Show 2019
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“When it came to designing, the modern mind had no equals. Designs were one article of which modern societies, and their members, never ran short. The history of the modern era has been a long string of contemplated, attempted, pursued, seen through, failed or abandoned designs. Designs were many and different, but each one painted a future reality different from the one the designers knew. And since the future does not exist as long as it remains ‘in the future’, and since in dealing with the non-existent one cannot ‘get one’s facts straight’, there was no telling in advance, let alone with certainty, what the world emerging at the other end of the efforts of construction would be. Would it indeed be, as anticipated, a benign, user-friendly and pleasurable world, and would the assets budgeted and laid aside for the purpose and the approved work schedules prove adequate for transferring that world from the drawing board into the future present?”


This quote speaks to all of the disciplines that have now come together in the newly formed School of Design, and to the challenges faced in a contemporary context. From the drawing board to the ‘future present’, we all continue to be involved in realising some kind of project, in planning its execution, and ensuring that adequate and appropriate resources are available and accounted for. Whether it be designs for buildings, for spatial arrangements, for concepts, products, or for narrative engagement, we are all critical participants in a complex economy of creative and professional challenges and opportunities.

The students’ work that is on display here, supported by the tutors who have worked with them to achieve their ambitions, is testament to the seriousness with which the critical challenges that currently face us are taken. Whether we continue to design our way out of such challenges, and remain on the path to the future, as envisaged by our modern predecessors, or adopt an entirely different mode of engagement – one that embraces non-linearity, uncertainty, and the reconstituted status of the human in a vastly expanded universal matrix of digital and analogue components – is a question that occupies our collective creative energies. The work in this show demonstrates that these challenges are being met with the kind of energy and acuity that means we can all be confident about the future, even if we do not know exactly what it holds.

My thanks and admiration go to all of the students and staff for making this inaugural School of Design show such a great success. Your contribution does not end here though, and we look forward to you returning to contribute to our ongoing endeavours as a creative community.

Professor Stephen Kennedy
Head of School
The Landscape Architecture and Urbanism courses (BA, MA, MLA, MSc and PhD) at the University of Greenwich are focused on the speculative design of future landscapes and cities, informed by site-focused research in specific local, regional and global contexts. This year began with recognition in the International Landscape School’s Prize, with five Masters student projects, by John-Joseph Watters, Cesare Cardia, Mais Kalthoum, Max Barnes and Rosie Martin, being exhibited in Barcelona at the International Landscape Architecture Biennial in Barcelona. The year finished with Rebecca McDonald-Balfour, a student on the BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture course, winning one of the Landscape Institute Student Travel Awards to study the transformation of public space during the Extinction Rebellion protests.

Between these achievements the year has been defined by students gaining employment with leading practices such as Martha Schwartz Partners, LDA Design and Arup. Alec Tosetin, a final year student on the BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture course, began a student placement with The Royal Parks, marking the first year of a 5-year initiative for employment of Greenwich Landscape Architecture students. Liz Stark, from the MLA Landscape Architecture course, was Highly Commended in the Landscape Institute Awards for her project, Phiilolutes & Psycholutes: Loves of Bathing and Lovers of Cold Water. The first Future Cities Summer School was launched with sixteen Year 12 students from across London, with support from friends at the Greater London Authority. The university also partnered with the Landscape Institute for their annual conference and IFLA Europe for their general assembly.

Student design projects focused on the temporal aspects of landscapes through critical investigations of ‘parks’ and ‘maintenance’. Studios explored the histories of parks and speculated on what they may mean for the future, from sites adjacent to the university, such as Royal Park Greenwich, to more complex notions of parks around London’s Heathrow airport, as well as claims for London as a National Park City. Students sensitively worked with stakeholders in places such as Deptford and Brompton Cemetery, reimagining landscape futures and addressing concerns for biodiversity, flooding and interaction with London’s new sewer system. Research is core to all projects and the Advanced Landscape and Urbanism group of staff and students (www.thelandscape.org) has continued to disseminate student work in international publications, including Nadia Amoroso’s Representing Landscapes: Analogue and The Routledge Handbook of Teaching Landscape.

We ended last year with Dan Cook, the CEO of the Landscape Institute, visiting the university and proclaiming: “An impressive exhibition - the profession’s future is in very good hands!” As we approach the end of another academic year, it is great to see the upward trajectory of student successes continuing to rise. Read on!
BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture is the first step in a professional career in Landscape Architecture. It is the only course of its kind in London that is accredited by the Landscape Institute. The course centres on the design studio, working in small class sizes with lecturers from leading landscape architecture practices in London. Students are introduced to inventive approaches in Landscape Architecture and are encouraged to experiment and to develop design speculations for future landscapes and cities. Design projects explore a range of landscapes, working with green roofs, living walls, courtyards, public spaces, parks, squares, waterfronts, urban masterplans and regional strategies. Students also investigate historical contexts and contemporary ideas in Landscape Architecture.

BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture

with studies informed by fieldwork in the UK and abroad. Visits to art galleries, museums and important landscapes in London, as well as lectures by leading international designers and artists, are essential to the course. Classes in ecology, conservation, horticulture, construction, visual representation, drawing skills and digital communication further support the development of design projects.

