫”的五大面向



1

CONSERVATION 保护

Ensure that the continued survival of the panda is at the heart of every decision making process
确保大熊猫的持续生存是影响每个决策过程的关键因素。



2

BRAND 品牌

Creating a strong unified brand that resonates with the people and captures the spirit of Chengdu
创建一个凸显成都精神和引发成都人认同的统一的品牌。



3

DESTINATIONS 胜地

Leverage the diversity of the destinations and unlock their respective values
利用当地多样化的旅游资源，释放各自的价值。



4

RESILIENCY 弹性

Establish a framework that is supportive and considers the long-term growth of the area
建立配套功能框架，考虑地区的长期发展。



5

CUSTODIANSHIP 守望

We are caretakers of our natural environment and need to maintain its viability for future generations.
我们是自然环境的守护者，需要为后代的生生不息做出努力。

Panda Land is not a loud project. At first glance, you may not see the details right away. But after spending some time, you realize its depth, subtleties and how many layers it has. It establishes a pact between nature and humans. It is a scenario of coexistence. A project that touches on experience, time and even ethical responsibility. Designed and developed through the Chengdu Panda Ecosystem, this project presents the relationship between nature and humans on an international scale from a more gentle, intuitive and egalitarian perspective.

Panda Land makes us realize that nature is not only something we need to protect, but also an entity with which we need to reconnect, and we can accept architecture as the language of this relationship.

Panda Land design seeks an answer to a very fundamental problem faced by contemporary architecture: How can we live with nature but not in front of it? This project, which creates a quiet but effective discourse, establishes a measured design language and a spatial strategy that reverses the hierarchy between humans and animals.

Maybe we need to rethink; the future will be shaped not by building more buildings but by listening more carefully and being able to read the environment we live in well. Panda Land reveals both the physical and ethical map of this shaping and transformation. And this map starts a journey that belongs to all of us. It offers us a narrative, and that narrative tells us how we can exist more gracefully in a world that is not our own.



Hassell “In the master plan we see visitors not as tourists but as explorers, giving them a variety of opportunities and sites to learn about the environmental challenges facing China's national treasures – to explore, discover and dream.” says.

“Our winning proposal is based on core principles of conservation, brand, destination, resilience and stewardship, and a high sensitivity to existing conservation areas and sanctuaries in the region,” said Andrew Wilkinson, HASSELL Director and project leader.

"It is extremely rewarding to be involved in this project, which meets China's increasing efforts to protect and raise awareness of this vulnerable species and its habitat," he said.

Panda Land project has received many awards these confirm the project's architectural quality and the ideological and ecological vision.

It aims for awards received:

2019: Singapore Landscape Architecture Awards - Outstanding Excellence

2019: Singapore Institute of Planning-Best Planning (International)

2022: IFLA Asia-Pacific -Honourable Mention

Partners of the project :
Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning & Design
Institute and Jon Coe Design

Design team:
Andrew Wilkinson, Chong Wang, Chris Kelly,
Hongyan Li, Liam Mouritz, Weixi Liu, Yucheng
Chen, Kairos Zhang, Qiming Zou

Client:
Chengdu Tianfu Greenway Construction
Investment



SCENARIO 12: POSTMODERN ARCHITECTURAL MOVEMENT



Parc de la Villette

By Sena Baydemir

Released in fall 2025

In the area where Parc de la Villette stands today, there were slaughterhouses and meat markets built in 1867 by Napoleon III. By 1974, this district had lost its function, and butchers and abattoirs were relocated elsewhere. In 1983, President François Mitterrand launched a landscape-architecture competition aimed at the economic and cultural development of the area. The goal was to create “a city park for the 21st century.” The ambition was also for the project to be not ordinary, but complex in structure, and to offer cultural and entertainment functions.

In the competition—whose shortlisted designers included renowned names such as OMA, Zaha Hadid, and Jean Nouvel—Bernard Tschumi won first place and earned the right to execute his design. Tschumi is a French architect of Swiss origin.

Parc de la Villette is located in Paris’s 19th arrondissement, covering 55 hectares, of which 34 hectares remain green space, stretching along the Canal de l’Ourcq. It is interwoven with other major cultural institutions in Paris.



Organizing the park's facilities by function, we have:

Cultural and Artistic Venues

- Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie (City of Science and Industry)
- La Géode (giant dome IMAX cinema)
- Cité de la Musique (Music Museum and concert halls)
- Philharmonie de Paris (Paris Philharmonic Orchestra and concert halls)
- Zénith de Paris (concert and event hall)
- Grande Halle de la Villette (fair, exhibition, and cultural event space)
- Temporary exhibitions, festivals, and cultural events
- Contemporary art installations and themed gardens

Children's Areas

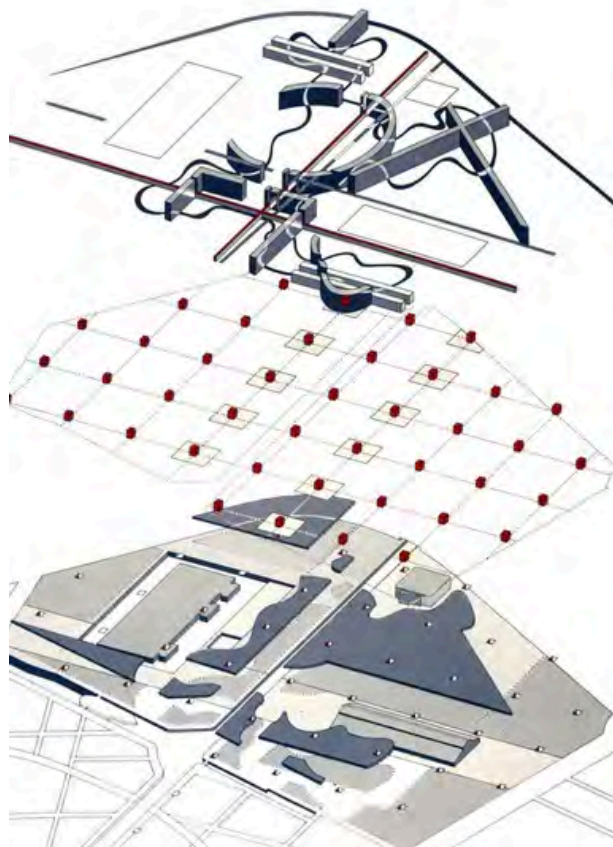
- Jardin des Dunes et des Vents (sand and wind-themed playground)
- Jardin du Dragon (giant dragon-shaped slide)
- Jardin des Bambous (discovery and fun area – bamboo garden)
- Jardin de la Treille (vine-covered walking and calm play area)

Food & Beverage Areas

- Restaurants
- Cafés
- Outdoor dining areas



The most distinctive feature of the project is that Parc de la Villette became one of the pioneering works of Deconstructivism—a postmodern architectural movement influenced by the ideas of French philosopher Jacques Derrida in the late 1980s. The three major events that marked the development of this movement include Bernard Tschumi's award-winning Parc de la Villette project, the 1988 MoMA exhibition "Deconstructivist Architecture" curated by Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley, and the opening of Peter Eisenman's Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio, in 1989.



Tschumi's unconventional approach set him apart and helped him win the competition. Departing from classical landscape architecture, he did not emphasize nature dominantly; instead, he created a radical urban park through an unusual relationship between architecture and landscape. His design of 35 wild architectural projects—distinctive designs with intentional disorder—supports this mindset. By integrating natural and artificial elements, he crafted a cultural space where humanity is constantly exploring, aiming to provide zones free from monotony where people feel comfortable, can engage in varied activities, and interact.

Because the park's design aims to trigger the desire for exploration, visitors feel free and happy as they wander. Ten different themed gardens were embedded so visitors can discover these spaces, participate in various activities, relax, rest, and even play.

The park's structural organization is shaped around three conceptual elements defined by Tschumi as "points, lines, and surfaces." Accordingly, the 55-hectare site was laid out on a grid system composed of 35 points. At these points, architectural elements called follies serve as significant reference markers in the park's physical and mental perception.

Each of these structures has a unique design; though they appear to share a repeating architectural language, they are intended to offer spatial differences to users. Visitors experience different feelings both inside and outside these structures, supported by Tschumi's principle of "movement of bodies in space." This principle is built into the park overall and the interiors of the follies—via ramps, stairs, and elevators—making them part of everyday life. With their fragmented and reassembled forms, these structures introduce a conscious sense of disorder and imperfection, shaping the park's character.



Parc de la Villette demonstrates that architecture can be more than a design layout—it can guide, surprise, excite, and create an ever-changing experience for users.

Parc de la Villette's design, distinct from traditional park design, was created with a unique approach that seeks to build a multidimensional experience rather than compress architecture into specific functions. Spatially, the park is organized around three key concepts: points, lines, and surfaces. This tripartite structure defines the park not only as a physical space but also as a conceptual ground for thought and individual exploration.



"Points" refer to the follies, the most prominent, defining elements of the park. Twenty-six red painted metal structures are scattered across the park on a grid system, each labeled with letter-number combinations. Originally designed without any functional purpose, these structures transcend being mere decorative or small service units, becoming objects focused on the formal potential of architecture.

Though initially without utility, some have since been repurposed—for restaurants, information centers, etc.—they still serve as orientation markers. Additionally, although Tschumi did not explicitly intend their form to reference local industry, some scholars and visitors interpret these steel structures as subtly recalling the area's industrial heritage. Thus, the follies shape the park's character not just physically but also through what they evoke.



Tschumi's follies function not just as physical orientation aids, but as part of a mental narrative that keeps spatial memory alive. Their lack of explicit program distinguishes them from traditional architectural elements; they do not impose fixed meanings, inviting the user to constantly re-interpret them. Each folly becomes a "stationary experiential point" that remains open to ongoing reinterpretation. This reflects Tschumi's view of architecture not merely as structures, but as a tool for generating intellectual experience.

The park's second element, "lines," function as pedestrian paths or spatial boundaries. These lines are conceived not as rigid walkways, but as dynamic structures that branch, intersect, and redirect, breaking from a fixed orientation. They are designed not just to guide movement within the park, but to link the park with its surrounding urban fabric. Thus, lines become an extension of a broader urban circulation strategy, transcending the park's borders.



The third element, "surfaces," comprise approximately 34 hectares of green space. These surfaces are defined not by thematic or functional subdivisions, but as open, flexible grounds available for free use. They accommodate diverse activities—socializing, resting, playing, or simply existing—offering users the freedom to create their own experiences. Surfaces propose a flexible balance between individual initiative and public sharing, opposing the rigidity of traditional park design.



Through the relationship among these three elements—points, lines, and surfaces—Parc de la Villette overturns the conventional definition of a park. Architect Bernard Tschumi opted not to divide space by pre-assigned functions, but to offer open-ended experiential areas. Orientation systems and structures in the park do not rely on fixed meaning; they remain unanchored to specific definitions. This turns the visitor from a passive wanderer into an active agent who continuously re-interprets and shapes the space. Tschumi's approach—to position architecture as an experimental, critical thinking ground—transforms the park from a mere vacancy into a continuously re-constructed field of thought.

However, some critics have considered the park to be too large in scale, with a weakened relationship to human scale, lacking sufficient regard for historical context. Nevertheless, such critiques do not overshadow the fundamental approach of the park. Parc de la Villette continues to hold significance as an experimental model within contemporary architecture, aiming to reveal the pressures and disorientation modern urban life places on individuals and offering an alternative intellectual space in response.

Parc de la Villette presents a radical alternative to traditional urban park design, re-defining the relationship between architecture and landscape. Through Tschumi's deconstructivist approach, the park transcends its role as a physical recreation area, recasting it as an intellectual space for re-shaping the relationship between individual and environment. The core conceptual elements—points, lines, and surfaces—serve not only to organize space but to offer users an open-ended experiential field, transforming the park into a dynamic, interactive ground rather than a static place. In Tschumi's view, what matters is not that the architect pre-defines the meaning of space, but that the user re-produces it anew each time.



Parc de la Villette turns the user from a passive visitor into an active subject engaging directly with space. This engagement ensures that the time spent in the park carries a different meaning for every individual. With striking structures like the follies and themed gardens designed to stimulate curiosity, combined with limited orientation, the design encourages freedom and exploration. As users move through different functional areas of the park, they gradually develop a more conscious relationship with their surroundings; this enriches their spatial awareness and personal experience. In line with Tschumi's goals, visitors feel free both physically and mentally; the park's multi-layered atmosphere becomes a stage for individual and social interaction.

Through its cultural institutions, artistic venues, play areas, and flexible surfaces, Parc de la Villette offers a multi-layered environment that meets both individual and communal needs of modern urban dwellers. As such, it has become an iconic example not only of Paris, but of contemporary urbanism and architecture. A place where people of all ages and backgrounds gather, transcending fixed meanings and imposed orientations, this site demonstrates powerfully that architecture can be not only aesthetic or functional, but also a social, cultural, and philosophical form of expression. Parc de la Villette provides an inspiring example, in architectural history and the dynamics of contemporary urban life, of how public urban spaces can be conceived to be more liberating, interrogative, and transformative.



Thank You

The topic presented in this article is supported by Natural System & Desing.



Arquitectura Viva

15 June 2025

Ayşenur İnan
020220507

Central Park

Central Park



Brief

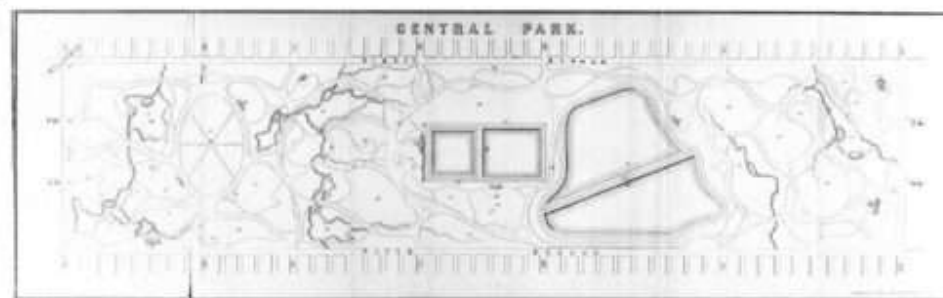


Photo: Peter Lik

Central Park Design Competition (1857)

In the competition held by the New York City Park Commission on April 13, 1857, a master plan was requested for the 843-acre Manhattan park. This project, initially named Manhattan Park,

was later named Central Park. Among 33 teams consisting of architects, engineers and gardeners, the "Greensward Plan" prepared by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux won. Construction began according to the winning plan and was put into practice in 1958.



Samuel Gustin's submission for the Central Park design competition

Imagining Nature in the City: Notes on Central Park

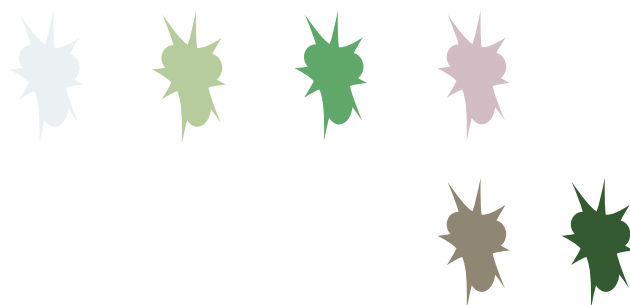
Central Park, Central Park, the first landscaped park in New York, should not be approached solely as a landscape design. It is also an intellectual structure that reveals the post-industrial society's imaginations about the city and nature. This large green area, designed in the middle of the 19th century, has been written as a turning point in the history of architecture when examined in terms of the spatial construction of public space, the representation of nature and social engineering practices.





...let your imagination run wild.

Color Range



Brief

Published by John Bachmann



Central Park naming process

This project, which was initially called Manhattan Park, later changed due to its geographical location. The park is located in the center of Manhattan Island. However, with the growth of New York towards the north in the 1800s, this area began to appear as a gap in the middle of the city's growing grid plan. For this reason, the name Manhattan gave way to Centrale, which means center. The name of this park also conveys some social and political messages. At that time, the idea of such a huge public park for a large metropolis like New

York was unusual. For this reason, it was not wanted to give this park ordinary names such as City Park, Manhattan Green or Public Square. It was wanted to emphasize that this park belongs to everyone, that it is a public center serving the entire city. This name was put forward by approaching both the aristocracy and the working class with an egalitarian attitude.



(Antique Map of Lower Manhattan and Central Park)



Charles magnus

Brief

Central Park construction process and effort

Many workers contributed to the construction of Central Park. This construction process is not only limited to drawings and ideas, but also a huge production process in which many people participate by digging the soil by hand, shaping the lakes, and planting thousands of trees by hand.



landscape design concept applied in central park

In landscape design, not only the natural appearance was aimed, but also the aim was to establish and experience a fictional relationship with nature. While creating the plant combination of the park, the designers made a structure both spatially and seasonally. Thus, this combination is no longer random. While using trees, shrubs and ground covers in landscape planning, it is aimed to develop the experiences of different users and to create experience and continuity in the relationship of the individual living in the city with nature. Large-leaved trees such as American elms (*Ulmus americana*), limes (*Tilia americana*), oaks (*Quercus rubra*, *Q. alba*) and plane trees (*Platanus occidentalis*) constitute the main component of the park. These species not only provide high shade areas but also create microclimates. At the same time, color changes occur throughout the four seasons, allowing temporal awareness to be shaped.

Seasonality plays a very important role in landscape design. This issue has also been taken into consideration in Central Park. Flowering species (*Cornus florida*, *Prunus serrulata*) that bloom in spring help to make the natural cycle of the park visible. In summer, thick-leaved trees provide shade; in autumn, reddening leaves turn the park into a colorful scene. In winter, the branches remain leafless, which gives the landscape an architectural bareness. With the falling snow, much more different visual feasts are experienced. Thanks to the shrub and plant cover, the roadsides, water feature surroundings and forest area transitions gain integrity. Their only feature is not only that they offer a visual feast to people, but also that they support biodiversity and provide habitat for birds and small animals. In addition, there are meadow clearings within the park. These contrast with the dense tree cover in the surrounding area. In these clearings, people can socialize, participate in different activities and breathe.

Brief

Central Park and Nature Relationship

At that time, when landscape architecture was not yet institutionalized, Olmset had a design approach that aestheticized the contradictory relationship between nature itself and the controlled structure of urban discipline. At first glance, the park seems natural, but when examined in depth, it is an artificially shaped natural scene.



The functional transformation of central park over time

Lakes were dug, rocks were placed and walking paths were curved. All of these offer people the experience of encountering nature. In the 19th century park concept, the pastoral nature image is both an aesthetic choice and a moral and social tool. People from different segments of society come together in this park, and as a result of this equality,

certain norms of behavior have been formed. Therefore, the publicity of this landscape is not absolute, it is a regulated absolute. With the arrival of the 20th century, changes also occurred in Central Park. A hybrid public scene had now emerged where cultural events, protests, film shoots and tourist routes intersected. Thus, new meanings were added to the multi-layered structure of the park.



Brief

The relationship between central park and biodiversity

Although the central park may seem like a part of nature at first glance, it is not the case. The truth is that the plant structure has been processed into the park very successfully. Thus, it gives people the idea that it has been formed naturally. While representing nature, the park has avoided directly imitating it. Instead, it offers people a place where they can spend time in nature, socialize and relax. The park is not only open to human use, it also has a structure that serves animals. Birds, mammals, reptiles and various insects get their food from this park, provide shelter and continue their life cycles. It has become an important stopping point especially for migratory birds because it is located on the Atlantic Flyway (eastern America bird migration route). Birds stop here and then continue their migration again. Hundreds of bird species visit this park in spring and autumn to feed and some even stay for a short time. Thus, the park ceases to be only a human place and becomes a multi-voiced, multi-species nature place.



Birds are not the only non-human beings living in the park. At the same time, animals such as squirrels, raccoons, bats and even foxes, although rare, are also seen. At the same time, thanks to the Central Park Zoo located inside, protected micro areas are created for certain species. Lakes and water elements are also very important in animal life. The ducks, geese, turtles and seasonal fish species found here contribute to the biodiversity of the park. At the same time, a natural circulation occurs within the park with some pollinating insect species. Although it seems human-oriented at first glance, when examined in depth, the diversity of animal life inside is considerably wide. At the same time, the presence of animals affects the relationship that people establish with the space. Bird sounds, squirrels running around, fish swimming in the lake and the sound of ducks walking integrate the entire space. In this way, people experience nature itself rather than encountering a representation of nature. They begin to perceive that the park is a living system.

Brief

Central Park's resistance to time, the difficulties it has experienced

Central Park is not only a landscape example, but also serves as a temporal record. Since its design in 1858, it has undergone many changes and has witnessed the social, political and environmental changes of different periods. In the early 20th century, New York entered a period of economic collapse and security crises in the city, and it entered a visible decay process. There was neglect in its maintenance, the roads were damaged, water elements were polluted and it became impossible to walk around the park in the evening due to individuals who acquired bad habits. This project, designed for the purpose of social idealization, deviated from this purpose in this difficult process and was left alone with losing its public space feature.



Fortunately, with the completion of this process, Central Park has entered a recovery process again. Over time, it has developed further and hosted various events. It has ceased to be a park where people can feel like they are in nature, and has become the intersection point of cultural events, protests, silent walks and various social segments. At the same time, the park has great importance in the current urban environment shaped by the climate crisis. The park's capacity to hold carbon dioxide, its ability to reduce the heat island effect in the city, its effect on water management and its support for the biodiversity it contains, rather than a place where we can only see the remains of the past, it appears as an ecological model for the future. As time passes, as people and other living things continue to live, this Central Park will continue to change and transform. Although it is a place that does not remain fixed, it is also possible for it to take on very different functions in the future.

Brief

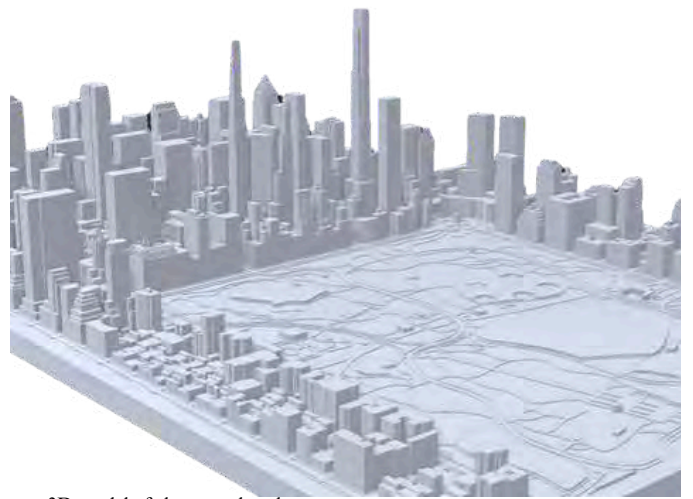
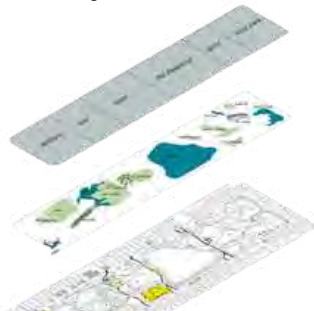
Central Park, established in the nineteenth century to counter the rapid pace of urbanization, has continued to exist today, bearing witness to social changes, spatial transformations, and environmental crises. It is one of the most influential and readable structures in the history of modern urbanism, with its formal integrity, its evolving use over time, and its ideological multilayered structure, going beyond the ordinary landscape project. Today, it continues to exist as a formal record of our relationship with nature, with its organized paths, controlled wildness, and public representation.



Perspective drawing Central Park



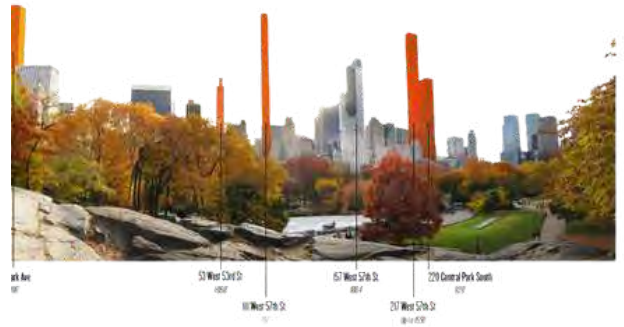
Programmatic form analysis of Central Park



3D model of the central park



Section of central park



LAVA+Aspect design the Central Park of Ho Chi Minh City



Plan of the central park



Diagram of the Central Park



RESOURCES

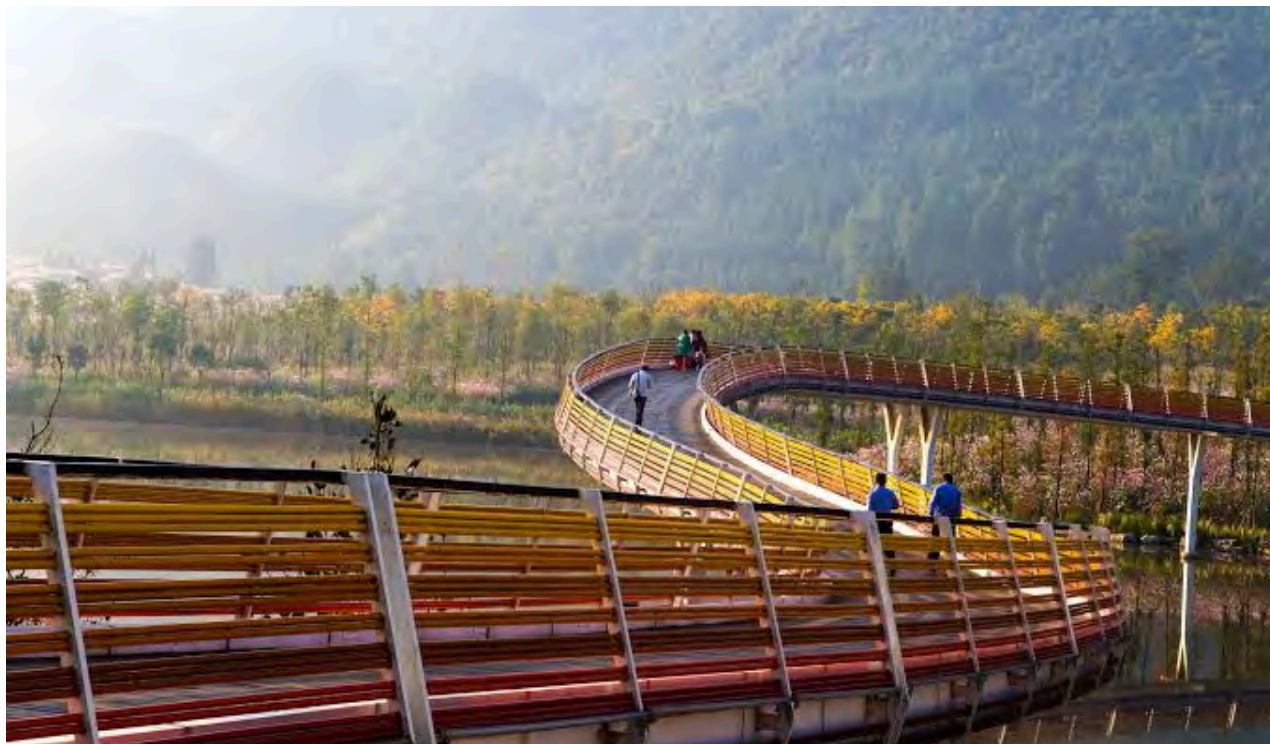
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Yirmibir
Mimarlık Tasarım ve Mekan
Haziran 2025

Wetlands as Urban Lungs

Minghu Wetland Park by Turenscape:
A resilient ecological design



Minghu Wetland Park

Minghu Wetland Park located in Liupanshui City, along the Shuicheng river, China. It lies in the western part of the central urban area, covering a total area of 197.7 hectares. The Project is designed by Turenscape, a landscape architecture firm known for its ecological and sustainable urban designs.

One of the main challenges addressed in this area was that it was once a concrete lined drainage channel struggling with flooding and ecological degradation. Minghu Wetland Park has been solved those challenges and transformed the site into a vibrant ecological landscape. By transforming an urban river into a multifunctional public landscap, the park enhances community well-being and encourages a sense of place.

Post Dead Areas



Before its transformation, the site of Minghu Wetland Park was a highly degraded and ecologically disconnected space. The area functioned primarily as a concrete-lined flood control channel. This rigid, engineered structure was designed to move water quickly through the city to prevent seasonal flooding, but it failed to support ecological processes or public life. Over time, the channel became a barrier which physically separating the river from the people who lived around it.



The area also suffered from poor water quality, minimal vegetation, and habitat loss due to years of urban development and industrial effects. Flooding remained as a continuous problem. Because the surfaces around the channel were mostly hardscape surfaces, stormwater runoff increased. Additionally, the site lacked any public function or identity; it was a leftover space, largely inaccessible and unusable.

These issues —ecological degradation, hydrological dysfunction, and social disconnection—called for a new kind of urban intervention. The design approach would need to not only solve technical issues but also imagine a more integrated and life-supporting landscape for both humans and non-human species.



Turenscape, the landscape architecture firm responsible for the project, focuses on creating a space that provides nature recover, controls the flooding water, and an area that accessible for people.

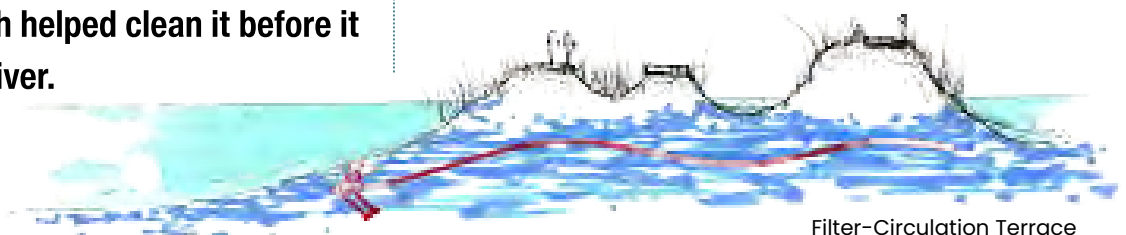
Firstly, instead of destroying the post infrastructure, they used the old concrete channel as a starting point. Their design strategy based on improving the site rather than erasing the traces of the site and its evolving system.

One of the most important ideas behind the design was to change the way water was understood and managed. Instead of seeing floodwater as something dangerous that needed to be quickly removed, the design team chose to treat it as a valuable part of the landscape. To make this possible, the designers created a system that worked with the natural flow of water rather than against it. This system included man-made wetlands, shallow basins to collect and hold water, and grassy meadows that could safely flood during heavy rain. These features helped slow down stormwater, allowing it to soak into the ground instead of rushing away. As the water moved through the landscape, it was naturally filtered by soil and plants, which helped clean it before it returned to the river.

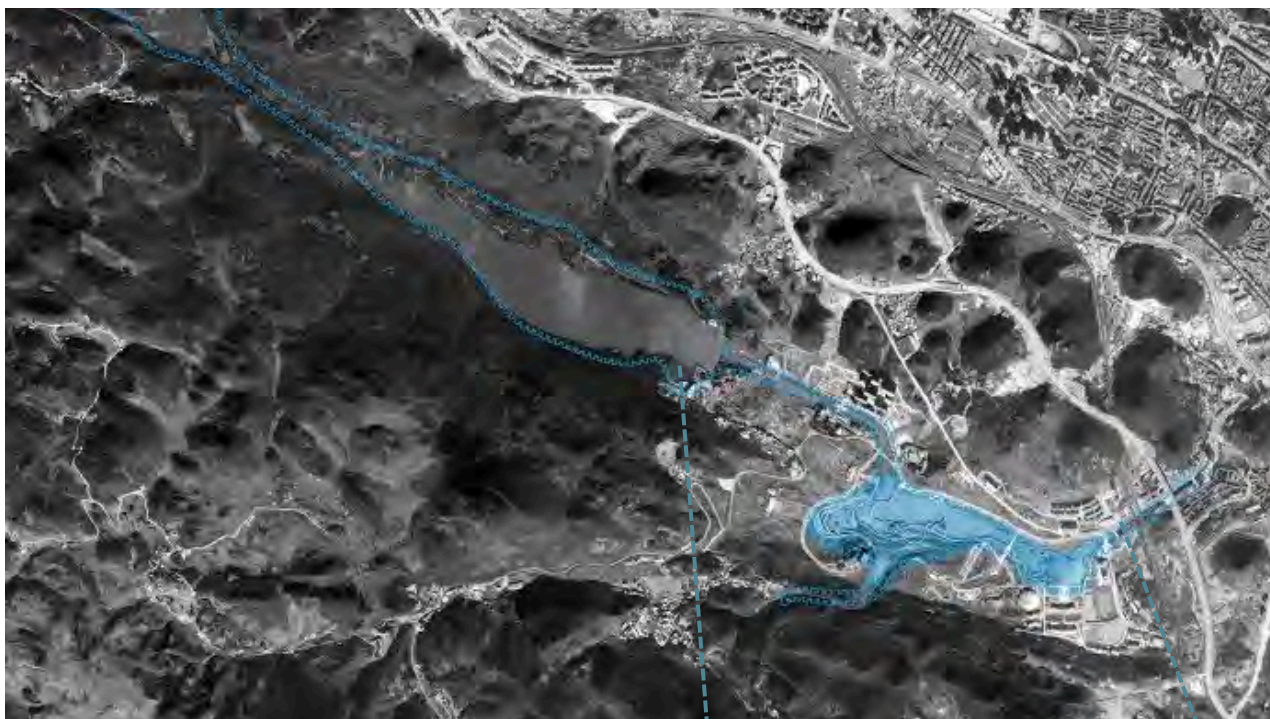


Steel Rainbow

Existing streams, fishponds, and low-lying land were integrated into a flood control and water purification system, forming wetlands of different sizes that support both flood management and river recharge. The removal of the concrete embankment allowed the river to return to a more natural state. At a smaller scale, the design focused on each unique part of the river, guided by the master plan. In the first phase, covering 31.2 hectares, the channelized river was ecologically restored and Minghu Wetland Park was created. The designers used the 15-20 meter-wide greenway and natural elevation changes to shape a terraced riverfront. Existing fishponds were also adapted into a wetland system to collect and purify water from the nearby mountains. A pedestrian bridge called the “Steel Rainbow” was added as a symbol of the city’s industrial past.

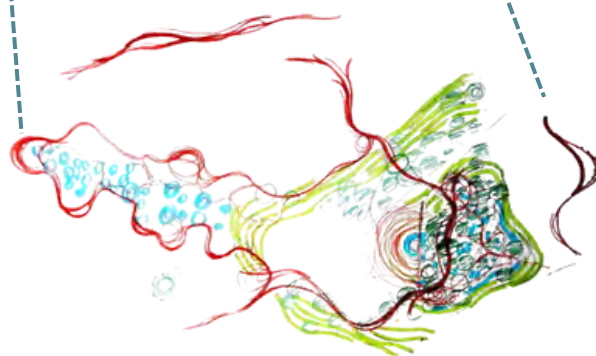


Filter-Circulation Terrace



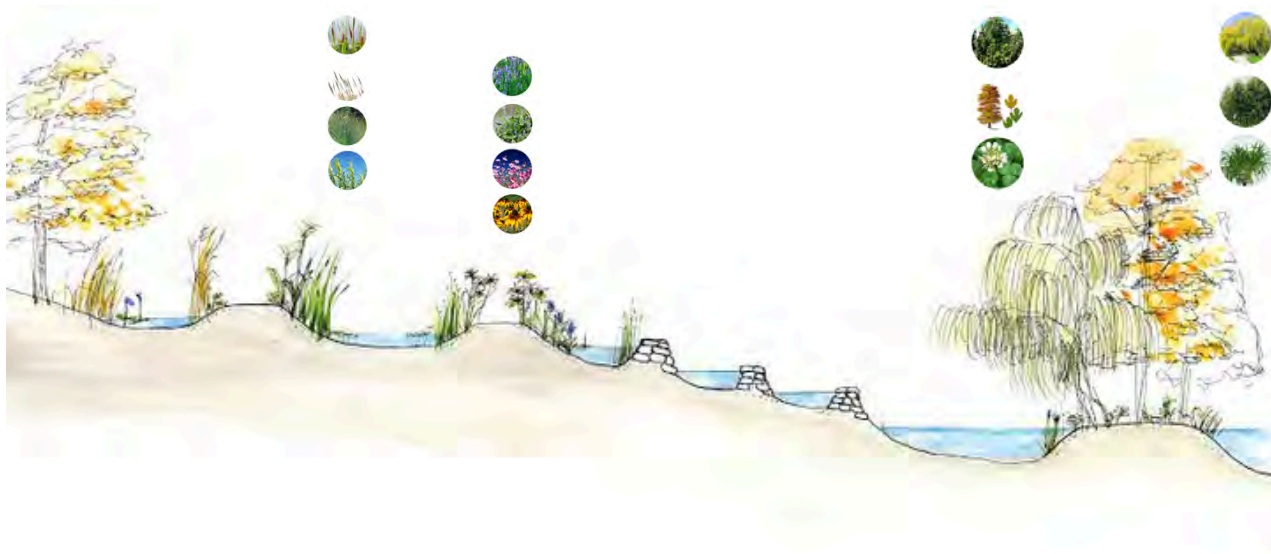
Minghu Wetland Park is located in Liupanshui City, in the western part of China's central urban area. It sits along the Shuicheng River, which plays a key role in the park's ecological and hydrological functions.

The park's design integrates a floating system that adapts to fluctuating water levels throughout the seasons. This floating system consists of modular platforms and planting beds that rise and fall with the water, allowing vegetation to thrive even during floods. By incorporating this adaptable floating infrastructure, the park enhances water purification, supports biodiversity, and creates dynamic wetland habitats that respond naturally to the changing river conditions.



The park, designed by Turenscape, employs a thoughtful planting approach that integrates native wetland vegetation to restore biodiversity and enhance ecosystem services.

The design includes the removal of the concrete embankment along the Shuicheng River to create two ecological zones: one encourages native vegetation within the flood zone, while the other establishes conditions for emergent vegetation in the riverbed. Aerating cascades were added along the river to introduce oxygen, fostering bio-remediation of nutrient-rich water.



Additionally, the planting strategy incorporates terraced wetlands and retention ponds to reduce peak water flow and regulate seasonal rainwater. These terraces are inspired by local farming techniques that catch and retain water, transforming steep slopes into productive fields. Native vegetation was planted to establish associations adapted to various water and soil conditions, slowing water flow and aiding in nutrient removal through microorganisms and plant species. Furthermore, the planting strategy includes the creation of inaccessible bio-islands to serve as wildlife habitats, enhancing biodiversity within the park.

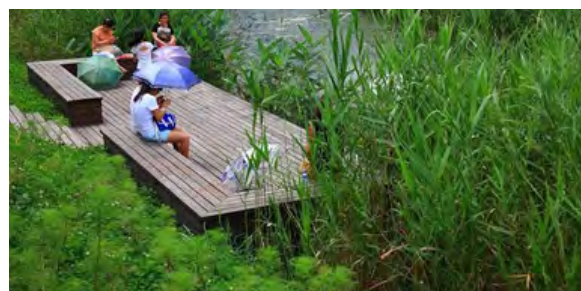




Observation Tower



Pathways



Seating Areas

The park includes a variety of spaces that support daily use and connection with nature. Walkways and bridges bring people closer to the water, while paths allow for walking, jogging or cycling. Open areas with urban furnitures offer places to seat, rest, meet and observe the view.

Rather than dividing the park into rigid zones, the design allows for smooth transitions between different types of spaces, creating a landscape that feels continuous and interconnected.

Children's play zones and educational installations enhance the park's program with environmental learning and multi-generational use.

One of the spatial elements in Minghu Wetland Park is the observation tower, which offers visitors a view of the landscape. It allows people to experience the park and the city through an elevated perspective.



Bridges



Minghu Wetland Park is a significant example not only of how urban ecological restoration projects can rehabilitate some abandoned sites and create a multi-functional public space, which can be advantageous for both nature and communities, it exemplifies how designed public spaces can address both water management and ecological functions and habitat creation while also accommodating social programming. Both through design and programming Minghu Wetland Park is an excellent representation of what cities can do to reconnect their inhabitants with nature. While the project was developed in phases, which offered a careful and thoughtful adaptation and growth process as well as able to provide an ecologically resilient park that enabled access for park users. The spatial programming consciously considered size and scale, while managing to provide for balance between recreation, education, quiet areas for reflection and quiet retreat. Minghu Wetland Park is an innovative typology that shows how cities can accommodate natural processes and ecological processes as part of the urban design, raise awareness for stewardship and biodiversity to support urban ecosystems, and enhance the quality of urban life. The significance of these features of this project provides insights and implications for the future wetland restorations in urban design and sustainable landscape architecture around the world.

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landscape
architecture
urbanism

scope

PROJECT Schouwburgplein



"When a city allows itself space, it becomes truly livable."

esq

Digital magazine #1

'scape 5 E -zines / digital magazine
and 1 paper edition a year

- _LIGHT THAT LISTENS
- _ARCHITECTURE OF THE VOID
- _GIVING SPACE TO CITY
- _LIGHT SYSTEMS
- _SCHOUWBURGPLEIN AS AN "Anti-Square"
- _NOT HIDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE
- _MAKING THE MECHANISM OF THE SPACE VISIBLE
- _THE MEANING OF SURFACE
- _THE SILENT INVITATION OF HARD GROUND
- _CRITICISM and COMMENT
- _IS IT EVERYONE'S SQUARE ?
- _A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY



"Light That Listens"

Rotterdam, NL

"Light That Listens"

Light Systems That Respond to the City

PROJECT: Schouwburgplein, Rotterdam (NL) by WEST8

*Schouwburgplein
Light responds to user movement.
The square becomes a dynamic scene.*

These interactive light modules located in Schouwburgplein Square are an intelligent system that responds to the user's presence.

The light towers do not only serve as lighting; they follow the user's movement as part of the urban void and offer an invisible response to it. This system supports transience, pause and waiting in the space, while contributing to the sustainable design concept with energy efficiency and infrastructure simplicity.