Academic Portfolio Lead - Landscape:
Dr Ed Wall

Technology Co-ordinator:
Duncan Goodwin

History & Theory Co-ordinators:
Tim Waterman (Years 1 & 2)
Dr Benz Kotzen (Year 3)
The design-led teaching and learning studio in Year 1 promotes skill-building in design and focuses on broadening students’ understanding of the built environment. It allows landscape architecture students to become visual thinkers, and more importantly, to become critical thinkers.

Throughout the year, students were challenged and given the opportunity to learn through a continuous feedback loop, to develop and apply their skills, such as sketching, drafting, model-making, both to investigate as well as to solve problems and develop site-specific design proposals. Students built confidence through making, techniques of landscape representation and iterative design thinking processes.

We investigated the multiple ecologies of a site and developed proposals that responded to their landscape’s tangible and intangible characteristics. The output was a ‘Landscape Artefact’ (or Dispositif) for play and contemplation. We aimed to challenge the students’ assumptions and foster creativity, asking them to explore, interrogate and communicate the landscape(s) around in ways unfamiliar to them. The objective was to improve the students’ ability in putting forward a structured and reasoned argument explaining their decisions.

We started by approaching the site in a free and intuitive manner to, later, explore interpretative tools that helped to generate critical and creative approaches and responses. Students used and develop skills and techniques such as model-making, casting, painting, drawing, collage, photography, video and printing, exploring and experimenting with the widest possible range of media, whether analogue or digital, 2D, 3D or 4D.

The exposure to a vast range of media, materials and techniques was aimed at helping them to discover the potential of experimentation, testing and reflexive practice.

The project was simultaneously research based and propositional. It explored ‘the liminal’ as a geographical/spatial concept, to identify spaces and propose strategies/tactics for occupation. One could propose that a liminal space is the time between the ‘what was’ and the ‘next’. It is a place of transition, waiting, and not knowing. Liminal space is where all transformation takes place. It is a place that is used, yet it is not used. Using the stretch of urban fabric around the University of Greenwich campus, students were encouraged to walk, observe, identify, experience, analyse, reflect upon, and formulate a network of ‘in between’ spaces (ie. thresholds, spaces in transition, abandoned, not in use, etc.) along that route.

The final part of the project built upon the research and analysis that emerged from the explorations on the site through the lens of ‘the liminal’. After the spaces were identified, using survey, analysis and mapping techniques and methodologies, students were challenged to identify strategies/tactics for occupation and developed a design proposal for a pocket park within the proposed network of spaces: the fragmented park.

The project allowed students to explore a dynamic multiscale approach, identifying characteristics, defining qualities and formulating strategies both at larger and smaller scales, to produce spaces that can be both productive and socially engaging.
The good of the people should be the supreme law. So say writers on government from Cicero to Locke, and so says Lewisham Borough Council on its coat of arms. But who are the arbiters of this public good and what should they do with our public spaces? Are public parks an anachronism in a city where private guards control our spaces with arcane rules?

Working on sites in Lewisham, we examined our values to answer these urgent questions and found they gravitated towards different corners of the profession. Some were fired by the politics of space, considering the ways that landscape design can respond to a spectrum of human need, from food and shelter to emotional fulfillment and ecological identity. Others were inspired by the unique set of cultural memories embedded in a place and the ways these can be read and rebild through design. Others revolved in the delight of the material and richness of sensory experience.

The studio system allowed the students to learn from each other’s interests and broaden the scope of their thinking. The results were places of respite for the homeless, of refuge for wildlife, of political outrage and collective grief, libraries, orchards, allotments and burial grounds, places of pilgrimage, play, performance and art. Our questioning went to the existential heart of the profession. If a landscape is ephemeral wrought by social, geophysical and ecological processes from the beat of a bee’s wing, to the vast rumble of tectonic plates, what then to make of design drawings that depict landscapes as asp, unchanging and, to all intents and purposes, dead? We needed to find ways of drawing and modelling that captured the dynamic nature of landscape. We saw ourselves as sitting somewhere along this timeline of change: designers as editors and curators of the past, and stewards or catalysts of the future. Some of the group preferred to hold the reins tightly, zealous parents unwilling to let go of their proposals. But how could they mitigate for an uncertain future?

Others were happy to release their projects to agents of change: plants and animals were invited to colonise and local communities encouraged to make and remake their spaces until the designer’s influence was merely one diminishing layer of the city’s palimpsest.

Our first site was a small park in Bermondsey. Students were asked to design not a thing, but a space, a void that would host an event or an experience or a fleeting feeling. But how to define a space? Must it be with physical boundaries or can we use less tangible elements; views, memories, journeys? And how can designers create experiences? Are they in the eye of the beholder or can we spin meanings into our designs for all?

Our second project took a site already rich with meaning, from the baroque church and graveyard at its heart to the vast plumbing tunnels currently being carved out fifty metres below its surface. What should we keep? What should we let go? How should we decide?
London in Facts
1,572 km² in area. 3.8 million gardens. 8.6 million people. 8.3 million trees. 14,000 species, 30,000 allotments, 3,000 parks, 300 farms, 50+ canoe clubs. 1,000 kms of signed footpaths. 850 kms of rivers, canals and streams. 14,000 wildlife species. 2 Special Protection Areas. 3 Special Areas of Conservation. 4 UNESCO sites. 37 SSSIs. 142 Local Nature Reserves. 1,400 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. 2 National Nature Reserves – Richmond Park and Ruslip Woods.