The square speaks with light. **Design is not only visible; it is felt.**

Architecture of the Void /

The Art of Standing on the Ground

An urban scene comes alive with a light that speaks to the user.

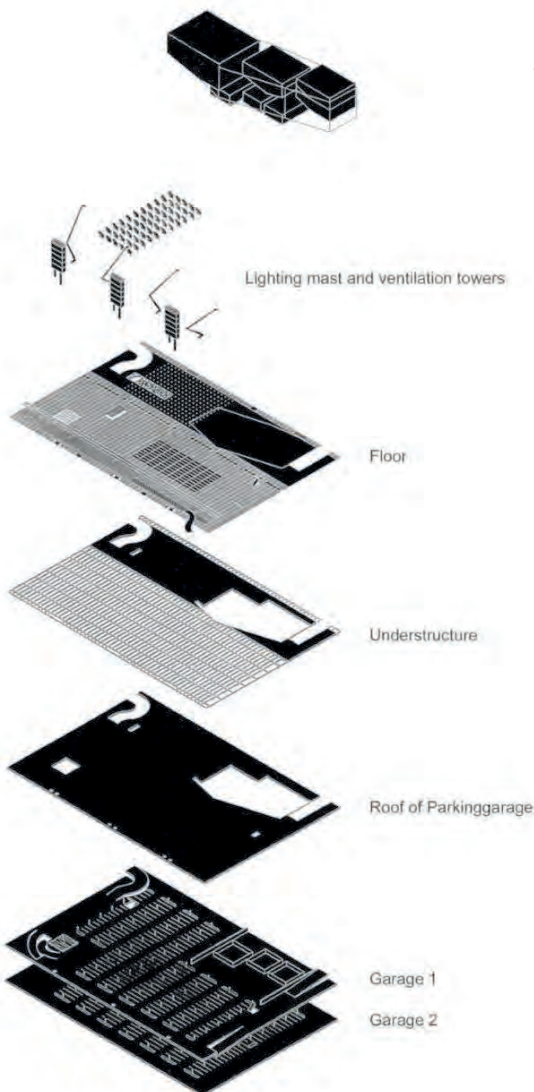
Schouwburgplein is a square design that makes infrastructure visible, located in the cultural heart of Rotterdam. Designed by West 8, this public space is defined by light modules that respond to user movements.



"Giving Space to the City"



*Schouwburgplein is a square located in the cultural heart of Rotterdam, making the infrastructure visible. With light systems that respond to the movement of the user, **public space is redefined...***



Schouwburgplein is a design that questions the definition of a classical city square.

Instead of offering a fixed program to the user, the area defines freedom through the void.

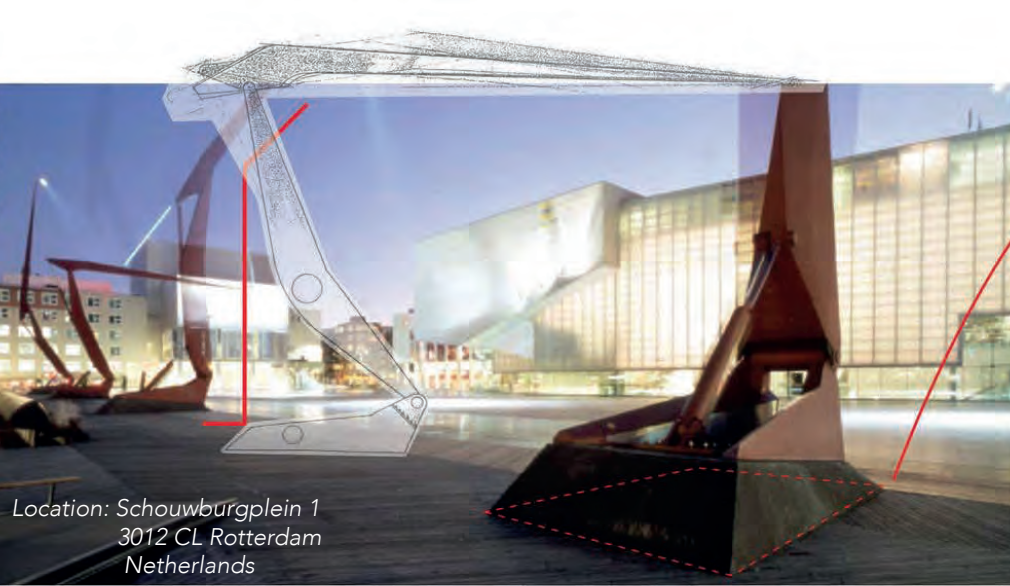
Light modules initiate a dialogue with the environment by perceiving the movement of the user.

This design makes the infrastructure visible instead of hiding it; it transforms the technical into experience.

It shows that the urban landscape is not just a surface, but an environment that can respond to behavior.

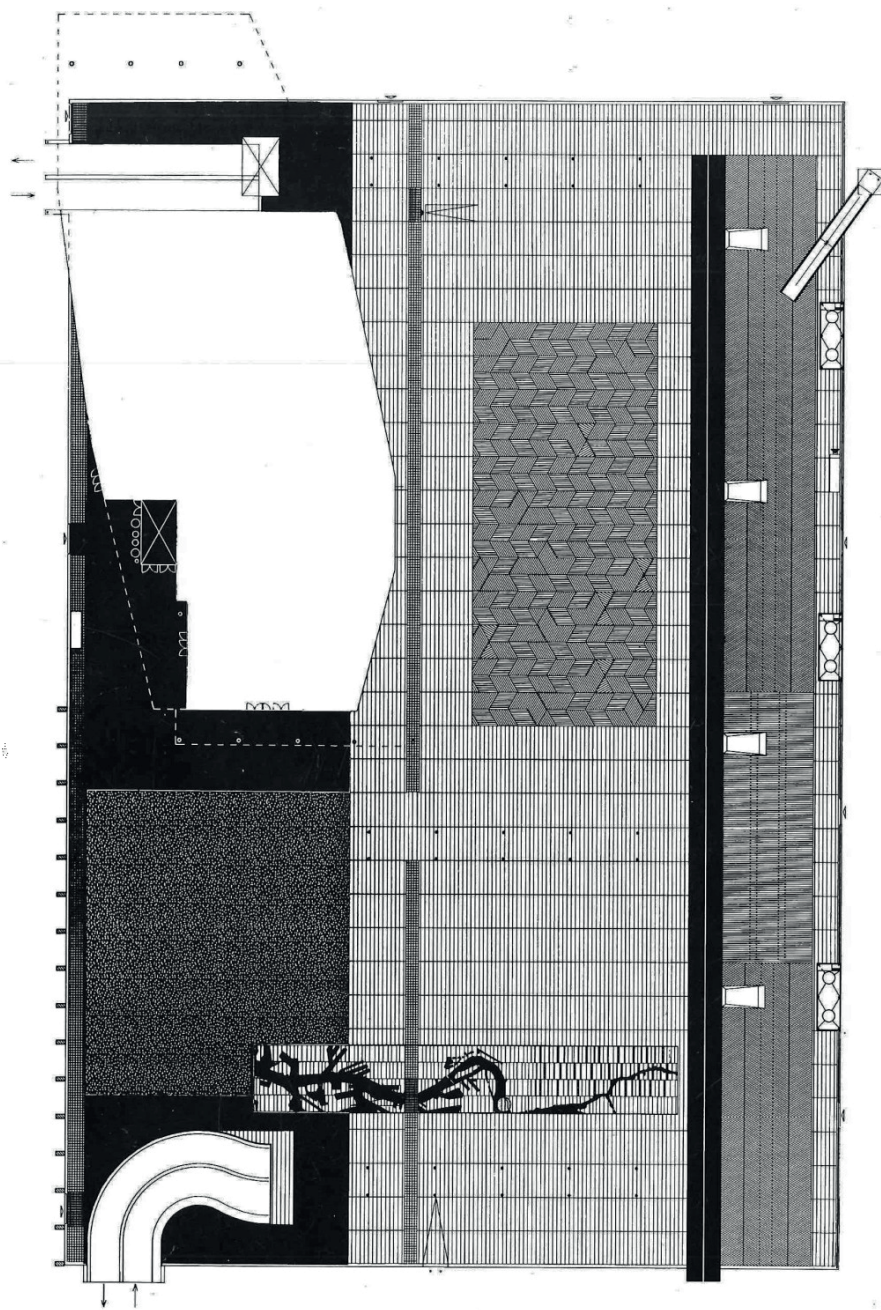
The void is not a deficiency here, but a design stance.

It is a field of possibilities that belongs to the user, not defined by the architect.



Area: 12,250 sqm
Operating Hours: 24/7
Park Type: Square/Plaza
Responsible Agency: City of Rotterdam; Duyvis Machinefabriek
Tram Route: 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 20, 23 at the Kruisplein
Visiting People: approximately 50,000/day

Site Plan



LIGHT SYSTEMS

AT SHOUWBURGPLEIN

Interaction Established with Mechanics

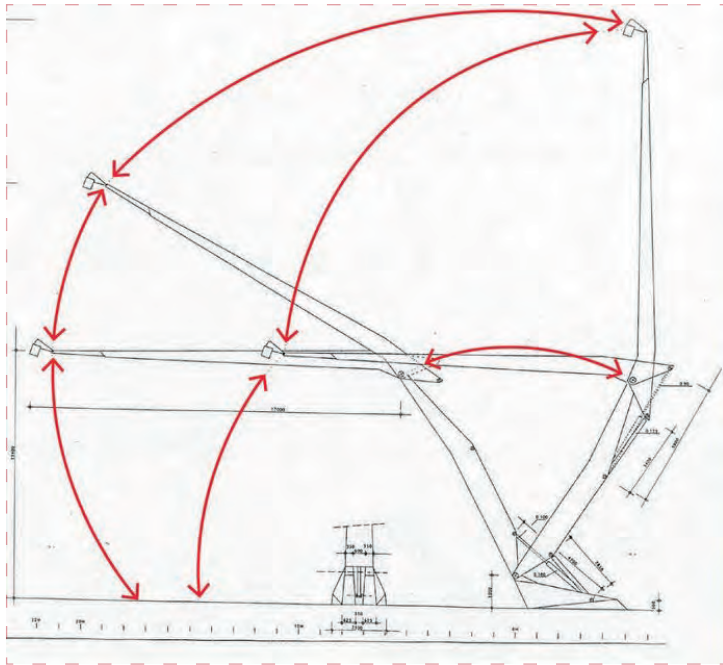


Light goes beyond traditional lighting elements at Schouwburgplein.

The giant crane-like structures placed at the four corners of the square are equipped with mobile floodlight systems positioned high up. These light cranes can be controlled by users via control panels placed on the ground.

At Schouwburgplein, light is not just a lighting tool; it becomes an active design element that interacts with the user and shapes the experience of public space. In contrast to the passive structure of traditional city lighting, light here comes into play as a kind of participation tool. Thanks to this system, where users can physically control the light, they can make instant interventions into the atmosphere of the square and establish a more personal relationship with the urban area.





One of the most striking elements of Schouwburgplein is the huge crane-like light towers. Each of these structures, positioned at a corner of the square, not only serves as illumination, but also establishes an interactive relationship with the user. Control panels on the floor allow the lights to change direction and angle. In this way, the square is shaped by the user, creating an environment that is not only visually but also experientially personalized.

The red metal arms are not only technical structures, but also architectural elements of public interaction. Here, light is not a directed tool; it is a co-produced experience. The system transforms the user from a passive user of the space into an active shaper.

The structural system of the building works with steel columns and arms; the spotlights, which can be mechanically rotated and changed direction, can be repositioned according to the movements of the users. This system does not hide the infrastructure but includes it in the public experience.

This approach establishes the square not only as a void, but as a stage that is constantly being redefined. Light does not fix the program; it liberates potential.





Schouwburgplein as an ***"Anti-Square"***

One of the most fundamental issues that Scape magazine focuses on is the answer that public spaces give to the questions of "for whom, for what and how". In this context, Schouwburgplein is a space that does not impose a program in the classical sense, but rather offers a spatial framework based on freedom. This space is not born out of a deficiency; it is born out of a conscious design attitude.

Contrary to the norm, the square does not offer the user a list of functions. There are no fixed benches to sit on, no specific circulation direction is imposed. Instead, the user is left with a surface where they can write their own scenario. Thus, the square gains a new meaning every day. Today it can be a concert area, tomorrow a market place, and the day after it can simply be a walking route.



Not Hiding the Infrastructure:

Making the Mechanism of the Space Visible

While traditional design approaches try to hide the infrastructure, Schouwburgplein does the opposite. Many technical details are clearly visible, such as the metal grids used in the floor covering, the anchors left for temporary structures and the connection points of the light towers.

According to SCAPE magazine, this kind of openness is a way of establishing a more honest relationship with the user. The visibility of the infrastructure stops the user from being a passive consumer; it makes them part of the system. Here, every detail is a "mechanical souvenir" that shows how the public space works.

The Meaning of Surface:

The Silent Invitation of Hard Ground

Don't look for green space on Schouwburgplein. This is a deliberate choice. The square is completely covered with hard ground. However, this hardness is not exclusive; on the contrary, it creates an inclusive silence. The surface formed by concrete, steel and metals allows users to hear footsteps, feel the passage of bicycle tires and experience a space where everyday movements echo.

The principle of "active ground", which SCAPE often emphasizes, is at play here. The surface is not defined as a void, but as a field of action. Here, the presence of the body establishes a direct relationship with the ground.



Criticism and Comment: *Is It Everyone's Square?*

Despite all these words of praise, Schouwburgplein is also open to criticism. The hard ground can be tiring for the elderly and children. The use of light towers requires technical knowledge. The feeling of emptiness can create belonging problems for some users. However, SCAPE's basic design principle of "taking urban risks" comes into play here.

Design does not have to suit everyone; *but it should give the user the chance to struggle with space, to redefine it. Schouwburgplein does exactly that.*





A New Relationship with the City

Schouwburgplein represents a revolutionary threshold in contemporary urban design. It is not just a square; it is an urban scenario that is constantly rewritten by the behavior of its users. According to SCAPE magazine, such designs ask questions not only on aesthetic but also on ethical, social and spatial levels. And that is why Schouwburgplein is at the very center of today's urban thinking, not just Rotterdam.



Schouwburgplein is a space that overturns the object-centered discourse of urban design. It is no longer a “square” — it is a system, an open proposal, a platform. This project by West 8 confronts us with how interventionist, how subjective, and how physical our relationship with the city is. By transforming the void itself into a design tool, Schouwburgplein is a spatial representation of urban participation.

This void creates not only a physical volume, but also an intellectual space. The unprogrammed nature of the space gives the user the right not only to move, but to make decisions. The orientation of the lighting towers, the variable usage scenarios on the ground, and the visually raw surfaces are not added to the space later, but are “moments of decision” left open from the beginning. This is a way of reading urban design not as a finished product, but as a living process.

A Day at Schouwburgplein

This square, shaped by the user's experience, becomes the theatrical stage of everyday city life. Light towers, empty ground, silence and movement... All are experienced together. This article tells how a day at Schouwburgplein is spent from the user's perspective.

Playing with Light

The giant light cranes located in Schouwburgplein are not just a means of illumination; they are also a means of communication. These user-manipulatable towers redefine the relationship between the city and the individual. This article examines the connection between "light and space."



Visibility of Infrastructure

Usually, infrastructure is intended to be hidden. However, here it is deliberately made visible. With its metal grids, connections and surface details, Schouwburgplein reminds us that the urban landscape is much more than aesthetics.

West 8's Stage

This square is not just a design, it is a manifesto. West 8's philosophy establishes the square as a living organism, not a fixed one. This article also opens a brief window into the office's spatial perception and other projects.

These interactive light modules located in Schouwburgplein Square are an intelligent system that responds to the user's presence.

The light towers do not only serve as lighting; they follow the user's movement as part of the urban void and offer an invisible response to it.

This system supports transience, pause and waiting in the space, while contributing to the sustainable design concept with energy efficiency and infrastructure simplicity.

The square speaks with light. Design is not only visible; it is felt.

Schouwburgplein is a square design that makes infrastructure visible, located in the cultural heart of Rotterdam. Designed by West 8, this public space is defined by light modules that respond to user movements.

Schouwburgplein is a design that questions the definition of a classical city square.

Instead of offering a fixed program to the user, the area defines freedom through the void. Light modules initiate a dialogue with the environment by perceiving the movement of the user.

This design makes the infrastructure visible instead of hiding it; it transforms the technical into experience.

It shows that the urban landscape is not just a surface, but an environment that can respond to behavior.

The void is not a deficiency here, but a design stance.

It is a field of possibilities that belongs to the user, not defined by the architect.

Light goes beyond traditional lighting elements at Schouwburgplein.

The giant crane-like structures placed at the four corners of the square are equipped with mobile floodlight systems positioned high up. These light cranes can be controlled by users via control panels placed on the ground.

At Schouwburgplein, light is not just a lighting tool; it becomes an active design element that interacts with the user and shapes the experience of public space. In contrast to the passive structure of traditional city lighting, light here comes into play as a kind of participation tool. Thanks to this system, where users can physically control the light, they can make instant interventions into the atmosphere of the square and establish a more personal relationship with the urban area.

One of the most striking elements of Schouwburgplein is the huge crane-like light towers. Each of these structures, positioned at a corner of the square, not only serves as illumination, but also establishes an interactive relationship with the user. Control panels on the floor allow the lights to change direction and angle. In this way, the square is shaped by the user, creating an environment that is not only visually but also experientially personalized.

The structural system of the building works with steel columns and arms; the spotlights, which can be mechanically rotated and changed direction, can be repositioned according to the movements of the users. This system does not hide the infrastructure but includes it in the public experience.

The red metal arms are not only technical structures, but also architectural elements of public interaction. Here, light is not a directed tool; it is a co-produced experience. The system transforms the user from a passive user of the space into an active shaper.

This approach establishes the square not only as a void, but as a stage that is constantly being redefined. Light does not fix the program; it liberates potential.

Schouwburgplein as an “Anti-Square”

One of the most fundamental issues that Scape magazine focuses on is the answer that public spaces give to the questions of “for whom, for what and how”. In this context, Schouwburgplein is a space that does not impose a program in the classical sense, but rather offers a spatial framework based on freedom. This space is not born out of a deficiency; it is born out of a conscious design attitude.

Contrary to the norm, the square does not offer the user a list of functions. There are no fixed benches to sit on, no specific circulation direction is imposed. Instead, the user is left with a surface where they can write their own scenario. Thus, the square gains a new meaning every day. Today it can be a concert area, tomorrow a market place, and the day after it can simply be a walking route.

Not Hiding the Infrastructure: Making the Mechanism of the Space Visible

While traditional design approaches try to hide the infrastructure, Schouwburgplein does the opposite. Many technical details are clearly visible, such as the metal grids used in the floor covering, the anchors left for temporary structures and the connection points of the light towers.

According to SCAPE magazine, this kind of openness is a way of establishing a more honest relationship with the user. The visibility of the infrastructure stops the user from being a passive consumer; it makes them part of the system. Here, every detail is a “mechanical souvenir” that shows how the public space works.

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The Meaning of Surface: The Silent Invitation of Hard Ground

Don't look for green space on Schouwburgplein. This is a deliberate choice. The square is completely covered with hard ground. However, this hardness is not exclusive; on the contrary, it creates an inclusive silence. The surface formed by concrete, steel and metals allows users to hear footsteps, feel the passage of bicycle tires and experience a space where everyday movements echo.

The principle of "active ground", which SCAPE often emphasizes, is at play here. The surface is not defined as a void, but as a field of action. Here, the presence of the body establishes a direct relationship with the ground.

Criticism and Comment: Is It Everyone's Square?

Despite all these words of praise, Schouwburgplein is also open to criticism. The hard ground can be tiring for the elderly and children. The use of light towers requires technical knowledge. The feeling of emptiness can create belonging problems for some users. However, SCAPE's basic design principle of "taking urban risks" comes into play here. Design does not have to suit everyone; but it should give the user the chance to struggle with space, to redefine it. Schouwburgplein does exactly that.

Conclusion: A New Relationship with the City

Schouwburgplein represents a revolutionary threshold in contemporary urban design. It is not just a square; it is an urban scenario that is constantly rewritten by the behavior of its users. According to SCAPE magazine, such designs ask questions not only on aesthetic but also on ethical, social and spatial levels. And that is why Schouwburgplein is at the very center of today's urban thinking, not just Rotterdam.

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left open from the beginning. This is a way of reading urban design not as a finished product, but as a living process.

Here, the square does not have a fixed identity. One day it is a gathering place for the crowd, another day it is a skater's route or a child's dream space sitting alone... Each use adds another layer to the memory of the space. None of them erases the previous one. Schouwburgplein is the concrete equivalent of the layered urban experience.

More than the technical accuracy or aesthetic beauty of the design, what is valuable is the openness it offers. This openness invites the user to think, understand and shape. In an age when the city is rapidly becoming a commodity and public space is constantly being reshaped by security and control, Schouwburgplein points to the liberating potential of the public.

And perhaps that is why Schouwburgplein is a scenario for the future not only of Rotterdam but also of contemporary urban life. For anyone who wants to think of the city not as a fixed frame but as an interaction surface shaped by participation, this square is an experimental but powerful starting point.

Portrait / A Day at Schouwburgplein

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Visibility of Infrastructure

Infrastructure is usually hidden. But here it is deliberately visible. With its metal joints, connections and surface details, the Schouwburgplein recalls much more than the aesthetics of the urban landscape.

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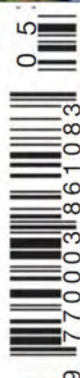


**The
Archhitectural
Review**

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**Lurie Garden: a prairie reborn in the city
Rewilding Chicago's civic core /
Oudolf & Gustafson's living topography /
Silence, structure and seasonality /
Planting as political expression**





“Design for Life”

-Terry Guen





In a city of steel, speed, and spectacle, the Lurie Garden dares to be natural, slow, and steady. Tucked away in the engineering grandeur of Chicago's Millennium Park, this garden is not a monument but a deep breath in a place that rarely pauses.

The Lurie Garden is situated on a field of layers of striking memories. Looking back before its construction, we see the train tracks, and it is one of the most semantically deep and active places in the city. Yet above, there is stillness: a project of more than 240 species of perennials, herbs, bulbs and shrubs.

Historically, the land now known as Millennium Park was a contested area that was part marsh, part railroad, and later designated by municipal ordinance as "forever open, clean, and free." This ethos of public administration continues to live in the structure of the Lurie Garden. The space offers bright, sunny vegetation arranged with changing textures and seasonal blooms.

The garden is not just vegetation and form. It is choreography. Walking, feeling, slowing down, all of these have a structure, a choreography. There is no single axis, no set path. Instead, the visitor dives in. The garden lives in cycles.

In terms of design, the garden escapes traditional boundaries and retreats towards spatial thresholds. The Raised Shoulder Fence is not a fence but a screen; it protects against plucking and offers a moment of silence upon entry. The descent into the sunken garden plane reinforces this change.

The paths are unclear, as if inviting people to explore and wander. Explanations and directions are intentionally left incomplete. This is not a garden of rules and instructions, but a garden of intuition. Children run. Couples sit quietly. Tourists take photographs without knowing what they are impressed by. The garden makes its claim through atmosphere.

More than 60% of the plant species are native to Illinois and were selected for their hardiness and ecological uniqueness rather than their ornamental showiness. No annuals or greenhouse arrangements. Instead, there is a quiet resistance to the artificial. The garden is a self-sustaining design.

Public space often prioritizes utility over emotion, clarity over complexity. The Lurie Garden challenges this duality. It allows for uncertainty, slowness, mood. It invites solitude in the city. It makes room for silence. At this point, this is not just a physical intervention, it is also a social proposition: a city can make room for thought.

The Lurie Garden's influence extends far beyond its borders. It has shaped urban design discourse globally and inspired a new wave of native planting in public spaces. It has become a model of how art, ecology, and urban passion can coexist. It shows that even in the heart of the metropolis, there can be a garden and a breathing space.

To visit the garden is to enter a landscape of echoes. Echoes of the land that once was. Echoes of the city beneath. Echoes of design decisions made with extraordinary patience and depth. Every blade of grass, every rustle of wind is evidence of care.

Located in the heart of Chicago's Millennium Park and completed in 2004, Lurie Garden is a project that combines ecological awareness with urban resilience. Commissioned as part of the city's larger revitalization of Grant Park and the lakefront, the project is transforming what was once a forgotten corner of the city into a vibrant, living system.

The garden responds to its unique location as a rooftop garden above a car park structure and train station by using light soils, deep-rooted plants and hydrological systems that support biodiversity and stormwater management. The design combines and works the richness of the garden with the infrastructural constraints, creating a model project for multifunctional landscape design.

What makes the Lurie Garden particularly important is its contextual awareness. It does not compete but integrates with the environment. While the surrounding structures rise in steel and glass, the garden is made up of plants and soil. Despite reflecting opposites in architecture, there is a sense that they complement each other.

At the heart of the garden is Chicago's dual identity as both an industrial powerhouse and a prairie city. The design team used native plant species, layered ecological strategies, and architectural choices to evoke this heritage without succumbing to nostalgia. The result is a new model for public space that is grounded in memory yet responsive to the needs and urgency of today.

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The Lurie Garden offers visitors an ever-changing dialogue between people and space. The design aims to activate all the senses, you don't just see and feel, you want to get lost in the scents of flowers, it is a feature that is exactly needed in the heart of the metropolis. Each season brings a new tempo, encouraging repeat visits and rewarding those who return with a deeper sense of place.

Benches are part of the composition, discreetly placed among the plants, providing seating and resting areas. These are interventions on a human scale. The paths are curved to be explored. The absence of signs or barriers allows visitors to write their own routes and rhythms.

The garden invites interaction naturally, not forcibly. People find themselves sometimes touched by the pollen of the many plant species, sometimes running their hands through their textures. Old couples stand in the dappled light of the tree canopy. Young people step on the grass not because they are told to, but because the garden invites them. In this mindset and emotional intensity lies the Lurie Garden in an over-programmed urban space.

It is, first of all, a personal narrative space. It becomes not just a public space, but a personal space. And that is perhaps its greatest achievement.



Piet Oudolf

Piet Oudolf is a renowned Dutch garden and landscape designer at the forefront of the New Perennial movement. Over the course of his career which spans over four decades, he has constructed dozens of private and corporate gardens, and collaborated on public spaces throughout the world, including Lurie Garden, the High Line in New York City, and temporary installations for the Venice Biennale and the Serpentine Gallery pavilion. He was awarded the highest cultural honor in The Netherlands, the Prince Bernhard Culture prize, in 2013, was named "Officer in the Order of Orange-Nassau" by the Dutch King Willem-Alexander in October 2018, and he received the first ever Royal Horticulture Society Horticulture Hero Award during the Hampton Court Flower Show in July of 2018.



Kathryn Gustafson

Kathryn Gustafson brings over 35 years of distinguished practice to her partnerships in two offices, GGN in Seattle and Gustafson Porter in London. Kathryn's diverse portfolio intuitively incorporates those fundamental sculptural and sensual qualities that enhance the human experience of landscape. Kathryn received the Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architecture, and medalist of the French Academy of Architecture. She is also the recipient of the Obayashi Prize, the ASLA Design Medal, the Chrysler Design Award, and London's Jane Drew Prize.



Jacqueline van der Kloet

Jacqueline van der Kloet designed the spring bulb display for Lurie Garden. Jacqueline van der Kloet is an internationally-acclaimed garden designer and one of Holland's best-known gardening authorities. She is a plant specialist whose advice is sought by designers and landscape architects. Her designs are prized for their beauty, naturalized schemes, bold uses of color. Van der Kloet's client list includes some of the most prestigious public gardens in the world. In North America, she teamed with Piet Oudolf for innovative plantings at New York's Battery Park, New York Botanical Garden, and Chicago's Lurie Garden. Her work across Europe and Asia ranges from Holland's famous Keukenhof, to the palace Huis ten Bosch in Nagasaki, Japan to the Newport Bay Club at Disneyland, Paris. Her work includes many private gardens and frequently contributes to international exhibitions.

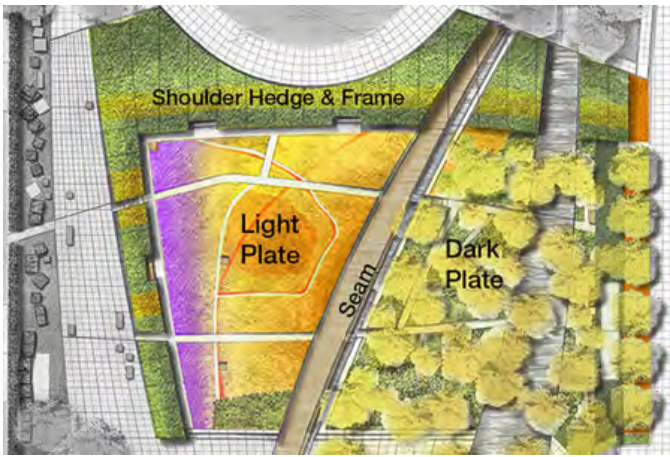


Terry Guen

Terry Guen is Principal and Founder of Chicago-based Terry Guen Design Associates. As Millennium Park Master Landscape Architect, she was responsible for the design and implementation of Millennium Park's entire 25 acre landscape. Working with Gustafson Guthrie Nichol as Lurie Garden's local landscape architect, she worked with contractors to implement the design, including procurement of plants, and layout of Piet Oudolf's perennial plant display.

Terry is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects. While her thirty year career spans complex ecological planning, design, and construction of public urban landscapes in the Midwest and East Coast US, locally she has been designer of many favorite Chicago public spaces

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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW: LURIE GARDEN SPECIAL ISSUE

In a city of steel, speed, and spectacle, the Lurie Garden dares to be natural, slow, and steady. Tucked away in the engineering grandeur of Chicago's Millennium Park, this garden is not a monument but a deep breath in a place that rarely pauses. Designed in 2004 by Kathryn Gustafson, Piet Oudolf, and Robert Israel, the garden has since become more than just a landscape.

The Lurie Garden is situated on a field of layers of striking memories. Looking back before its construction, we see the train tracks, and it is one of the most semantically deep and active places in the city. Yet above, there is stillness: a project of more than 240 species of perennials, herbs, bulbs and shrubs.

Historically, the land now known as Millennium Park was a contested area that was part marsh, part railroad, and later designated by municipal ordinance as "forever open, clean, and free." This ethos of public administration continues to live in the structure of the Lurie Garden. The space offers bright, sunny vegetation arranged with changing textures and seasonal blooms.

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Public space often prioritizes utility over emotion, clarity over complexity. The Lurie Garden challenges this duality. It allows for uncertainty, slowness, mood. It invites solitude in the city. It makes room for silence. At this point, this is not just a physical intervention, it is also a social proposition: a city can make room for thought.

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become a model of how art, ecology, and urban passion can coexist. It shows that even in the heart of the metropolis, there can be a garden and a breathing space.

Visiting the garden means entering among the traces of the city. Above the memories that once existed. Traces of the city beneath us. Accents of design decisions made with extraordinary patience and depth. Each flower petal, each breeze is evidence of care.

Context and Design Approach

Located in the heart of Chicago's Millennium Park and completed in 2004, Lurie Garden is a project that combines ecological awareness with urban resilience. Commissioned as part of the city's larger revitalization of Grant Park and the lakefront, the project is transforming what was once a forgotten corner of the city into a vibrant, living system.

The garden responds to its unique location as a rooftop garden above a car park structure and train station by using light soils, deep-rooted plants and hydrological systems that support biodiversity and stormwater management. The design combines and works the richness of the garden with the infrastructural constraints, creating a model project for multifunctional landscape design.

What makes the Lurie Garden particularly important is its contextual awareness. It does not compete but integrates with the environment. While the surrounding structures rise in steel and glass, the garden is made up of plants and soil. Despite reflecting opposites in architecture, there is a sense that they complement each other.

At the heart of the garden is Chicago's dual identity as both an industrial powerhouse and a prairie city. The design team used native plant species, layered ecological strategies, and architectural choices to evoke this heritage without succumbing to nostalgia. The result is a new model for public space that is grounded in memory yet responsive to the needs and urgency of today.

Visitor Experience

The Lurie Garden offers visitors an ever-changing dialogue between people and space. The design aims to activate all the senses, you don't just see and feel, you want to get lost in the scents of flowers, it is a feature that is exactly needed in the heart of the metropolis. Each season brings a new tempo, encouraging repeat visits and rewarding those who return with a deeper sense of place.

Benches are part of the composition, discreetly placed among the plants, providing seating and resting areas. These are interventions on a human scale. The paths are curved to be explored. The absence of signs or barriers allows visitors to write their own routes and rhythms.

The garden invites interaction naturally, not forcibly. People find themselves sometimes touched by the pollen of the many plant species, sometimes running their hands through their textures. Old couples stand in the dappled light of the tree canopy. Young people step

on the grass not because they are told to, but because the garden invites them. In this mindset and emotional intensity lies the Lurie Garden in an over-programmed urban space.

It is, above all, a space of personal narrative. Visitors project their own meanings onto it—memories, reflections, hopes. It becomes not just a public space, but a personal one. And maybe that is its greatest success.

About the Designers

Kathryn Gustafson brings over 35 years of distinguished practice to her partnerships in two offices, GGN in Seattle and Gustafson Porter in London. Kathryn's diverse portfolio intuitively incorporates those fundamental sculptural and sensual qualities that enhance the human experience of landscape. Kathryn received the Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architecture, and medalist of the French Academy of Architecture. She is also the recipient of the Obayashi Prize, the ASLA Design Medal, the Chrysler Design Award, and London's Jane Drew Prize.

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TGDA's "Design for Life" ethic has transformed Communities, Cities, and the Region, bringing visionary planning and design of natural and civic spaces and mitigation of climate effects to major public initiatives. TGDA designs healthy places which people love and return to. Based upon her leadership vision Terry was appointed by President Obama as

member and landscape architecture expert, to the federal Advisory Council for Historic Preservation.

Jacqueline van der Kloet designed the spring bulb display for Lurie Garden.

Jacqueline van der Kloet is an internationally-acclaimed garden designer and one of Holland's best-known gardening authorities. She is a plant specialist whose advice is sought by designers and landscape architects. Her designs are prized for their beauty, naturalized schemes, bold uses of color.

Van der Kloet's client list includes some of the most prestigious public gardens in the world. In North America, she teamed with Piet Oudolf for innovative plantings at New York's Battery Park, New York Botanical Garden, and Chicago's Lurie Garden. Her work across Europe and Asia ranges from Holland's famous Keukenhof, to the palace Huis ten Bosch in Nagasaki, Japan to the Newport Bay Club at Disneyland, Paris. Her work includes many private gardens and frequently contributes to international exhibitions.

-Muhammed Kerem Karakaş | 020230505

Jun 2025

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE MAGAZINE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN
SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

TACHYCARDIA FOR ESBJERG'S DORMANT HEART

The park plan that won the
competition

HISTORY

general information
about the park

PLAN

Explore the wonders
of the park!

DESIGN WITH EMOTION

Integration of the park with
poetry and art



Esbjerg Bypark: A Meeting Point of Nature, Art, and Community

It is necessary to listen to nature like music, to read it like a book to derive meaning from it, and at times, to draw or write upon the soil as if it were a canvas. When you understand it deeply, nature becomes a shelter from erosion on a cold Danish night, and a park where you can cool beneath the trees on a hot summer day. Because nature responds. When a competition was held to develop ByPark in Denmark in 2019, the idea of reestablishing the connection between people and nature by reclaiming this region full of potential for the public attracted considerable attention. Some companies, Henning Larsen Architects Topotek 1 and Ingeniør, and also artist Even Kock who adopted this idea, combined their strengths and won the competition by putting forward the “Byens Bjerg” project which translates to “The City’s Mountain” in Danish. The name evokes both a geographical feature and a symbolic new summit an elevated point of connection between the city and nature. These genius people chose not to change the nature, but to work in harmony with it. “We didn’t design a park, because the park was already there,” says Salka Kudsk, Head of Landscape at Henning Larsen. The history of this park, located in the city of Esbjerg in western Denmark at least as old as the city itself. The cliff near the sea, connected to the ocean, became a settlement. Among the first residences, a harbor was formed, and people planted fir trees on the cliff’s slopes to protect against wind and coastal erosion. In later years due to the need for water infrastructure in the city, the water tower was built in Esbjerg Park. In later developments, the water tower was repurposed as a museum but was subsequently closed to the public. Additionally, deciduous trees were gradually introduced to the park, becoming a defining feature that contributes significantly to its character." In 1884, the park was designed by Dr. Oscar Bruun as an space where people could have a good time and socialize. Over time, the park has also accumulated a number of artistic elements in nature. "In 1962, the Esbjerg Art Museum was established within this 30,000-square-meter park in the harbor city, and a music house was built on its northern border in 1997." This harmonious relationship between nature and humans has become a familiar story of settlement. The project proposal was politically approved in June 2024 and today, with excitement running high, construction work on the Esbjerg Bypark project has begun as of 19 May 2025.



Esbjerg Park, one of the most important public spaces in the city, has entered a comprehensive renewal process both physically and spiritually through the Bypark project. While the park is being strengthened architecturally, it also combines the concepts of nature, art, and play to nourish its unique spirit. Once this project is completed, the park will be an impressive, artistic, and peaceful route for both locals and visitors.



A new stage building will be constructed on the site and the seating areas will be renewed, but of course, this transformation will not be done in a boring and conventional way it will be far from ordinary. The stage building will be brought to life with artistic elements such as poetic inscriptions and light installations. The stage building and seating area are expected to be completed by June 1, 2025. Speaking of poetry, it is also worth turning our gaze to the innovations at the art museum established in 1962. Perhaps the most distinctive element of the project is revealed here: some façades of the museum will be decorated with light installations featuring poetic quotations from various authors. The three main entrances of this park, where poetic elements are planned to be used extensively, will be marked by stepping stones embedded with verses gentle invitations to reflection with every step. Without a doubt, this will create an engaging and memorable experience for visitors an encounter that lingers long after they've left the park. The renovation of the playgrounds will be carried out as a separate project. The park set to become an essential part of the imaginative world of children of all ages is expected to open in the fall of 2025. It will truly come to life through the joy and laughter of children at play. We cannot overlook the prominent water elements integrated into the park. The structure known as Mountain Lake is a multifunctional water feature planned to be built on a concrete platform, serving as a stage in summer and turning into an ice rink in the winter. This flexible project beautifully emphasizes the city's evolving relationship with water. In addition, the amphitheater located on the terraced slope connecting the city and the harbor presents a harmonious blend of form and function with the water channels around it. The amphitheater, an important part of the landscape, provides a natural terrace area for open-air events. Across the park, other smaller-scale artistic water features are also envisioned. They affect and attract visitors emotionally in various parts of the park. Water is a fascinating element that combines nature and art in this park. Bypark aims to be an inclusive public space by offering various experience areas for

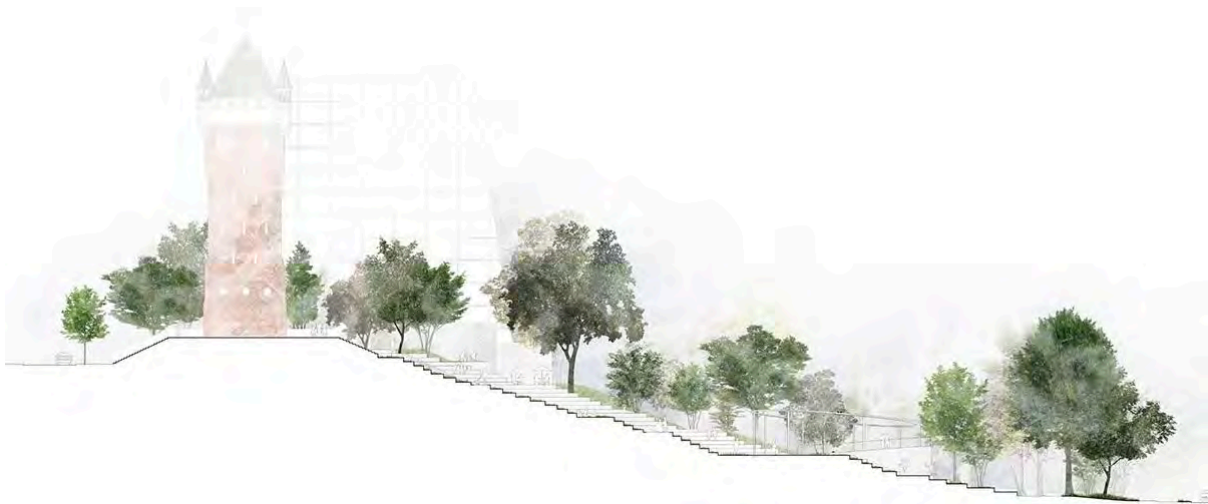
different age groups and user profiles. Play areas specially designed for children are intended to stimulate their imagination and are scheduled to open in the fall of 2025. Walking routes marked with poetic stones offer a poetic and meditative journey to all visitors. Light installations that visually interact with the art gallery provide different experiences both during the day and at night. Rest areas for elderly users are supported with shaded seating areas. Thus, the park becomes an accessible and meaningful space for users of all ages. Now let's discuss the design strategies and spatial tactics of this project. The clever use of topography is organized both visually and functionally. One prominent example is the transformation of the park's natural slopes into a 2,500-seat stepped amphitheater. The structure was planned using the natural potential of the slope. In addition, seasonality is another key design strategy. A striking example is Mountain Lake. There was a need for various pathways for visitors to explore the park sensorily, and the project successfully overcame this. Water channels and fountain systems placed in the natural topography gather the attention of visitors in certain areas. Concrete surfaces are dominant in structures such as the amphitheater and stage platform so as not to disrupt the natural tree cover in the park. After all, the main idea of the project is to respect nature and develop it. Light and shadow interplay is also essential for a magical atmosphere. This has been provided both artificially and naturally. While the stage building and routes containing poetry are illuminated by built-in LED systems and performance lighting, shadow patterns depending on daylight in the park create movement in the space.



The basic idea of this park plan does not consist only of the park being functional and aesthetic. It consists of seeing and interpreting the potential of nature, blending it with culture and art, and then adding to it without causing damage.

At the same time, limiting the use of concrete in spatial planning and preserving the park's natural tree cover helps reduce the carbon footprint. Various structures that adapt to climate change emphasize both functionality and climate resilience. This park, which has been afforested from past to present, can be associated with sustainability in terms of erosion protection and the use of natural topography without alteration. Overall, the Bypark provides an example of thoughtful design that contributes to climate goals and long-term sustainability while improving the urban environment. Today, many urban parks are full of designs that ignore topography, suppress nature with concrete, and contradict sustainability principles. Areas that are flattened by ignoring local climate conditions, surfaces that do not direct water, and practices such as cutting down natural tree cover and adding “designed” green strips in their place no longer serve either the user or the planet. As parks become representations disconnected from nature, they lose both their ecological value and cultural meaning. At this point, Esbjerg Bypark offers a strong response to all these mistakes. Instead of suppressing nature, it adopts an approach that speaks to it, and instead of ignoring topography, it makes it the cornerstone of the design. This project, which limits the use of concrete, preserves the existing tree cover, and designs a living landscape with seasonal water elements, brings the concept of sustainability to life not only as an environmentalist slogan but as a spatial principle. The Esbjerg project is an example of preserving past values and carries great hope for the future.





This project, in which various architects, artists, landscape architects, and engineers collaborated, shows that people can rediscover nature whenever they want and live in harmony with it. Although parks may seem like ordinary structures, they hold a very important and significant place in human life. the rush of city living can sometimes tire people out. Just getting fresh air and walking in a park full of trees brings great peace to the mind. It provides both mental and physical renewal. In addition, being a social meeting place is very important for both children and adults. Contact with nature touches and heals everyone especially when the park has the qualities of Esbjerg Park.

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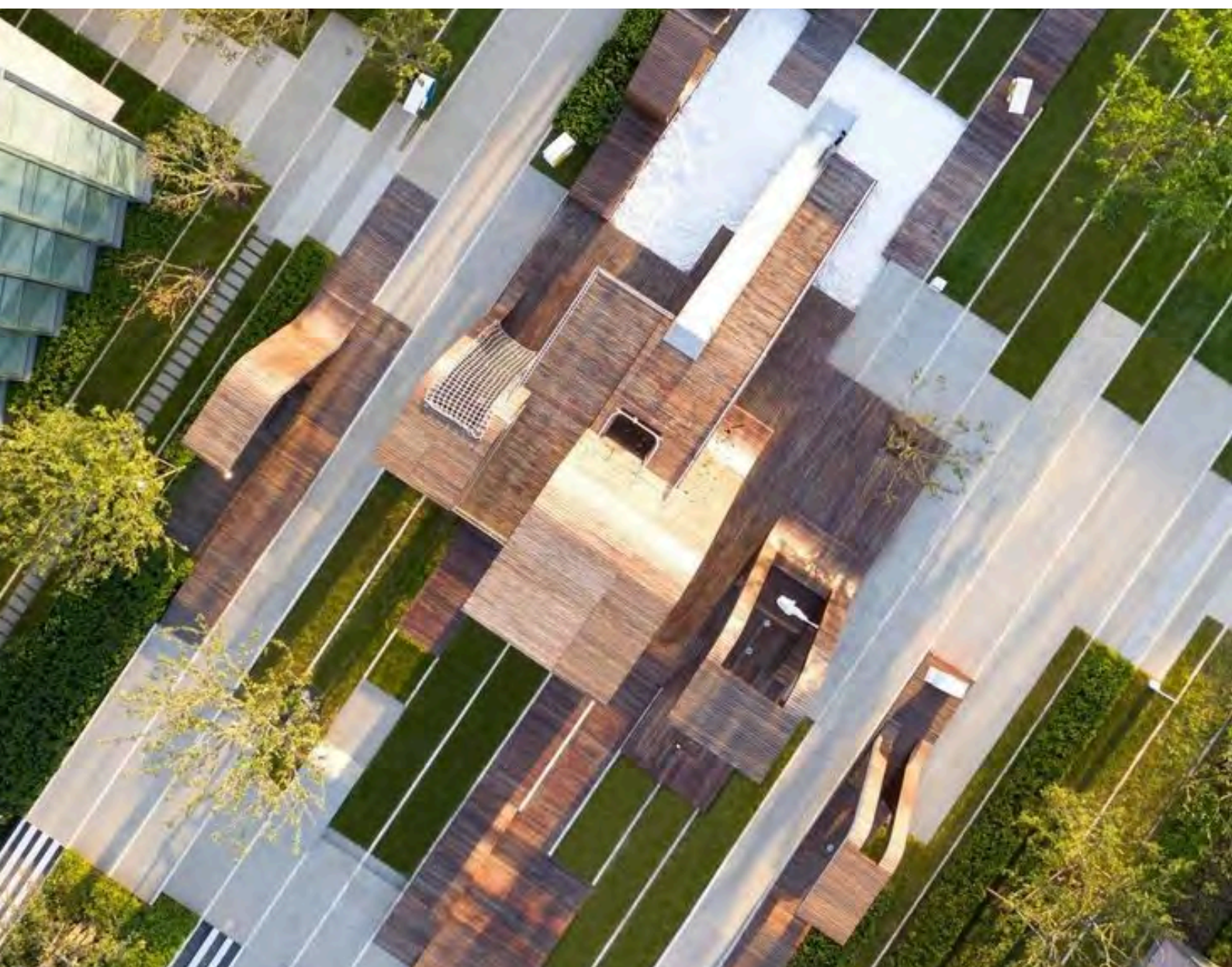
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Urban Landscape | Redesign | Creativity



The Big U: An Immersive Investigation of Urban Resilience

Redesigned through Innovative and Creative Design Solutions



In the wake of the devastating occurrence of Hurricane Sandy that hit in 2012, New York City was forced to take immediate action on the weaknesses and vulnerabilities that existed within its coastal urban settlements. The hurricane, which resulted in extensive destruction, flooded a large number of residential neighborhoods, paralyzed vital infrastructure systems, and presented a critical threat to the lives of thousands of citizens who were especially exposed to this calamity. In light of this calamity and the pressing necessity for rejuvenation, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, otherwise known as HUD, embarked on an ambitious project dubbed the "Rebuild by Design" competition. This competition was a multifaceted program conceived with the aim of stimulating and fostering creative and sustainable solutions to urban design that would promote resilience in the wake of future adversities.

Among the many proposals rigorously selected, one was very prominent on the basis of its innovation,

broad range of objectives, and the vast multilateral effect it had in store: The Big U, a comprehensive coastal defense project innovatively conceived by the highly reputed architecture firm known as Bjarke Ingels Group or simply BIG.

In a departure from the conventional methodology implicit in floodwalls, The Big U is a groundbreaking synergy of many disparate disciplines, from engineering and landscape architecture to engaged community, all synthesized into an integrated urban plan. This article examines various facets of the project, from its historical context to underlying design philosophy, major structural details, ecological considerations, and its response to pressing global issues. The article contends that The Big U operates at a new paradigm of "social infrastructure," which successfully marries climate resilience with civic life in new and unprecedented forms never seen before.

Context and Overview of the Project

The Big U was envisioned and created specifically in response to the tremendous damage and destruction caused by Hurricane Sandy, most urgently in the Lower Manhattan district, which was one of the hardest hit. This hurricane exposed the vulnerability of the region: an overwhelming number of over 95,000 low-income, elderly, and disabled individuals were seriously harmed and affected. Essential public services to which the community had been accustomed were brought to a grinding halt, and economic activities in the region took devastating hits and disruptions. It was obvious in the most glaring fashion that New York City needed a novel, forward-thinking, and proactive approach to the problems that were created by such a calamity.



Figure1: Project plan

Open since 2013 and underpinned by an initial massive injection of federal funding to the tune of \$335 million, which quickly grew to more than \$500 million, this visionary project comprised a wholesale re-design of a significant portion of Manhattan's shoreline. Specifically, it was a contiguous 10-mile stretch, or roughly 16 kilometers, that altered the face of the landscape. The goal of the project was to create an integrated system that was dedicated to flood protection, but also an active public space—one that would foster areas for recreation, cultural enhancement, and the daily life of residents and tourists alike.



Figure2 , Figure3: Planned public space

BIG spearheaded the coordination of the design team, which comprised an extensive and varied assortment of collaborators. This team was constituted by such prominent firms and organizations as One Architecture, Starr Whitehouse, Buro Happold, Arcadis, Green Shield Ecology, and Level Infrastructure, among a number of others. The multi-disciplinary make-up of this assembled team allowed for the successful incorporation of an assortment of crucial elements into the project. Consequently, coastal engineering and urban planning were orchestrated in concert with landscape ecology and a comprehensive socio-economic analysis, enhancing the overall project scope and depth.

Design Philosophy: Understanding Infrastructure as an Intrinsic Part of Social Fabric

What sets The Big U apart from other projects is its groundbreaking design philosophy, which is really one that sees infrastructure not as a thing that holds us back, but rather an openness to integration into our world and lives.

Rather than merely building rigid floodwalls that do nothing but hold water back, the designers posed a reflective question: Can we use the same structures that work to keep rising water out of our spaces to enrich and make our quality of life better in helpful and positive ways? Bjarke Ingels has called this approach "social infrastructure." Defensive measures are incorporated into daily urban landscape here—berms are landscaped as parkland, floodgates are redesigned as art, and recreational pathways trace flood-resistant edges. This double-purpose approach renders resilience visible, accessible, and convenient.

The Big U resists and undermines the normal binary opposition that would otherwise exist between what is "hard" engineering and what is "soft" landscape. By incorporating and blending these two elements, it produces a hybrid system that is secure but also accessible to all.

Design Elements: A Three-Fold Organization of Separate Compartments, United by a Common Strategy

The Big U is a large structure made up of three connected but separate compartments, which are blended together but are capable of existing separately from one another. Each of the three compartments has been meticulously designed to accommodate the unique nature and requirements of the region that it is adjacent to. The segregation into separate units is inspired by the engineering strategies that are implemented when designing the hulls of ships, which are specifically designed to contain any damage that would occur and maintain the overall buoyancy of the ship.



Figure 4: Design Elements

East Side Coastal Resilience (ESCR):

Extending from Montgomery Street to East 25th Street, this particular section features what is referred to as a "Bridging Berm." This is a carefully designed and landscaped green earthwork that serves the twin function of storm surge protection while simultaneously permitting pedestrian passage, providing space for gardens, and creating separate paths for cyclists. Aside from this, the berm is designed in such a way that it can cross over the FDR highway, thereby actually restoring an important connection between the city and its beautiful waterfront.

Two Bridges and Chinatown:

This chapter familiarizes the reader with the innovative deployable flood barriers cleverly concealed beneath overpasses in motorways. In their non-operational mode, they are in fact made to resemble artistically lighted ceilings, thereby adding aesthetic value to such areas. By doing so, they effectively transform previously dark and underutilized areas into safe, lively public areas for everyone.

The Battery and Financial District:

Located at the southern tip of Manhattan, the sensitive design treatment integrates raised knolls that create natural amphitheaters as well as play areas.

Furthermore, a pre-existing Coast Guard station has been imaginatively repurposed and redeveloped as an ecological educational center, not only celebrating the site's rich maritime past but also providing an eye-opening insight into the critical challenge presented by rising sea levels and their effect on the environment.

These particular components are made to function independently and on their own in the case of an emergency scenario, thus ensuring that localized protection is delivered efficiently. This feature plays an important role in and adds to the overall resilience of the entire system.



stormwater runoff but also actively work towards reducing the urban heat island effect as well as allowing for a high degree of plant and animal diversity. In contrast to the conventional approach of using gray infrastructure, The Big U here takes a more innovative route by combining an assortment of natural elements, such as beautifully planted berms, and using textured concrete within its design. These thoughtful elements combine to not only reduce the visible massing and hardness of the structure but also to significantly improve the overall human experience of the space, while making the space more resilient to climate issues.

Strategies for Environmental Resilience and Integration

At its core, The Big U is a better model of nature-based solutions that integrate seamlessly into the environment. The futuristic project employs a combination of plantings, thoughtfully designed topography, and water-saving design principles to deliver required ecosystem services alongside robust flood protection capacity. The designers went the extra mile to incorporate measures such as bioswales, which are designed to capture and filter stormwater, rain gardens that enhance the aesthetics of the place while managing excess water, and native plantings that not only capture

Technical analysis that was carried out by the Level Infrastructure team has provided an astonishing figure indicating that the project will save a staggering value of more than \$11 billion in flood losses through to the year 2100. This is quite clear to demonstrate that going for green design solutions is not only good for our environment, but it is also a viable and sustainable economic option in the long run.

Community Engagement and Urban Placemaking

An advantage of The Big U is that it was created bottom-up. It involved over 150 residents through workshops conducted by landscape architects Starr Whitehouse. Residents discussed what they required: additional light, safe pedestrian access, greenery, and active recreation areas.

The result of all this is a well-thought-out public area that has been built not just for people's enjoyment but also with their participation and input in consideration. Elements like basketball courts, amphitheaters, fishing piers, play areas, and other cultural installations have been well incorporated into the design to effectively capture the distinct character and personality of each respective neighborhood within the region. It is most significant to note that a major part, that is 42%, of East River Park was specifically designed to remain open and available even as the work was conducted in segments. This thoughtful approach ensures that the community residents are able to continue enjoying and utilizing the park throughout the whole duration of the project, thus creating a sense of continuity and belonging. This participation model is designed to build trust among all of the stakeholders, fosters a sense of effective ownership among the participants, and ensures long-term stewardship and maintenance of the project.

Adapting to Contemporary City Challenges

The Big U is an all-encompassing and complete shift in thinking regarding city building and urban development. Urban cities across the world are becoming increasingly aware of the urgent necessity of incorporating resilience into daily life for those residing within the cities. This groundbreaking endeavor clearly illustrates how a single design with numerous benefits can at the same time meet

a wide range of social, environmental, and economic objectives and targets. The project is connected with several modern trends in planning: A shift away from gray to green infrastructure Human-centered flood protection Compartments-based, scalable resilience Equity- and community-based investment and planning Public participation in climate adaptation through training. The Big U's receipt of the Holcim Silver Award for sustainable construction is no coincidence. This success is not just an excellent benchmark for engineering and design fields but also a very positive message regarding the ability of urban environments to transform in a way that is visionary, supportive, and considerate. In conclusion, the Big U is a benchmark in today's discussion of urban resilience. It powerfully rejects the prevalent presumption that infrastructure must be solely defensive in nature, unpleasant to behold, and devoid of public engagement possibilities. Instead, it presents a vision for the future where protection is not delivered through the building of walls, but through the creation of lovely, interesting, and open public spaces. These are designed not just to allow more social interaction, but to serve as a valuable tool in mitigating the danger presented by climate-related threats. As cities globally grapple with the challenge presented by rising sea levels and the rising incidence of climate-related disasters, The Big U provides a replicable and inspiring model that can be scaled up. The project clearly shows that, with the synergy of interdisciplinary co-ordination by different specialists and stakeholders, extensive community participation on all levels, and the use of visionary and innovative solutions, it is actually possible to make a city not only more secure for its residents but also more dynamic in its vigour, more just in its opportunities, and more resistant to future challenges .

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Willamette Falls Riverwalk

Overview



Willamette Falls, the second largest waterfall by volume in the United States, has been inaccessible to the public for the past century due to industrial activities along its shoreline. However, a growing movement aimed at revitalizing post-industrial landscapes is shedding new light on this stunning site. In response, Snøhetta's master plan envisions a transformative project that not only restores public access to the falls but also invites visitors to reconnect with the site's rich tapestry of natural, cultural, and industrial histories.

The proposed riverwalk is envisioned as more than just a pathway; it is an immersive journey through time and terrain. Stretching from the heart of Oregon City's historic downtown and culminating at the crest of the falls, the riverwalk is designed with a series of interconnected islands formed by ancient basalt and remnants from a bygone industrial era. It treats the entire 22-acre site as a cohesive, interwoven environment, where elevated walkways and promenades gracefully weave through the natural topography and the stories embedded within it. Visitors will experience the shifting rhythms of the river, feel the refreshing mist on their skin, witness the light dancing on the water's surface, and be enveloped by the constant sound and movement of the falls.

Ultimately, this initiative serves as a thoughtful example of adaptive reuse, transforming a post-industrial landscape into a meaningful public space. By harmonizing ecological restoration with cultural memory and contemporary public engagement, the Willamette Falls Riverwalk offers a blueprint for reconnecting communities with their land, their heritage, and the natural processes that have shaped both

A Place Always Meant More



Before the factories, before Oregon City became what it is today, this was a gathering spot for the Grand Ronde, Warm Springs, Umatilla, and Siletz peoples. They fished here, met with other tribes, traded goods, shared stories, and held ceremonies. It wasn't just about salmon — though the salmon were plenty — it was about community, tradition, and belonging.

When settlers arrived in the 1800s, that connection was slowly broken. Big mills were built, fences went up, and one by one, the old gathering spots disappeared. The sound of machines replaced the sounds of water, and the river was reshaped to serve industry.

Even after the factories shut down, no one came rushing to reopen the falls to the public. The buildings stayed, rusting and empty. The fences stayed too. But through it all, the water kept falling — and somehow, that constant sound carried a kind of quiet promise that one day, people would come back.

A Walk That Tells Stories

The team behind the Willamette Falls Riverwalk could have taken the easy way out. Clear the site, clean up the mess, build a shiny new park with neat benches and polished paths. But they didn't. And I think that's what makes this project so special.

Instead, they chose to keep the rough edges. Old factory walls, giant rusted beams, and crumbling foundations aren't being wiped away. They're being woven into the design. Elevated walkways will move through the ruins. Some structures will become gathering spots, others open-air classrooms or lookout platforms. You'll walk beside water that once powered paper mills and see where nature is slowly taking back the land.

It's not about pretending this place was always perfect. It's about letting the layers of its history show — the good, the painful, the in-between.



Not Just Access , but Belonging



picture : snohetta

The truth is, public space isn't just about physical access. It's about who feels like they belong there. For generations, Willamette Falls wasn't a place people could share. Now, the Riverwalk is changing that. Wide paths, ramps, and platforms mean people of all abilities can get close to the water. Families, elders, school groups, visitors — everyone is welcome. And even better, Indigenous tribes are leading some of the conversations about how this land is cared for. When the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde bought most of the property in 2019, it meant the people with the deepest connection to this land finally had a say in its future again.

That alone makes this more than just a park project. It turns it into an act of repair.

Letting The Land Heal , Too

You can't spend a century dumping waste into a river and expect it to bounce back overnight. But the Riverwalk is helping. Wetlands are being restored. Native plants are going back in the ground. Waterways are being cleared so fish can swim through again.

Visitors won't just pass by pretty views — they'll walk through a living, changing environment. And maybe that's part of the lesson here: landscapes don't just get fixed once and for all. They heal slowly, over years, with care and attention.



picture : snohetta

A Place Made For Everyday Movements

One of the things I like most about this project is that it's not built around one big, flashy feature. There's no giant monument, no expensive art installation taking center stage. It's a series of open, flexible spaces where people can gather, hang out, hold events, or simply sit quietly by the water.

In a way, it feels like it's designed for everyday life, not just for special occasions. Markets, small concerts, school trips, sunset walks. The kind of simple moments that give meaning to a place over time.

A Reminder Of What Public Space Can Be



picture : snohetta

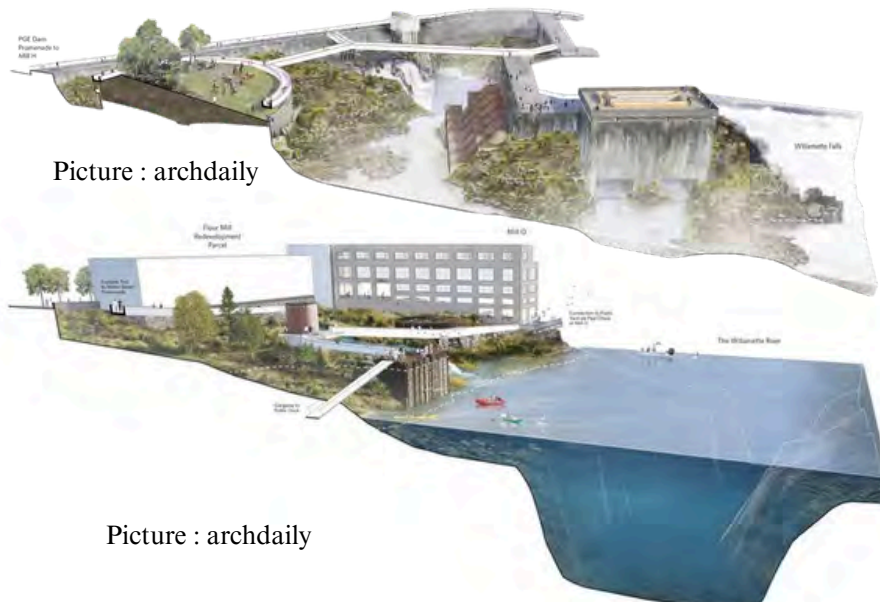
When you look at a place like Willamette Falls, it's easy to see the ruins and think only of what was lost. But the Riverwalk project reminds us that places like this still have so much to offer — if we're willing to see them differently.

It shows that public space isn't about perfection. It's about layers, stories, memory, and care. About making space for what came before, what exists now, and what's still possible. About giving land and water back to the people who need it most.

And honestly, every city should have a place like that.



picture : ASLA



Picture : archdaily

Picture : archdaily

Opinion

Sometimes, places are forgotten — not because they stop being beautiful, but because people are kept away from them. For me, Willamette Falls was one of those places. I always thought it was sad that a place so powerful and special could be hidden for so long.

That's why I really love the Willamette Falls Riverwalk project. It's not just about making a nice path. It's about giving this place back to the people. I like that they didn't cover up the old buildings or pretend nothing happened here. The broken walls, the old beams — they tell a story, and I think it's important we hear it. What touches me most is how this space welcomes everyone. It's for families, children, elders, and especially for the Indigenous people who have always cared about this land. It's a chance to remember, to heal, and to spend time with something bigger than ourselves — the sound of water, the mist in the air, and the feeling that some places still matter.

I hope more cities do this. Not just to build parks, but to bring forgotten places back to life, with honesty and care.

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A Walk Trough

Nature

City

History



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An aerial photograph of Sydney, Australia, featuring the Sydney Harbour Bridge in the upper left. The bridge spans the water, with the city skyline visible in the background. In the foreground, there is a large, curved residential or commercial building complex, a green park area with winding paths, and a rocky shoreline meeting the water. The lighting suggests late afternoon or early morning, with long shadows and warm tones.

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regenerative urbanism

Oh, hi there!

I'm topos, the leading international magazine for urban planning from Munich, Germany. For me, everything revolves around the sustainable city of the future. Online, I spend 365 days a year dealing with the question: how will we live sustainably, healthily and technologized in the world's future metropolises? In addition to my home www.toposmagazine.com, I am published four times a year as a print magazine (that's what you are holding in your hands right now!).

I address everyone who is interested in the smarter, greener city of the future and who works in, on and with the city. My readers include CEOs, mayors, architects, landscape architects, urban planners, engineers, digitalization specialists, researchers – simply everyone that is interested in urban development!

My great passion is finding and analyzing solutions for the city of the future. Solutions that city planners, companies, start-ups and of course the cities themselves find to respond to challenges such as digitalization, climate change, mobility, population growth and poverty.

In addition to our cover stories in the printed edition, you will find online the most important stories and news from the world's largest and most influential cities, portraits of the foremost international projects around the globe, new solutions and innovations for the city of tomorrow, as well as interviews with international city makers.

Nice to have you here, let's change the world together!

RECLAIMING WHAT WAS LOST

Restoring Sydney's lost headland through layered design, native planting, and cultural memory.

Barangaroo Reserve is more than just a public park; it's a landscape of ecological resistance, reclamation, and memory. This 6-hectare waterfront property, which is located along the western edge of Sydney Harbour, was once an industrial container terminal. It combines cultural resurgence with ecological restoration, making it one of Australia's most comprehensive urban rehabilitation initiatives to date. The concept, which was created by Johnson Pilton Walker and PWP Landscape Architecture, represents a change in urban design philosophy from controlling land to interacting with it.

The term "Barangaroo" honors a well-known Eora Nation Aboriginal lady who resided in the region in the early years of European colonization. Her legacy resurfaces in the reserve's ethos: to restore the land to its ecological and symbolic pre-colonial state.

Barangaroo Reserve is situated in a special transitional area, both historically and physically, between restoration and displacement. The ancient headland was completely erased as a result of significant modifications made to the location for maritime operations during the 20th century. This industrial landform was estranged from Sydney's Aboriginal past as well as its natural environment.

To recreate the beach in 1836, the design team used oral accounts, sketches, and archival maps. Their objective was to revive the social and environmental functions of the headland while preserving its geological integrity. Today's landscape is a hybrid, a new spatial story based on Indigenous knowledge and modern ecological science rather than a copy of the past.



Where stone meets water, and memory meets future — Barangaroo's restored edge tells a story of return.

MATERIAL LOGIC

A LANDSCAPE OF LAYERS



Similar to the historical and geological substrate of the site, Barangaroo's design approach is stratified. Using 10,000 pieces of sandstone, 93% of which were quarried on-site, the headland topography is recreated as the dominating gesture. These interlocking stones resemble pre-colonial coastal cliffs by following natural fracture lines.

A living matrix of more than 75,000 natural plants, grown in cooperation with nearby Aboriginal communities and botanists, lies above this artificial geology. These species are not merely aesthetic; they are performative—filtering runoff, hosting pollinators, and resisting coastal erosion. The Sydney shoreline's long-lost natural processes are restored by this vegetation.

Crucially, monumentality is avoided in the design. Barangaroo provides immersive terrain, scale flexibility, and material continuity in place of iconic structures. It is a performative landform—architecture devoid of structures.

"Instead of iconic structures, Barangaroo offers material continuity and immersive terrain."

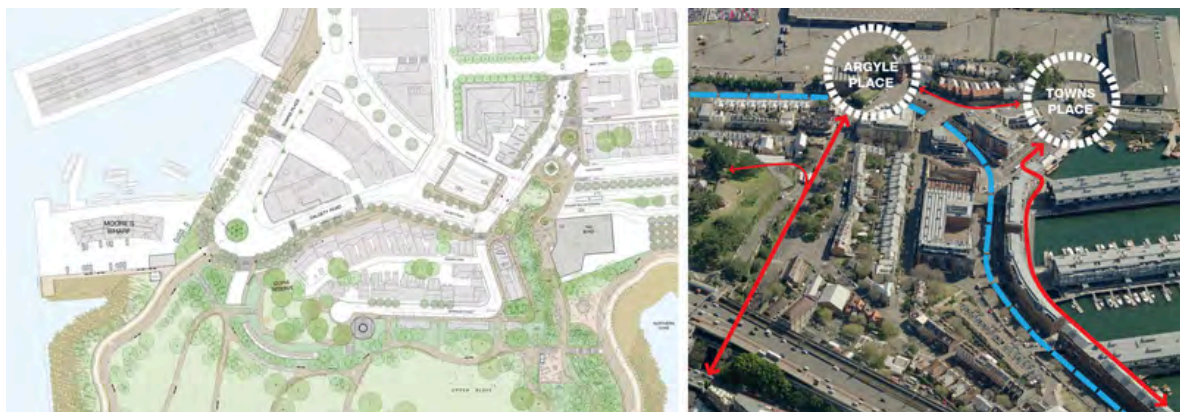
PROGRAMMATIC ELEMENTS, CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE, AND PUBLIC USES

The Cutaway and Grounding in the Community

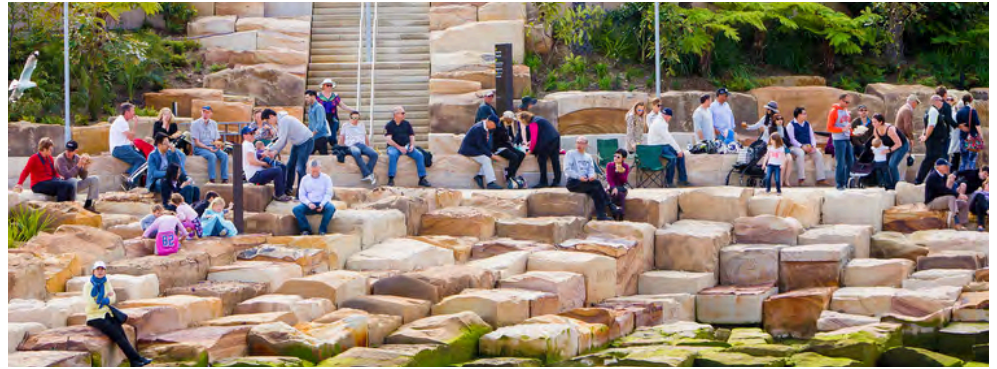
Beneath the man-made headland lies The Cutaway—a vast, column-free cavern carved into the reconstructed terrain. It serves as a versatile space for cultural events, community gatherings, and art installations. By embedding such a significant program below the landscape, the designers avoided disrupting the visual horizon of the park, while crafting a powerful metaphor: culture quite literally grows from the land.

Other spatial components of the design further reinforce this integration between landform and public function. Walking trails and elevated observation decks allow visitors to engage with the site's topography, offering varied experiences in scale, movement, and perspective. The reintroduced Marrinawi Cove, a tidal pool accessible for swimming, references the area's Aboriginal fishing heritage and connects users with the water's edge in an immersive way.

The design also includes quiet zones filled with native vegetation and shaded resting points, intended for reflection, meditation, and slow-paced interaction with the landscape. All interventions rely on spatial clarity rather than architectural spectacle—they are low-tech, yet highly effective in fostering a sense of belonging, memory, and place.



BUILDING WITH, NOT AGAINST, THE LAND



At Barangaroo, sustainability was ingrained in the building logic and went beyond green certificates. Transportation-related carbon emissions were significantly decreased by using sandstone that was obtained on-site. Subsoil and erosion control layers were created using recycled crushed limestone, recovered timber mulch, and green garbage.

The park also serves as an urban sponge. Vegetated swales filter stormwater runoff before it enters the harbor. In order to promote pollination, native stingless bees have been introduced, and organic debris is used to nurture soil microbiomes.

A new paradigm for low-carbon urbanism is also exemplified by Barangaroo, where regenerative infrastructure is created by weaving together materials, ecosystems, and cultural narratives.



REASSEMBLING NATURE AND CULTURE: TOWARDS A REGENERATIVE URBANISM

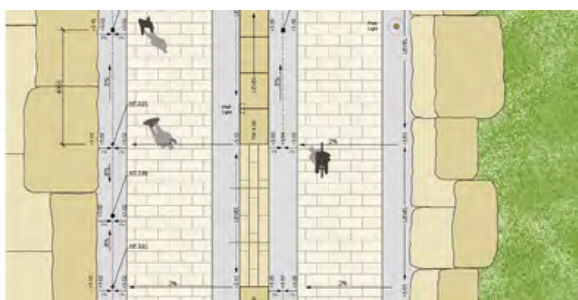
Barangaroo Reserve represents a new paradigm in urban landscape thinking in the face of growing environmental challenges: regenerative urbanism, which incorporates nature into the city's core structure rather than just making room for it.

By directly integrating ecological intelligence into urban form, the project restores damaged ecosystems rather than copying nature. Rebuilding ecosystems and reestablishing connections between disjointed systems are its guiding concepts. Barangaroo, which is based on the philosophy of cultural landscape, respects Indigenous cosmologies and opposes the cultural erasure that frequently comes with urban growth. It sets a standard for responsible design by minimizing environmental effect and enhancing ecological return through One Planet Living-informed solutions. Its robust landform and modular sandstone structures are designed to endure sea level rise and climatic extremes, embodying the ethos of resilience-oriented planning. Barangaroo can be interpreted philosophically as a heterotopia, a place with multiple meanings, conflicts, and reassemblies.

Once an area of ecological damage and industrial displacement, it is now a complex space of encounter, contemplation, remembering, and rehabilitation. In keeping with Michel Foucault's idea, Barangaroo aims to create a living present in which culture and nature come together in fresh, significant ways rather than restoring a romanticized past. It emphasizes how cities are extensions of nature, always changing and intricately intertwined with it, rather than being outside of it.

Thus, Barangaroo Reserve serves as a model for the future metropolis, one that is multi-layered, rooted, and aware of its past. It teaches us that even land that has been cut off from its roots for a long time may recall, renew, and redefine itself; that reconciliation must take the form of space; and that sustainability must be observable. Through the conversion of an abandoned industrial site into a thriving natural and cultural ecosystem, Barangaroo shows that regeneration is not only feasible but also necessary.











PARCO DORA

Urban nature reclaims the industrial remains of Turin's past.

When Production Fades

shadow continues through landscape form

From Nothingness to Necessity

The emptiness of yesterday becomes today's anchor.

Fractured but Full of Life

Integrating aging elements into visual storytelling.

Fulin Kahveci
020230518





DESIGNING WITH NATURE: TURIN'S PARCO DORA AND THE NEW URBAN ECOLOGY

Shaping industrial memory through
expressive and contextual landscape
interventions.

Foregrounding the City : Memory Carved into Post-Industrial Landscapes



Once an industrialized landscape bustling with the operations of Fiat and Michelin, the present-day Parco Dora symbolizes a new chapter in urban design—where the remnants of production are repurposed into living infrastructure. This essay evaluates the transformation of its 45 hectares through ecological restoration, material conservation, and spatial narrative construction.

“Latz + Partner, awarded the project in 2004, chose not to demolish the industrial shell but to reprogram it. Weather-worn columns and vast concrete surfaces are now essential components of the park’s identity, coexisting with plantings, public life, and environmental processes in a site that narrates its own layered evolution.

Urban Growth Patterns and Memory-Driven Significance in the Site’s Redesign:

in the heart of Turin’s Spina 3 redevelopment district, and following the natural line of the Dora Riparia River, the terrain now known as Parco Dora was once an epicenter of the city’s manufacturing strength.

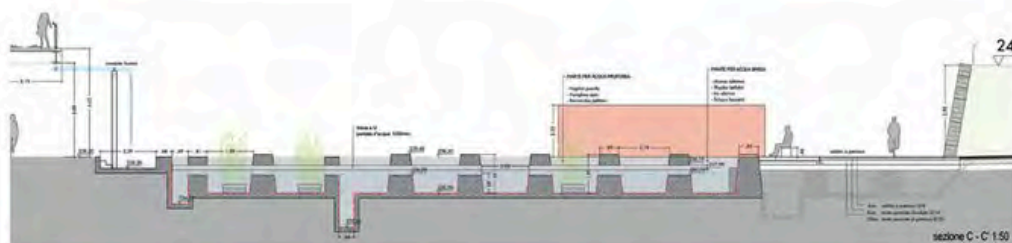
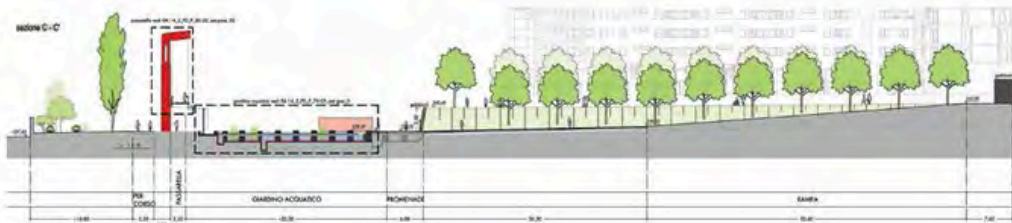
This expansive site was occupied by large-scale industrial operations—from metallurgy to automobile production and glassworking—that left a lasting imprint on the city’s spatial and economic structure. By the end of the 1990s, industrial decline had rendered the area largely inactive and derelict. However, instead of initiating a process of total demolition, city planners recognized the cultural and architectural value embedded in the site’s remains.

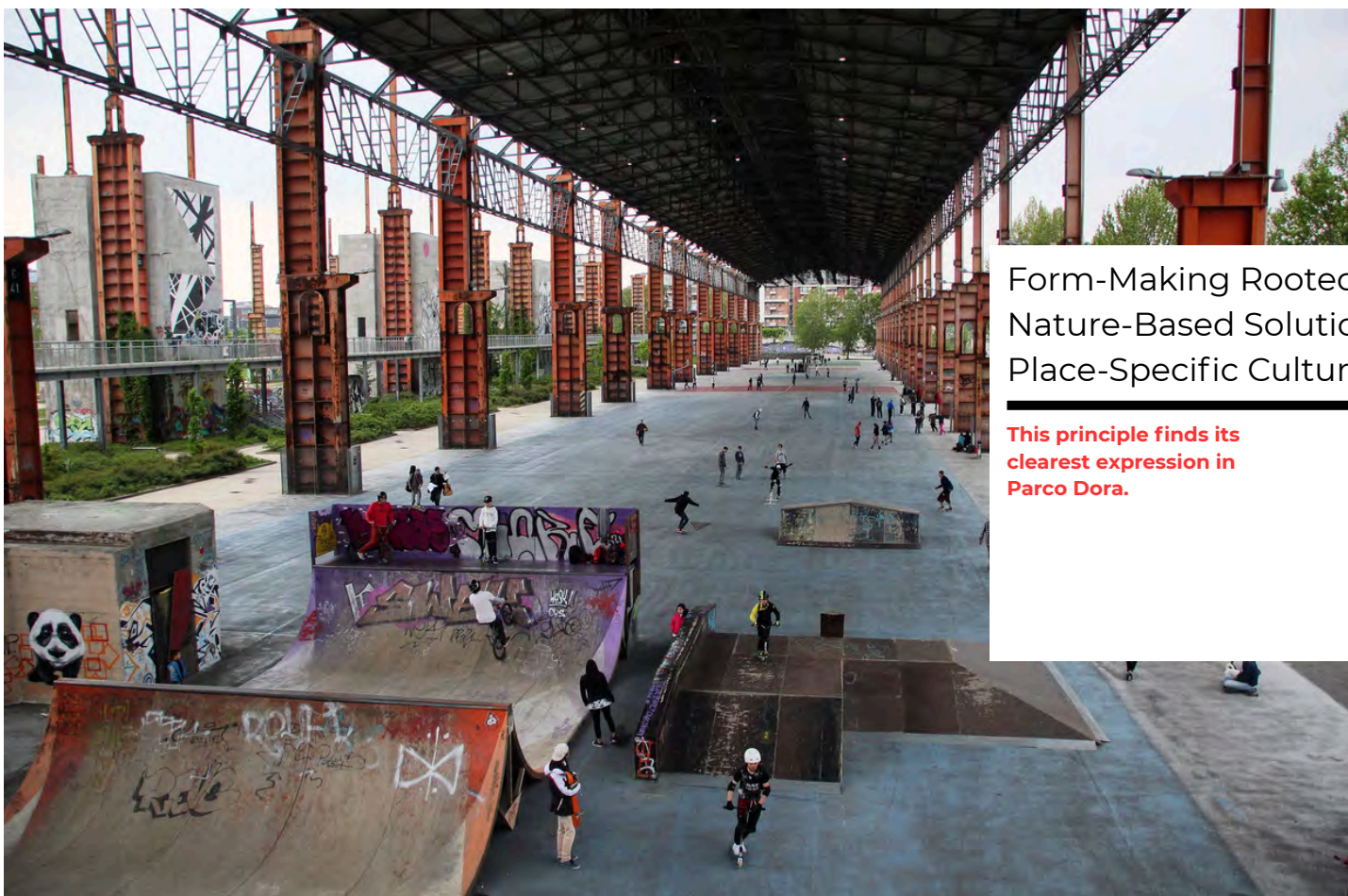


A competition held in 2004 marked the beginning of a new chapter—proposing a hybrid public space that balances decaying industrial elements with natural systems and public use in a narrative of transformation.

Early Design Conception, Core Evolutionary Steps of the Project, and the Regional Infrastructure and Urban Layers Shaping Its Identity:
Project Title: Parco Dora Urban Landscape
Urban Environment: Located within Turin, in the northern part of Italy
Design and Realization Period: Took place from 2004 until finalization in 2012
Opening Date: Publicly inaugurated in 2012
Total Area Redeveloped: Around 450,000 square meters of reclaimed

- Team of Designers:**
- **Lead Architecture Office:** Latz + Partner, Germany
 - **Collaborative Design Teams:** Studio Pession Associato, STS S.p.A., Ugo Marano
 - **Commissioning Body:** City of Turin, acting as both initiator and client
 - **Park Division:** The landscape is segmented into five named areas—Mortara, Ingest, Michelin, Valdocco, and Vitali—each conveying a unique interpretation of adaptive reuse and ecological design.





Form-Making Rooted in
Nature-Based Solutions and
Place-Specific Cultural Insight

**This principle finds its
clearest expression in
Parco Dora.**

Latz + Partner approached the site with the intention not to erase its industrial heritage, but to embed it thoughtfully into a newly envisioned urban ecological landscape. Their design method is grounded in the belief that memory can be carried and expressed through spatial and material interventions. As Peter Latz puts it, the design process involves embracing the site's constraints and allowing its past to shape the future, rather than resisting its complexities.

The industrial steel columns are preserved not just as visual remnants but as active structural elements, symbolic gestures, and tools for organizing space. The former concrete industrial buildings are reinterpreted as open-air structures, becoming accessible spaces for community use. In addition, systems of environmental management—such as surface water channels, water-permeable pavements, and rooftops covered with vegetation—are made visibly present, reinforcing a landscape logic that values openness, function, and ecological sensitivity.



Significant Framework Elements and Integrated Landscape Approaches

Each of the five zones within Parco Dora applies its own context-driven design methodology, yet they are unified through a consistent use of materials and recurring architectural elements that create coherence across the site.

Steel Framework Structures:

Especially dominant in the Vitali section, the preserved industrial steel skeletons have been maintained as defining visual and spatial components. These towering remnants offer not only shade but also serve as structural frames that articulate key visual corridors throughout the park.