London as Infrastructure
47% green – parks, gardens, woodlands. 2.5% blue – ponds, paddles, canals, rivers, lakes...
And only 9-10% of London is domestic buildings. London has lots of roads but put together they make up just 12% of London space. London has 3.8 million gardens cover 24% of the capital. Gardens are where Londoners have very real power to protect, conserve and create life.

@LondonNPC
Faced with the prospect that we live in an increasingly urbanised world, and that 68% of the work population will live in urban areas (UN 2018), it is time we seriously rethink what is a city and how they operate. One such ‘rethink’ is to imagine cities as parks.
A growing international movement exists to form a Universal Charter of National Park Cities. This movement is real and has met on several occasions. Although different cities are signed up to the charter, few have committed their city as a pilot study for the idea. The major city committed, ready and prepared to act as a testbed for the idea is London.
London Park City began as an idea impulsed by Dan Raven. He has harnessed support from policy-makers, academics, local authorities and would-be critics to promote and push London into unexplored territory of making it the world’s first National Park City. The official launch for London Park City is to take place in May 2019. Problematically (or conveniently?), the NPC will not have any formal planning. So, the traditional powers by which the city controls land development and management will not necessarily be at the disposal of NPC. However, in 2050, with 66% of the work population living in urban areas, formal top-down powers of city-building may have become irrelevant. There are other ways in which citizens, collectives, communities and local authorities can create agencies of soft-power to shape the city-park they desire.
This year, the Year 3 studio explored - through critique and prose - what these soft powers can be. We looked towards London in 2050 and imagined a National Park City that has a Charter, Partnership Structures, a set of Design Codes, and a guide for the soft powers of Planning & Development. We designed future landscapes and urban design projects that were accompanied by a written manifesto. This manifesto was our contribution to the NPC launch that took place in May 2019.
The studio works with numbers.
The studio works with facts.
The studio pushes data-driven design.
From the Bus Stop to the Computer Room

Harry Bix
Dr Shaun Murray

Students:
Tijana Admerovic, Anna Balandova, Jessica Bannfoot,
Oscar Berkeley, Emilia Chakraborty, Alex Colombo,
Asha Das Gupta, Henry Day, Allan Dervish,
Magan Doyle, Georgina Hogg, Angelina Heitner,
Nikita Klymian, Haerw Kayas, Benjamin Keane,
Eve Leithum, Chuan Yin Li,
Damien Michel, Meredith,
Monaco Gretchuk, Hogu Morris, Matt Mountford,
Muhammad Patel, Anastasia Potanina,
Francois Ravees, Tillis Seymour, Lily Van,
Iffrin, Marina Watkins,
Meredith Will, Hongti Xu.

Thanks to:
Duncan Goodwin, Ed Will.

The students were asked to reinterpret their
journey to the studio, a single term form finding
exercise through 3D computer modelling.
Junctions along travel routes began to site
structures, extracted foregrounds from an
individual’s vision cone formed new surfaces.
One’s own biological state, the cost of a ticket, bus
timetables, thoughts and daydreams, institutional
relationships, verbs that describe movement and
looking, snippets of pop songs heard and the
digestion of breakfast: all can be abstracted to
sets of numeric and spatial data. The relations
between objects and people, processes and
ecologies merged with existing landscapes.

Students were challenged to communicate
their ideas in the aesthetic language of
extrusions, projections and patches in plan,
section, axonometric, diagram and render, and
the oportunity to rethink the conventions of
communication, continually aware that, as with the
pen, modelling software can both limit and propel
design thinking. How might we disrupt software
to our own speculative advantage? How might we
map our own processes of representation within,
and integral to, our landscapes?
Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA)
The MLA is designed for graduates who wish to become professional landscape architects. The course is accredited by the Landscape Institute, offering a 2-year graduate entry conversion route for candidates from diverse backgrounds such as art, architecture, horticulture, geography and social sciences. Graduates are eligible to become registrants members of the Landscape Institute and begin the Pathway to Chartered. Students explore a diverse range of approaches to the design of landscapes, such as green roofs, living walls, courtyards, public spaces, parks, squares, waterfronts, urban masterplans and regional strategies. Students develop skills and knowledge in design, history, theory, professional practice, technology, ecology, sustainability, horticulture, drawing and digital representation. The course has a close relationship with industry, and an extensive alumni network, resulting in exclusive work experience opportunities with The Royal Parks, innovative and distinct approaches to landscape architecture in the final design project and written thesis. Design teaching is informed by professional and technical seminars, theory lectures, and guest lectures from international artists, designers and academics.

MSc Architecture Landscape and Urbanism
The MSc encourages students to develop inventive and speculative approaches to the design of cities, landscape and territories. The course promotes strong design methods and the integration of innovative technologies to address the challenges facing cities, such as urban growth, climate change, globalisation and social inequality. The course interrogates the growing influence of landscape on urban, social and ecological processes, providing a platform from which to address the conditions of contemporary urbanism, such as extreme environmental events, shifting economic agendas, new forms of public space and the transformations to urban infrastructures. The course centres on the design studio, with advanced design techniques and innovative methodologies are employed to develop speculative designs, strategies and interventions. The course is designed for those aiming to develop advanced design skills or use in architecture, landscape and urban design practice, and for those looking to enhance their academic skills and/or go on to doctoral study.