Water Management Design:

Stormwater is guided through visible concrete channels that run along the surface of the site. These infrastructural elements function both as practical systems for managing runoff and as references to the site's industrial past, evoking the form of historical pipelines.

Topography and Circulation Strategy:

The site's natural elevation differences are skillfully negotiated using an integrated network of bridges, ramps, and terraced surfaces. These features enable accessible movement while generating layered spatial experiences and enhancing site legibility.

Public Program and Amenities: A variety of user-centered features—including skateboarding zones, open green lawns, stepped seating areas, basketball courts, bike lanes, and community gardens—are seamlessly incorporated into the design. These elements are positioned to coexist with existing industrial structures, establishing a dialogue between past and present rather than erasing historical traces.

Planting Scheme and Ecological

Integration: The landscape includes a mix of resilient, regionally appropriate species such as birch trees, coniferous plants, and native grasses. Additionally, areas of spontaneous vegetation have been preserved, encouraging biodiversity and allowing ecological processes to unfold naturally within the park.

An Environment Marked by the Fusion of Multiple Historical and Interpretive Dimensions

Parco Dora approaches the site as a dynamic carrier of memory rather than a blank canvas.



Instead of erasing traces of its industrial legacy, it transforms them into features that invite direct interaction. For example:

Children play among the towering steel frames that once supported industrial lifting systems.

Teenagers now use concrete platforms—originally designed for molten metal—to practice skateboarding.

Graffiti-covered walls, dating back to the site's occupation era, now border relaxed picnic areas.

This strategy makes temporal layering visible and experiential—where past narratives, present activities, and future possibilities are intertwined.

The park acts simultaneously as an open-air archive, a collective civic stage, and a resilient ecological environment.

Structural and Design Solutions for Emerging Environmental Challenges:

In the face of climate change, the loss of green infrastructure, and increasing social disconnection, Parco Dora presents a progressive approach to repurposing former industrial land. It directly responds to several key environmental concerns:

Ecological Restoration:

The project applied soil remediation processes to remove industrial pollutants and reestablish safe ground conditions. Planting schemes were carefully designed to reconnect fragmented habitats and promote ecological continuity. As a result, native bird species and insects have begun to return in notable numbers, reflecting an increase in biodiversity.

Water Management:

To address stormwater issues, the design includes retention basins and floodable zones that minimize surface runoff during heavy rain. Open concrete channels make water flow visible, facilitating evaporation and contributing to passive cooling effects across the site.

Climate Resilience:

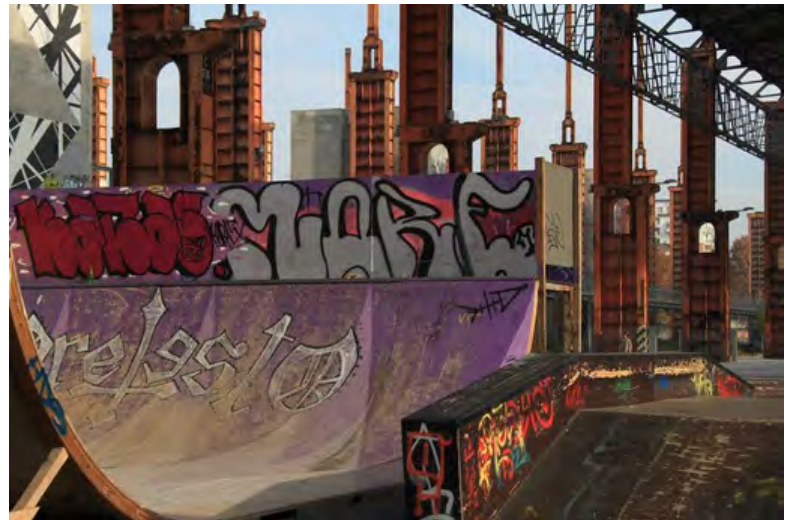
Shading is provided by retained steel frameworks, which help lower surface temperatures and mitigate urban heat island effects. Ground surfaces composed of permeable materials such as crushed brick and gravel improve drainage and infiltration. In addition, canopy trees and integrated wind corridors support microclimate regulation, enhancing thermal comfort for users.



Design Approaches That Prioritize People and Honor Local Culture:

Parco Dora serves not only as a leisure area but also as a communal hub that encourages engagement among diverse groups such as artists, immigrants, students, older adults, skateboarders, and visitors. Through its adaptable public programs and open environments, the park becomes a vibrant setting for urban social activities.

Furthermore, the park pays tribute to Turin's shared heritage rooted in its working-class history. In a city deeply influenced by Fiat's legacy, Parco Dora honors industrial labor with respect and authenticity, avoiding nostalgic portrayals. It rejuvenates the northern districts while ensuring the preservation of local communities without displacement.



Harmonizing visual components alongside spatial organization:

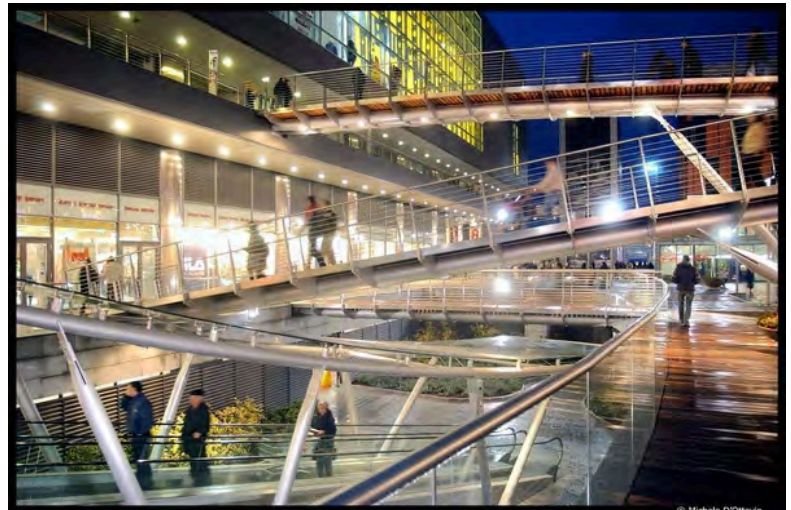
The park's character is shaped by striking visual contrasts:

Aged, corroded steel structures stand alongside soft, flowing meadow plants.

Heavy concrete platforms are set against slender birch trees.

Tall vertical beams intersect with expansive horizontal sightlines.

Together, these elements create a powerful emotional resonance and a distinct sense of place.





The sustained imprint and widespread influence on a global scale:

Parco Dora has established itself as a prominent and influential example in the field of postindustrial landscape revitalization. Frequently mentioned alongside renowned projects like Landschaftspark Duisburg-Nord in Germany and the High Line in New York City, it serves as a benchmark for innovative approaches to reclaiming former industrial sites. Its pioneering design and adaptive reuse strategies have had a significant impact on a number of more recent landscape architecture projects across Europe, particularly in vibrant urban centers such as Ghent, Madrid, and Barcelona, where similar challenges of industrial heritage and urban regeneration are being addressed.



Beyond its practical and design significance, Parco Dora plays an important role in the academic sphere as well. It is extensively integrated into landscape architecture curricula worldwide, where it functions as a case study to teach students critical concepts including the preservation and interpretation of cultural memory, the pursuit of environmental justice within urban contexts, and the importance of context-sensitive, site-specific design approaches. Through this pedagogical role, Parco Dora not only influences contemporary design practice but also helps shape the perspectives of future generations of landscape architects.



Final Statement: A Park Showcasing Layered Histories Through Its Landscape:

Parco Dora represents a complex and genuine environment instead of an idealized green refuge. It invites people to connect with historical layers while envisioning future possibilities, fostering both ecological renewal and heightened urban consciousness.

Amid ongoing environmental and social transformations, the project demonstrates how historically grounded design can inspire thoughtful yet hopeful approaches to collective urban futures.



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METROPOLIS



DESIGN THE FUTURE
Summer 2025

Tempelhof Reimagined From Runways to Recreation

A Story of Democracy, Design, and Ecological Renewal

Special Edition: The Future of Adaptive Reuse in Architecture

Tempelhof's Second Life

Where History Meets Sustainability

By Süleyman Varici



Urban landscapes are more than just physical spaces. They are living things that shaped by history, culture and the local community. Tempelhof Airport is one of these places. Tempelhof Airport is located in Berlin, Germany. It spans approximately 386 hectares, making it one of the largest urban parks in the world. Initially designed in the 1930s by Ernst Sagebiel, the airport's architectural style reflected the Nazi regime's aspirations of monumentalism. The airport operated until 2008, when it was closed due to declining air traffic. The decision to repurpose the site into a public park emerged in the following years, with significant input from Berlin's citizens through a 2014 referendum. It's not just a abandoned airport, it is a space with lots stories and history. From early days as a symbol of power during World War II, Tempelhof Airport had many changes.



Originally that was a open, empty field known as Tempelhofer Feld. It served as a military training area in 19th century. In 1930s, it's transformed into iconic structure of monumental architecture under Ernst Sagebiel's design intended to show Nazi's power. Later, it became a beacon of hope during the Berlin Airlift, symbolizing freedom in the face of Cold War. In the years that followed, the airfield transitioned from being a stage for political events to eventually closing as an airport in 2008.

Now it serves as a public park where people get together to relax and connect with nature. The transformation of airports into public spaces became popular with trends in sustainability and urban planning. Airports cover large expanses of vast land, making them ideal candidates for repurposing. For example, Atatürk Airport is transforming into a large public park for improve quality of life.



Similarly, Tempelhof's reinvention shows how such spaces can serve urban needs while respecting their historical layers.

According to the thesis "Landscape strategies for the transformation of abandoned airports in the context of landscape urbanism: Case study of the Atatürk Airport" by Diler Çiftçi, guided by Prof. Dr. Meltem Erdem Kaya, landscape urbanism is key to reusing these spaces. The study highlights ideas like improving biodiversity, and involving the community in design decisions. We can see these ideas at Tempelhof, where local citizens have helped turn the old airport into a lively community space.

Today, Tempelhof Airport is a beautiful public space where people meet for various activities. The park has free space for sports like cycling, skating, jogging and lots of activities. Families can have a picnic on its green fields. Kite flying is especially popular because of its big vast lands.

Beyonds of public use, the airport has important role in biodiversity. The park contains various bird species, such as lark and kestrels, and have rare plants that thrive in open grasslands. Temporary wetland areas also have amphibians and insects, contributing to an urban ecosystem that benefits the city's environment. Tempelhof airport is transformed with lots of cooperation of city planners, landscape architects and the local people, so it doesn't credit a single design team, it reflects a collective commitment to urban sustainability and adaptive reuse.

Tempelhof Airport design philosophy is recycling huge spaces and sustainability, becoming an example of how cities can revitalize post-industrial land. The aim is that of respecting the past rich history of the site but transforming it into public space appropriate for today. It is not erasing the past but building on the layers. The most noticeable feature of the design is the maintenance of the huge open airfield. They have remained relatively unchanged, and they exist as a living proof to the site's past significance in aviation and its Cold War reputation as a symbol of freedom. This availability speaks to the distinct personality of Berlin (Berlin also known as its freedom and liberty)—a city defined by wide vistas, landscapes and potential. This strategy is in cooperate with the ideals of conservation urbanism, which gives value the integration of a site's natural and historical structures into its modern and contemporary function. Rather than impose a fixed new design, the goal was to let history tell its own story. The ancient landmark terminal building and its vast hangars, left standing, bear witness to the site's rich and complex history.



No longer gateways for airplanes, they are gateways for people. They have been redeveloped as special event spaces for conventions, concerts, art exhibitions, and open city tours, where visitors can immerse themselves in Berlin's history while surrounded by a modern environment. In my opinion, it is a very important and unique aspect of an architectural project. It shows us that we can convert thing into useful lands by not harm the original environment The transformations of the land are respectful and minimal. A system of cycling and walking trails enables tourists to traverse the site without disrupting its natural character, and inconspicuous signing gives guidance. This careful strategy preserves the park's historic and natural integrity. The Tempelhof revitalization is an excellent illustration of the strength of citizen engagement. It would have been impossible to have today's park without the active interest of the Berlin people.



When the city council suggested commercial and residential construction in the area, a citizens' movement formed in strength. The movement reached its peak in 2014 in a landmark referendum, when a supermajority of the voting public expressed their desire to keep Tempelhof Field open to the public as a green open space, free from large-scale development. This landmark vote was a definitive expression of the value of public land in a growing urban setting and has become the exemplary case for participatory democratic urban planning. Public involvement continued beyond this watershed moment. Active participation is fostered by workshops, public hearings, and joint projects, in which citizens are able to continuously influence the development of the park. The amenities that have been provided within the park, from garden plots where Berlin citizens cultivate their own salads to sports and barbecue facilities, are a direct outcome of this participatory process. This level of participation has given citizens an amazing sense of pride and ownership. Tempelhof is not so much a park that is given to them as a park they struggled and continue to build themselves. This is backed up by a vibrant programs of community activities, such as cultural festivals and drive-in cinema nights, that add to its reputation as a popular meeting place for a diverse city.



At an environmental level, the complex is a masterclass in sustainable development. By choosing to recycle the airport instead of tearing it down, the municipal government saved the massive amounts of waste and carbon emissions resulting from the construction of new structures. The extensive green spaces in the park provide valuable ecological functions. They are the "lungs" of the very densely populated urban environment, cleansing the air and having a cooling effect that mitigates the urban heat island effect, particularly during hot summer days. In addition, the region's natural grassland and wet meadows play an essential role in the management of urban water supplies. By filtering and absorbing rainwater, they recharge groundwater and reduce the stress on the city's sewer system during intense precipitation, this system reduces the risk of flooding. Yet, park development is also marked by controversy and a number of issues. The same accessibility that defines Tempelhof's natural character also presents an operational dilemma: no shade and shelter. During the sweltering summer afternoons or in bad weather, this limits the use and pleasure of the park.



This has sparked a continuous argument between preservationists, planners, and citizens. Should there be more trees? Should pavilions or shelters be added? Or would such transformations be detrimental to the open and empty appearance that is inextricably linked to its historic character? This dilemma can only serve to highlight the root issue that is involved when dealing with adaptive reuse approaches: how to strike the appropriate balance between maintaining the distinct character of a site and clearing space for the mundane comforts and requirements of its new users. In summary, Tempelhof Airport represents more than a mere recreational area; it serves as a symbol of the determination, innovation, and democratic values inherent in Berlin. Its history of reinvention from political spectacle to public commons is a story about a city claiming its past and shaping its future. Tempelhof's past offers valuable lessons to planners and landscape architects worldwide. This illustrates the remarkable potential of adaptive reuse to revitalize sites that are of social and environmental importance. It illustrates that where the community members have been able to engage in the planning process effectively, the outcomes are more meaningful and inclusive. Last but not least, this highlights the requirement for a balanced approach that is historically sensitive and environmentally responsive while being attentive to an active community's needs. Though its narrative continues to be more completely written, Tempelhof is an encouraging and hopeful example of how city spaces can utilize historical elements to construct a more equitable and sustainable future.

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Comer Youth Center



Overview



Image: archdaily

On South Chicago Avenue, in the Greater Grand Crossing

neighborhood of Chicago's South Side, a modest yet remarkable building stands quietly. Neither a museum, nor a traditional landmark, nor a tourist attraction, the Comer Youth Center may well be one of the most radical public buildings in contemporary American urbanism.

Established in 2006 as part of the Gary Comer Education Campus, this center is not merely a youth facility. In a city shaped by historical discrimination, educational inequality, and disinvestment, the Comer Youth Center is an intervention. It is a synthesis of architecture, education, and landscape.

The answer was a multilayered urban intervention—one that combined philanthropy with educational facilities, arts and sports programs, environmental education, and food production.

At the heart of this model, the Comer Youth Center is not just a building, but a system of care and action.

Designed by John Ronan Architects, the Comer Youth Center avoids the clichés often associated with civic architecture—it neither carries the institutional coldness nor indulges in architectural spectacle. On the contrary, it is a building that reads its context with care, is meticulously designed, and takes a confident stance without resorting to display.

The façade's metal panels, expansive glass surfaces, and rhythmically layered elements give the building a sense of openness—yet this openness never compromises security. The architecture carefully navigates a delicate balance between transparency and protection—an essential quality in a neighborhood where the need for safety often conflicts with the need for dignity.

The interior is functionally rich and spatially adaptable. Classrooms can transform into art studios when needed; the black box theater hosts a wide range of events—from poetry readings and panel discussions to performances. The gymnasium accommodates both unstructured recreation and organized programs. A rooftop garden—which in many cities would be considered a luxury—is here more than just a green space: it functions as a social gathering point, an urban agricultural zone, and an outdoor classroom.

This green roof is not an ornamental gesture but an integral part of the educational mission. It fosters awareness around food justice, environmental literacy, and the human connection to the land. In a food desert, planting a single tomato can be an act of quiet revolution.

Infrastructure of Care

What sets the Comer Youth Center apart from similar projects is its systemic vision. The goal here is not to “fix” young people, but to rebuild the systems that surround them. The center is embedded in a campus model that includes Gary Comer College Prep, a community health clinic, and partner organizations offering a range of services—from mental health support to career counseling. It is not an isolated facility, but more like a neural hub that extends into the neighborhood. Through workforce development programs, environmental education, and cultural festivals, it taps directly into the lifeblood of the community. Comer redefines what a civic building can be in post-industrial American cities. It is not a monument; it is an infrastructure of care.

Landscape is often treated as a backdrop—greenery added after the fact. But at Comer, landscape is integral to the educational mission. The rooftop garden produces thousands of pounds of food each year. Some of it is sold at neighborhood markets; some is used directly in educational programs. Students learn botany, nutrition, economics, and community organizing—directly from the soil. This green infrastructure also plays a vital role in climate resilience. Stormwater management, urban heat reduction, and pollinator support systems are all embedded into the design. Comer stands as a neighborhood-scale model of ecological urbanism. In a city like Chicago—where environmental injustice runs deep—planting is a political act.

Image: hoerrschaut



Image: hoerrschaut



Image: hoerrschaut



An Ecosystem, Not a Building.

**Youth does not need hope
it needs space.**

The Landscape of Structural Change

A New Civic Imagination: The Comer Youth Center

While European cities like Prato convert historical hospitals into civic parks, America's urban legacy often lacks such romantic architectural artifacts. Instead, cities like Chicago are dotted with infrastructural scars—redlining maps, expressways that cut through communities, shuttered schools, and decaying public housing. Comer Youth Center emerges within this context not as a nostalgic project but as a speculative one. It proposes new civic imaginaries. What if schools were sanctuaries?

What if youth centers were cultural institutions? What if a rooftop garden was more powerful than a monument? The Center's strength lies in its refusal to replicate traditional models of either public education or architecture. In a city where many civic structures operate like fortresses, Comer opens itself up—visually, functionally, and philosophically. Over the years, the Comer Youth Center has received significant recognition—not just for its architecture, but for its measurable social impact.

College admission rates among students at the adjacent College Prep have risen. Youth violence in the immediate vicinity has decreased. Thousands of young people have accessed job training, health care, and creative mentorships within its walls. Yet, Comer does not measure success in statistics alone. Its true achievement is cultural. It has shifted the narrative of what is possible on the South Side—not through temporary programs, but through permanent infrastructure.

photo:archdaily.com



Opinion

The Comer Youth Center is not only integrated into the physical fabric of Chicago but also into its social structure. This is not simply a building; it is a space where young people, ideas, food, production, and a sense of trust come together. Comer does not sell hope for the future. It creates space for it. It offers young people a foundation where they can genuinely exist, think, and grow. In a time shaped by inequality, climate crisis, and social disconnection, Comer introduces a new language for what architecture can become. It is a language where form is defined not only by aesthetics but also by care, history, and community and perhaps the real questions are these. Can design be modest yet just? Can infrastructure become a visible form of love? This building answers clearly. Yes, it can. These questions are not theoretical. The model offered by Comer stands as a physical response to the need for care, trust, and belonging, especially in cities like those across the United States where deep social divides persist. Every part of the building is shaped not only by form but also by history, collective memory, and a shared intent to build together.

As I have mentioned in my recent articles, architectural discourse often ignores neighborhoods like Greater Grand Crossing. Yet this is precisely where the most essential design work happens. Comer is not a legacy built on the past. It is a vision of the future built from the ground up. And that too is a legacy worth preserving.

DİDAR SUDE BİÇAK



COMER YOUTH CENTER

photo: archdaily.com

“No society can develop by
ignoring the hopes of its
youngest members.”

-Marian Wright Edelman

MORE THAN A BUILDING

A structure for justice, growth, and care.

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From Highway to Waterway

THE INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN DESIGN

α

INTRODUCTION



REDISCOVERING A BURIED WATERWAY

γ

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY: INFRASTRUCTURE AS LANDSCAPE

β

PHASED INTERVENTIONS AND DESIGN COMPONENTS

From City Hall to Dongdaemun

From Dongdaemun to Sindapcheolgyo

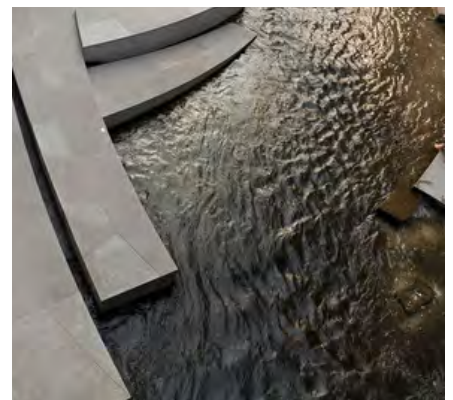
From Sindapcheolgyo to Jungnangcheon Confluence

LAYERING OF HISTORY AND CULTURE

THE CANAL AS CIVIC NARRATIVE

δ

RESPONDING TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES



LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE



In the early 2000s, South Korea's capital embarked on one of the most ambitious urban renewal projects of the 21st century. The Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project—also known as the Chongae Canal Restoration Project—was completed in 2005, reintroducing a long-buried stream into the densely built fabric of downtown Seoul. Conceived as both an ecological intervention and a cultural reawakening, the project quickly gained international attention as a model for post-industrial urban revitalization. For *Topos*, a journal committed to the intersection of landscape, ecology, and urbanism, Cheonggyecheon exemplifies how infrastructure can be redefined as both environmental system and public space in the face of mounting ecological challenges.

Rediscovering a Buried Waterway

The Cheonggyecheon stream, once central to the everyday life and commerce of Joseon-era Seoul, had long been neglected and buried under layers of concrete and infrastructure. During the 1950s and 60s, amid rapid postwar industrialization and population growth, the stream was paved over, and an elevated expressway was constructed above it. By the late 1990s, the overpass—plagued by structural degradation and urban blight—had come to symbolize the obsolescence of mid-century automobile-centric planning. The city was ripe for a new urban vision.

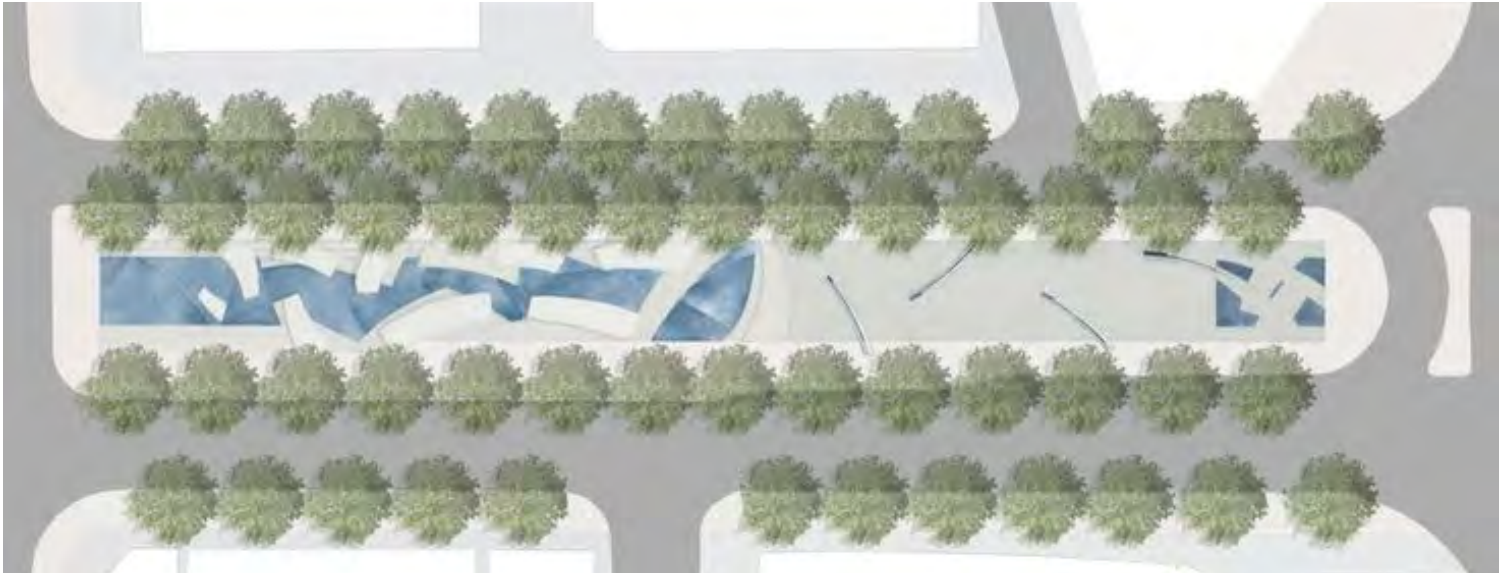
In 2003, then-Mayor Lee Myung-bak launched the Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project with a bold mandate: dismantle the expressway, excavate the stream, and create a continuous 5.8-kilometer linear park through the urban core. The project was led by the Seoul Metropolitan Government with design and engineering input from the Seoul Development Institute, Dongsimwon Architects, Yooshin Engineering, and landscape architecture firm SeoAhn Total Landscape, among others. With a budget of approximately \$281 million USD, the restoration was fast-tracked and completed in just over two years.



Design Philosophy: Infrastructure as Landscape

The guiding principle of the project was ecological urbanism—an approach that prioritizes the interdependence of ecological processes and urban form. Unlike conventional infrastructure projects that isolate natural systems into engineered conduits, Cheonggyecheon sought to reintegrate water into the city’s social and ecological metabolism. The design team framed the project as a form of “soft infrastructure”: a hybrid landscape that blends flood management, biodiversity, public space, and cultural memory. Rather than attempt a literal restoration of the historical stream, the project envisioned a reconstructed ecology that functioned as a civic spine. Cheonggyecheon became an “urban watershed,” designed not only to transport water but to filter pollutants, cool surrounding microclimates, attract biodiversity, and provide a walkable green corridor through the heart of Seoul.







Phased Interventions and Design Components

The restored stream corridor is organized into three distinct sections, each responding to different urban conditions and design goals:

From City Hall to Dongdaemun

This segment emphasizes social access and historical interpretation. Promenades run parallel to the stream, framed by stepped terraces, bridges, and shaded seating areas. Interpretive signage and embedded art installations recount the history of the site, from its premodern function as a lifeline of the city to its burial during the industrial era. Nighttime lighting and seasonal festivals add temporal richness to the landscape.

From Dongdaemun to Sindapcheolgyo

Here, the stream widens, and the design shifts toward ecological restoration. Reconstructed riparian habitats incorporate gravel beds, emergent vegetation, and subaquatic habitats for fish and invertebrates. The stream becomes a functioning biotope, drawing migratory birds and native species back into the urban core.

From Sindapcheolgyo to Jungnangcheon Confluence

The third segment approaches a more naturalistic form, acting as a transition between the formal city and the Jungnangcheon tributary. Vegetated floodplains and planted wetlands increase biodiversity and offer critical stormwater buffering. This segment is the most experimental in its ecological ambition, prioritizing resilience and habitat continuity over formal aesthetics.

Across all three sections, a range of green infrastructure strategies were employed: Engineered hydrology: Because the original stream's natural headwaters had been disrupted by urban development, water is now pumped from the Han River and filtered via a closed-loop system. While this has raised questions about energy intensity, it ensures year-round flow and quality.

Permeable paving and bioswales reduce runoff and support infiltration.

Flood terraces accommodate seasonal monsoon surges while maintaining pedestrian access.

Habitat patches and constructed wetlands support native flora and fauna.

Public amenities such as benches, performance spaces, and art installations encourage interaction and extended use.

Layering of History and Culture

A defining feature of Cheonggyecheon is its narrative depth. The canal is not just a hydrological system; it is a cultural corridor that weaves together past and present. During excavation, remnants of stone bridges and market artifacts were uncovered and incorporated into the design. Some were restored in situ; others were reinterpreted through sculptural or architectural elements. The canal tells a palimpsest of stories—of Joseon dynasty waterworks, colonial displacement, postwar reconstruction, and neoliberal modernization. In doing so, the canal bridges memory and imagination, using the language of landscape to pose essential questions: What does it mean to unearth the past? What futures might we build on these reclaimed grounds? Temporal rhythms are integral to the experience of the site. The stream changes character throughout the day and across seasons. It hosts cherry blossom festivals in spring, becomes a lantern-lit riverwalk in autumn, and acts as a refuge during Seoul's hot summers. The design accommodates this temporal variability, creating a landscape that feels alive and adaptable rather than fixed or static.

The Canal as Civic Narrative

The core narrative of the Cheonggyecheon project is one of transformation. It represents a pivot from an industrial logic of concealment and control to an ecological logic of openness and flow. It repositions water from a hidden utility to a protagonist in the urban story. This is also a political narrative. The project was championed as a symbol of Seoul's commitment to sustainability and innovation. Mayor Lee framed it as a flagship for South Korea's emerging "green growth" strategy, aligning environmental restoration with economic development. While the project faced criticism for accelerating gentrification and for the displacement of informal vendors and low-income communities, it undeniably shifted public expectations for what urban space could be. The success of the project—in terms of increased biodiversity, higher property values, and international acclaim—ignited similar efforts across Asia and beyond. Cities from Singapore to Los Angeles have cited Cheonggyecheon as inspiration for daylighting buried streams and rethinking infrastructure as ecological amenity.



Responding to Environmental Challenges

Cheonggyecheon anticipates many of the key concerns facing cities today:

Climate Resilience: The stream moderates local temperatures, particularly in summer months, by reducing the urban heat island effect. Its floodplains and terraces provide adaptive capacity in the face of increasingly erratic rainfall.

Green-Blue Infrastructure: By integrating water management with public space and habitat restoration, the project demonstrates how multifunctional landscapes can replace single-use infrastructure.

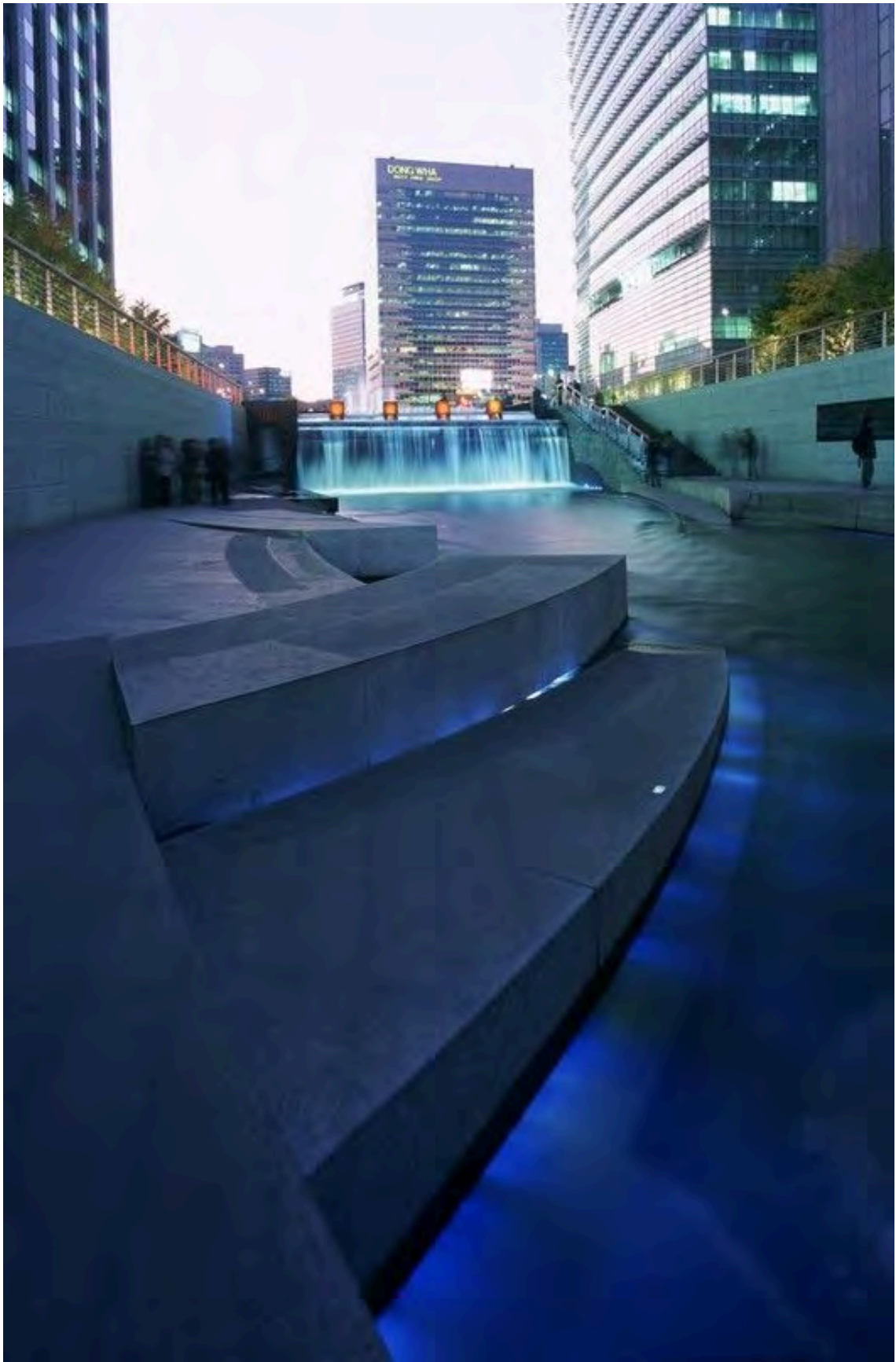
Biodiversity: Rewilding efforts have led to the return of over 50 species of birds, insects, and aquatic organisms, indicating a renewed ecological network within the city.

Social Sustainability: By prioritizing pedestrian mobility, cultural expression, and inclusive design, Cheonggyecheon invites a more democratic use of space. Despite early displacement concerns, it has become a venue for protests, festivals, and everyday social life.

Participatory Urbanism: The project also galvanized civic interest in the urban environment. Community forums, exhibitions, and student-led initiatives emerged in its wake, signaling a shift in how Seoulites view and shape their city.

Lessons for the Future

Cheonggyecheon is not without its complexities. The project's reliance on mechanical water circulation and its impact on informal economies raise important questions about environmental justice and systemic sustainability. Yet, as a symbolic and functional landscape, it achieves something rare: it reconfigures the relationship between people, nature, and infrastructure in a dense urban context. The Chongae Canal Restoration Project offers not a replicable formula, but a provocation. It invites us to rethink what lies buried beneath our cities—literally and metaphorically—and what might be gained by unearthing it. In restoring a forgotten stream, Seoul did more than rehabilitate a waterway: it created a landscape of reconciliation, one that speaks to memory, ecology, and hope. Cheonggyecheon offers one powerful answer as climate pressures intensify and urban populations swell, the question facing cities is not whether to restore nature, but how: restore with intention, design with humility, and build with the rhythms of water, not against them.



Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the editorial team at Topos Magazine for providing a platform to explore and share the significance of the Chonggyecheon Restoration Project. Special thanks to the urban planners, landscape architects, and environmental experts whose documented insights and critical analyses enriched this work. I am also grateful for the publicly available resources and visual archives that allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the project's ecological and cultural impact. Lastly, my appreciation goes to the readers, whose continued interest in sustainable urban transformation inspires meaningful discourse on the future of our cities.



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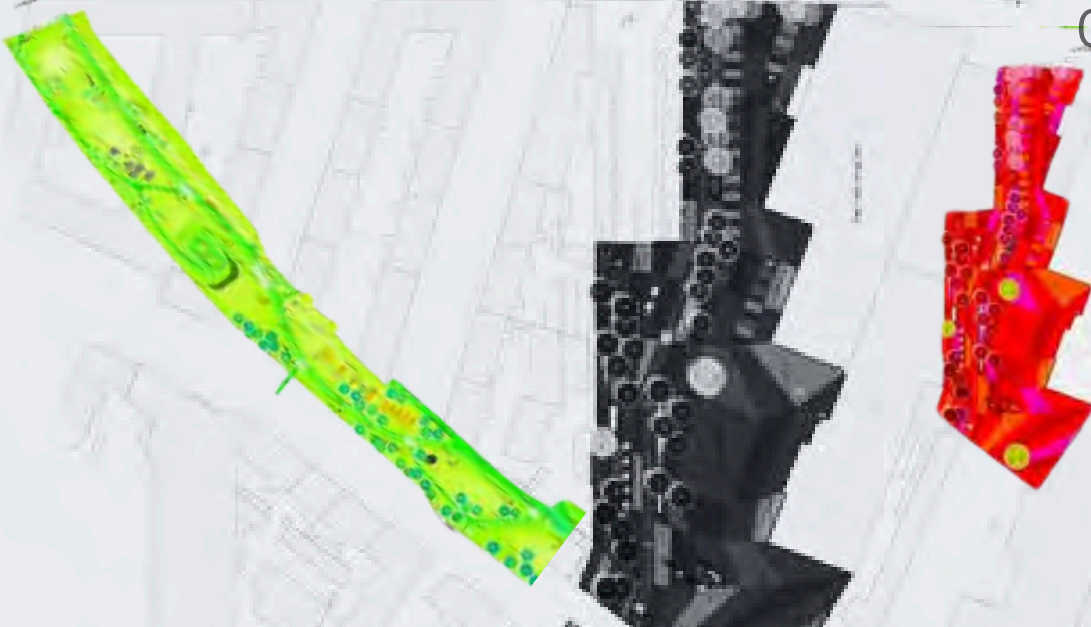
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SUPERKILEN PARK : as a urban living room



a look to the park and neighborhood

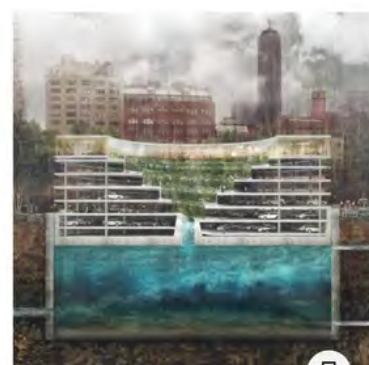
Information about the Park

Superkilen Urban Park , the winner of Aga Khan Architecture Reward in 2016, American Institute of Architects Urban Planning National Reward in 2013 and Red Dot Design Award in 2013 opened in June 2012 in Copenhagen , Denmark. The name “kilen” comes from the “kama” shape. It refers to an amazing green space and the tangible shape. The area is 27.000 square meter and almost three and a half kilometers from the city center of Copenhagen. The budget of the project is eleven million American Dollars. The project is acknowledged as a pioneer of democratization of the urban space.



CITIES

Hamburg first port to
provide shore power



PROJECTS

STOP THE FLOOD – Join us!

S. The Background of the Park and Designers

This area is not only a park, also a public area where people connects with different origins, a part of urban improvement plan. The park is located in the center of Nørrebro, where Denmark's most ethnically diverse and socially disadvantaged communities and individuals struggle with criminals. Also the neighborhood is divided with a way from the rest of the city. At the same time in 2006 there was a controversial cartoon about Muslim prophet Muhammed and it caused problems there. The architects who are from Copenhagen designed a mosque and after that they are exposed to revolt and violence and they decided to create public spaces which can provide integration. The companies . BIG Architects (2002, Copenhagen), Topotek 1 (1996, Berlin) and Superflex (1993, Copenhagen) designers aimed to promote tolerance and unity in the city. They also tried to transform the neighborhood as a high quality and inspirational situation. And the association Realdania (2000, Denmark) contributed. This four have common purposes like inclusivity for all people and ways, cooperation with other disciplines like art, landscape and architecture. They are always environmentally friendly and interaction with local people support the designs. With creativity and critical approaches they describe the function.

The government showed an approach to positive and suitable for the country politics. They tried to balance the negative comments. Also they always promote the social interaction. Probably this was the best reaction that they can do without separated the people.

The Design Phases and Community

The designers wanted object suggestions to enhance the urban space and the residents, who include more than 60 nations contributed for the design and provide the park as a exhibition. This is a multicultural event which do not make anyone outsider. Because everyone is outsider. Gyldholm from Bjarke Ingels Group said "With Superkilen, we needed to find a way to tap into the diversity of the local population." The designers think that this project is unending, an artwork which will continue. The research process was comprehensive.

Also this contribution supported sense of belonging. Both the individuals and the furniture represent people from diverse nations coexisting in harmony. For instance; swings from Iran, benches from Brasil and Turkey, fountain from Morocco, slides from Chernobyl, plants from Japan. Also the park has neon signs which make advertisement anything. Each element has a iron-plate which people can read where the element from, the functions in the elements language and Danish. This plates represent diversity and reality of local neighborhood.

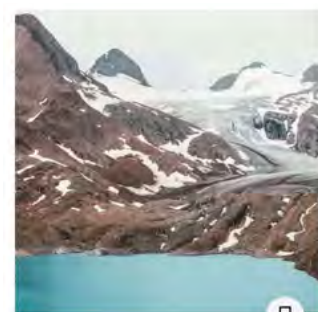


site plan



EVENTS

Architecture in the North



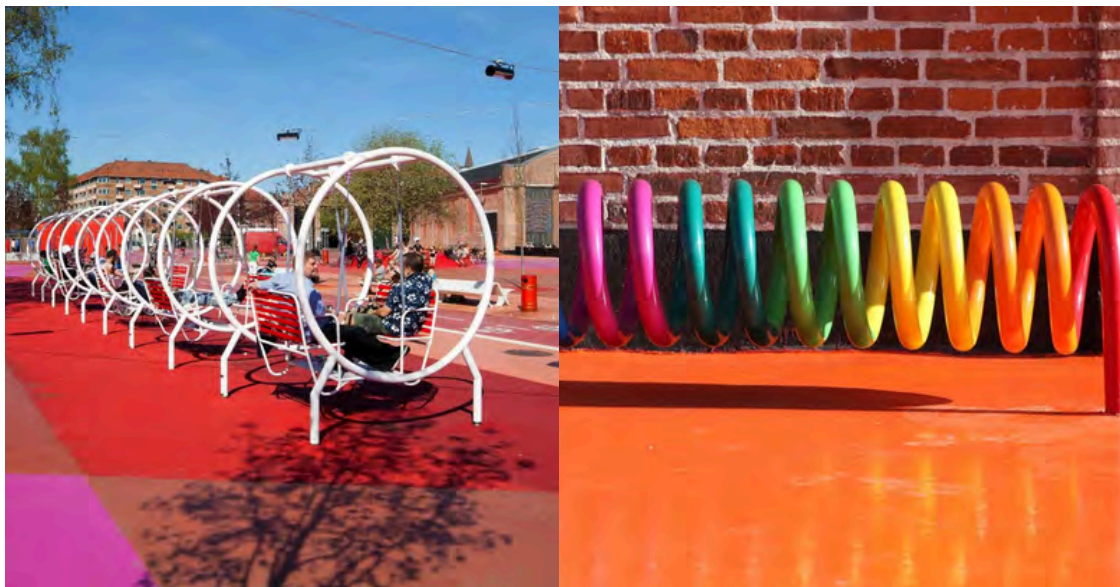
CITIES

The 2025 UN World Water Report: The Mountain Water Crisis

The Park

The park consists of almost one kilometers and three main sections. The Red Square, The Black Market and The Green Park. Different surfaces and colors are for creating a dynamic space for daily objects and this contributes diversity.

The red rubber area as known as red square is designed for cultural and sportive activities. This is the area which people can communicate each other by physical activities such as individual and group sports. The area which has a view of Nørrebrogade can be seen sunset with raised areas. The soil is came from Palestine by to woman who are from Copenhagen. With the application which shows the processes of design and construction, it can be seen how this strong women collect the soil and rocks with their hands. Excluding the existing trees there are only red trees. In this part Acer platanoies as known as maple tree is chosen by designers for the harmony of colors. Also in this area every weekend sets up on open market. During the walk huge and famous Spanish iron bull can be seen. That Osborne Bull was a special request of local couple who are from Denmark. With the applications direction map small international objects can be seen. The objects are either bought or produced as the same size. There is trash bin from Blackpool , sewages from Switzerland and shelves from all around Europe. The wide rubber area which is multifunctional provides plays , markets and parade. For instance for creating a three dimensional experience , the color of ground is continued to the city. At the same time , elements which brought from different countries come to the forefront. For example ; climbing wall from India and boxing ring from Tayland. Picnic tables are from Armenia , ping-pong tables are from Spain.



The second section of the park as known as Mimers Plads is mainly black. This is the center of Superkilen and most intense area in the park. As distinct from the square pattern in red area , all the white lines on the Mimers Plads are from north to south are straight. However the lines curve when there is a furniture. The actual aim is emphasise the element , not background. On weekdays there are permanent banks from Turkey , sitting areas assume the rest areas and provide chess playing.

At the end of the park the green area can be seen by people as known as The Green Park. On the top of the area, there is a huge Donut and a neon sign which is fourteen meters high. To Midgaardsgade the elevation differences were a problem. They solved this problem and the bicycle traffic moved to east and the ramp is built where across the Hotherplads. There is also a peak in the north, there is a hill facing south that overlooks the square and its activity. Most of the elements came from Turkey, United States, Qatar, Bulgaria. It provides some rest for people in the chaos of life. Because of that for young people, who come from Mjolnerpark and the school next to Mjolnerpark hockey and basketball field are moved to Green Park section like other sport fields. The area is mostly for children, young people and families. For picnic, sunbathing and chilling in the garden and collective sports. Bauman states that “Sport is one of the few institutions in society, where people can still agree on the rules. No matter where you’re from, what you believe in and which language you speak, you can always play football together.” (n.d.). The various plants which are chosen very detailed, spreaded to all the neighborhood as a composition like small island shapes. The present plants are increased due to desire of to be more in touch with nature. The rise of greens was a special wish of the local people.

Park, used in as a urban living room appeals to people of all ages from babies to old citizens. Also tourists like this park due to its story and features. According to estimates over one million people visit the park each year. 80% of the visitors are locals



The Application

The application has 108 different explanation for 108 different objects. With a interactive map, this experience transforms into a digital guide.

The Traffic Problem is controlled

Not only the park also the positive effects for traffic is significant for either city or neighborhood. For example for making a better and useful for infrastructure the bicycle ways and as the public claimed, the connection way to Mimersgade for bus are also regulated and designed new ways. This is the part of the infrastructure. There is a wide middle lane and ramp for reducing the speed. This changes helped to control the cars, transportation and people.

The government showed an approach to positive and suitable for the country politics. They tried to balance the negative comments. Also they always promote the social interaction. Probably this was the best reaction that they can do without separated the people.



This park not only a park , also it represent ideas and reality. The diversity of people and objects is different both individuals and tourists. Maybe this park can be interessting for tourists who came to visit the country or leaves abroad. During the visits most of tourists can feel well after seeing something about their culture. Also the combination of different nations and different objects establish a mutual relation between that nations even if their elements aren't there can support the relation. This multicultural park transforms a park to a pyscial space which increases and corroborate accessibility and comprehensiveness of city planning. The critiques show that the negative ones like graffities and the color chaos changed after the park opened and starting to represent the nations and peace. Also problems such as cleaning and objects which are damaged solved in a little while. Hopefully this special area is going to continue to represent the nation diversity and justice.



urban plaza

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LEVINSON
PLAZA

THE HEALER OF SURFACES

Through plazas, gardens, and courtyards, Mikyoung Kim creates spaces where trauma is softened and the urban ground begins to breathe.



Mikyoung Kim And Design Philosophy

Mikyoung Kim, the designer behind Levinson Plaza and many other remarkable projects, is a Korean-American landscape architect, artist, and academic. Her work brings together art, ecology, and social integration to create sensory and healing urban landscapes. To describe her design philosophy broadly, one could say that it is deeply rooted in sensory experience. As a master, Kim combines things like microclimate, water, light, and materiality to make places that are both touchable and emotionally powerful. Her projects often focus on socially rich environments, including hospitals, public spaces, and school courtyards, where people of diverse ages gather and interact. Rather than idealizing nature, Kim merges natural systems with modern urban design, including the principles of biophilic design. Levinson Plaza stands as a clear example of how a landscape architect's influence can be detailed yet profoundly transformative.



THE URBAN PLAZA

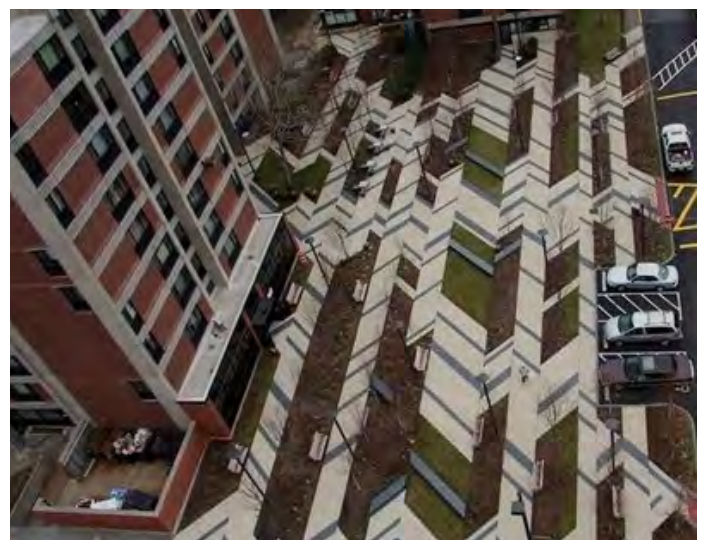
Levinson Plaza Review

During the redesign process by Mikyoung Kim, more inclusive and inaccessible structures were removed to create a more inclusive and user-friendly design. The new design included water features, plants, and flexible spaces designed to bring users of different age groups together and to include all ages in the design. As a result, a previously monotonous and underutilized area was transformed into an aesthetically engaging and socially functional public space that fosters community interaction.

Located in Boston's Mission Hill neighborhood, Levinson Plaza holds a distinctive position not only geographically, but socially and emotionally. Completed in 2008 by Mikyoung Kim Design, this public plaza marks the first phase of a broader landscape master plan developed for the 14 acre Mission Park residential campus.

The project was commissioned by the Roxbury Tenants of Harvard, a community-led organization founded in the 1960s in response to institutional expansion within the Longwood Medical Area. Today, Mission Park features 147 townhouses, three mid-rise residential blocks, and one high-rise apartment tower, along with shared amenities including a library, daycare center, gym, and swimming pool.

Before its redesign, the plaza functioned as a disconnected, elevated void—more of a physical barrier than a gathering place. Through Kim's touch, it was redesigned as a ground-level, open, and attractive public space. The new design introduces water features, vegetation, and spatial cues that support all ages and multicultural use. In doing so, the space has improved from its useless state into a vibrant platform for social exchange.





At its core, Levinson Plaza is not about architectural spectacle or monumental gestures, it is about the landscape's ability to provide comfort, rhythm, and care. The black-and-white zigzag paving directs movement while lending the space a bold visual identity. A quiet water feature reflects the sky and light, while trees offer seasonal shading. The choice of materials is modest yet intentional, designed to respond to touch, sound, and climate.

This project encapsulates a distilled version of Mikyoung Kim's design values: to create spaces that listen to bodies, to weather, and to memory. Levinson Plaza does not simply offer a path to walk through, it encourages a conscious and embodied experience of place.



A QUIET GROUND FOR REPAIR

The core idea of Levinson Plaza

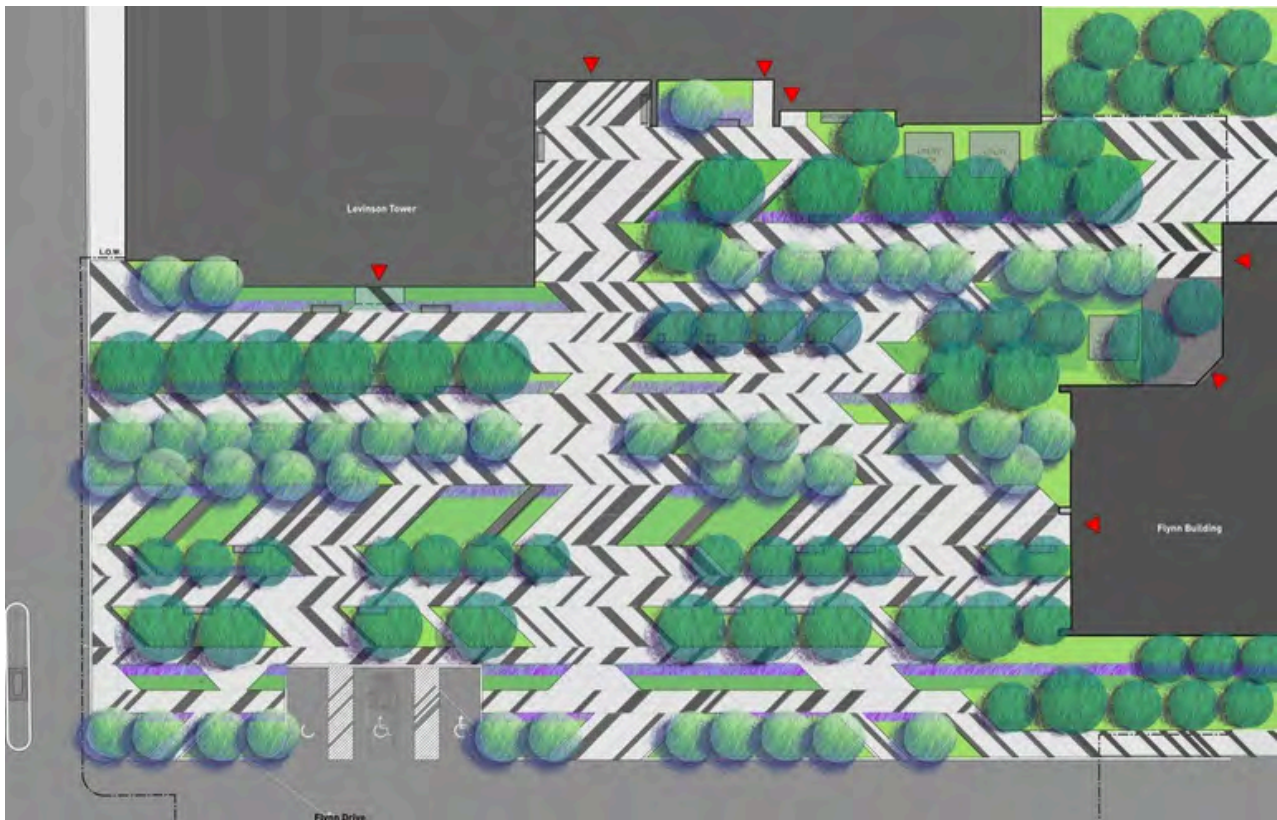
How Levinson Plaza heals through availability, not performance
At the heart of Levinson Plaza lies a undefended simple suggestion: landscape can heal. In a context shaped by institutional growth, urban fragmentation, and historical disconnection, the new plaza does not aim to dazzle or instruct, it offers a space of gentle restoration.

There are no monumental gestures here. Instead, there is careful grading, tactile materiality, rhythmic paving, and spatial openness. These are not design moves for display, but for dignity.

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Not all healing
requires greenery
sometimes,
geometry and
rhythm are enough.

Where other urban spaces might demand activity or spectacle, Levinson Plaza invites stillness, awareness, and co-presence. It becomes a place not to perform, but simply to be alone, together, or in quiet transition.

In this restrained composition, we find a landscape ethic not of noise, but of attentiveness. And in today's cities so often overwhelmed by speed and stimulus such landscapes are not marginal, but urgently necessary.



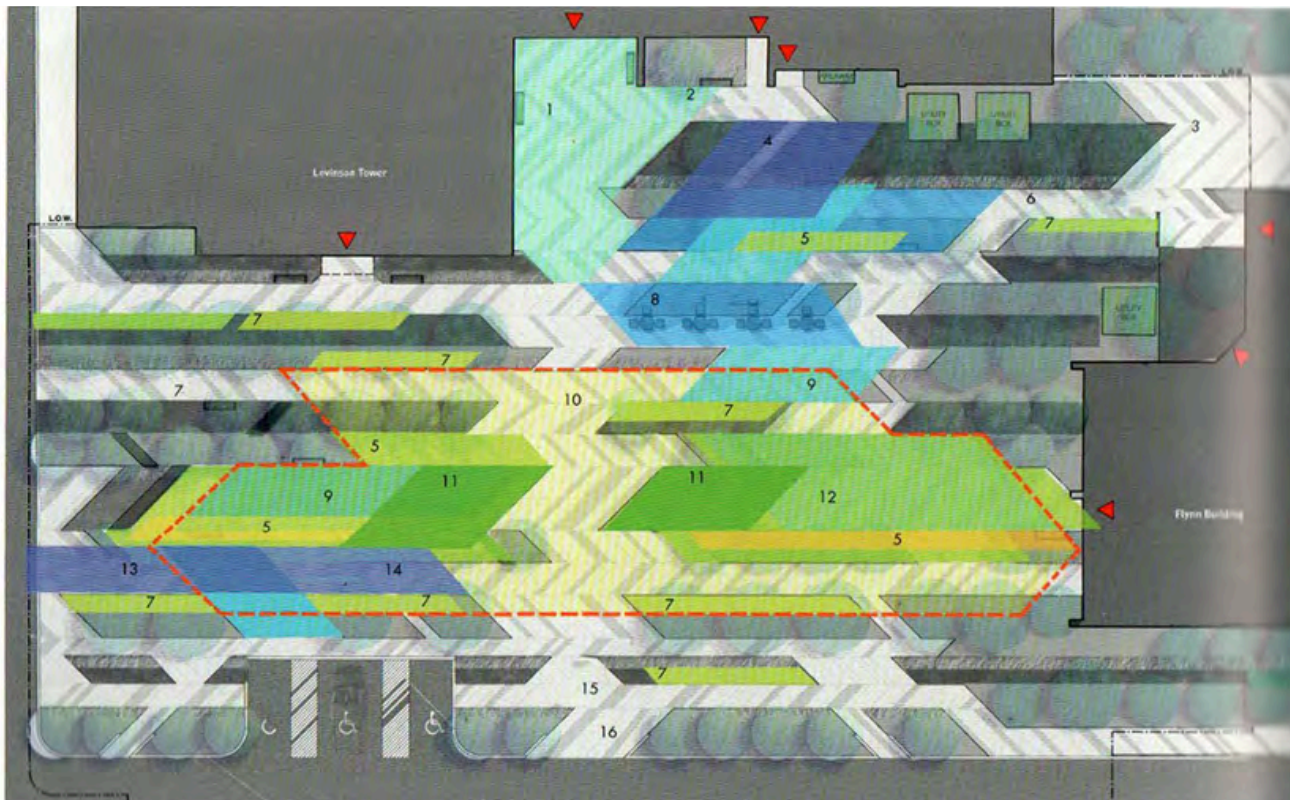
LEVINSON PLAZA PLAN

The Silent Logic of Space

Levinson Plaza is in the middle of Mission Park, a 14 acre HUD (Housing and Urban complex) housing complex in the Mission Hill area of Boston. Completed in 2008 by Mikyoung Kim Design, the project aims to create a multifunctional and accessible public space that reflects the social and cultural diversity of the area.

Design creates the area as a leveled platform for everyone's use from a high and separated state, which currently lets people move freely. Additionally, the zigzag pattern adds a fine sense of harmony while organizing circulation. A quiet water feature and carefully placed trees provide resting and gathering points for users of all ages.

The design is based on New England's garden traditions and uses strong materials and a limited range of plants. This approach ensures both aesthetic cohesion and low-maintenance resilience over time.

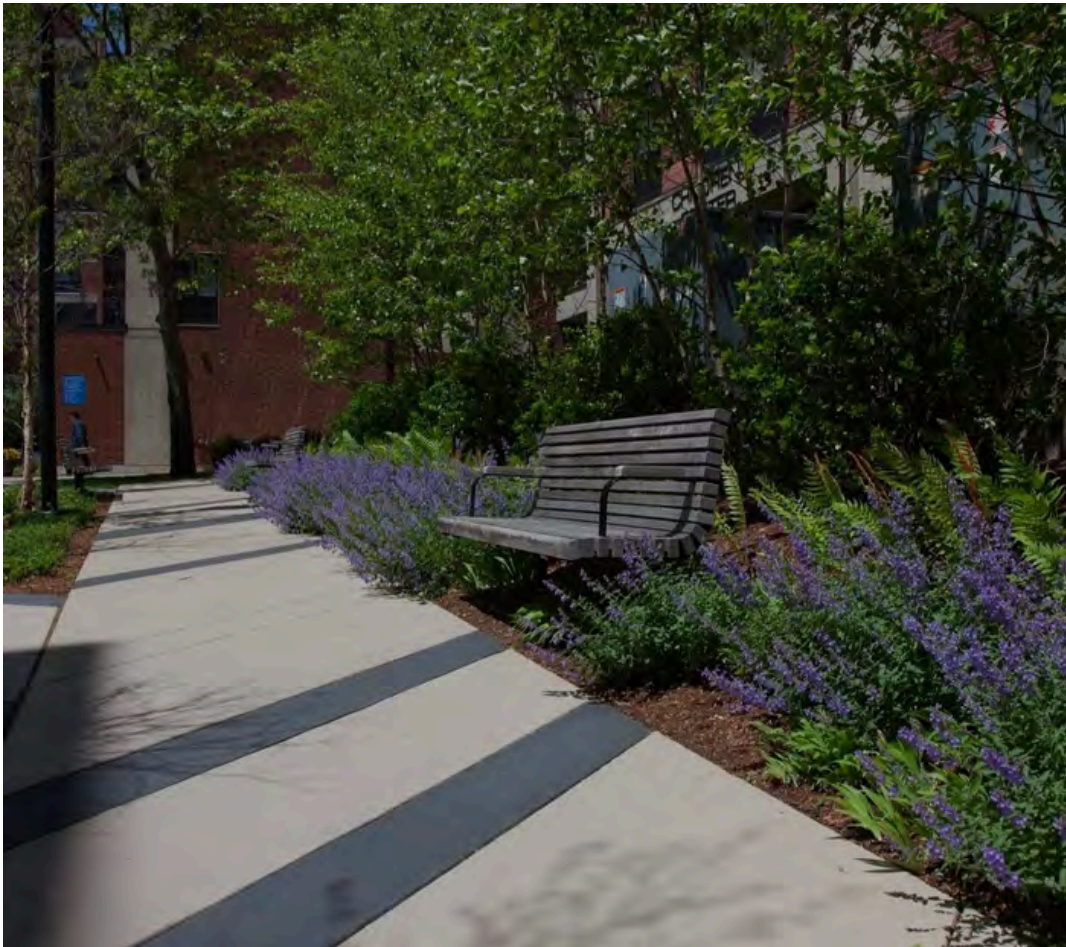


PROGRAM DIAGRAM

1. Main entry plaza
2. Nursery school residential
3. Residential lownhouses
4. Childrens play
5. Reading area
6. Community center
7. Seating area
8. Chess area
9. Tai chi area
10. Gathering area for larger events
11. Sunbathing area
12. Community center plaza
13. Schoolbus drop off
14. Childrens pick up area
15. Main entry path
16. Public transportation

DESIGN INGREDIENTS AND TACTICS

For Surface, Pattern, and
Participation



One of the most defining features of Levinson Plaza is its bold black-and-white zigzag paving. More than just a visual element, it gently guides movement through the space and establishes a sense of rhythm that resonates across generations.

Water element: A shallow reflective pool stays on the site, offering visual calmness and a sensory pause in an otherwise dense urban setting. **Vegetation:** Trees are rare but strategically placed to provide seasonal shade and define microzones within the open space.

Material palette: Durable, tactile, and low-maintenance surfaces respond to climatic conditions while encouraging sensory engagement (footfall sound, warmth, coolness). **Topographic adjustment:** The original elevated platform was removed, and a more accessible, level surface was introduced removing physical and symbolic barriers.



URBAN PLAZA

Together, these elements form a plaza that feels coherent yet open-ended, designed for multiple interpretations and user-led appropriation

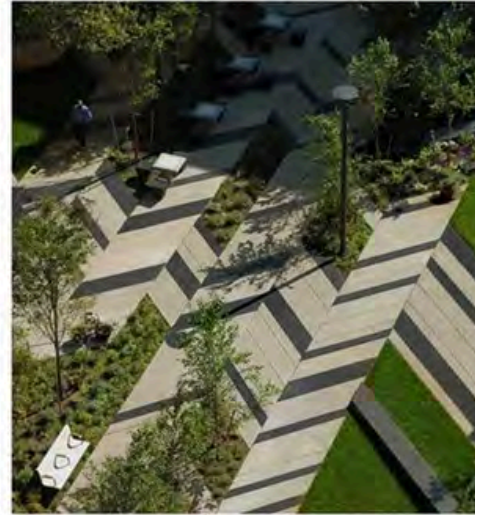


PATTERN TO INVITE

Material strategy as choreography in Levinson Plaza

Levinson Plaza is not overloaded with features it is built with intention, precision, and restraint. The landscape rests on a handful of key components: a zigzag paving pattern, a quiet water feature, strategically planted trees, and a fully accessible flat surface. Each element shows quietly, yet distinctly.

2
Material Strategy
Durable, low
maintenance, tactile
materials for all
weather use.



The paving does not just cover the ground; it directs movement and defines a spiritual rhythm. The water element introduces stop and reflection, a counterpoint to urban intensity. The trees, placed with care rather than repetition, frame microzones and provide seasonal shade.

The material palette is humble and tactile, selected not to impress but to enable. There are no static interventions, no staged moments. This is a design that values invitation over instruction one that trusts its users to define their own experience.



PLANTING AS SOFT

How Levinson Plaza uses vegetation to frame, not decorate

At Levinson Plaza, planting is not an afterthought nor a decorative layer; it is a structural element that choreographs experience. Instead of lush, ornamental masses, the vegetation is deliberate, sparse, and strategic.

Tree location defines the geometry of open spaces without enclosing them. Each canopy casts seasonal shadow, helping to line up microclimates while allowing visual permeability. There are no hedges, no hard borders, only soft thresholds that organize without division.



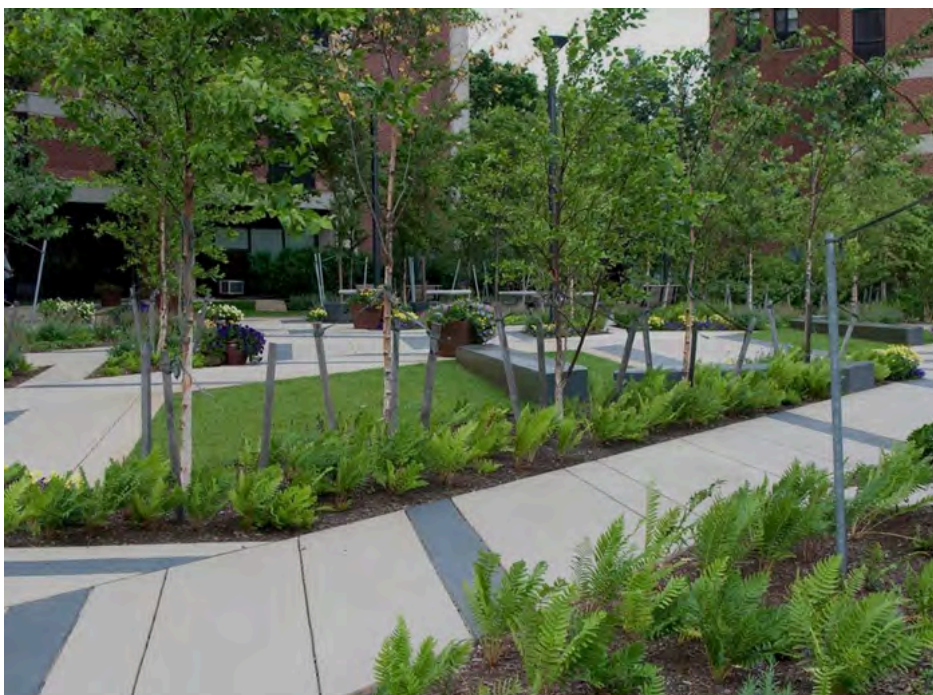
In a plaza where surfaces do most of the talking, planting becomes a quiet companion guiding, cooling, and softening, without overwhelming.

3

Design Ethic
No lush layering.
Just enough to
shape, not to
dominate.

4

Planting Character
Sparse. Intentional.
Low-noise.



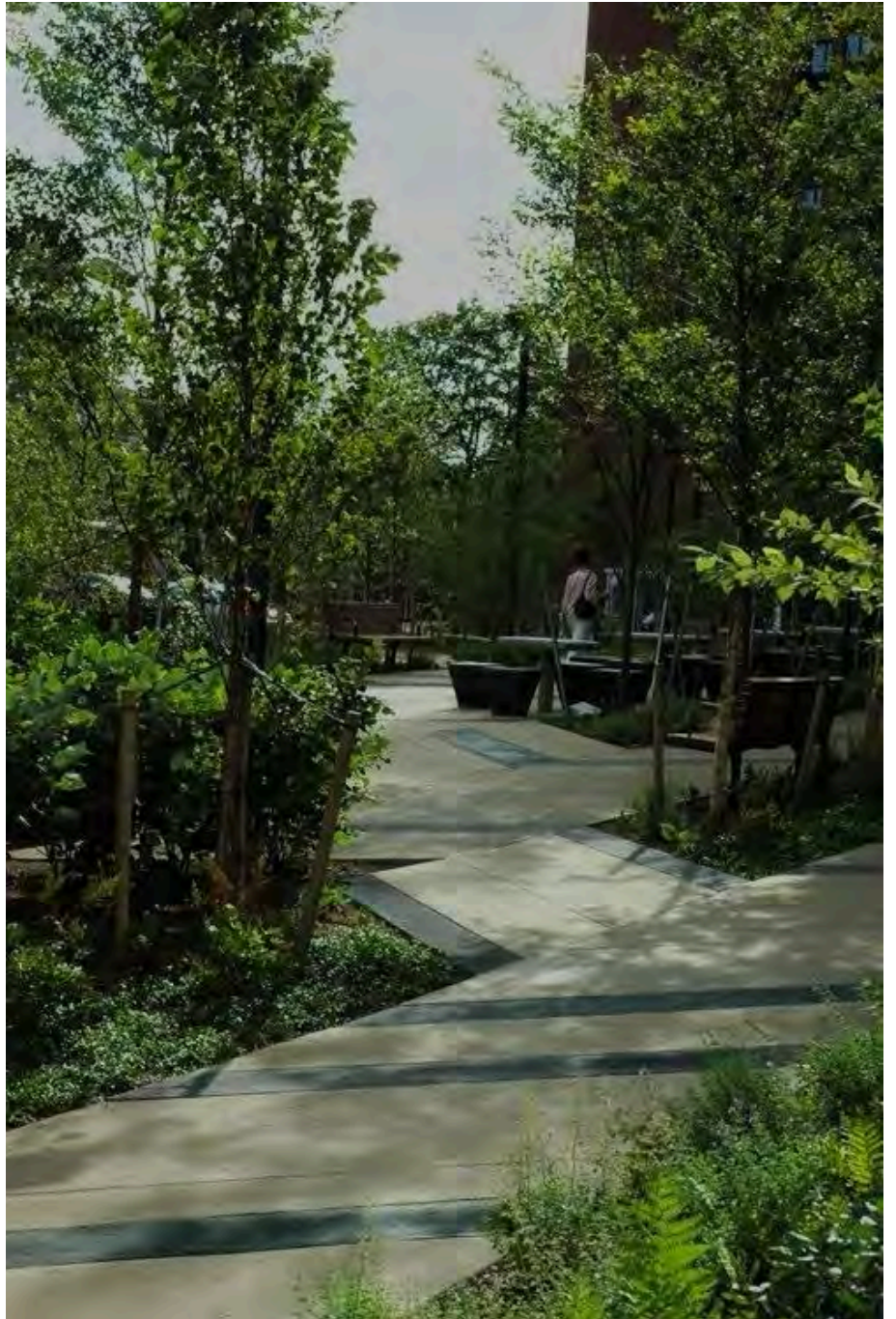
FINAL WORDS ABOUT LEVINSON PLAZA

A Subtle Revolution in Urban Ground

Levinson Plaza does not want attention. It does not do something created to attract attention.. And perhaps, this is precisely why it matters.

In an era where public spaces often lean on spectacle, programmability, and fast impressions, this project offers something quieter but far more enduring. What Mikyoung Kim Design has achieved here is not a plaza that tells people what to do, but a landscape that listens to movement, to weather, to memory.

The success of Levinson Plaza lies not in grand architectural forms but in how the surface is treated: as a narrative, as an invitation, as a foundation for human interaction. The paving sets the pace. The trees carve gentle frames. The water reflects not just sky, but also stillness. Every design decision is modest, yet deeply intentional.



GARDEN DESIGN JOURNAL

JUNE 2025

THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY OF GARDEN DESIGNERS

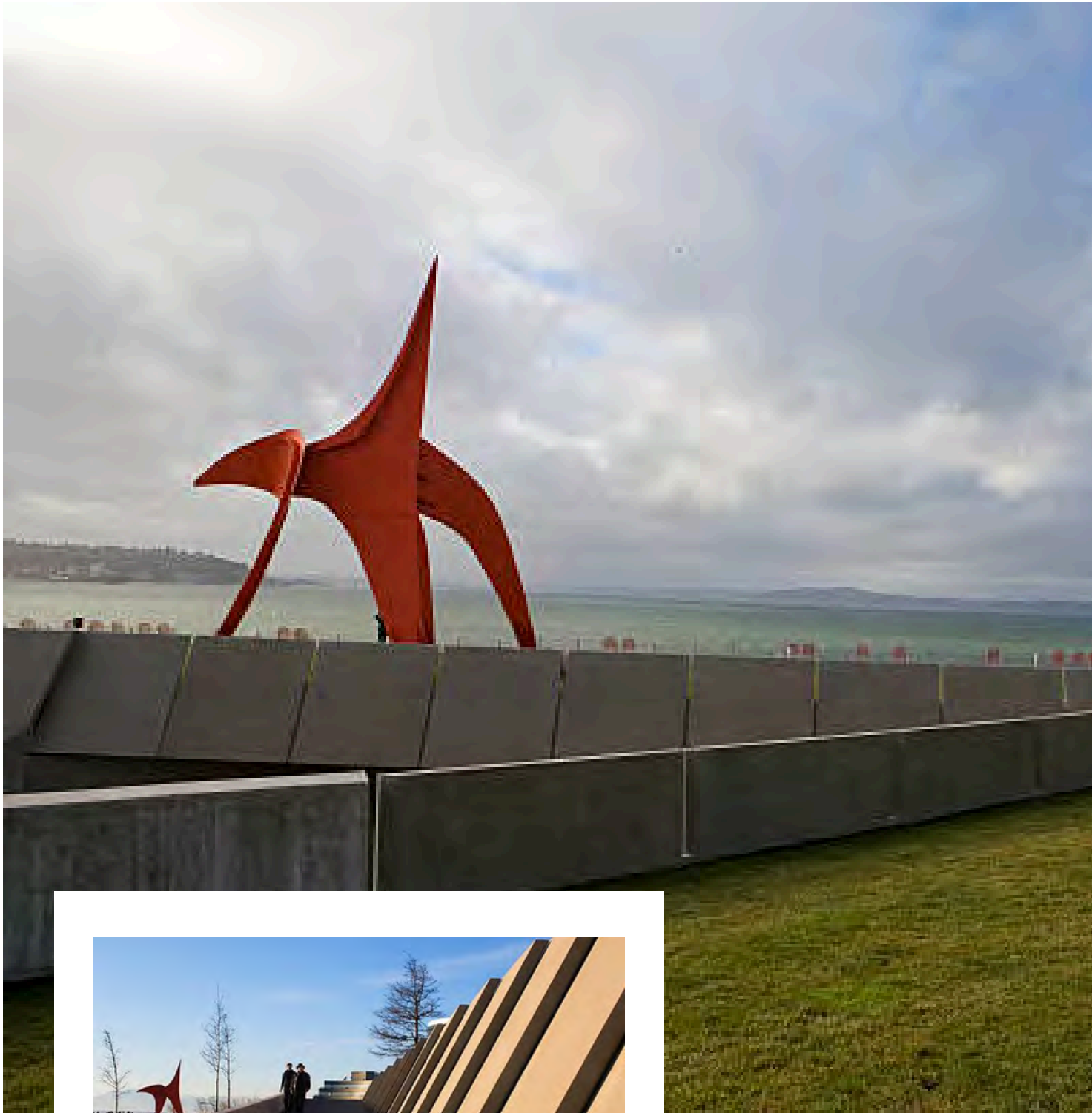
WHERE SCULPTURE MEET THE EARTH

SHAPING EXPERIENCE THROUGH
LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL CONTEXT

A SCULPTURE PARK IN
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Editor: Sare Nur Erenay





OLYMPIC SCULPTU PARK

PHOTOGRAPHS: Weiss/Manfredi



RE On the coastal side of Seattle, the Olympic Sculpture Park was created by converting an old industrial site. It contributes to the city in terms of both cultural and environmental. Park, by renewing the vehicles that were formerly warehouses and factories, is a part of the urban transformation and sustainability of the struggle. Thus, a site which unused by individuals is opened again to public usage. Visitors explore a variety of ecosystems around

the sculptures through the walking roads and curved ramps. On the coastal side of Seattle, the Olympic Sculpture Park was created by converting an old industrial site. It contributes to the city in terms of both cultural and environmental. Park, by renewing the vehicles that were formerly warehouses and factories, is a part of the urban transformation and sustainability of the struggle. Thus, a site which unused by individuals is opened again to public usage. Visitors explore a variety of ecosystems around the sculptures through the walking roads and curved ramps. In this way, art is not visual, changing the physical and emotional experience concurrently. This project, compatible with natural landscape design, has some principles that stand out, such as the usage of plants, sustainability, and barrier-free access. So, it stands out as a modern public design sample all over the world. Olympic Sculpture Park is not just a park or sculpture area but also is sample of contemporary landscape design that re-evaluates an urban void with an industrial past and brings together public, nature, and cultural life.

The design of the park has been thought of by designers both aesthetically and environmentally (socially). This project highlights the fact of how urban areas are converted and how the landscape plays a role in landscape architecture during this period.

Site and Context

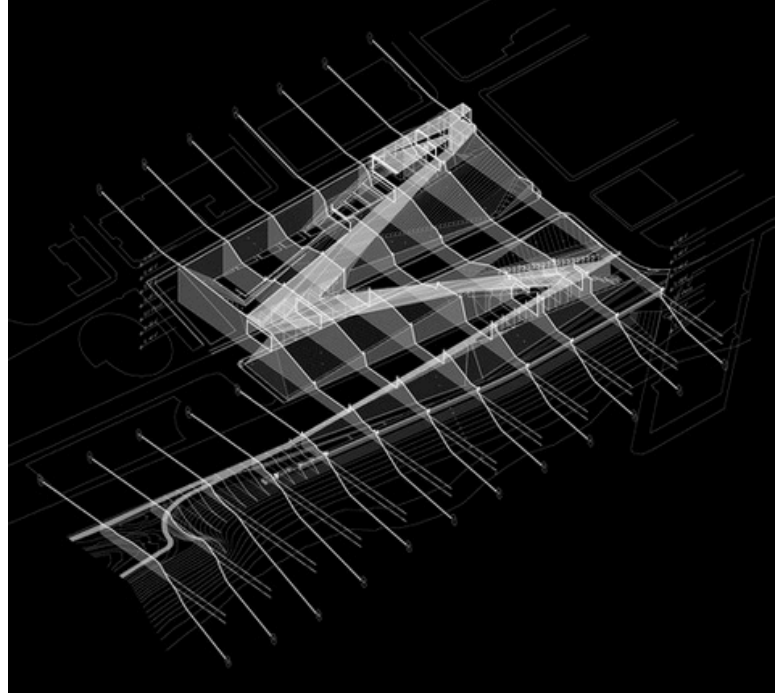
Olympic Sculpture Park is located in Seattle, Washington – on the shore of Elliott Bay, and opened to public usage in 2007. This Park's designer team is Wiss/Manfredi Architecture/Landscape/Urbanism, and its partners are Seattle Art Museum, Magnusson Klemencic Associates (engineering) Charles Anderson Landscape Architecture. Land which is located in the Park had different industrial usage, especially by the oil industry during the 20th century. Until Park was acquired by the Seattle Art Museum in 1999, →

for converted into a public landscape. This project has a variety of purposes. First of all, combining art and nature, the works of art in the park are not integrated into nature, but rather exist together with nature. Secondly, to bring urban waterfronts back into public use, the Park is an example of giving the private area to the public area. It is also an important connection between the city center and urban area accessible by pedestrians from the city center. Additionally, expanding general culture by offering a free, open-air museum to the public. Finally, for sustainability, dirty soil was cleared, re-greened with a variety of plants, and created different ecological habitats (shore, forest). It was financed by funds and donations led by the Seattle Art Museum.



The picture above is of the *Eagle* sculpture, the artist Alexander Calder is a famous artist with kinetic art and mobile sculptures. The *Eagle* work was made in 1971 and placed in the park in 2007. The material of the sculpture is painted steel and forms that give the feeling of flight. It looks out from above the focal point that is in the center of the park and the Seattle skyline, and the Olympic Mountains. Interacting with nature as with the visitor allows for the sculpture to create feelings like flying and freedom.

art.seattleartmuseum.org



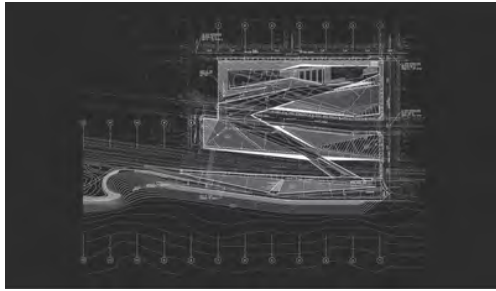
DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

Olympic Sculpture Park aims to integrate art, nature, and people. The Wiss/Manfredi design intertwines the works of art with the natural landscape and reinterprets them in an urban context.

The park is designed with a focus on steady movement and people's spatial experience. Ramps, walkways, and topography provide visitors with a continuous movement experience. Works of art (sculptures, objects) cease to be static works and interact with visitors, not integrated with nature and the park, but also exist with them, like the eagle sculpture.

In addition, the topography is not used to create layers, but is integrated with the land and becomes a part of the park. The park itself functions as a sculpture. The aim of the design is to create an experience area for individuals who visit this park on the Seattle waterfront with different elevations, viewing angles, and spatial depth.

The design creates an accessible area that is integrated with the city by making art and nature open to the public.



Design Components and Spatial Organization

Firstly, the basic structure of the Olympic Sculpture Park is a "continuous route" shaped by ramps, which takes visitors on an experiential journey. In addition, it is a project that starts from the city in the park and goes to the city, intertwined with its surroundings. In the sense of, for the most part, a spatial organization spreading over three different levels has been created.

Secondly, the sculptures in the park were not used solely for decorative purposes but were placed according to the route of the park. While some sculptures are focal points, others appear as surprises on the road. To exemplify, Calder's Eagle, Serra's Wake, Turrell's Skyspace, etc.

In addition, the Park has plant zones representing different

habitats. For instance, coastal scrub, forest plants, and steppe species. The selection of native plants has been prioritized because this is significant for sustainability and ecosystem restoration.