Academic Portfolio Lead - Landscape:
Dr Ed Wall

Masters Co-ordinator:
Dr Ben Kotzen

Technology Co-ordinator:
Duncan Goodwin

Theory Co-ordinator:
Tim Waterman

Masters Landscape Architecture + Urbanism

and strong graduate employment with renowned practices such as Gustafson Porter + Bowman, Martha Schwartz Partners and Gross Max. The course attracts applicants who are changing career or furthering their work in Landscape Architecture.

MA Landscape Architecture
The MA course is designed for individuals interested in becoming professional Landscape Architects. Graduates have joined some of London’s leading landscape practices, have founded award-winning international design studios and have led strategic urban design projects such as the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The course has a high international profile, with published and award-winning student projects recognised in the Landscape Institute Awards and the International Biennial of Landscape Architecture. The core component of the course is the design studio, with student investigations addressing concerns about climate change, ecological conditions, spatial justice, urban development and future technologies. Students are supported in the development of...
‘The edgelands are the debatable space where city and countryside fray into one another. They comprise jerry, jumbled, broken ground, brownfield sites, utilities infrastructure, crackling substations, pallet depots, transit hubs, sewage farms, scrub forests, sluggish canals, allotments, retail parks and guerrilla ecologies.’

- Paul Farley and Michael Symmons Roberts

Unit A has been exploring, defining and re-designing the urban futures for the West London Edgelands.

The Unit investigates the Edeland conditions within the M4, M3, M25, A4 and A30, including London Heathrow Airport. In contrast to the heavy transport corridors and flight paths, the West London Edgelands also offers a mix of familiar, competing green belt characteristics: golf courses, large hospitals, ‘horse culture’, shooting ranges and yards, jockeying with nature reserves, the remnants of rich farmland, pasture and ancient woods.

The Unit brief presumption is that the 3rd runway at Heathrow Airport will never be built. As a consequence, there is the possibility that in the long-term the airport will be relocated outside the M25. In addition a “Grand Paris Express” style rapid transit line will, in the near future, connect the outer London Edgelands together.

The following questions have informed the design process:

1. How would you define the Edgelands?

2. What are your motives, intentions and ideas for the future of the Edgelands?

3. What are your tactics, components and tools to steer urban transformation for the Edgelands?

4. How would you re-imagine urban life for the Edgelands?

All proposals were site specific and have taken multiple scales into consideration. This includes strategic interventions that range from territorial to small-scale. The diverse individual interpretation of the West London Edgelands has led to eleven distinct and unconventional projects. There are a variety of (sub)urban themes including youth culture, wildlife road kill, urban farming, loneliness, and mobility.
Brompton cemetery is one of the Magnificent Seven cemeteries, built as a private speculation in the mid 19th century. In 1860 Brompton Cemetery took advantage of a brief opportunity to become public, being bought out by the government. As a result of operating under the general auspices of public good, Brompton Cemetery was uniquely available for the burial of people of all faiths, including unbelievers. In the unit we explored five main questions:

1. Is Brompton Cemetery for everyone?
Although publicly owned, the cemetery was run for profit and still has a money making department devoted to burying people. Now that space is running out, the money taken from burials is far exceeded by the maintenance costs of the park. As a cemetery alone it is not currently economically viable.

2. Is there an economically sustainable future for the cemetery based on a financial model funded by burials?
As a public institution the cemetery has long been operated by The Royal Parks, and in this case the term ‘park’ is not incidental. The cemetery performs many of the roles played by parks: As a place of ecology and biodiversity; as a place of respite; as a place to sit and eat lunch or wait for a football game to start.

3. Where do we draw the line here between the functions of cemetery and park, and what are the implications of that decision?
The cemetery is a matrix of stories in the landscape. There are stories of those who are dead, and then there are ways in which we connect those stories and interpret them to tell meta-stories. For example, it is thought that the characters in Beatrix Potter books are to be found on the cemetery gravestones where she liked to walk.

4. How can we use the Brompton Cemetery landscape to interpret the stories that are present and connect them to tell new stories?
Whilst many of the Magnificent Seven cemeteries are located such that the natural qualities of the landscape offer visual drama and access to the sublime, Brompton Cemetery is located on a flat site without views. The design for the cemetery thus relied heavily on landscape architecture to enliven and dramatize the space. The scheme, though not completed, is entirely successful.

5. What are the necessary moves required to complete the landscape architectural scene of the cemetery for now and for the future?
Unit C: City on the Brink (of Tomorrow)

Roo Angell
Bob Bagley

MSc:
Ghazal Abajian,
Aseema Noor.

MA:
Casper Baruch, Cailin Trodziowski.

MLA Year 2:
Hal Forbes Adam, Corrie Gudill, Kwanghyun Ko,
Dhilly Lakhani, Henry Wilson.

MLA Year 1:
Tajuan Adams, Oscar Beresley, Amin Davodshahi,
Meredith Gottschall, Fara Ramesh.

Thanks to:
CIC Hutchinson Holdings for providing access to Convoys Wharf site, The Deptford community including groups VoicesDeptford, Deptford Neighbourhood Action and others for their contribution.

Image by
Henry Wilson
D.A.F.T. (Deptford Air Force Team) Intervention

London has always evolved, but the ever-increasing pressure of land values is in danger of limiting the scope for experiment and risk, and with it the creative spark that has always been core to the city’s identity. With growing awareness of limited resources (spatial, environmental and financial), what opportunities do ‘Meanwhile Use’ spaces offer to reinvigorate the landscape sector’s longer-term goals: resilient communities and a strong sense of place contributing to an integrated and healthy city? Meanwhile Use’ space has grown piecemeal in recent years, with temporary housing, community gardens, leisure events and festivals, creative and business start-up spaces. Cheap or zero rents, and less stringent requirements for temporary uses, can give a step onto the first rung of the ladder that would otherwise remain inaccessible to many. This promotes a diverse and creative pool that can in turn either grow into more established channels and/or inform the future of the temporary site. However, the lack of a comprehensive strategy is currently limiting the realisation of its potential.

Unit C took Convoys Wharf as its site and engaged directly with the live project of Sayes Court. We took stock of current Meanwhile Use practice and devised our own criteria for its development. Through design proposals, we reevaluated the traditional skills and expertise of landscape architects towards grassroots regeneration, exploring changing practice, city-building and design issues.

Convoys Wharf is currently characterised as a 40 acre expanse of ex-industrial space bordering the Thames. In 2015 planning permission was granted for the construction of 3,500 homes in a mixed-use development. Despite being 400m from Deptford High Street, the site is currently unoccupied and without activity. Convoys Wharf has a rich history as the site of the much celebrated Gardens of John Evelyn (designed in 1665) and the site of the Royal Docks, originally founded by Henry VIII.

We created a collaborative publication that provided the datum against which proposals can be measured. Part Critical Research Methodology, part Manifesto, this document serves as a detailed analysis of the physical, cultural, social and historic fabric of Deptford, providing a platform upon which we can critique the effectiveness of using long-established techniques such as mapping, drawing, interviews, photography and model-making to best serve our ambitions for capturing a sense of place. The Manifesto is based on the deeper theoretical and experiential basis needed for creating Meanwhile Use proposals which best utilize the elements of meaning, narrative and identity.

This led to the formation of detailed strategies and ultimately discreet proposals exploring how to make the meanwhile meaningful. Students devised and designed a future (short or long-term) Meanwhile Use for Convoys Wharf that synthesised those narratives to facilitate and inform future design, strengthen local economy, contribute to the narrative of development whilst integrating the development into existing local community. Students then projected the evolution of their proposals as the wider site is built out, to bridge the transition and become part of the permanent structure of the city.
Altun Deviç
Deptford Greencoat

Henry Wilson
D.A.F.T. (Dagbodir Air Force Technicians) Intervention
Advanced Studio: Critical Maintenance Practices

Dr Ed Wall
Alicia Gomez Jimenez


Thanks: Anoushka Archip, Graham Durr, James Fox, Duncan Goodwin, De Bent, Kotten, Abel Malavari, Jane Polio, Homon van Rijswijk, Tim Winterton.

Image: George Armour. People's House

‘Dismissed as irrelevant to form making and design, maintenance has been cast aside, appearing (if at all) in the back-section advertisements of architecture magazines or categorized as a problem to be undertaken after construction, not treated as a disciplinary concern or as having any relevance to the production of an art form.’

- Hilary Sample, Maintenance Architecture

In 1969 the New York artist Mierle Ukeles wrote Manifesto for Maintenance Art: 1969. This short text marked a break in her practice, away from making physical artworks, to focus instead on maintenance practices and their associated material flows. Ukeles used the manifesto as a means to critique the term ‘development’ as it refers to the products of contemporary art and claimed the potential of ‘maintenance’ as art. She discussed domestic activities of washing, dusting and protecting actions that had become the focus of her life since becoming a young mother, and she asserted that avant-garde art is dependent upon, and bound up, with maintenance practices. In the manifesto Ukeles questions art practices that deny the presence of maintenance and renders invisible the workers associated with these tasks. She asks: ‘[A]fter the revolution, who’s going to pick up the garbage on Monday morning?’ (Ukeles 1969).

This Term I introductory Masters studio explored the temporality and spatiality of ‘maintenance’ and ‘development’ within the context of Royal Park Greenwich, Building on a 5-year collaboration between the Landscape Architecture and Urbanism courses at the University of Greenwich and The Royal Parks - which includes student employment, teaching and research - we explored the relations between ‘development’ and ‘maintenance’, both as creative design practices. Through the projects we questioned the relations between these practices; we reflected on how these processes are employed in different historical environments and design projects; and we reimagined how development and maintenance can be incorporated in our future landscape and urban design projects.
According to the United Nations, 68% of the world population will be living in urban areas by 2050. It is true that urban expansion, if adequately planned for, has great potential to improve peoples’ lives through easy access to health care, education, housing, transportation and other essential services. However, the continued pace of urban development does create challenges by placing an increasing reliance upon technological infrastructures to provide all the services and goods required to enable society to function effectively within the cities we create.

Urban development has steadily replaced what was previously vegetated land with a variety of hard infrastructures. Trees and other vegetation, as vital elements within the urban ecosystem, are able to offset some of the adverse effects of this urban expansion but, some argue, the system has been pushed beyond its biological capacity to compensate for all anthropogenic disturbances. It is now vital that urban planning and Landscape practitioners discard a pure aesthetic dogma and pursue more creative approaches to ensure that our interventions not merely minimise environmental adversity but also maximise the beneficial services that can be provided by urban ecosystems.