Thus, planting is not only done for green appearance but also the transition between art and nature.

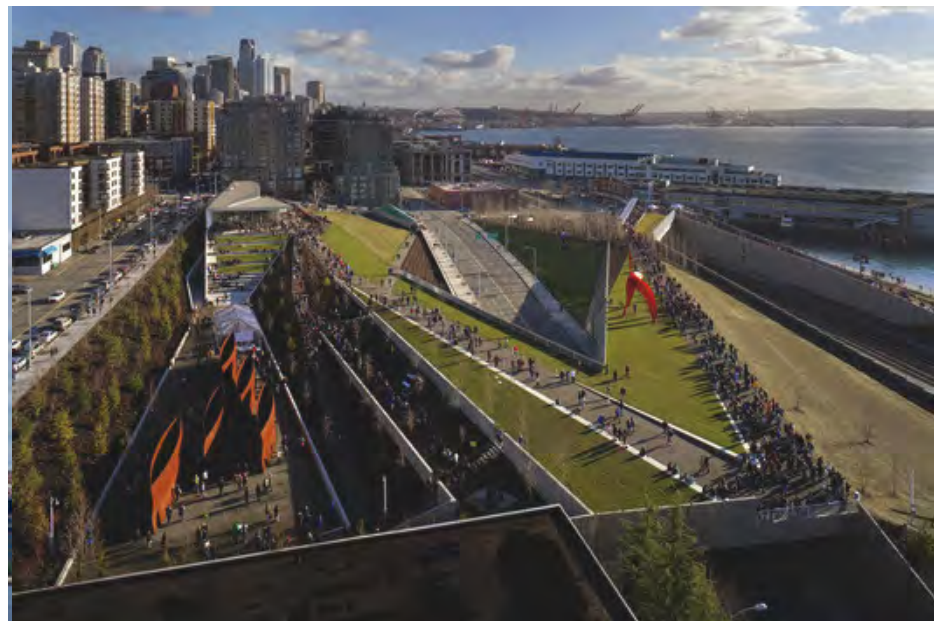
Finally, with the ramps and paths in the park, visitors can experience the park with different routes. In addition, the park was not designed only within its own borders, the surrounding viewpoints (Puget Sound, Olympic Mountains) were also integrated into the design. Seating areas, viewing stops, and slowing points were design considering the

The artist of the work seen in the picture to the side is Louise Bourgeois and it was made in 2005 (it was made and installed before the park opened). The project was carried out with a donation from a philanthropist named Stu Smailes. In the work, stainless steel, aluminum and bronze bells are used and water cascades alternately, one is visible at the hour while the other is less visible. Its meaning is the emotional distance and closeness between the father and the son. The water "membrane" represents dependency: the passage of time, the relationship.

view experiences of visitors.

Environmental Responsiveness: A Model for Contemporary Landscape Architecture

Olympic Sculpture Park is not only a public artistic space, but also an environmental, nature-friendly and sustainable project. Built on a former industrial site, the park reflects how the design actively



engages with ecological challenges and becomes a model of environmental recovery.

The park was built on land that had previously been used as a heavy industry, and warehouses have suffered from soil degradation and pollution. The design team carried out extensive soil clearing work to improve the soil, along with landscaping with plants to preserve the natural balance of the ecosystem.

The park has special filtration and drainage systems to filter rainwater naturally. The design allows rainwater to be purified via plants as well as soil, instead of going directly to Puget Sound. It lessens water pollution and safeguards the normal water supply. Additionally, it ensures the

maintenance of the natural balance within the ecosystem.

The Olympic Sculpture Park was designed as more of a public space that has living spaces intended for birds, insects, and other animals too. It also contains many living habitats. To increase biodiversity along with different living habitats, several landscape elements and plant varieties (primarily local plants) were added to the design. In addition to these, the designers designed not only land life but also marine life, and for these areas, protected areas are created by the seaside so that people do not harm the marine ecosystem. As a result, the design was made by prioritizing the ability of all living creatures and the habitats they live in to continue living as a whole in the park.

The park, which contains many plant species, serves as a significant green corridor that connects nature with the city of Seattle. This green corridor offers visitors an uninterrupted and peaceful nature experience through many different architectural elements, such as pedestrian paths and different experience areas. Despite the urban density in the region, the park provides the public with a break from the busy pace of life with its natural ecosystem. As a result, the park offers many benefits to people among the buildings by establishing interaction between people and nature.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, Olympic Sculpture Park was established in Seattle in a former industrial area, and today it has many functions with its intersections with both art and the environment. This design is an example of how landscape architecture can reflect culture and address ecological challenges.

This innovative design restores ecological function while also providing public spaces that make art and nature interaction accessible. It also integrates sculpture with the environment, creating a green corridor that benefits the entire ecosystem. While many cities around the world are struggling to cope with ecological problems, Olympic Sculpture Park emerges as a convincing project for landscape architecture. It proves that design and eco-friendly improvement can be done in the urban core.

Taken from: *Weiss/Manfredi*. (n.d.). *Olympic Sculpture Park*. *Weiss/Manfredi*. Retrieved June 14, 2025, from *Seattle Art Museum*. (n.d.). *Olympic Sculpture Park*. Retrieved June 14, 2025, from *Calder Foundation*. (n.d.). *The Eagle (1971)*. Retrieved June 14, 2025, from *Wikipedia contributors*. (n.d.). *Eagle (Calder)*. *Wikipedia*. Retrieved June 14, 2025, from *Wikipedia contributors*. (n.d.). *Olympic Sculpture Park*. *Wikipedia*. Retrieved June 14, 2025, from *ArchDaily*. (2011, February 14). *Olympic Sculpture Park / Weiss Manfredi*. Retrieved June 14, 2025, from



The Architectural Review

BETWEEN CONCRETE AND CANOPY

REES STREET FREE FOREST BY SCAPE:

Where Architecture Meets Ecology



Eylül Çakır
020230527

June 2025

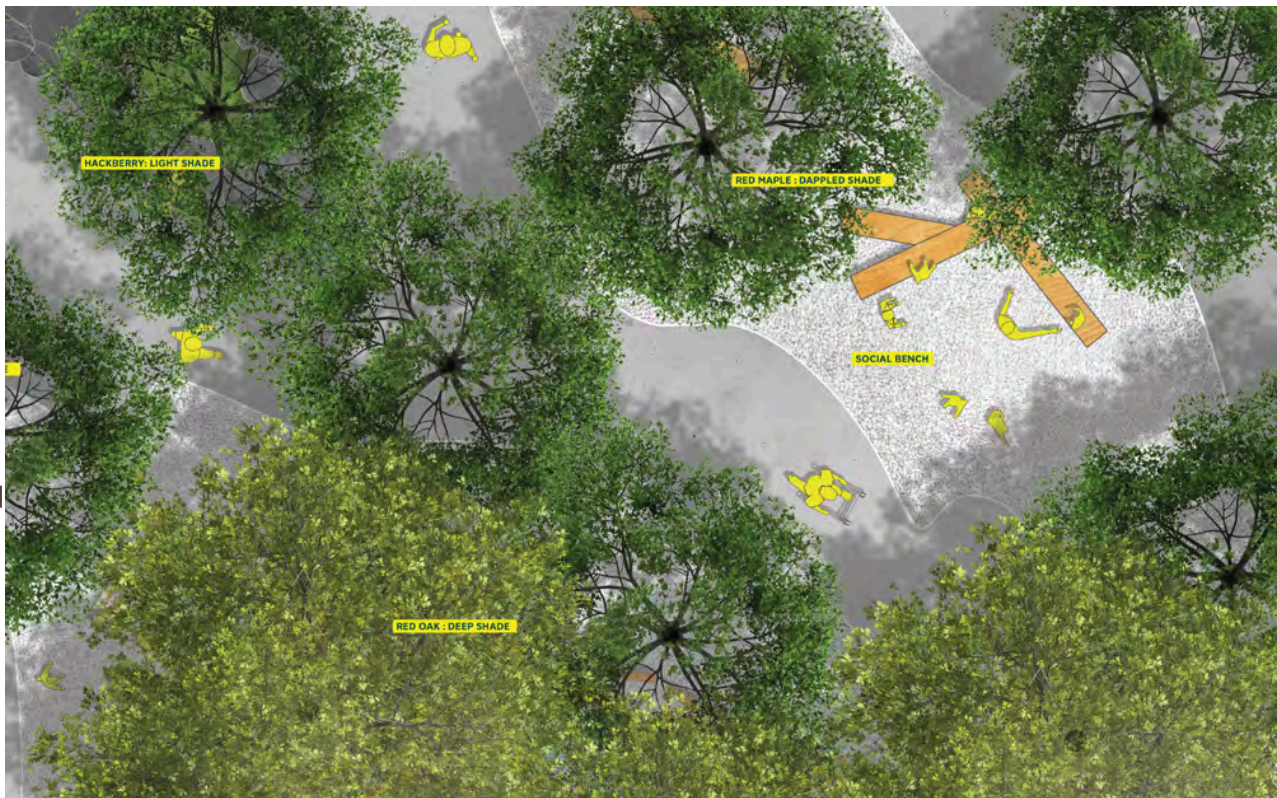


REES STREET FREE FOREST

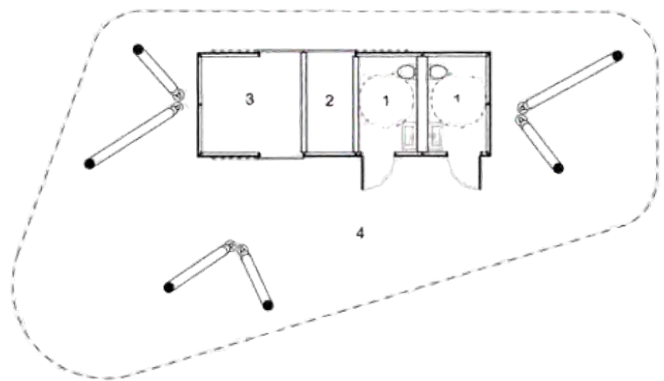
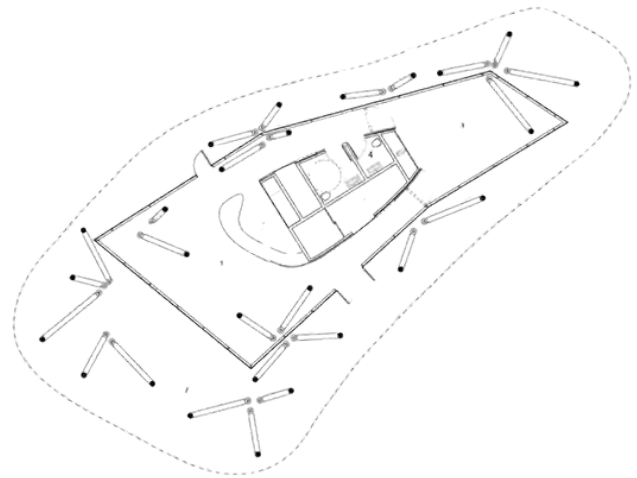
Rees Street Free Forest, situated in Toronto, Canada, is a novel urban public space intervention that rebuilds a portion of the cityscape according to an ecological and non-dominant-use example. SCAPE Landscape Architecture and BSN Architects collaborated on this project, converting a uncared waterfront site in Toronto into a living, breathing wooded environment.



Originally service lane, the block had long been a back-of-house area with limited usefulness to the public. But proximate to busy Queens Quay and various residential and academic buildings, the property held potential for ecological and social connection.



One of the biggest problems that the project solved was how much actual green space there simply wasn't and how there wasn't even any place where people could just sit around that was in the middle of a downtown. Instead of designing a normal park, the plan built what we call a "free forest.". This was a plan for plants and trees that wrap around trees and is made on purpose to develop the way it wants in the future. The work here builds a space for many kinds of life, shade, and a soft edge to the hard.



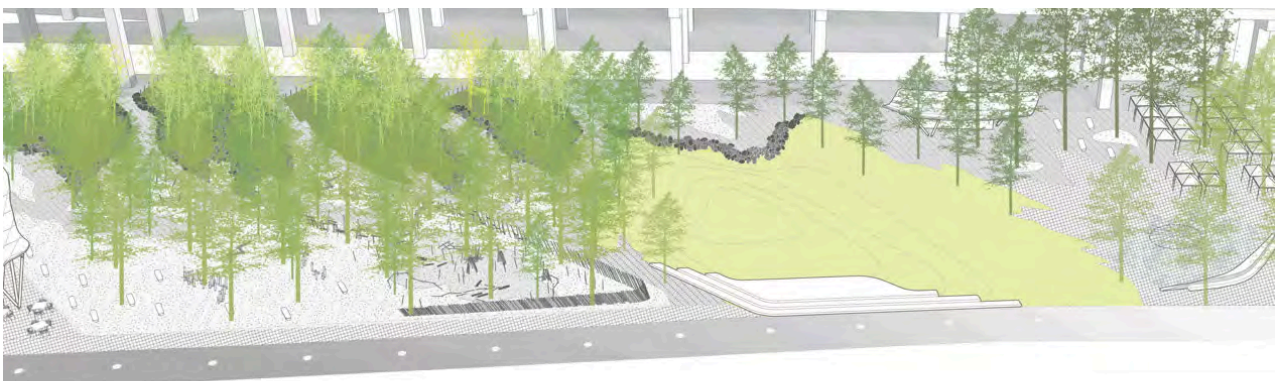
DESIGN PROCESS: A FOREST BY INTENTION, NOT CONTROL

How Rees Street Free Forest was formed started with an unusual dream: less doing, but with purpose. As one of Waterfront Toronto's public space projects in 2018, the project defied a new method of land usage in the city in hope to find more happiness and life.

SCAPE Landscape Architecture, working together with Toronto's BSN Architects, simply told very plain terms: why put in a park when a forest will grow? They wanted to let nature do her thing plants, white and green of more plants, and some shade by making a rough outline for plant life and doing very little else. It was not a plan for things, but for the potential for things.

They did not want to buy roads, or where you're sitting, or halways, but let the space develop over time. SCAPE's design vision permitted the space to grow through seasons, conditions, and users. BSN Architects played an important part of the city, meeting the needs of the city, making it secure, and enabling us to put things there—the design and arrangement of the space.

It was essential to enable it to be made accessible to all who would participate. Those who study life, those who plan cities, and those who constructed the public space to be inhabited the project with the discussion of many. It is a public space that generates its own order.

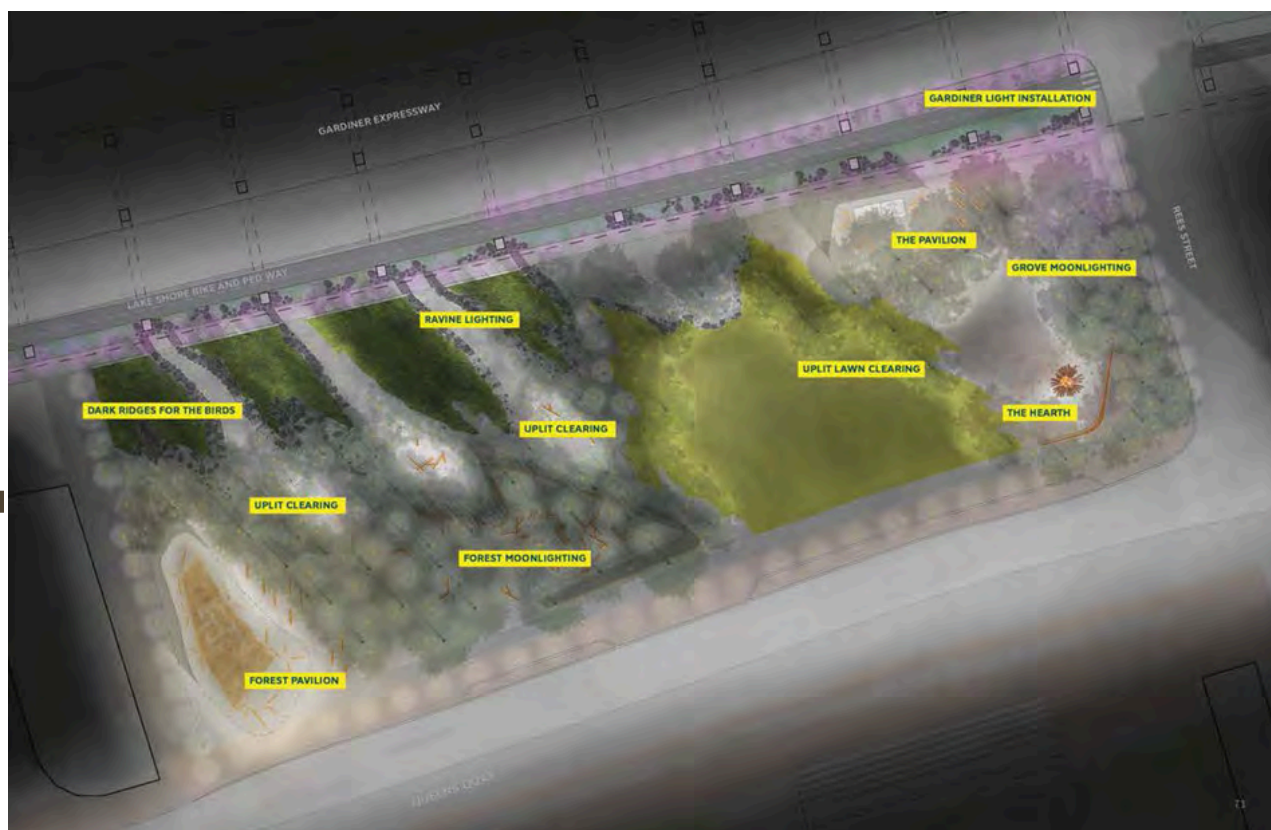




FROM BACK ALLEY TO BREATHING SPACE

Rather than creating a typical park design, complete with formal pathways benches or manicured gardens—the plan put in a “free forest”: a naturalistic planting plan that allows the landscape to evolve over time. The planting plan promotes biodiversity, offers shade, and lighten the sharpness of the boundary between hardscape and softscape.

One of the project's main goals was to put nature in the city in a rough and easy way. The people who made it put in native trees, things under the canopy, and grasses, so there was a way of life that is like how a real wood will grow. This wood will not last it's meant to change and grow, to change with the seasons, the weather, and even how people use it.



LIGHTING AND AMBIENCE: LOW-TECH, HIGH-IMPACT

One of the significant but sometimes undervalued aspects of this transformation is its lighting policy. Unlike much urban parkland, where overheard decorative lighting is handed out, the Rees Street Free Forest employs low-impact, pedestrian-scale light, incorporated into the landscape. Soft floor-level lighting guides night-time visitors without overpowering the mood or startling nocturnal animals.

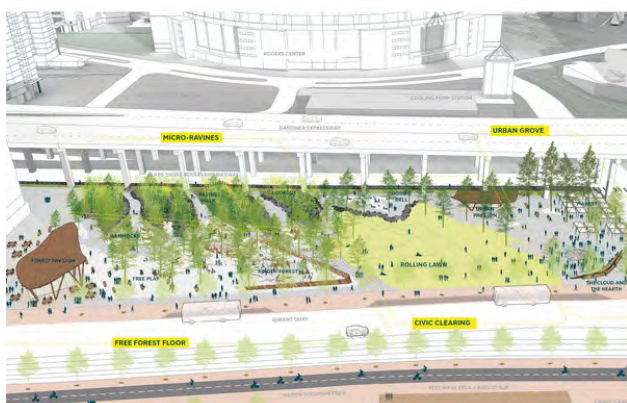
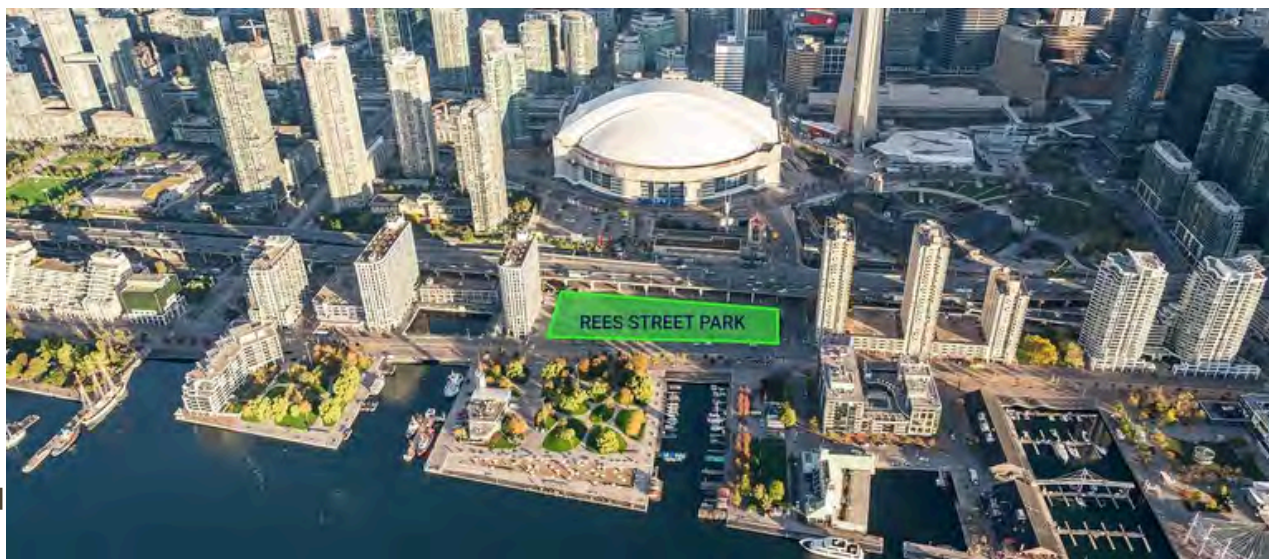
This lighting design works with the green ideas of the project. It takes away the wrong sort of light that is not needed. It does this while still being safe and showing you what is around you. This is very different from how we usually see light, where we see light just added on. It is calm and warm, like what we see when the sun is just gone for now and the city is full of light.



DESIGN FOR PUBLIC FLEXIBILITY

The choice not to over program the space is intentional. So much of the forest's charm is its uncertainty, anyway. It is landscape, corridor, ecological experiment. Because it is uncertain, a range of kinds of users residents, workers, students, kids can occupy the space in their own way.

Free Forest is not meant to host shows or games. It needs a slower way to do things. People can walk in it, rest on stones or on tree stumps, or just go through it to get to another place. There are no doors and no way to come in and out again, which once more shows that this is a space that is open and has no shape about it. It is a breath of breath in the rush of the city.



THE ROLE OF LOCATION: BETWEEN WATER AND CONCRETE

Rees Street Free Forest is ideally placed. It's right next to the very busy intersection of Queens Quay West and Rees Street. This is one of the fast changing parts of Toronto's waterfront. There are lots of high rise condos, wide walkways and bike trails, buses and streetcars, tourists and residents. And yet, incredibly, there was no real open green space there.

This paradox is the heart of Rees Street Free Forest's importance. It mediates between high rise towers and the waterfront, not just physical access, but ecological and psychological shelter. In the face of climate change driven temperature increases, small forests like this can provide localized cooling and air filtration. They are a haven for pollinators and birds, boosting the biodiversity of highly developed land.



A MODEL FOR FUTURE URBAN FORESTS

Toronto, along with a lot of the world's cities, must balance growth with green goals. This is a perfect example of how unused, or misshaped land can be turned into other things with the Rees Street Free Forest.

The forest is not there as a last stop but as a point of departure — a living example instructing us in how the city can once more be made wild. It doesn't have a finish which is good. It makes room for the community to have a role in it, for the earth to do more, for it to change as the earth goes on changing.

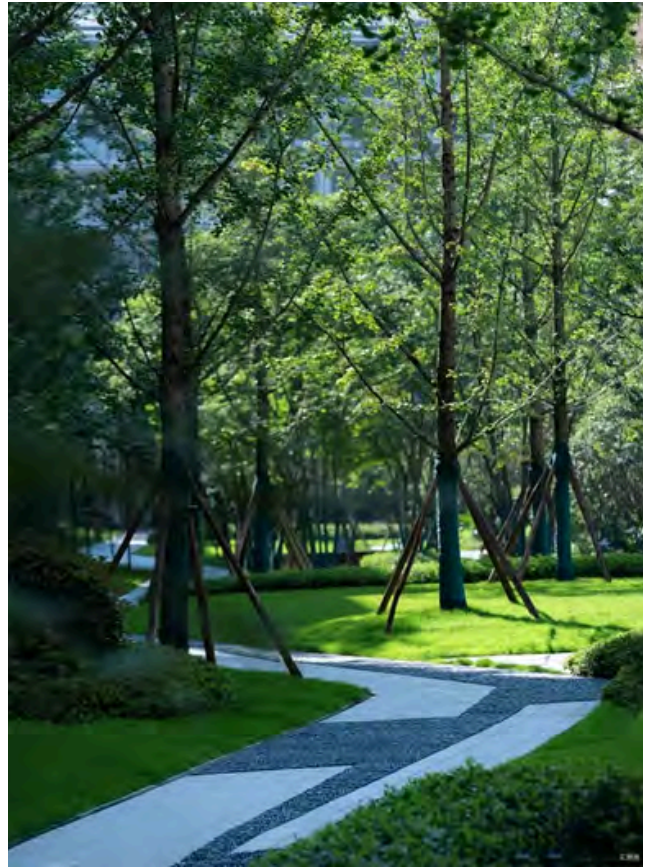
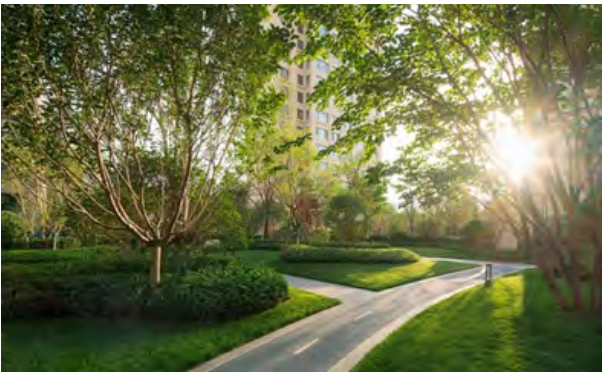
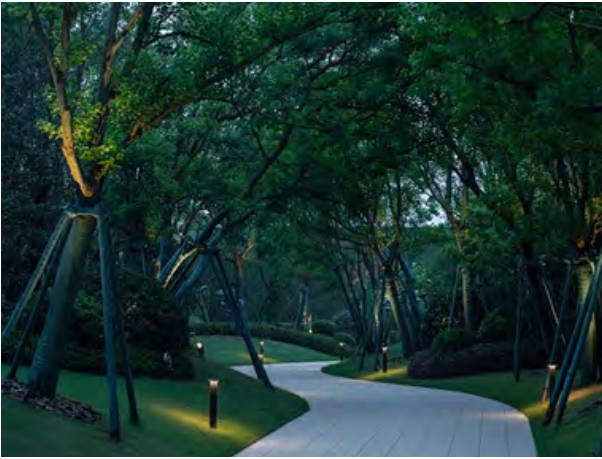
How SCAPE and BSN Architects did this also leaves us to wonder what we mean by 'design'. Here, the designer's hand is there and yet held back. It is a means of making a land form that is not of the grand and big things we see but about small yet many ways of fitting in and of changing over time.



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL IMPACT

Small as it is, the Free Forest has made a slight social impact. The area, which was once disliked or simply not thought of, is now someplace that is looked at by passers, dog walkers, and children. It's some place people can go and sit and stare at nothing at all, and they do not have to do anything.

This is a type of civic space no longer available in the majority of cities. But Rees Street Free Forest is an unusual type of civic gift that costs nothing. Its strongest argument may be that it requires nothing in return.



SUSTAINABILITY: A LIVING SYSTEM BASED ON RESILIENCE

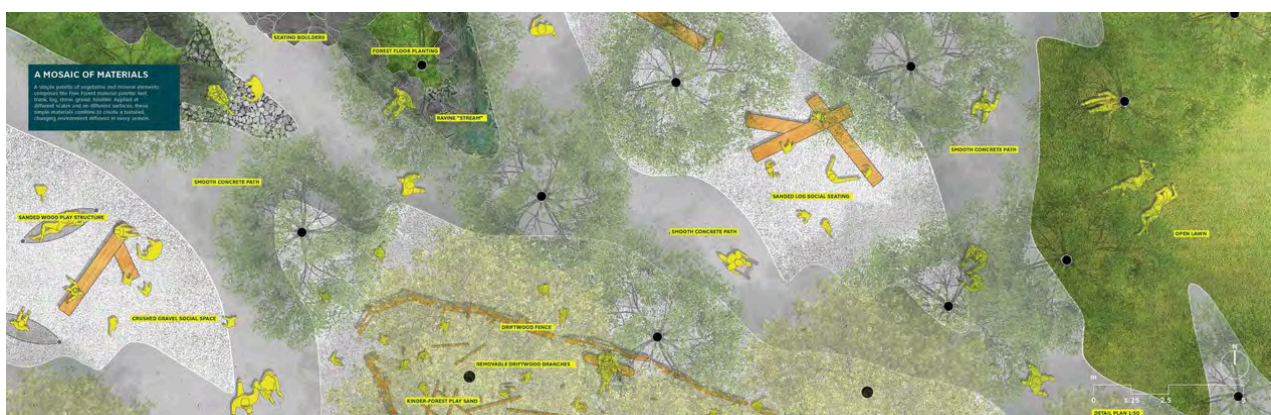
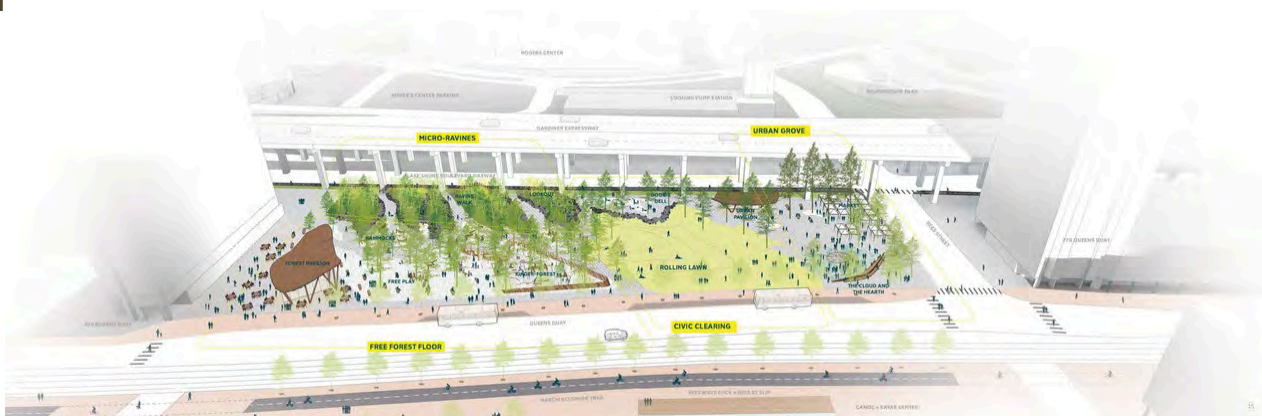
Rees Street Free Forest is an excellent lesson in observing how we can get us to function better together. While we wrestle with growing and building in rain and sun, this plan takes into account what works best for everything in a way that unifies with what already is.

The forest helps us to live better in many ways. For one, it makes us cooler and has the warm air underneath. When big coverings of the trees stretch out, it is easier for us to remain cooler and cooler environments are better for us when it is sunny weather, much better when it is hot and there is sunshine. Two, the structure helps during the rain. Unlike the common practices of dealing with rain, the Free Forest permitted rain to diffuse into the ground and support soil and fresh water. It also frees rain from the city's clogged pipes and gives room for rain to live and infiltrate into the ground.



Third, the land is less water dependent, food dependent, or dependent on care because of the native plants. The land itself is in the condition that it can take care of itself and only gets stronger as time goes on. This is the opposite of well manicured parks which must be monitored at all times and require a great amount of maintenance and utilize our planet's resources.

Most importantly, the Free Forest is different from other things that call themselves 'green' or 'good for the planet' because it is more than just what is good for the planet. It is about what is good for everybody, whoever they are. It is about what is good for all the life on the planet and how they all contribute.



RETHINKING PUBLIC SPACE

Rees Street Free Forest is not merely a small park it's an outrage. It challenges conventional concept of what public space should be and how it should be presented. In a city with neatly scripted squares and green space, the Free Forest is an oasis.

It means that we do not necessarily have to give more room to the public, put things on it or modify it. Sometimes, the best that place makers and planners can do is to get it right so that the wild can thrive.

LANDSCAPE

ISSUE
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AUSTRALIA

THE URBAN GREENERY ISSUE

URBAN REGENERATION
INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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THE YANGPU RIVERSIDE PROJECT

THE FABRIC SEWED TOGETHER FROM HISTORY, COMMUNITY, AND SUSTAINABILITY



The Yangpu Riverside Project takes place in Shanghai, China, it was designed by DLC, Design Land Collaborative. This project stands as a transformative urban renewal initiative, converting a once-industrial expanse along the

river Huangpu, making it into a vibrant and community centric urban space, which is also a sustainable area. The Yangpu Riverside is not just a construction project, but it also tries to honor the history of the area, protect the environment, and make better

living conditions for the nearby living citizens. In my essay I will talk about how this project was designed, the environmental goals behind the choices in the project, how it includes the local residents and citizens and also how it will affect the future of cities and planning.

Phylosophy of the project: The People's City concept idea



The main idea behind this project was to follow and fit in with the People's City philosophy.



This idea bases on the theory of President Xi Jinping, that he shared during his visit in 2019. The idea he shared emphasizes a people-centered way of urban planning, saying that cities are constructed by, and for the residents. In his idea the city is not only an infrastructure web, but a social space where people can connect, disconnect and reconnect with each-other and their surroundings, a place where they can express their identities and sculpt their environment to their own liking.

The People's City philosophy was built on three pillars, which are the following ones:

- Livability: designing the urban spaces to make the users physically and mentally better and healthier, promoting being in the outside areas, on fresh air, moving our bodies.
- Participation: involving the local citizens in the planning process, so they feel like it's their own project too.
- Heritage preservation: embracing the cultural, historical and industrial heritage of the site, integrating it into the modern urban spaces and fabric.

So based on the previously said things, the Yangpu project's goal is to make a community centre where people can feel connected to each-other, nature and they can feel like the area is their own, by participating in the decision making and the planning process. The concept of People's City is not an idealistic and utopian idea but a very feasible concept that bases on the vision of sustainable urban design.

Strategies and design elements: braiding the past and present together in the spirit of sustainable development



The design of this project is paying attention to a lot of components, especially for preserving and repurposing the industrial heritage on the original site. The original aim was to keep the former industrial structure and braid it into a new functional public space, not erasing the structures but giving them new function.

Strategies in making the design were preservation of industrial heritage, community participation, creating multifunctional spaces and to integrate the historical lines.

- preservation of industrial heritage: the planning site contained buildings like Yangshupu Water Plant and the Shanghai Shipyard, which have been transformed and made into cultural centers and space for the community, while keeping their old shine and historical heritage. Just as in a lot of different sites, the designers used the old brick buildings, steel structures and all the mechanical elements in the new functions and integrated it in the new face of the area.
- community participation: the opinions and ideas of the local residents were considered in the process of making the final design. The site has community service stations placed in every 800 meters on the riverside, so the users have the opportunity to give suggestions and feedback on the park.
- creating multifunctional spaces: the different areas in the park can hold different and multiple functions, such as resting areas serving as venues for cultural events. This kind of approach in the designing process ensures continuous and versatile usage. As an example the park can host picnics or sport conventions during the day and movie screenings or concerts during the night.
- integrating historical lines: as we are looking at the layout of the new park and the layout of the former industrial patterns we can discover some similarities. This phenomenon

shows in details like previous factory lines and transportation routes showing in the new design honoring the old times. By this design we can have a unique experience of history and landscape architecture.



Content of the project: Cultural spaces and community network

The project includes various elements that show and support community life and the richness of culture, they are listed below:

- Educational and cultural centers: there are several cultural institutions included in the project, just like WorldSkills Museum which shows the history and the wonderfulness of historical craftsmanship. An other great example for this is the People's City hall, which presents the development of Shanghai and also explains the ideas behind the People's City idea.
- Recreational infrastructure: the designer team planned active recreational elements, such as rest areas, running tracks, cycling paths, sports fields and playgrounds. They included all age groups and also paid attention to make place for special need citizens with making integrationatl playgrounds and senior fitness parks.
- green spaces and ecology: the riverside park streches 5.5 kilometers along the water and the designers filled this space with parks, meadows, habitats and ecological islands.

These areas offer visitors to use them as recreational spaces and the contribute in the local green infrastructure and ecosystem as well.

- Events and installations focusing art: the park gives opportunities to hold social events, public exhibitions, concerts and are frequently held there, making the community a closer, bonded neighbourhood. In the park it is possible for residents to organize their own events, strenghtening the feeling of some kind of ownership over the area.

Response to enviromental trends:

Looking at this project and analyzing it we can see, that it perfectly aligns with the current enviromental trends, gives focus to ecological balance and protection of climate.

They used the ones listed below to achive the goals of envirometal trends:

- Rain gardens and water retaining systems: they collect rainwater through raingardens, they create and nourish rich plant ecosystems and also helps reduce flood risks. These features take part in reducing the urban heat island effect too.
- energy efficiency: using renewable energy sources significantly reduce carbon emissionswhich is a key component in fighting the climaet change. In this project several buildings are energetically self suffiecient, using solar panels.
- Green infrastructure: Green roofs, green walls and permeable pavements are essential components in sustainability strategies. Creating urban green corridors can help in fresh airflow and support biodiversity as well as improving the natural circulation of air.
- Circulation of material: the designers prioritised recycled materials in the project, the demolition debris has been repurposed as seating areas, retaining walls or pavements.



Economical and social impact of the project: Rust belt to public space

A transformation of a rust area like this have high impact on social relations, community, value of the neighbourhood etc. This specific site has improved the area in several points listing them below:

- technological development, startup companies: this new and innovative area attracts innovative, new companies. There are firms like Bilibili and Meituan, who have established presence, making the digital economy better. The old factory buildings are now used as offices and as hose of technology incubators.
- Job oppurtunities: a development like this, and creating new centers make a lot a of new employment oppurtunities which boosts the local economy and also has a good impact ont he social web.
- Social impacts: an area like this, open and accessible, contributes to social equality. In this specidófic project special attention has been given to children, the elderly and people with special needs of some kind.



This project is a perfect example of community planning and the result of that. The users see the park as their own, it is adjusted to their needs and desires. The park is also an extraordinary good example of responding to social trends, social needs, modern design trends and combining

all of these with heritage protection, making sure that the history of the site is not forgotten. This is a rare and exemplary case of planning and designing, putting the professional expertise and the popular will together. Weaving these two together is an especially hard and long process, waiting for all the opinions from the public side, analyzing them each, one by one and making a professional base for the planning from it. From the mix of those two was born the project where people, history, community and sustainability meet. Since the park was finished, it has been a very popular destination for both locals and outside visitors as well. It contains several playgrounds, community spaces, and sports opportunities, while making sure all of the park is accessible for elderly, children and people with disabilities. Personally I really like this project, we can learn a lot from how the designer team worked and made their final design for the site.

Aslı Eda Karaüzüm
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Wijkeroogpark Velsen

- Feature Project:
Wijkeroogpark
- Ecological
Restoration in
Velsen
- Design by Bureau
B+B & Erick de
Lyon
- Landscape
Architecture &
Water Systems

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Wijkeroogpark Velsen

COVER

PHOTO: Lucas Foglia



Wijkeroogpark, located in Velsen-Noord, Holland, which is an industrial town also known as IJmuiden harbour, is an ecological restoration project. This project was being implemented in an area where nature had been significantly damaged over the years, especially through the construction of infrastructure. One of the most important elements that damaged the natural system of the area was the Velser Tunnel, built in 1964. The tunnel was built right through the center of the park, dividing it into two parts and causing extreme disruptions to the soil, the water system, and the green continuity of the landscape. The Velser Tunnel, apart from spoiling the green areas, also upset the soil and water balance, which were already fragile due to industrial activities around the harbour. These environmental issues brought the need for an intervention to restore the ecological values of the site.

Between 2004 and 2012, the park took its current form through an ecological restoration and redesign process. This design project was developed by the Dutch-based landscape architecture office, Bureau B+B, in collaboration with landscape architect Erick de Lyon. The main aim of this project was to reduce the harmful effects of the Velser Tunnel and bring nature back to the site, both in physical and symbolic ways. The idea was not just to plant trees or redesign a park visually, but to actually fix the ecological systems that were damaged, especially the water system. A central part of the design focused on the underground stream called Scheybeek.

The Scheybeek is a water stream that originates near Heemskerk, from the edge of the inner dunes and heaps, then flows through Wijkeroogpark and eventually reaches the North Sea Canal. During the construction of the Velser Tunnel in 1964, the natural flow of this stream was interrupted.



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The stream was taken into underground pipes, which made it invisible and disconnected it from the soil. The lake, which was once part of a natural sluice system, also lost its function due to this intervention. This removal of water from the surface destroyed the natural connection between the soil and the water. Moreover, because of the location of the park near the harbour, the whole area was already affected by pollution and other environmental problems.

In response to this environmental degradation, Bureau B+B and Erick de Lyon carried out a detailed restoration process. Their restoration design focused on bringing the stream and lake back to a visible and functioning state. The water was brought back above the ground, and the design included new rambler paths, bike paths, and access areas for people. The design not only focused on restoring nature, but also on inviting people to engage with it. The designers widened the area of the sluice and lake to allow for water overflow to occur in a controlled and productive way. Instead of letting the excess water become a problem, they turned it into an opportunity by designing fishponds, baby pools, and water auditoriums where people can interact with water in different ways.

The main area of the park is where the sluice flows northwards. Rather than letting the water flow directly into the sea channel, a special intermediate area was created just behind the seawall. This area allows for the mixing of freshwater and saltwater, creating a brackish environment. This kind of mixed water is ecologically rich, allowing specific aquatic plants and animals to thrive. Different aquatic plants started growing in this area, and these plants created feeding areas and habitats for various bird species.