Landscape Architects are in the unique and enviable position of having access to a design tool that contains the fundamental elements; earth and water. These are the building blocks from which we can create the systems that facilitate the solar shading, surface water attenuation, air quality improvements and increased physical and mental well-being, that help to make our cities more pleasant places to be.

Innovation in material technologies and processes has always been at the forefront of our technical modules. We encourage our students to develop more creative approaches, beyond tackling the conventional core issues, that aim to minimise environmental impacts now and into the future whilst also responding to the aesthetic needs of city dwellers. This in part can be achieved by reducing embodied energy and carbon, targeting green infrastructure interventions and embracing the sustainable integration of water management to create effective living, sustainable systems. We invite specialists from a variety of construction disciplines to deliver key technical seminars that sometimes challenge conventional approaches and encourage exploration and discussion. Our students are then expected to reflect on and develop further these approaches in their projects and consider how they may be relevant to their individual and future ambitions.

We provide a rigorous foundation in professional landscape architecture practice for both our undergraduate and postgraduate Landscape Institute accredited programmes. We encourage our students to explore established, historical and future approaches to material trends, emerging technologies, technical detail, professional regulation and project precedent.
Landscape Architecture History and Theory

Teaching of history and theory on the BA (Honours) Landscape Architecture course is conceived as a complete journey over three years through the ideas, politics, art, ethics, buildings and landscapes of human civilisation. The first term of Year 1 introduces students to London, Greenwich and the broad range of research undertaken at the University of Greenwich. Site visits and workshops balance the content between research, lectures and first-hand experiences of architecture, landscapes and cities. A broad overview of architecture, landscape and art history follows in the second term of Year 1 and the first term of Year 2. Students develop their skills in writing and research, gradually framing a set of interests that inform their future studies. Greater focus occurs in the second term of Year 2 when contemporary themes in theory and built work are explored. In the Year 3 dissertation, each student develops research interests both as individuals and in small, themed and tightly guided groups with a dedicated supervisor. A high level of research quality and critical evaluation is expected, and the students are encouraged to pursue themes they are passionate about and forge connections with their design work. Many students undertake during studies that are arising in terms of their written and visual quality, as well as the connections made between sites, projects, and the cutting edge of landscape theory.

Masters Landscape and Urbanism Theory

Masters students explore the critical and theoretical discourses from landscape, architecture and urbanism that engage with the design, planning and production of cities, as well as the interrelationship of the urban, rural and processes of urbanization. There is an emphasis on landscape architecture, architecture, planning and urbanism theory, while aiming to open up interdisciplinary dialogues across design, philosophy, sociology, geography, history and anthropology, among others.

In the final year, Landscape and Urbanism Theory combines lectures, workshops and seminars to present the core theoretical concepts and ensure opportunities for research. There are readings assigned every week that support the teaching and discussion, that help students to structure their own research and discover and/or reinforce their interests. There is much emphasis on discussion for critical evaluation. Readings range across the disciplines that impact landscape architecture, such as J.B. Jackson writing in landscape studies, Michel de Certeau and Henri Lefebvre on the study of everyday life, Jürgen Habermas and Walter Benjamin in political and cultural theory, Don Mitchell and Sharon Zukin on the politics of the contemporary city, David Grahame Shane and Charles Waldheim on urbanism, Elizabeth Meyer and Lorraine Code on ecology and ecological thinking, and Denis Cosgrove and William Cronon on wilderness, nature, the sublime and industrial capitalism. Students choose the focus of the essay, researching a position and perspective developed on the project, practice and theory.

The following pages present excerpts from eight carefully researched and adventurous projects, selected to show the diversity of subjects.
Tangina Ahmed
World’s First National Park City: A Comparative Analysis of how the National Park City Status could Impact London
Dissertation, BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture
Supervisor: Tim Waterman

In a time where there is no shortage of existential challenges, creative and unorthodox solutions must be employed. This is the fundamental thinking behind the concept: “What if London were a National Park City?” (Daniel Raven-Ellison). London’s air-polluted streets and dense urban core may initially deem the city an unlikely candidate for a National Park, but the UK capital is already on the road to becoming the world’s first National Park City. The basic concept is to take the ethos of a National Park and adapt it to the urban environment. Whilst there are obvious differences between the undulating hills of a national park and the protruding urban landscape of the city, the two are not entirely mutually exclusive. It is often perceived that the countryside is home to wildlife while the city is a desolate void exclusively inhabited by humans, however research has shown that due to monoculture and pesticides, vast areas of the countryside boast far less ecological richness than parts of the city. The re-designating of London as a National Park City may not be the most obvious solution to issues such as poor air quality, health and climate change, however through a comparative study this dissertation investigates what the ‘National Park City’ title could potentially denote for London and seeks to determine if real changes can be made through this ambitious proposal. By exploring existing conditions, example models and past events, this dissertation discusses and analyses the aims of the National Park City proposal and evaluates how they can be practically implemented.
This thesis demonstrates the creative ideas of Erasure and Subtraction in the landscape through the work of Estudio Martí Franch (EMF). Martí Franch’s work allows for a multiplicity of viewpoints and processes that abandon the notion of absolute human control in favour of one that is multi-layered and complex as seen in two EMF projects in Spain: Cap de Creus, and Girona, works that placed processes of erasure and subtraction in historical and artistic contexts.