The design philosophy of Wijkroogpark is centered on the belief that landscape is not something fixed or frozen, but something that is dynamic, ever-changing, and alive—especially through water. Water, in this park, becomes both a symbol and a tool for renewal. Instead of trying to return the park to a romanticized past, the designers embraced the present condition of the land and looked for ecologically realistic ways to make it healthier. The Scheybeek stream, once buried, was now reborn—not just as a feature to look at, but as a working part of the ecosystem.

As a central design strategy, both to remember the park's past and to reveal its historical layers, the designers placed Scheybeek and the network of paths (used by pedestrians and cyclists) at the heart of the spatial layout. These paths not only provide movement but also tell a story of reconnection. In some parts of the park, small observation platforms were created so that people could observe and learn about the life happening in and around the stream—like birds, fish, and insects. These educational elements are important because they build a relationship between people and the ecosystem.

Some parts of the park were designed to let the stream naturally widen, and in those spots, the water becomes more than just a stream. It turns into ponds, wetlands, or shallow pools where children can play, and birds can feed. Rough concrete was intentionally used in some water-edge areas, which might look simple, but actually helps sediments collect and gives a home to microorganisms. This increases the biodiversity of the park in the long term.





There is also a very unique zone in the park where the freshwater meets the salty water. This creates a special brackish condition, which is rare and valuable. Certain plants like saltmarsh rush and sea aster grow here, and special kinds of fish like thicklip grey mullet, sea lamprey, and black goby can live in this mixed water. It is unusual to find these species all in the same place, so this mixing adds a lot of ecological richness.

Today, Wijkeroogpark consists of a combination of wooded zones and open spaces. There is a walking path and a cycling path that follow the flow of the stream—sometimes running together, sometimes splitting apart. The layout is not rigid—it follows the logic of water. In the end, the park is not about controlling nature, but about letting nature be, and working alongside it. It represents a balance—between humans, animals, water, plants, and time.

Bureau B+B is a landscape architecture studio based in Amsterdam, founded in 1977. With 40 years of experience, this company has a reputation for thoughtful, environmentally friendly projects. Their approach to each project combines strong spatial thinking with sensitivity to ecology and cultural events.

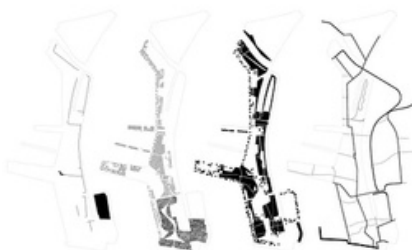
In the Wijkeroogpark project, Bureau B+B teamed up with Erick de Lyon to reimagine a damaged parkland that had been split by the Velser Tunnel. Instead of trying to bring back an idealized version of the past, they focused on revealing and enhancing what was already there—especially the buried Scheybeek stream. Bureau B+B really sees landscapes as living things — they change and grow over time, shaped by water, people, and the stories those places carry with them by bringing the stream back to the surface and

placing it at the center of the park, they reconstructed the natural process of the landscape, enriched the soil condition, and added new wildlife habitats. The use of rough concrete, gently winding paths, and carefully shaped brackish water areas shows their attention to both material detail and ecological value.

For Bureau B+B, landscapes are never static. They're always alive—changing, growing, and shaped by the flow of time, water, people, and the memories they hold.

Wijkeroogpark is a fantastic illustration of how geography armature can really bring damaged areas back to life. Rather than trying to abolish what happened, this design shows us that the trick is to understand moment's ecological challenges and work with them to produce geographies that can acclimatize and thrive. The contrivers dug up and re-established the old Scheybeek sluice, casting a living, breathing system that connects water, soil, and life in a really meaningful way. What is cool about this approach is how it sees nature and mortal input as deeply integrated, not separate. The design actually invites people to jump by and learn from the natural world around them.

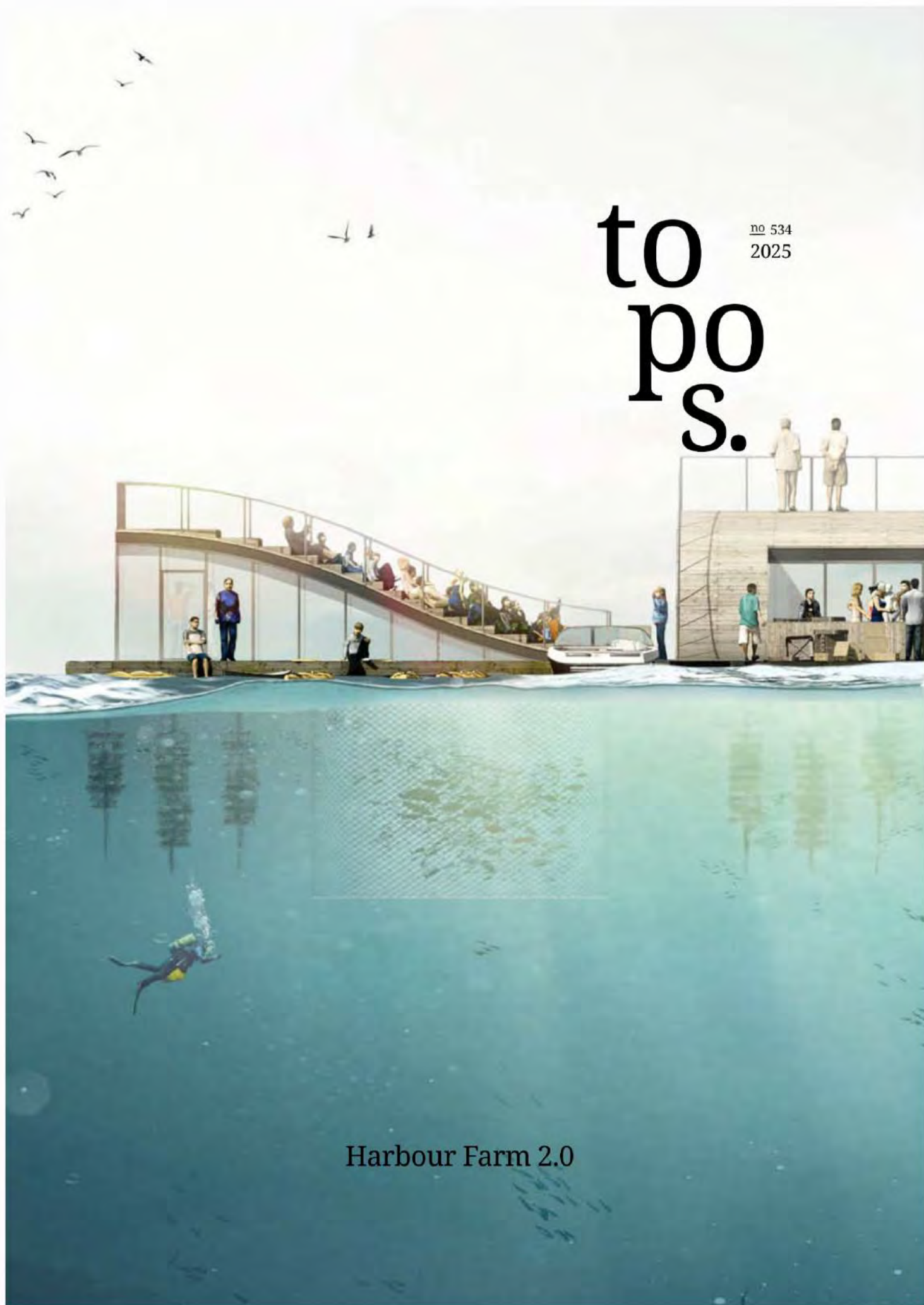
Wijkeroogpark is a great memorial that geographies are not stationary or boring – they are alive, shaped by time and all the stories they carry. What makes this design so inspiring is the important assignments it offers for other places hit by industrialization or environmental damage. As diligence keep growing and climate issues get bigger, Wijkeroogpark gives us stopgap. It proves that no matter how bad the damage, nature can heal, and a place can come commodity that nourishes both the land and our well-conditioned- being.



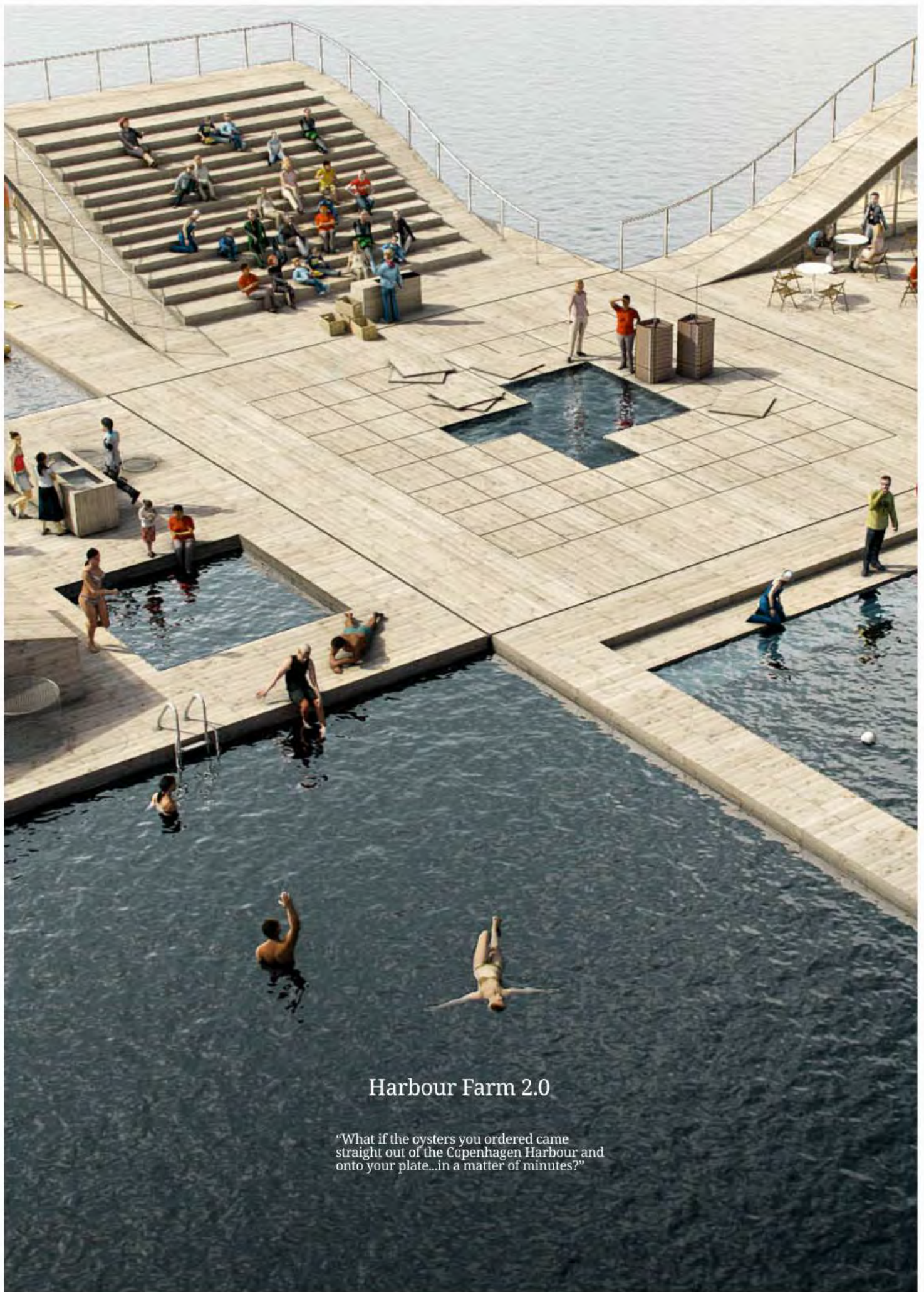
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Harbour Farm 2.0



Harbour --- Farm 2.0



Harbour Farm 2.0

"What if the oysters you ordered came straight out of the Copenhagen Harbour and onto your plate...in a matter of minutes?"





In an age marked by overlapping crises, such as climate change, population growth, urban overcrowding, and global food insecurity, cities are becoming centers for innovation. Architects, urban planners, and environmentalists are increasingly collaborating to rethink urban systems in ways that promote ecological resilience, social inclusivity, and sustainable resource management. A notable example of this trend is Harbour Farm 2.0, a groundbreaking project created by the Danish architectural studio EFFEKT in partnership with Konvers and a diverse team of scientists, engineers, and public agencies. Designed for implementation in Copenhagen Harbour, this initiative reclaims urban waterfronts to function as multifunctional hubs for sustainable aquaculture, environmental renewal, and public engagement.

Harbour Farm 2.0 envisions a future where cities are not just users of natural resources but also active producers and caretakers of ecological systems. The project combines architecture, marine biology, and urban design to address the complex challenges of today's urban environment. With a scalable, modular design and a strong socio-environmental focus, Harbour Farm 2.0 offers a new model for waterfront development that is productive, participatory, and regenerative.

Context and Conceptual Framework

Around the world, post-industrial port cities face a common challenge: large areas of waterfront infrastructure have become outdated due to the decline of traditional maritime industries. These underused locations often experience pollution, damaged ecosystems, and limited public access. Rather than viewing these issues as setbacks, Harbour Farm 2.0 sees them as chances for adaptive reuse and ecological restoration.

The main idea behind Harbour Farm 2.0 is to transform urban harbors into floating aquaculture systems that support food production while improving environmental health. By drawing on examples from floating architecture and ecological urbanism, the project imagines a modular system of floating platforms that can be shaped according to local needs and specific site conditions. Each module serves a distinct purpose, from mussel farming and seaweed cultivation to community spaces and renewable energy generation. Together, they create a flexible, decentralized structure that enhances urban resilience.

This hybrid character—part farm, part park, part infrastructure—defines Harbour Farm 2.0 as a new category within architectural practice. It expands architecture's role beyond fixed buildings to embrace active ecological systems and community-oriented activities.

Design Strategy and Spatial Organization

The success of Harbour Farm 2.0 is rooted in its adaptable and thoughtful design. Each floating unit is 6x6 meters and designed for easy connectivity. These units can be organized into larger clusters or spread across multiple locations, depending on ecological conditions and urban contexts. Beneath the surface, the modules provide habitats for marine life and filter water, while the topside offers space for productive, educational, and recreational uses.



Key components of the design include:

- **Aquaculture Beds:** Specially designed structures beneath the waterline house oysters, mussels, and macroalgae. These species not only provide food but also play crucial roles in nutrient cycling and cleaning the water.
- **Renewable Energy Integration:** Solar panels and small wind turbines are installed on select modules to power operations, reducing the project's carbon footprint and increasing self-sufficiency.
- **Public Amenities:** Walkways, seating areas, and viewing platforms are included to enhance public access and encourage social interaction. Floating greenhouses support year-round cultivation and serve as educational spaces.
- **Logistics Hub:** A central platform contains a logistics and processing station, where aquaculture products are cleaned, sorted, and sent to local markets and restaurants.



The materials used are strong and environmentally friendly, featuring marine-grade steel, FSC-certified timber, recycled plastics, and ETFE membranes. The design promotes transparency—both literally and figuratively—by making food production visible and clear to the public.



Technological Integration and Smart Systems

Harbour Farm 2.0 employs modern monitoring and automation technologies. Sensors placed on and beneath the platforms collect real-time data on water quality, salinity, temperature, and biodiversity. These measurements inform farm management practices and assist researchers in evaluating the ecological impact of the project.

An open-source digital interface links users to the farm's operations. Visitors can access this data through mobile apps or interactive displays, promoting a greater understanding of marine ecosystems and the science of aquaculture. For school programs and citizen science projects, the farm provides tools for hands-on learning and experimentation. Augmented reality (AR) features are being considered to enhance the educational experience further.

This technological framework makes Harbour Farm 2.0 a living laboratory, a space where environmental care and public involvement are closely connected.

Ecological and Environmental Contributions

One of the most striking aspects of Harbour Farm 2.0 is its focus on ecological restoration. Unlike typical urban developments that take from the environment, this project gives back. Seaweed and shellfish cultivated on-site actively filter out pollutants from the water, helping to restore the harbour's ecological balance. Studies show that a single mussel can filter up to 25 liters of water daily, while seaweed absorbs excess nutrients that lead to harmful algal blooms.

Beyond water purification, the submerged structures create habitats for fish, crustaceans, and other marine organisms. This supports the rebuilding of urban biodiversity, making the harbour cleaner and more ecologically vibrant. The project also acts as a buffer against climate change by supporting carbon capture, reducing urban heat islands, and increasing the resilience of coastal areas.

Social, Cultural, and Educational Dimensions

Harbour Farm 2.0 is not only an environmental initiative but also a social one. The project reclaims urban space for community use and encourages people to reconnect with the natural world. By placing food production at the heart of public life, it transforms how urban residents engage with sustainability.

Public programming is crucial. Events like open-air markets, cooking demos, guided tours, and workshops take place regularly. These activities turn the farm into an active cultural site. Partnerships with local schools, universities, and NGOs ensure inclusive access and ongoing community involvement.

Architecturally, the spaces are designed with everyone in mind. Universal design principles guide pathways, ramps, and signage. The goal is to create a welcoming environment where people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can learn, relax, and contribute. Multi-lingual interfaces and participatory art installations further strengthen the space's inclusive spirit.

Urban Integration and Replicability

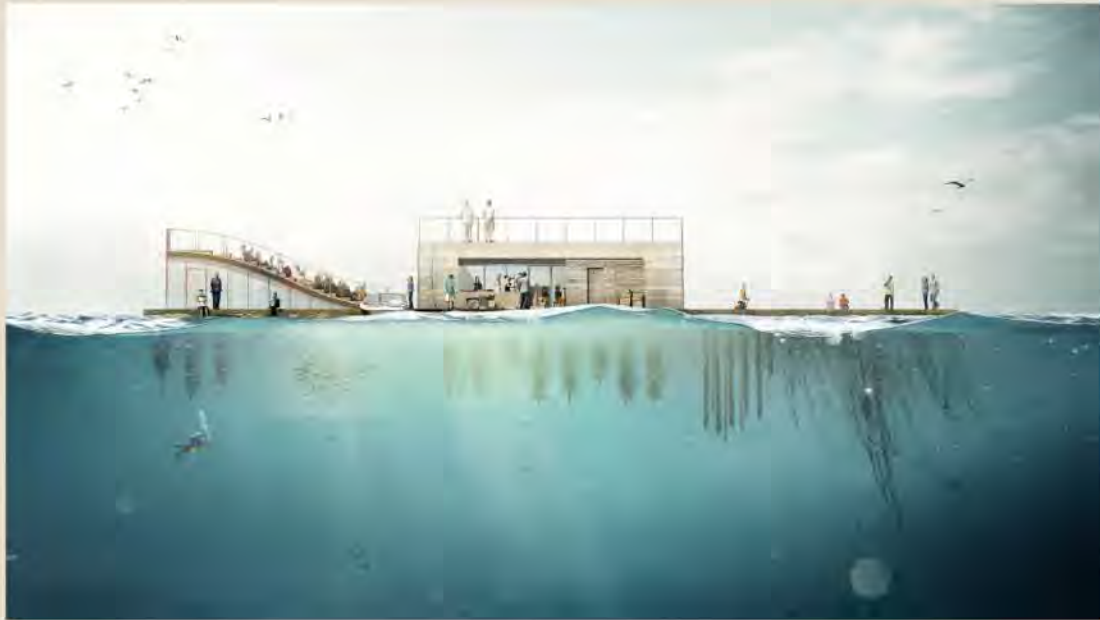
Although tailored to Copenhagen's harbour, the design principles of Harbour Farm 2.0 are broadly applicable. Its modular and adaptable model can be used in cities with various geographical and cultural contexts. In heavily polluted or rapidly urbanizing coastal cities like Jakarta, Manila, or Rio de Janeiro, similar models could enhance both environmental recovery and food security.

Integrating with local infrastructure is central to the design approach. The farm connects physically to existing waterfront walkways, bike paths, and public transit systems. It works alongside surrounding developments without pushing out current uses. Economically, it creates new green jobs and boosts enthusiasm for local seafood, strengthening the blue economy.

Harbour Farm 2.0 also supports global sustainability goals. It contributes to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 14 (Life Below Water). These connections enhance the project's significance on the global stage and open up opportunities for international collaboration and funding.

Architectural Significance and Paradigm Shift

From a theoretical perspective, Harbour Farm 2.0 represents a shift in architectural thought—from a focus on design as objects to understanding it as part of systems. Traditional architecture often emphasizes form, function, and aesthetics in isolated locations.



In contrast, Harbour Farm 2.0 positions architecture as an active participant within ecological and urban systems.

This shift challenges professionals to broaden their responsibilities. Architects need to consider how buildings and public spaces interact with ecosystems, economies, and social networks. Harbour Farm 2.0 serves as a concrete example of how this expanded role can be fulfilled through cooperation and user-focused design.

The project's aesthetic appeal comes not from grandeur but from clarity, modularity, and engagement. It makes complex systems visible and encourages people to take part in sustainable urban change.

For an end, Harbour Farm 2.0 is more than a floating farm; it is a vision for how architecture can respond to contemporary challenges. By transforming neglected urban harbors into productive, inclusive, and ecologically beneficial spaces, it redefines the possibilities of waterfront architecture. The project combines cutting-edge technology, community involvement, and ecological science into a cohesive design that is both forward-thinking and attainable.

In doing so, Harbour Farm 2.0 offers a hopeful counter-narrative to the environmental damage and social division that often characterize modern urban life. It invites architects, policymakers, and citizens to see cities not just as places to live but as ecosystems where people can thrive. With thoughtful planning, ongoing cooperation, and a willingness to rethink the limits of our fields, the principles embodied in Harbour Farm 2.0 can extend from Copenhagen's harbour to coastal cities worldwide, paving the way for urban resilience and design excellence.

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Topography and Grid: Designing with the Land

The Barcelona Botanical Garden sits on Montjuïc Hill, on land that was once used as a kind of waste area or dumping ground. In 1999, it was turned into a garden mainly focusing on Mediterranean climate plants.

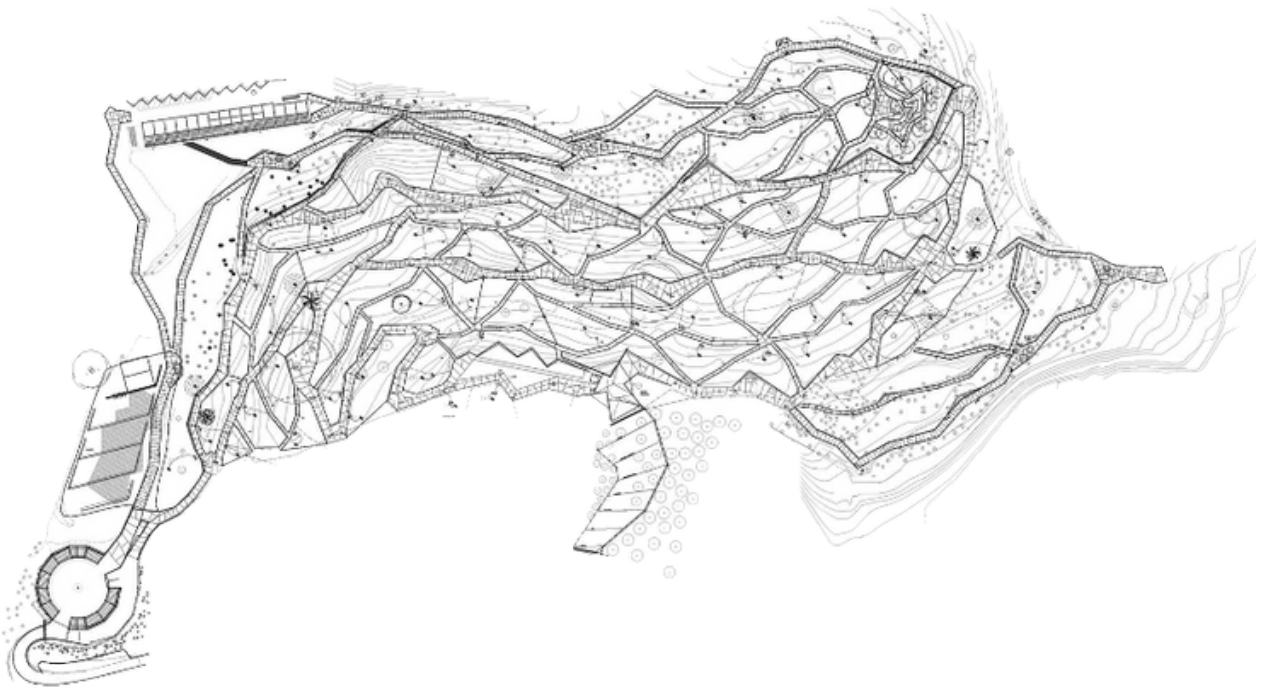
It wasn't designed by a single person — the project brought together an architect (Carlos Ferrater), a landscape designer (Bet Figueras), and a botanist (Joan Pedrola). Their aim wasn't just to create a peaceful green space, but also to make people think more about nature and climate issues.

What I found most interesting was how the garden includes plants from five different parts of the world — like Chile, California, and Australia — all of which share a Mediterranean climate. Even though these places are far apart, their plant life feels surprisingly similar. The garden paths follow a triangle-based layout that fits well with the slope of the hill and makes walking around easier.



Natural Look, Engineered Logic

Designing Systems Inside the Grid



Barcelona Botanical Garden was built on Montjuïc Hill, and the land there is not flat. Because of that, the designers used triangle shapes to follow the slope. These triangle pieces are made in a way that two corners stay at the same level. This helps them to not dig too much and to make the garden look more natural.

The triangle shapes are used for walking paths, and also to organize the plants. It is easier to move from one side to another because the paths go with the slope. Also, water pipes and other systems are inside these shapes, so the garden works better and cleaner.

The idea of the garden is not to change nature a lot, but to still make a good plan. When someone walks in the garden, it looks like nature, but actually, it was made with planning. It shows that a garden can be natural and designed at the same time.



In the garden, the plants are from five different regions with Mediterranean-type climate. These are the Mediterranean Basin, California, Chile, South Africa and South Australia. Even if these places are very far from each other, the weather in them is kind of similar. They all have dry summers and rainy winters.

The designers used this idea for organizing the plants. Each zone is placed in triangle-shaped areas on the garden. So, for example, one triangle has plants from California, and the next triangle has plants from Chile. This helps people see the differences and similarities of plants from different parts of the world.

The plants are not placed randomly. Some of them like more sun, others need more shade. Designers think about this and placed plants where they can grow better. So, the triangle system helps not only for walking but also for plants' health.

There are no fences between the zones. The paths are soft and curved, not straight. While walking, you suddenly feel the change in the plants. It feels like traveling between continents, but without taking a flight. Just by walking, visitors understand how plants live in similar climates, but still look very different.

This part of the design is very useful for learning. People can compare plants easily. Also, it's interesting to realize how climate creates different ecosystems. So, the garden is not just beautiful but also educational. And because it's easy to understand, it becomes fun even for kids or visitors who don't know much about plants





In this garden, sustainability was very important from the beginning. The designers didn't change the natural land too much. They used triangle shapes to follow the slope, so they didn't need to dig or cut the ground a lot. This way, the nature of the place was protected.

For the walking areas, they used materials that let the rainwater go into the soil. It helps the water cycle and stops too much water going away. Also, there are systems for watering the plants, and they are controlled by computer to save water.

Some of the lights in the garden use solar power. This means they don't need electricity from outside all the time. These small things make the garden more eco-friendly.

Also, the garden is open to everyone. People don't need to pay to enter. Families, children, old people, anyone can come and enjoy the nature. This supports social sustainability too, because it gives learning and relaxing space for all people.

So, the garden shows how design can be useful for environment and people together. It is simple but effective.

In Barcelona Botanical Garden, the walking paths are planned with the shape of the hill. The land is not flat, so the designers didn't try to make it flat. Instead, they followed the natural slope. The garden uses triangle shapes on the ground. These triangle parts help to fix the ground height. So, there was no need to break or dig the land too much. It stays more natural like this.

There are big paths and small ones. First, people walk on the main road, and then they can choose to go to the small ones for looking at different plant areas. It's like a system but still feels natural. You don't need a map or signs to know where to go. You just follow the way, and the plants slowly change while walking. This makes the experience better because you can see the change in plants and spaces step by step.

Also, the triangle system helps for water pipes and other things underground. It all fits together. The walk feels easy and smooth, not like going up and down suddenly. Everything feels soft and simple. The ground, the air, and the plants change slowly from one to another. That's why walking in this garden feels nice and not boring. It's a smart design, but it doesn't look too strict. It's just nice to walk and see the nature.

A Garden for Learning and Sensing

The Barcelona Botanical Garden is not just for walking or watching plants. It also has an educational purpose. There are some boards near the paths, and they give short information about the plants, the climate zones, and also some facts about nature. These signs help visitors to learn more about how different plants live in different areas of the world. They are written in a simple way, so many people can understand them easily.

The garden also gives a strong feeling to the visitors. When you walk inside, you can feel different smells from the plants. Some plants have strong, nice smells, and others are more soft. The colors are also important. There are many green colors, but sometimes flowers show up in red, yellow, or purple. All of these make the garden more than just a visual place. It becomes something you can feel with more senses.



In some parts of the garden, there are small places where school groups can stop and talk with their teachers. It looks like they made these spots for learning outside the classroom. Also, sometimes people can join guided tours, and in those, they hear stories and details about Mediterranean plants. This makes the visit more interesting and educational.

Also, some paths are made for children. They are shorter and more playful. These paths make it easier for kids to enjoy and learn at the same time. It seems like the garden is designed for all ages. It is not boring or too serious. It tries to teach, but also to make people feel happy and curious.

Designing with Nature

Barcelona Botanical Garden is a calm and nice place. Nature and design work well together here. The garden uses a triangle system. This system makes the garden look clean and easy to understand. It is not like a usual park with many flowers everywhere. It feels more like a place where you learn slowly while you walk.


What I like is how the garden connects different plant areas without making it too clear. The plants change a little, but the paths make the walking smooth. It feels like you move to different countries but you do not get lost.

I also like that the garden design did not change the land too much. The paths and shapes follow the hill. This makes the garden feel natural and quiet. It shows that smart design can work without big buildings.

I think this garden is a good example. It shows how we can protect nature and learn from it at the same time. It is not only about how beautiful the garden is, but also about respect for nature.



Thanks for reading! Hope you enjoyed it 🌿



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PARQUE DE LA GAVIA

Ecological Infrastructure

Toyo Ito & Associates

Madrid

No 130 / 2025

Name: DIJAN KAZAR

Student ID: 020230520

Park de la Gavia: From Vision to Terrain

Madrid's unbuilt future turned into a living infrastructure

Located on the southeastern edge of Madrid, Parque de La Gavia was first conceived in the early 2000s as a transformative public space — a park that would respond not only to the city's pressing ecological challenges, but also to its growing need for civic infrastructure. Designed by Tóyo Ito & Associates, the project envisioned a new typology: a park not as static green space, but as an active, performative terrain shaped by water, climate, and time.

Although the original plan was never fully realized, its vision remains compelling: to create a landscape that could both perform essential ecological functions and engage the public in direct sensory relationships with natural processes. In a city where summers are increasingly dry and heat events intensify each year, the park proposed to harness hydrology and topography not as background systems, but as design protagonists.

Madrid's semi-arid climate posed both a constraint and an opportunity. With limited rainfall and high evaporation rates, water needed to be managed with precision and care. The park answered this challenge with a series of sculpted terraces, planted retention zones, and open-air channels — a visible infrastructure where rainfall would be captured, slowed, and reintroduced into the land



The site itself, once a void in the urban fabric, was reimagined as a responsive ground — a living system designed to evolve with seasons, respond to shifts in use, and perform under variable conditions. Rather than imposing rigid geometry, the project followed the logic of slope and soil, crafting a topographic language that revealed rather than concealed ecological flow.

This was not simply landscape design — it was an act of urban reprogramming. By integrating stormwater management, soil restoration, and spatial experience, La Gavia blurred the lines between utility and beauty, between function and form. The project introduced a radical premise: that infrastructure could be poetic, that a park could teach, and that nature, when made visible, could become a shared civic narrative.

Today, Parque de La Gavia stands as a prototype — whether built or unbuilt — for the future of ecological urbanism. Its vision continues to inspire new ways of thinking about terrain, climate, and the role of design in shaping resilient and expressive environments.



Hydrological flows made visible through planting and earthworks. Terraced landforms structure both drainage and movement through the site.

Design and Water Topographies

“To reveal the buried infrastructure is to invite a deeper relationship with landscape and time.”

Toyo Ito – Project Statement, 2005

Terraced Topographies

Designing with slope, soil, and stormwater

In Parque de La Gavia, terrain is more than a physical setting — it is an instrument for ecological performance. Rather than treating water as an invisible threat to be diverted underground, the design embraces hydrology as a spatial and expressive force. The park's surface is carefully sculpted to guide, delay, and cleanse stormwater through a series of interconnected topographic gestures.

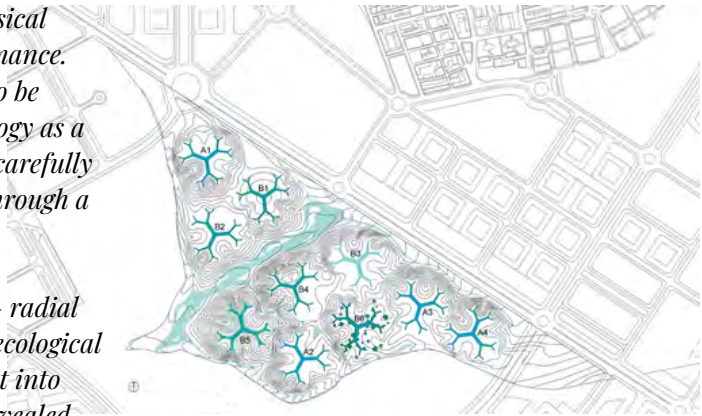
At the core of this approach are the "water trees" — radial depressions carved into terraced slopes. Acting as ecological anchors, these forms slow down runoff and direct it into shallow central basins. Water is not hidden; it is revealed, flowing visibly through terrain, shaping both soil and experience.

Terracing becomes the primary language of modulation. Each level softens the descent of rain, allowing for filtration, percolation, and temporary retention. This step-by-step choreography transforms the land into a living system — a gradient of functions where slope, structure, and planting coalesce into rhythmic hydrological sequences.

Hydrological modeling directly informed the spatial strategy. Flow velocity, saturation zones, and soil porosity were analyzed to determine the placement of planted channels and infiltration zones. Vegetation density increases along steeper inclines to stabilize slopes, while flatter areas invite accumulation and slow release. These decisions are not decorative; they are functional moves embedded in topographic logic.

The result is a landscape where terrain and water co-design each other. Rather than suppressing natural processes, the park choreographs them. Water becomes legible — not just in channels and basins, but in the shifting gradients, material transitions, and soil textures that narrate its path.

This is a visible infrastructure, both ecological and spatial. It teaches through its form. As visitors move across the site, they read water's journey: entering, pausing, infiltrating, vanishing — only to return with the next rainfall.



Radial "water trees" structure the terraced ground, each with a central basin and sloped arms that direct rain into retention pockets. These forms translate rainfall into visible flows shaped by topography.



General topographic masterplan of Park de la Gavia, showing terraced terrain, radial water structures, and surface flow patterns.

Revealing Ecology: Infrastructure as Landscape

Designing with water, vegetation, and terrain in Madrid's semi-arid climate

At the core of this strategy lies an open, responsive system. Terraces, basins, and vegetated channels guide rainfall across the site. Each surface performs: slopes direct, plants absorb, soil filters. Nothing is decorative — everything contributes. Planting prioritizes resilience. Drought-tolerant species trace the terraces, stabilizing soil, cooling the air, and forming a breathing green matrix that thrives with minimal care. This ecology remains visible. As visitors move through the site, they witness slow flows, silt pockets, and layered vegetation. The terrain becomes an outdoor manual — teaching through presence, not signage.



Overall landscape program plan showing forest typologies, water basins, and public zones.

This clarity is deliberate. Tōyo Ito's vision resists concealment. Instead, the park narrates: how water flows, how species react, how terrain participates. It offers a new public typology — where function and form coalesce.

By staging climate response as shared experience, Parque de La Gavia becomes more than parkland. It becomes a prototype — a responsive ground shaped by weather, people, and time.

At the heart of this approach is a visible water infrastructure — terraces, shallow basins, and planted swales that choreograph rainfall in motion. Design mediates: land redirects, roots absorb, soil filters. Form follows flow.

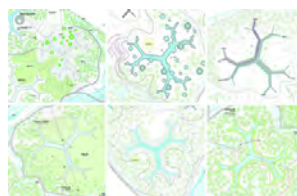
Plant choices reflect climate, not ornament. Positioned along contours and catchments, they assemble a durable green framework that operates with little input.

This system is legible. Walking through it, one encounters slow-moving water, sediment pools, and robust vegetation. The landscape explains itself — through rhythm, resistance, and renewal.

This exposure is intentional. Echoing Ito's philosophy, the design makes processes seen and felt. Water, plant, and terrain act in concert — ecology rendered spatial.

As a living model, the park transcends its boundaries. It becomes a civic prototype — open, adaptive, and inseparable from its environment.

User interaction with water systems — water becomes visible and tactile.



Branching basin types and topo-coordinated water systems in radial forms.



Performing Infrastructure

When water invites interaction

Visitors do not simply observe this landscape; they move through it, linger within it, and are cooled, challenged, and engaged by it. In doing so, they become part of the park's ecological choreography. What might otherwise be hidden — water's flow, retention, evaporation — is turned into a shared, tactile experience. Hydrology becomes immersive. Infrastructure becomes felt.

The design transforms passive environmental systems into visible rituals of daily life. Children chase puddles formed after a storm; elderly visitors rest in shaded hollows cooled by water-retaining plants. Students sketch the radial geometries of water trees. Families follow the flow paths as if tracing a quiet map. These interactions are not scripted, but emergent — shaped by weather, season, and curiosity.

This is what makes La Gavia more than a park. It is a civic landscape in the fullest sense: where learning happens not through signage, but through walking; where sustainability is not a diagram, but a lived experience.

Public interaction with water systems makes infrastructure experiential.



A large, modern water fountain in a park. The fountain has a curved, metallic structure with multiple jets of water spraying upwards and outwards. Several people, including adults and children, are standing in the water, playing and enjoying the spray. The background is filled with lush green trees and a clear sky. The overall atmosphere is one of a vibrant, public urban space.

As a result, Park de la Gavia offers a new vision for urban landscapes.

A landscape where ecology is public, performative, and infrastructural.

As a living system, the park performs with people, not for them. The cycle of water completes itself through play, presence, and joy.

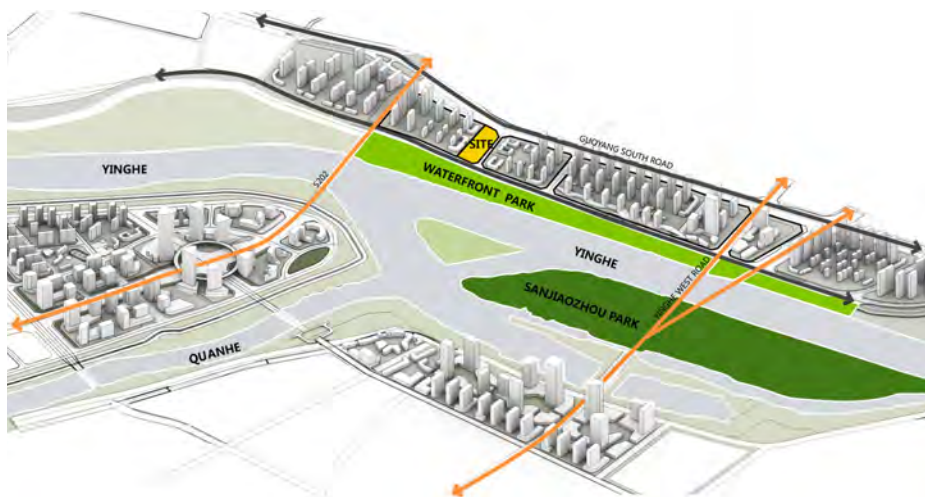
GLOBAL ENVIRON MENT

A Journal of Transdisciplinary History



Introduction : Fuyang Upper River Side Urban Experience Area

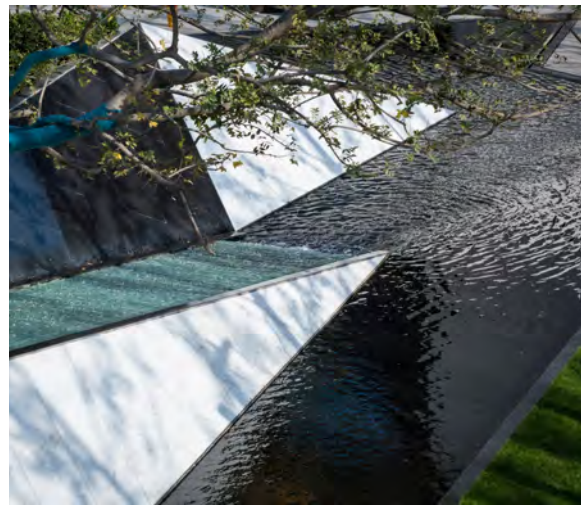
The Fuyang upper riverside experience area, in Fuyang, China, developed in 2019 by Landao Design spans 21,000 m². It was designed for R&F PROPERTIES, WANTOU REAL ESTATE and lies to the east of the Ying river crossing Fuyang. It was designed in the context of the upper city renewal, a plan to renovate and revitalise the riverside and the adjacent neighborhoods.



As stated by the designers, it's main challenges are firstly, how to activate the innovation of the city interface. Secondly, how to bring popularity to the area. And Third, how to sort out the complex traffic flow lines. As a solution, it was designed as a three dimensional traffic node, that combines an urban park and the entrance to a community center and links the city with the Waterfront thorough a landscape bridge. This bridge not only links space, but also time, as the Ying river is a very important part of the city since the beginning. It was the ma-



major development route in Fuyang, functioning as the place for trade and transportation, making it a meeting space for the local community. Through modernization the urban fabric on the riverside changed, leaving it fragmented and underutilized, losing their traditional function as communal gathering and recreational areas. This is eroding the centuries old cultural identity of Fuyang. It is a focus on experimental continuity that is supposed to preserve the genius loci of the place, consisting of spatial openness, flow and community access. It features a very geometric design with grass slopes that invite to explore the area through different topography. The geometric design is paired with light installations in the ground, to follow the design principle of a prism, that splits



light in lots of different colors, as the park provides lots of different functions to its users. Furthermore it features a water area with a spring. The design is supposed to bring urban vitality to the vicinity, encouraging development of cafes, shops, supermarkets.





LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND ART

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Karen Blixens Plads : landscape as functional sculpture

Abstract. The relationship between architecture and nature has always been one of the key topics of interest in architectural debate, even more so in the present day. So, the article discusses Karen Blixens Plads that named for noted 19th-century Danish author Karen Blixen, located at the University of Copenhagen, stands as a transformative urban space that redefines the boundaries between landscape, infrastructure, and art. Designed by COBE Architects, the plaza merges sculptural form and sustainability with everyday functionality. As a result of this project the uninterested place, which was the university square has been a dull grey parking area for bikes, in an unfriendly scale and with no spatial hierarchy converted to magnificent landscape with room for 2,000 parked bicycles. This study explores how the project exemplifies a new paradigm in public space design—integrating bike culture, green infrastructure, and aesthetic value. The paper investigates the planning approach, materiality, and spatial experience of the site while assessing its ecological contributions and social activation. As one of the main conclusions of the study, Karen Blixens Plads is presented as a model of multifunctional landscape architecture that reflects the evolving demands of urban life.

Keywords: Karen Blixens Plads, urban design, landscape architecture, sustainable public space, COBE, multifunctional landscape, Copenhagen, square

Introduction

In an era where urban spaces must fulfill ecological, social, and infrastructural roles, landscape architecture plays a central role in shaping contemporary cities. Karen Blixens Plads, completed in 2019 in Copenhagen, Denmark, offers a compelling case study of multifunctional and sculptural landscape design. Located between key university buildings, the plaza addresses the needs of students and staff while transforming a former flat terrain into a dynamic, inclusive public space. With an area of 20,000 square meters, Karen Blixen Plads is one of Copenhagen's largest squares. The exact place is a strategic enclave between the city university's South Campus and the Royal Danish Library, the new public space arose from adopting a combination of interrelated sustainability strategies. First was the idea of creating an undulating carpet designed by a multidisciplinary team of architects and engineers, a green and ceramic surface under which a large bicycle parking shelter has been provided.

Second was the decision to make the plaza capable of handling stormwater, in such a way that rainwater collected could be used to form small lakes around which new urban biotopes would proliferate. Third was the desire to mix green and civic sustainability considerations, and hence the inclusion of an open-air auditorium accommodating an audience of over a thousand people.

Materials and methods

This study takes a qualitative approach to understanding the design and impact of Karen Blixens Plads. The analysis is based on a mix of visual observation, design documentation, and literature review. Online platforms such as Google Maps and user-generated content from social media were also helpful in getting a broader sense of how people use the space over time.

In terms of physical materials, the square is mostly made of smooth, light-grey concrete, which creates a clean and neutral surface across the large area. The signature mounds that rise from the plaza were formed with steel frameworks and then covered with concrete, creating gentle slopes that define the character of the site. These are not just sculptural features—they hide bike parking spaces underneath, showing how the design combines function and form in a smart way.

Plantings are concentrated in the spaces between the mounds and include native grasses and perennials that don't require much maintenance. These green areas also help with water drainage, as rainwater is absorbed into the soil instead of flowing directly into the city's drainage system. This reflects a wider focus on sustainability in urban design, especially in Copenhagen, where climate adaptation is a major concern. Green profile. In a soft transition, Karen Blixens Plads brings together the university's need for urban spaces with the open landscape of the neighboring Amager Fælled (Amager Commons). The north side of the square, where the three main entrances to the university are located, is an open and multi-purpose space.

To the south, hilly, undulating meadowland connects the campus with the commons. In addition to bringing nature into the campus the landscape also contributes to climate change adaptation by adding a capacity to handle stormwater. Delaying rainwater in depressions in the landscape utilizes the recreational values of the water and creates small wet biotopes that support biodiversity, enable rainwater evaporation and supplements the canal in case of extreme precipitation, thus contributing to climate change adaptation.

The design uses simple, sturdy and durable materials, just as lighting and furnishings are kept to a few, simple elements to ensure a sustainable urban space. All the selected elements are low-maintenance and contribute to the square's green profile.

Results and discussion

1. Design and Planning Approach

COBE's design is based on natural dune topographies and wave-like terrains, creating a unique spatial language. Three large mounds form the plaza's signature identity, each hollowed within to allow for bicycle parking while their outer forms provide seating and walking surfaces. This topographic manipulation transforms a flat area into a dynamic public surface that supports both function and aesthetics.

2. Spatial Qualities and Public Use

The space successfully merges infrastructure with social life. More than 2,000 bicycles can be parked underneath the sculptural mounds, leaving the surface free for public enjoyment. Students, visitors, and passersby use the mounds for relaxation, play, and movement. The layout encourages informal behaviors such as skateboarding, resting, and spontaneous gatherings—characteristics of a truly democratic urban space.

3. Ecological and Sustainable Design

The plaza is built with permeable materials and engineered to absorb and redirect stormwater through natural filtration. Vegetated mounds and tree plantings contribute to microclimatic comfort and biodiversity. The compact design reduces the heat island effect and incorporates maintenance-efficient planting schemes.

4. Artistic and Cultural Dimensions

Beyond function, Karen Blixens Plads is a public artwork. It evokes land art and modernist sculptural traditions through its organic form, while referencing Danish nature and sustainability values. The plaza blurs the line between landscape and architecture—an example of how contemporary landscape design becomes an expression of culture and identity.

From clusters of bikes to an organized landscape of bicycle hills

Photographs of the university square before the Karen Blixens Plads project



Photographs of the university square after the Karen Blixens Plads project



Fig. 1. Aerial view of Karen Blixens Plads, showing the sculptural mounds and bike infrastructure.



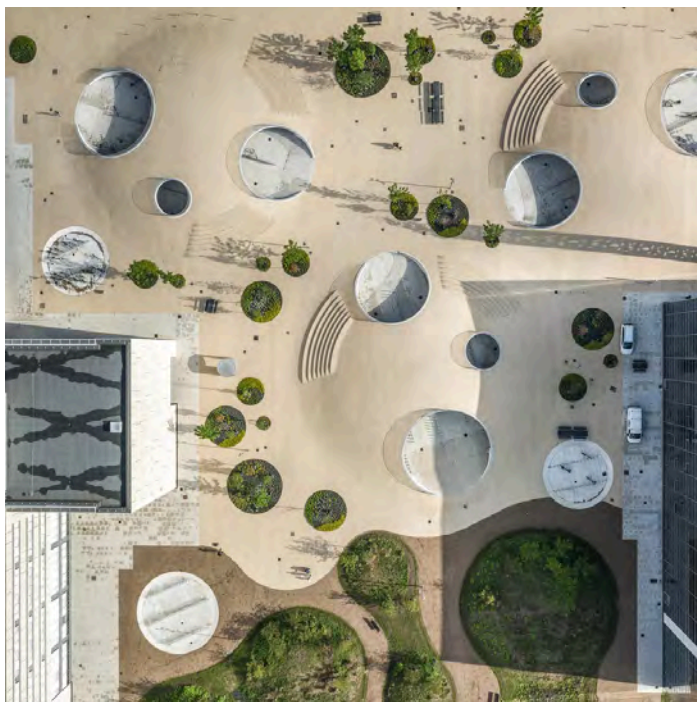


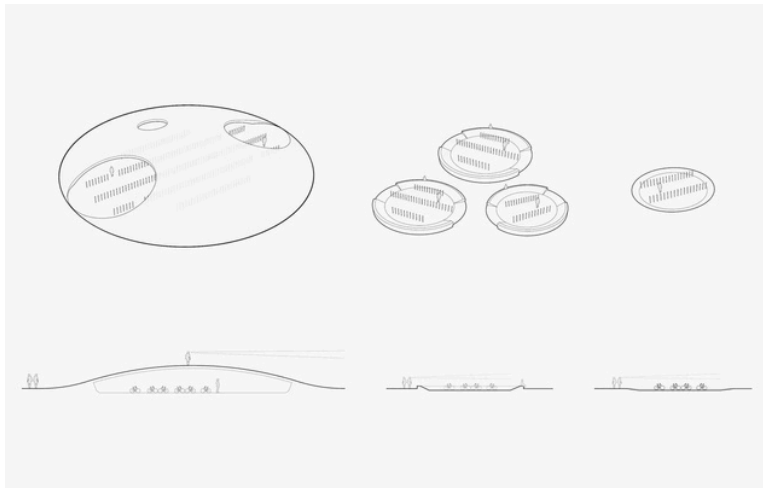
Fig.2. top view of area



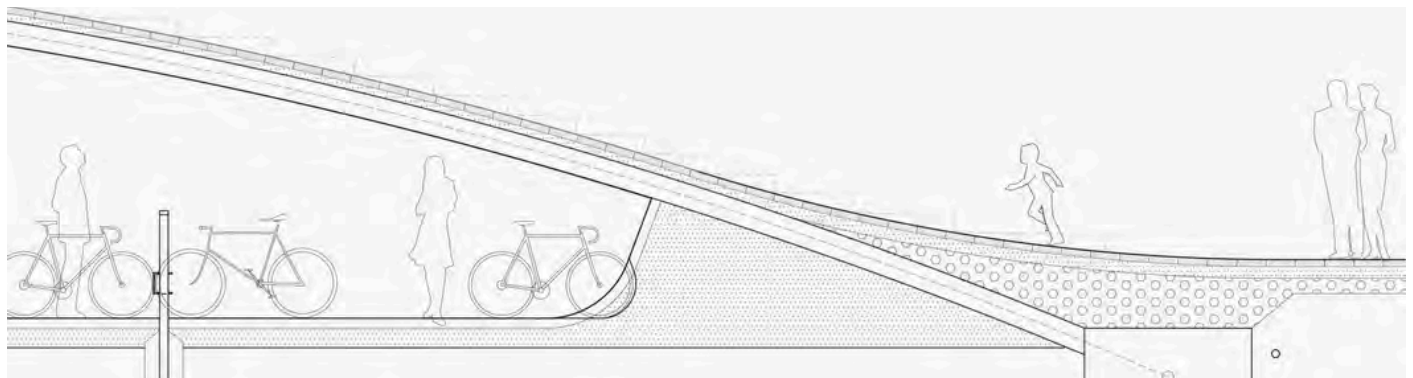
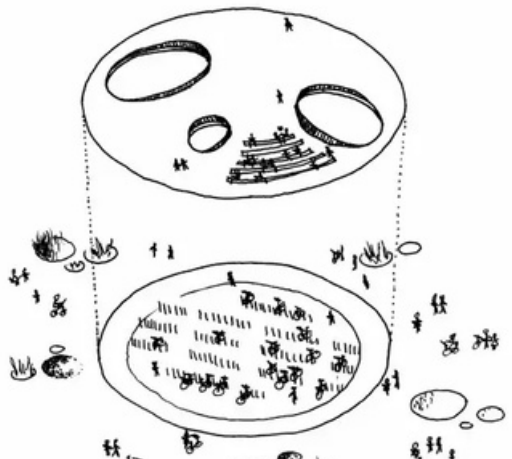
Fig. 3. Users engaging with the terrain as a social space and circulation route.



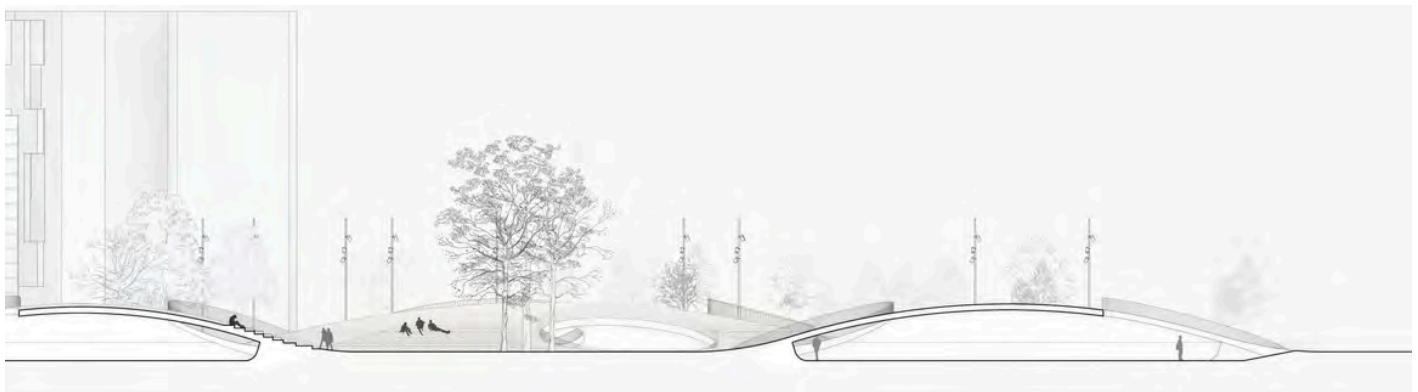
Fig. 4. View of the bikeable landscape mounds at Karen Blixens Plads.



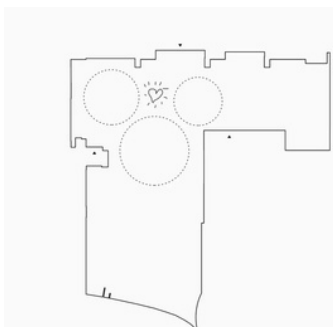
Three types of bicycle parking: Bicycle hills and two types of bicycle beds.



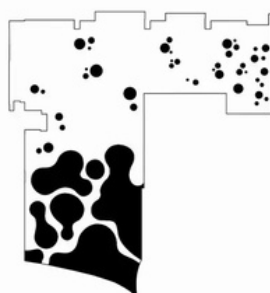
The bicycle hills are created as iconic concrete domes with a shell construction as the load-bearing structure.



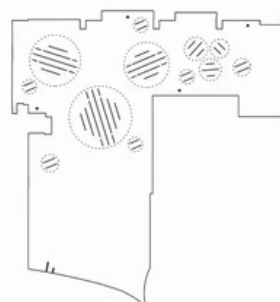
The section of the area offers a flexible zone where many different activities can unfold, including informal breaks, lectures, group work or events outside of school hours, serving as an urban living room.



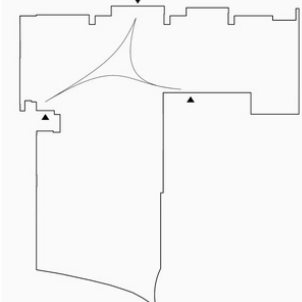
Establishing a meeting place as the heart of the square.



Connecting the landscape with the urban space by forming a gradual transition from Amager Commons to the university square.



Creating room for more than 2,000 bicycles by designing bicycle "pockets" and covered parking shells inside three central "bicycle hills".



Connecting the main three entrances of the university.

Conclusion

Karen Blixens Plads stands out as a powerful example of how landscape architecture can rethink the role of public space in the modern city. It is not just a square, but a hybrid space that combines movement, ecology, and everyday life in a single cohesive design. By integrating infrastructure—like bicycle parking—within sculptural landforms, the design moves beyond conventional urban planning and offers a more poetic, flexible use of space. This approach reflects a growing shift in landscape architecture toward multifunctional design that balances aesthetics with practical, environmental performance.

The project's success lies in its ability to mediate between built and natural environments. The square connects the urban life of the university with the wild, open landscape of Amager Fælled, offering a gradual and respectful transition between architecture and nature. At the same time, the use of sustainable materials, water-sensitive design strategies, and low-maintenance planting contributes to long-term ecological resilience.

Perhaps most importantly, Karen Blixens Plads proves that large-scale infrastructure can be beautiful, inviting, and socially inclusive. Rather than hiding functional needs, the design celebrates them—turning bicycle parking and stormwater management into integral parts of the user experience. It is a reminder that thoughtful landscape architecture can shape not just spaces, but the way people live, move, and connect with their environment.

As cities around the world face increasing pressure from urbanization and climate change, projects like Karen Blixens Plads offer valuable lessons. They show that innovative public spaces can be both functional and poetic—grounded in sustainability, yet open to imagination. For designers, planners, and communities alike, it serves as an inspiring model of what a 21st-century urban landscape can be.

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank my instructors for their guidance throughout the research process, and I am especially grateful for the publicly available resources and design documentation provided by COBE Architects, which greatly contributed to the understanding of Karen Blixens Plads. Additional thanks go to the authors and editors of *Landscape Architecture and Art* journal, whose format and structure inspired the presentation of this work.

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LINEAR ECOLOGY

The Living Infrastructure of Sagrera Park

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SAGRERA UNCOVERED: LANDSCAPE IN MOTION

Barcelona's Sagrera Linear Park emerges as a crucial component in rethinking urban infrastructure through ecological sensitivity. Located atop a former railway corridor, the park responds to the need for integrative green infrastructure in dense metropolitan environments. More than a recreational strip, it performs as a living system, shaping water, biodiversity, and public experience.

As part of the greater Sagrera redevelopment area, this linear park bridges neighborhoods previously disconnected by rail tracks, reconnecting people with place. With climate change accelerating urban vulnerabilities, especially heat islands and stormwater surges, Sagrera's approach prioritizes visibility and performance in its infrastructure.

What makes this park exceptional is how it reframes traditional park typologies. It doesn't just decorate the city but actively filters, cools, and educates. The park becomes a landscape of motion—hydrologically, socially, and ecologically.



THE URBAN CHALLENGE: LINEAR VOID TO ECOLOGICAL SPINE

The space once defined by infrastructural absence—a sunken railway divide—is now transformed into a linear ecological spine. Linear parks, by virtue of their length and connectivity, have an unmatched potential to regenerate urban ecologies. Sagrera’s design leverages this potential by blending mobility infrastructure with green systems.

Integrated pathways allow for uninterrupted pedestrian and cycling movement. Native tree canopies mitigate heat along transit routes, while bioswales adjacent to tracks manage stormwater runoff. More than a buffer, the green corridor becomes a multispecies passage, offering continuity in both social and ecological terms.

The park’s longitudinal logic aligns with Barcelona’s greater mobility goals, linking neighborhoods to public transport hubs. In doing so, it creates a resilient and equitable public space where movement, rest, and ecology overlap. Sagrera sets a precedent for how post-industrial voids can become urban lifelines.



ECOLOGICAL STRATEGY: INFRASTRUCTURE AS ECOLOGY

Instead of concealing infrastructure underground, Sagrera Linear Park brings it to the surface. Bioswales, permeable pavements, and rain gardens visibly manage water. These elements respond dynamically to rainfall events, absorbing, filtering, and slowly releasing water into the soil.

Plant species are selected not only for aesthetics but for drought resistance, root structure, and contribution to urban habitat diversity. The use of native and adaptive species minimizes maintenance and irrigation needs while encouraging pollinator populations and avian return.



The design uses topography as a tool. Slight gradients channel water toward planted basins. Layers of vegetation and soil treat runoff in-situ, reducing dependency on external drainage. In Sagrera, the ground is not passive—it performs.

TOPOGRAPHIC DESIGN: SCULPTING FLOW: A TOPOGRAPHIC CHOREOGRAPHY



Water doesn't simply pass through Sagrera; it is orchestrated. The park's terrain is shaped to slow, store, and display water movement. Shallow basins carved into the landscape create opportunities for filtration and sedimentation. These basins double as gathering spaces during dry weather.



The linearity of the site is broken into rhythmic zones: depressions, plateaus, and berms, each performing specific hydrological functions. Cross-sectional design shows how landform is manipulated to handle different rainfall intensities.



This topographic choreography ensures that Sagrera remains adaptable. It can absorb high-intensity storms and sustain its vegetation during prolonged dry spells. The design teaches that land, when shaped intentionally, becomes a hydrological tool.

SOCIAL & SENSORIAL ENGAGEMENT: PUBLIC PERFORMANCE OF LANDSCAPE



Sagrera invites interaction. Children play in shallow water features designed for seasonal variability. Adults rest in shaded bioswales where birds nest and bees forage. The park is not a spectacle to observe but a system to inhabit.

The sensory dimension of the park amplifies its ecological role. Visitors feel the cooling effect of evapotranspiration under tree canopies. They hear the trickle of rainwater being filtered through gravel beds. They see how flora changes with the seasons, learning that ecology is not static.

This performative quality transforms park visitors into participants. By making infrastructure sensorially legible, Sagrera fosters ecological awareness through daily engagement.



RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY: DESIGNING FOR THE UNCERTAIN

Urban landscapes must now operate under uncertainty. Climate forecasts predict more frequent extreme weather events, and urban spaces must respond. Sagrera does so through redundancy, flexibility, and low-energy systems.

Its planted systems are multi-functional. Rain gardens double as biodiversity pockets. Tree groves act as both habitat and heat mitigation structures. The park's design adapts over time, with planting regimes that accommodate succession and disturbance.

Maintenance is decentralized. Rather than relying on energy-intensive irrigation, the park relies on stored water and native species. The park is not only sustainable; it is regenerative.

Reflection & Relevance: A Prototype for Tomorrow's Cities

Sagrera Linear Park redefines what it means to be an urban park. It is not ornamental but operational. It doesn't hide its function but showcases it, engaging citizens in the performance of urban ecology.



Compared to models like the High Line in New York or Madrid Río, Sagrera prioritizes functionality over spectacle. Its layered systems demonstrate how cities can embed climate resilience within their everyday spaces. It is both infrastructure and pedagogy.

As a prototype, it shows that even narrow, constrained sites can perform at multiple levels—ecologically, socially, and technically. In the Anthropocene city, parks must do more. Sagrera leads by doing just that: performing ecology in public.



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Tainan Spring

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Site Plan

*visual documentation
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*Prepared by Sude Vural
natural system and design / Spring 2025*

Tainan Spring: A Public Space Reborn

*Transforming an abandoned mall into
an inclusive, water-filled landscape*

Once a sunken mall, now a civic landscape shaped by memory, ecology, and public life.



Tainan Spring is a public space project located in the city of Tainan, Taiwan. It was designed by the Dutch architecture firm MVRDV, together with local collaborators and the city authorities. The project was completed in 2020 and is situated on the site of the former China-Town Mall, a shopping center that had been abandoned for years and disconnected from the urban life around it.

The area where the mall once stood used to be a canal before it was filled in to make space for the mall.

Tainan Spring, this space has been reimagined as a shallow water plaza where people can walk, play, and cool off during hot days. Some parts of the original structure were intentionally left in place, adding a sense of memory and history to the new design.

By turning a forgotten and unused area into a lively, nature-based public space, the project brings people back to the heart of the city. It also shows how cities can create meaningful places for the community by rethinking old spaces instead of building something entirely new.

**THE SITE ONCE COVERED A
HISTORIC WATERWAY-
UNTIL URBAN GROWTH
SEALED IT SHUT.**

The area where Tainan Spring now exists has a layered history. Long before the project, the site was part of a canal system that played an important role in the city's development. The canal connected Tainan's old harbor to the inner parts of the city, acting as both infrastructure and a cultural reference point.

However, during the 1980s, this waterway was covered to make room for a shopping mall—China-Town Mall. Built on top of the canal, the mall was seen as a symbol of modernization, but it never truly connected with its surroundings.

Over time, the mall became disconnected from public life. As consumer habits changed and the structure aged, the space slowly emptied out and was eventually abandoned. What was once a place meant to bring people together ended up isolating them.

The decision to demolish the mall and reintroduce the canal was both practical and symbolic. It opened a path to restore not only the flow of water, but also the social and ecological memory of the site. This move marked the beginning of a new relationship between the city and its lost landscapes.

Layers of the Past

From buried canal to concrete mall

REUSING SPACE, REVEALING WATER

Tainan Spring was not designed as a complete erasure of the past. Instead, it is built upon it—both physically and conceptually. The design team decided to keep parts of the old China-Town Mall structure, especially the concrete columns, as “urban ruins.” These remains give the space a sense of depth and time, while blending with the newly introduced elements like water, plants, and seating.

The heart of the site is a sunken public plaza that transforms with the seasons. In dry times, it becomes a stage-like space for walking, gathering, or just cooling off. During rainy months, it holds water like a shallow lagoon. This natural change allows the space to stay alive and adaptive without the need for mechanical systems.

Instead of rebuilding, the designers worked with what existed and created an adaptive public landscape shaped by water and time.

Designing with What Remains

Instead of adding new buildings, the designers focused on subtraction—removing unnecessary layers and opening the site to light and air. Mist-spraying systems are integrated for passive cooling, and native plants were used to create a resilient microclimate. Many surfaces are permeable, allowing rainwater to drain naturally into the soil.

Pathways, glass floors, and small open structures are added in a way that respects what’s already there. The result is not just a park, but an evolving civic space that invites both memory and movement. Tainan Spring becomes a model for how forgotten places can be reimagined using the simplest materials: what is left, what is needed, and what nature can offer.



Tainan Spring offers a new model for sustainable urban transformation—by using less

How cities can rethink what they already have

Tainan Spring is more than a public park—it is a strategy. It shows how cities can address climate, memory, and social needs not by building more, but by rethinking what is already there. By avoiding full demolition, the project minimized construction waste and preserved part of the site's character.

The use of passive cooling systems like misting, shade, and water not only helps with heat but also creates an enjoyable space for the public. Rainwater is allowed to collect naturally in the lagoon, reducing pressure on the city's infrastructure. At the same time, the design encourages interaction—people walk barefoot in the water, children play, families gather.

Adapt, Don't Replace



This kind of low-impact, high-engagement design reflects a shift in how we think about sustainability. Instead of relying on high-tech solutions, it uses local climate, landscape, and leftover structures to create something meaningful.

In a time when cities around the world are questioning how to adapt and stay resilient, Tainan Spring offers a simple but powerful answer: reuse, reconnect, and open up space. Its success proves that sustainable design does not have to be complex—it just has to be thoughtful.

BY USING LESS, OPENING MORE, AND LETTING NATURE BACK IN

Motion, Memory, Space.

*A space
where
water,
shade,
ruins
shape
daily
life*

At Tainan Spring, the boundary between design and use is intentionally blurred. The shallow water, the remnants of the mall, and the soft planting allow visitors to explore, pause, or even play. The plaza becomes a place of daily routine—where people stop on their way to work, children run barefoot through the mist, and seniors rest in the shade of remaining structures.

The project doesn't force a specific kind of use. Instead, it offers a flexible landscape that adapts to different needs.

Moving Through Design

The sunken plaza becomes a gathering point on weekends, and a quiet space on weekday mornings.

This responsive design encourages not just activity but also observation. People sit on steps, dangle their feet in the water, and enjoy the sounds of wind and birds. This sensory engagement creates a stronger bond between citizens and their public spaces.

More importantly, it makes the site feel like it belongs to the people. It doesn't feel like a typical park. It feels lived in. As a result, Tainan Spring fosters a sense of collective ownership—turning a previously ignored part of the city into a place of shared experience and memory.

user experiences



Softening the City



MAKING
SPACE
WITHOUT
TAKING
SPACE.

*This is not just a story of design
—it's a quiet suggestion that our cities can heal if we let them.*

What Tainan Spring teaches us about trust, place, and remembering how to stay?

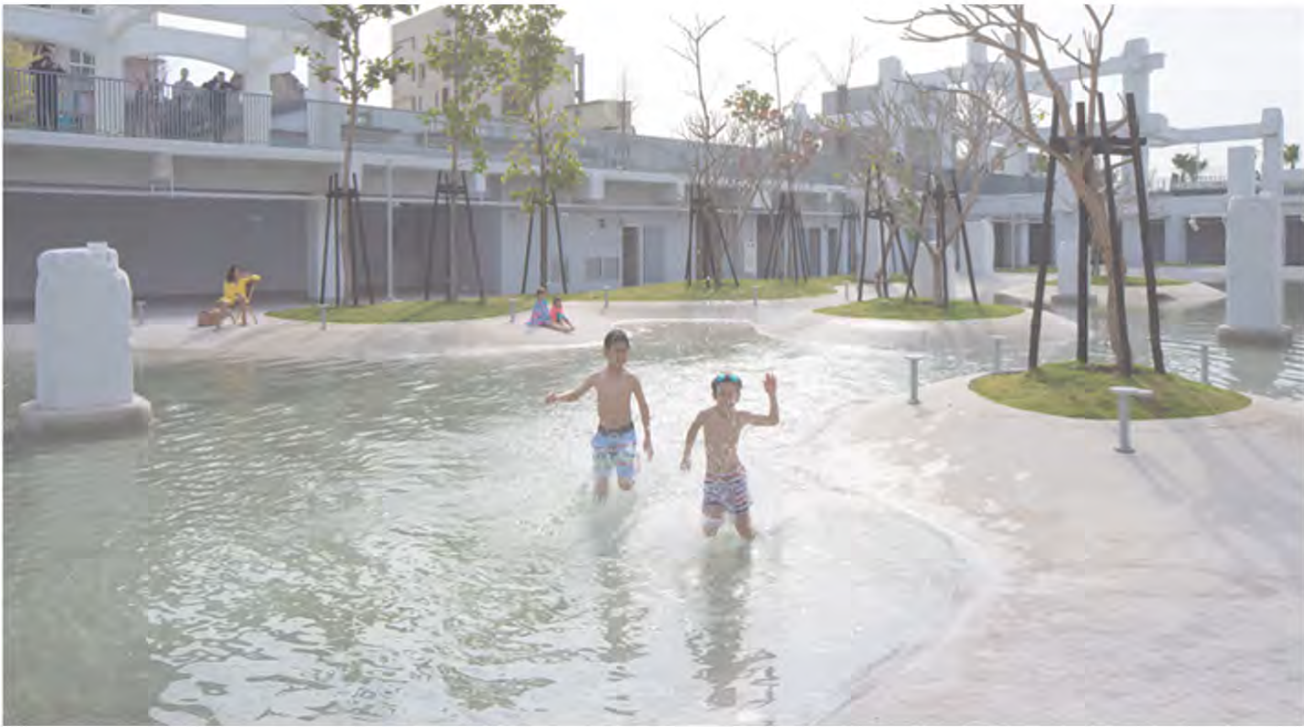
Tainan Spring is not a loud project. It doesn't shout for attention or try to impress through scale. Instead, it gently invites people in. It doesn't aim to erase what was there, but to reshape it into something meaningful. In this way, the project models a kind of urban care that is often forgotten in modern development: the care of listening, waiting, and working with what already exists.

By retaining fragments of the China-Town Mall, the design embraces imperfection. It shows that not everything broken needs to be replaced. Some things can be softened, repurposed, remembered. This gesture is not only symbolic—it is deeply practical. It reduces waste, conserves material, and honors memory.

The shallow pool, plantings, open air, and simple textures show that richness in space does not come from complexity, but from the sensitivity of how things are placed. Nothing is over-designed. The space gives room for the unexpected—for a child to splash in water, for a passerby to pause, or for someone to return again and again, finding something slightly different each time.

LISTENING TO WHAT REMAINS

We shape the present by how much of the past we choose to carry forward.



There is a quiet generosity in this kind of work. Tainan Spring doesn't prescribe how to use the space—it trusts people to figure it out. And that trust is what makes the space feel alive. It becomes a place where people don't just visit but inhabit, where they leave marks, memories, laughter.

This project suggests a shift in how cities might grow in the future—not by doing more, but by doing less, more carefully. In an age of urgency, slowness is revolutionary. Listening to the past, respecting the land, and designing with restraint are no longer luxuries—they are necessities.

What Tainan Spring ultimately offers is hope. Hope that cities can be softened. That not every transformation must come from demolition. That maybe the best kind of innovation is to pause, look around, and ask what still works—and what could bloom again, if simply given light and time.

SITE PLAN

Plans showing how space is structured for memory, ecology, and civic use

These plans reveal how Tainan Spring transforms an abandoned mall into a layered civic space. The site plan shows the sunken plaza's integration into the city's fabric, reintroducing water and natural systems. Public circulation weaves around remnants of the original mall, connecting old and new layers.

By keeping structural fragments and opening the ground, the design respects memory while restoring function. Seasonal flooding is embraced, not prevented, and passive systems such as shading and water flow reduce energy use.



Figure 1. General Site Plan

This plan outlines the sunken plaza in relation to the surrounding buildings and streetscape. It shows how the new landscape carves itself into the urban grid without disconnecting from it.

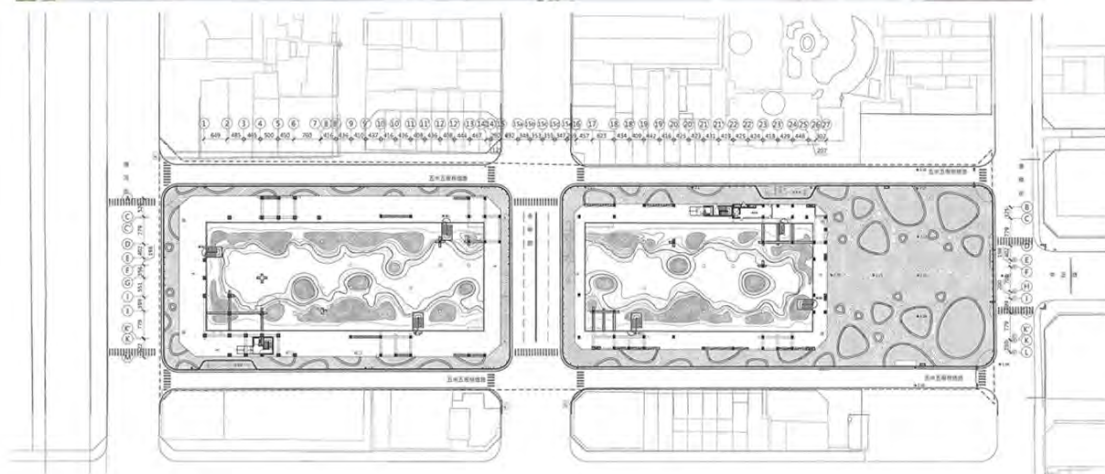


Figure 2. Plaza Circulation and Edges

A closer view of how people move across the plaza, interact with the water, and transition between the old building fragments and new layers of design.

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AMSTERDAM

Schiphol Airport



DESIGNING A GREENER
WAY TO TRAVEL

JUNE 2025

Today, airports are very important places. Many people use them every day. They fly to other cities and countries. But airports are not only for flying. They are also big spaces where people can walk, sit, shop, and eat. Some airports are very big and modern. Some are small and old. Schiphol Airport is a big and modern airport in Amsterdam. It is one of the largest airports in Europe. Every year, millions of people use Schiphol Airport. But Schiphol is not only for planes. It is also a place where people can feel good. It is clean, green, and nice. The design helps people feel comfortable. The airport also helps the planet by using green energy. In this essay, I will talk about Schiphol Airport. I will explain its design, ideas, and how it helps people and the world. Amsterdam is a very important city in Europe. It is a big center for culture, business, and travel. Many people come to Amsterdam every year. They use Schiphol Airport to visit the city and other parts of Europe. Airports are also important for the economy. They create many jobs and help the local community. Schiphol is one of the biggest employers in the region. This makes the airport very important for both the city and the country.



Project Information

Schiphol Airport is in Amsterdam, Netherlands. It is in a place called Haarlemmermeer. This area is not far from the city center. The airport was first built in 1916. At that time, it was very small. Now, it is very large. Today, it is one of the top airports in Europe. Every year, about 70 million passengers come to Schiphol Airport. They come from many different countries. The airport has one big terminal. This is a special design. Many airports have many terminals, but Schiphol only has one. The airport has many runways and buildings. It is still growing every year. Famous architects designed parts of Schiphol. One of them is Benthem Crouwel Architects. Another is Kisho Kurokawa Architects. Now, Royal Schiphol Group owns the airport. They manage the airport and plan for the future. They want Schiphol to be better every year.

Design Philosophy

One Terminal Concept

Most airports have many terminals. Passengers need to take buses or trains to go from one terminal to another. This can be difficult and take time. But Schiphol has one big terminal. This makes it easy for passengers. They can walk to different parts of the airport. They do not need to use buses or trains inside the airport. The airport is designed like one big building. Passengers can find shops, restaurants, and gates in the same area. It is easy to find everything. The idea of one terminal helps people feel less tired and less stressed. It also saves time. People can enjoy their time in the airport more.

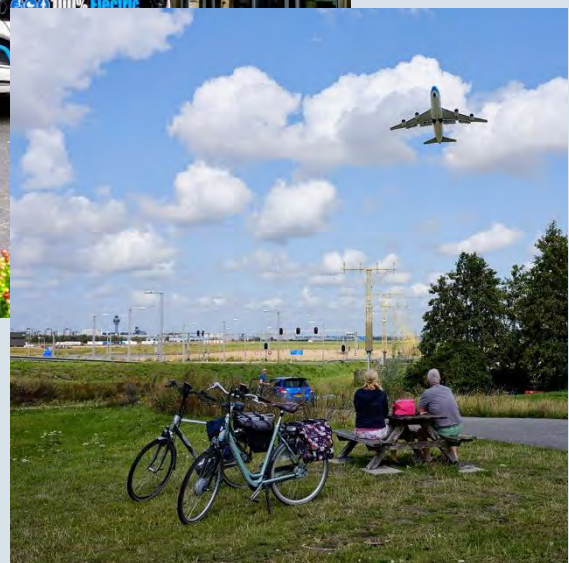


Dutch Style

Schiphol Airport shows the style of the Netherlands. It uses a lot of glass and water. These are important in Dutch design. Inside the airport, there is a lot of natural light. Big windows bring sunlight inside. This makes the space feel open and bright. There are also plants and green spaces inside the terminal. These help people relax. They also show the connection to Dutch landscape. In some parts of the airport, there are water features. They remind passengers of Dutch water management and culture. This design makes Schiphol different from many other airports. It feels modern but also connected to nature.

Sustainability

Schiphol Airport wants to help the planet. It works to be a green airport. It uses many ways to save energy and reduce pollution. First, the airport uses LED lights. These lights use less electricity. They also last a long time. This helps save energy and money. Second, the airport uses natural air. It has big windows and good ventilation. This means less need for air conditioning. It keeps the air fresh and saves energy. Third, the airport uses smart building systems. These systems control lights, temperature, and air. They help use energy only when needed. Schiphol also has a big goal. It wants to be carbon neutral by 2030. This means the airport will not add more carbon to the air. It will use clean energy, like wind and solar power. The airport also works on recycling. It uses recycled materials in building and repairs. It also asks shops and restaurants to recycle waste. Schiphol Airport has many bike parking areas. Many people in the Netherlands use bikes. The airport wants to support this. There are safe and easy parking places for bikes near the terminals. This helps reduce car traffic and pollution. The airport also uses green roofs on many buildings. These roofs have plants and grass. They help keep the buildings cool. They also help manage rainwater. Green roofs are good for the environment and make the airport look nicer. Public transport is very important at Schiphol. There are many trains and buses that come to the airport. This makes it easy for passengers to travel without using cars. Good public transport helps reduce CO2 emissions.



Design Components

Spatial Planning

Schiphol Airport is very big. But it is easy to use. The airport has one big main hall. This is called the main spine. The main spine helps passengers find their way. Shops, restaurants, and gates are next to the main spine. The airport has open spaces. The ceilings are high. There are no small dark places. Passengers can walk easily. They can see where to go. This helps people feel relaxed.



Materials

Schiphol uses many good materials. There is a lot of glass. This brings in natural light. There is also wood inside the airport. This makes the place feel warm and friendly. Green plants are in many places. They help passengers feel calm. It is nice to see nature inside a big airport.

Passenger Experience

Schiphol cares about passengers. It wants them to feel good in the airport. There are quiet zones. People can rest there. There are also art pieces from the Rijksmuseum. Passengers can enjoy the art when they wait. Lighting is soft. It feels like sunlight. The airport is not noisy. There are special designs to keep noise low. The airport has family areas where parents and children can play and relax. This makes the journey easier for families. There are also business lounges for people who need to work. These areas are quiet and have good internet. Business travelers can prepare for their meetings here. Signs and information desks are easy to find. Passengers can get help quickly if they need it. Good signs help people feel safe and happy in the airport.

Theoretical Ideas

Some airports feel cold and not friendly. They are places where people wait but do not feel happy. This is called a "non-place." Schiphol wants to be a real place. It is more than a place to wait for a plane. The airport uses art, plants, and natural light. It also shows Dutch culture with water and glass. Passengers remember this airport. The airport also follows green design ideas. It saves energy and helps the planet. There are train connections to the airport. Many passengers come by train, not by car. This reduces pollution and is good for the environment.



Environment and Society

Schiphol Airport cares about the environment. It uses many green ideas. It wants to be carbon neutral by 2030. It also works with local people. When the airport grows, it asks people for ideas. The airport uses clean energy. It puts solar panels on roofs. It also buys green electricity. Recycling is very important. Shops and restaurants must recycle waste. The airport uses recycled materials in new buildings. Schiphol supports local businesses. Many local companies work with the airport. This helps the local economy and creates jobs. The airport also has community programs. It works with schools and organizations. It teaches young people about travel and green ideas. Schiphol is also a part of the city. There are hotels and offices near the airport. People can work and live near the airport. This makes Schiphol an urban place, not only an airport.

Conclusion

Schiphol Airport is a good example of modern airport design. It helps passengers feel good. It also helps the planet. The airport uses green energy and smart design. It is easy to use and shows Dutch culture. Schiphol is not only a place for planes. It is a place for people. It is a place that passengers remember. In the future, Schiphol will continue to grow and improve. It will bring new green ideas and better experiences for passengers. Schiphol will always be a smart, green, and friendly airport.