This thesis explores the influence of anarchism on landscape design for children’s play through the lens of pragmatist anarchism; with reference to Colin Ward, and extends to using the theory of affordances, according to James Gibson’s approach. The argument centres on why, as a society, we require more play spaces that allow children greater freedom and independence, and how this can be achieved using models of anarchist-influenced design. Historical case studies were selected to give context to three contemporary projects that were analysed to evaluate to what extent they embody anarchist approaches to play. In questioning the nature and design of historical and contemporary adventure playgrounds using a pragmatist anarchist framework, extended using the theory of affordances and “loose parts”, it became evident that anarchist approaches to play, and specifically self-organisation among children to create their own play environments, is key. But in practice, the extent to which this can happen is not so clear. Landscape architects are in an excellent position to fight for the creation of play spaces that give children the tools to “design the experiences they desire for themselves” (Lane, 2018).

This change in attitude is understood through the recent evolution in design and architecture from a Cartesian rationalist world view, to a Post-Modernist position that seeks to incorporate the language of the oral, the particular, the local, and the timely. The use of erasure in the design process allows for a richer layering and creation of spaces, leaving traces of what existed before, and providing a framework within which temporal processes can perform.

Alluring, vibrant, cultured, intoxicating, illicit: the nocturnal life of London is as important to its identity as its days. The way we experience the city at street level after dark can also reveal a great deal about how its citizens are regarded, highlighting issues that are less visible during daylight. The perception of dark places as dangerous is historically well established. By the 18th century London had become so difficult to police that the only outdoor places safe for nighttime entertainment were privately run, such as the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, where admission was charged to see its display of 15,000 glass lamps. By the 19th century, cheap and bright incandescent lights were introduced. The combination of conditioning to fear the dark with technological advances has led to the way we experience night-time streets today: a proliferation of lighting. In 2013, a public realm framework emphasised ‘integrating the day and night-time economies’ for the area between Nine Elms and the South Bank, including Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens. In 2017, the London Mayor’s office launched its strategy for a 24-hour city, suggesting that the night has an underused value. Extending activity into the night could ‘create new jobs, improve conditions for existing night workers and create more space for culture’, but should the night be treated as an extension of the day? This thesis explores the potential for Landscape Architects to use darkness as an alternative starting point for designing public spaces for use at night, as a lens to reveal hidden ecologies and desires, and a medium to create new experiences.
“The University of Greenwich has given me a solid understanding of Landscape Architecture and the fields directly related to it, from planting design to sociology and politics. I have grown both personally and academically.”

- Cesare Cardia
MA Landscape Architecture
Graduate 2019 (Work featured >)

“Greenwich is uniquely challenging, allowing you to experiment with technical issues and communication. The mix of international students helped us develop designs that championed a wide range of cultural experiences.”

- Clare Flawn-Thomas
BA (Hons) Landscape Architecture
Graduate 2018
The creation of the School of Design has provided significant opportunities for interdisciplinary as well as inter and multi-disciplinary research and other collaborations across the School, the University and the wider world. Building on the multitude of disciplines that the energetic and talented staff and students bring to research, we have the opportunity to further grow research and enterprise, creating our mark, fashioning centres of excellence in a variety of fields encompassing the theoretical, technological, scientific and the creative.

In Landscape Architecture and Urbanism we are breaking new ground, innovating, in our collaborations with EU partners in COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology), INTERREG and ERASMUS + projects. Dr Benz Kotsen’s work in the Aquaponics Lab has indicated that a number of Asian vegetables imported from South East Asia could well be grown aquaponically, reducing carbon and ecological footprints and potentially costs. Urban Tree research, led by Duncan Goodwin through a series of test-sites at Hadlow College, is well under way and there are new collaborations being established with organisations in Greenwich.

We have also further enhanced our technical capabilities through new technologies in 3D scanning, a 3600 camera that will allow research in 360° narrative filming, the use of immersive technologies and the launch of the first weather station in the heart of Greenwich that will provide data for research across many disciplines.

Research events this year have included the Landscape Citizenships symposium, in partnership with University of Toronto, the Landscape Research Group and the Centre for Landscape Democracy, and Design Agency within Earth Systems, an international symposium in collaboration with the Architecture Association and University of Westminster. The Activating Biophilic Cities conference brought participants from around the world to discuss the latest research and design in biophilia. We also successfully hosted the Landscape Institute Annual Conference and the International Federation of Landscape Architects, IFLA Europe forum.

Our expanding group of PhD students are pushing the boundaries in their various fields while the Masters students have had their design and research work published internationally. Naido Amoroiso featured the work of students in her recent book Representing Landscapes: Analogue while the Routledge Handbook of Teaching Landscape has also included student works. A coming issue of Architectural Design, guest-edited by Dr Ed Wall and published by Wiley in January 2020, will further unpack the work of Advanced Landscape and Urbanism, a group that is marked by the intersection of staff and student projects across research and design.

In preparing for REF 2021, we realise the strength of our research, much of which is internationally excellent and some of which is world-leading, but we also know that we can do better, and to this end we will endeavour to enhance the facilities and the supporting conditions for both staff and students to undertake high quality research across the School of Design.
Join the second Future Cities Summer School at the University of Greenwich, from 29 July – 2 August, 2019.
- A unique, free 5-day summer school for Year 12 students.
- Explore the design of landscapes and cities.
- Develop drawings, models and manifestos to define a future London.
- Build a temporary pavilion on a live project at Sayes Court, supported by the Mayor of London.
- Learn from design professionals from across London.

For more information, email Design_School@Greenwich.ac.uk

The first Summer School was organised in 2018. It involved sixteen young Londoners who worked with a small team of landscape architects and urban designers at the University of Greenwich. Over a week they explored how many different people can be represented in the future design of London.

The aims of the first Summer School were to:
- Focus on the design of cities by young people who live in them.
- Design urban spaces by, with and for individuals and groups who are un/less-represented in current city-making processes.
- Explore un/less-professional approaches to design.

The Summer School explored three terms: ‘see’, ‘be seen’ and ‘hide’. The students studied an area of Deptford, in South East London, through taking photographs and making recordings. They explored spaces that allow people to ‘be seen’, locations from which people can ‘see’, and sites in which individuals could ‘hide’.

The students developed sketch design proposals for changes to Deptford that enabled observing, showing off and concealing different activities. These drawn speculations were accompanied by manifestos that outlined the ambitions of their proposals. Through presenting their proposals to each other during the Summer School, the students shared experiences and developed shared understandings.

The main activity of the Summer School involved the construction of a five metre long collective model. Students created maquettes of their designs and developed models in the context of existing buildings, streets, parks and infrastructures. As they worked their proposals, the students revealed their individual and common ambitions for Deptford.

The Summer School was led and informed by experienced landscape architects and urban designers. It included support and speakers from the Greater London Authority (Robert Baffour-Awuah), The Royal Parks (June Polly, Graham Dean), BNP Paribas (Denizen Ibrahim), Landscape Institute (Talitha McKinnon), Gensler (Alex Malaescu), East Anglia Records (Harry Bix) and Project Studio (Dr Ed Wall).
Lectures 2018–2019

The School of Design Open Lecture Series welcomed leading landscape architects, such as Andrew Grant, the designer of Gardens by the Bay in Singapore, and London-based Lynn Kinnear, to present their ground-breaking work. They were joined by artists, designers and architects, such as Archigram’s Mike Webb. In addition to the School series, public landscape lectures highlighted the diversity of award-winning practitioners teaching at the University of Greenwich, including James Fox (FFLO Landscape Architects), Suzanne O’Connell (The Decorators), Honoré van Rijwijk (Collective Urban Strategies) and Roo Angell (Sayes Court).

Andrew Grant

Thursday 25 February 2019, 6pm

Formed in 1997, Grant Associates explore the emerging frontiers of landscape architecture within sustainable development. Andrew Grant has a fascination with creative ecology and the promotion of quality and innovation in landscape design. Each of his projects responds to the place, its inherent ecology and its people.
From Bugs to Features

Concreete Wave, 2014. Photo: Adrian Taylor

Stefan Höltgen

Monday 14 January 2019, 5pm

Computer games are meant to disperse the player’s sense for reality with their aesthetics of immersion. This process is interrupted when a computer error occurs. Instead of just stopping the game, the gamer can focus his/her attention to the erroneous process and try to transgress the black boxes borders by starting to play with the game (instead of just playing the game), searching for the game’s inner rules and trying to modify them. The talk will take a look at different forms of computer errors (glitches and bugs in hardware and software), and show their historical and epistemological roots by focusing on early computer games of the 1970s and 1980s. Back in the day, bugs were common and hacking practices were used to debug and modify game codes. The connection between the real world (on our side of the computer’s surface) and the world of media technology on the surfaces of the machine will be shown by a comparison of the languages spoken, the errors made on both sides, and de/bugging hacks as transgressions of this border.

Lynn Kinnear

Monday 11 February 2019, 6pm

Lynn Kinnear will talk about the role of a landscape architect not just as a designer but as a supporter of social change. As a practice, Kinnear Landscape Architects (KLA) work in a way that allows others to participate and demystifies the design process. These processes support a deeper understanding of place and social need. Strategies have developed from the multicultural context of London to support different sectors of the community, who often have polarised positions, to come together over the design of open space. The talk will emphasise the importance of always having an eye on the bigger picture and, for students, using their role and training as landscape architects to inspire change and challenge the status quo.

Richard Wilson

Monday 18 February 2019, 6pm

One of Britain’s most renowned sculptors, Richard Wilson is internationally celebrated for his interventions in architectural space, which draw heavily for their inspiration from the worlds of engineering and construction. He is also known for his performance works both with the Bow Gamelan Ensemble (formed in 1983) as well as other solo and collaborative projects. His projects have met with widespread critical acclaim. The installation 20:30 was described as “one of the masterpieces of the modern age” by art critic Andrew Graham-Dixon in his BBC television series The History of British Art. This work, a sea of reflective sump oil, is permanently installed in the Saatchi collection. This lecture will be followed by a live performance by Richard Wilson, with Ian Thompson and Stephen Shill.

Michael Webb

Thursday 14 March 2019, 6pm

Formed in the 1960’s, the renowned avant-garde architectural group Archigram aimed to keep the spirit of modernism alive. Founder member and documenter of the group, Michael Webb, will introduce a new monograph of his work and speak to some of the history of the group.