Spring 2020

BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY
OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS MAGAZINE **SPRING 2020**

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The BCSLA offices are located on unceded Coast Salish territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilw̓ətaɁɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations.

Sitelines is published twice a year by the British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects and is mailed to all BCSLA members, registered landscape architects, associates and affiliates. The purpose of *Sitelines* is to provide an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to the profession of landscape architecture. Individual opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily of those of the BCSLA.

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Social Distancing
Portrait 11 - Lori and Lesley, March 2020
video 16-seconds

Artwork by Adad Hannah
@adadhannah

Artist statement:

On March 14, 2020. I got frustrated with feeling paralyzed – sitting at home endlessly reading the news – and decided to do the only thing I'm qualified to do: make some art. I put a long lens on my camera and headed out on foot. As I walked towards the shopping centre, I asked people from a distance if I could take their pictures from far away. Many said no, but some said yes. I wanted to see if I could capture this strange tense in-between moment we are currently living in. Things are changing fast, yet we're also sort of stuck in time, not knowing what comes next. I'll keep doing this as long as it makes sense. I'm hoping this project doesn't last too long.

I found these two women coming out of the community centre after a yoga class.

"It was our last yoga class, they are closing down tonight. It's part of our community, it's going to change. We'll miss it. It's surreal, you can't believe that your life is going to be so much different, but people adapt. It'll be interesting to see how. Things will be different when we get to the other side. Yoga is helpful to stay centred. It's important to find those places of peace."

See the latest on Instagram @adadhannah or with Capture Photography Festival's virtual exhibition at capturephotofest.com/exhibitions. Adad Hannah lives and works in Vancouver, Canada.

Welcome to the Transformation issue

trans·for·ma·tion
/ˌtran(t)sfərˈmāSH(ə)n/
noun

1. a thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance.
   "its landscape has undergone a radical transformation"

We are living in an era of unprecedented complexity and uncertainty. Global health, economic, social and environmental issues such as the coronavirus pandemic, economic instability, truth and reconciliation, and climate change are complex and have significant impacts on the way the world operates.

Due to the multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary nature of landscape architecture and its capacity to address a variety of health, economic, social and environmental issues, landscape architects are well positioned to remain relevant and adapt to the ever-shifting world around us. Through all our professional activities, from the smallest to the largest scale, we encourage BCSLA members to consider the wider-reaching impacts and influences of our professional choices and decision-making. In doing so, we can aim to become more active participants not only in shaping physical open space, but in contributing to positive change in the wider social, cultural and physical environments at local and regional scales and beyond.

Sitelines magazine, the voice of landscape architects practicing in B.C., is undergoing a transformation to reflect the shifting and expanding profession of landscape architecture. The aspiration of the *Sitelines* Editorial Advisory Board is for *Sitelines* to be a platform for landscape architects and allied professionals to share information, engage in open dialogue about current issues, and evolve alongside the profession in order to maintain and increase our relevance in the rapidly changing world around us.

To provide feedback on *Sitelines* magazine, email admin@bcsla.org with the subject, "Sitelines Feedback."

Thank you and we look forward to continuing to evolve *Sitelines* in collaboration with our readership and the BCSLA membership.

Sincerely,
Sitelines Editorial Advisory Board (SEAB)

Contents

In every issue

Taking flight

Cover art by Erin Ramsay

Every year, millions of Monarch Butterflies *(Danaus plexippus)* migrate across North America in a spectacularly massive display that spans 4,800 km. This phenomenon is driven by the butterfly's instinct to seek food, warmer temperatures, breeding grounds, and "home."

No individual butterfly will ever complete the entire round trip, but as a species they are united in their focus to survive. For this transformative issue of *Sitelines*, the migration of the Monarch butterfly served as inspiration for the original cover art by BCSLA intern and landscape designer Erin Ramsay. Her illustration celebrates the individual's and collective's power to transform, while reminding us of the vulnerability we all face at this critical point in time. Like most butterflies, Monarchs are highly sensitive to weather and climate but they are also one of the many species that landscape architects have the power to help through thoughtful design and stewardship.

To find out more about the Monarch Butterflies (and how to help them) visit, davidsuzuki.org/take-action/act-locally/butterflyway/

VANCOUVER By Julie McManus and Wendy de Hoog, City of Vancouver

The "Rain City Strategy"

Imagine the City of Vancouver 30 years from now. Park-like connectors called blue-green systems flow through the city, providing lush natural spaces, biodiversity corridors, and urban rainwater management. Rooftops are covered in greenery that adds much needed urban cooling, community amenity spaces, and rainwater treatment. Every street is lined with green infrastructure practices such as tree trenches and bioswales that add to the aesthetic of the city, while also building climate resilience. This is the Rain City.

In November 2019, Vancouver City Council adopted the Rain City Strategy, a green rainwater infrastructure and rainwater management initiative. Over the next 30 years, the strategy will transform Vancouver into a water-sensitive city that values rainwater as an important resource for communities and natural ecosystems.

The Rain City Strategy is a paradigm shift in how the city plans for, designs, and builds rainwater management infrastructure. It is a roadmap to implement green rainwater infrastructure broadly across the city, moving beyond pilot projects and turning it into business-as-usual practice. Vancouver's goal is to capture and clean 90 per cent of the rain that falls on the city, no small task for a city that receives 1,200 to 1,600 millimeters of rainfall each year. To meet this goal, everyone will need to be part of the solution, including both public and private property owners.

Blue-green roofs are an example of innovative design strategies being examined by Vancouver as a possible solution to delivering rainwater management, particularly in developments with limited lot lines. Rooftops represent large unused areas in cities and are also a major contributor to the urban heat island effect.

Blue-green roofs incorporate a water storage system below the vegetated surface that can be used for irrigation during the dry summer months. Capillary cones placed throughout the storage layer transport water from the units back up to the soil. This opens the door to a wider variety of creative and functional rooftop gardens, as the water storage capacity allows for greater plant selection beyond drought tolerant species and sedum mats.

Vancouver is currently conducting a monitoring study of resilient rooftop practices, including blue-green roofs, in partnership with the British Columbia Institute of Technology. This year-long study compares a regular roof against a green roof, blue roof, and a blue-green roof. The amount of rainwater captured by each roof type, rooftop temperature, and the growth and health of the vegetation over time will all be monitored. The information collected will quantify the benefits of resilient roofs in Vancouver's climate, and act as a catalyst for future policy and design strategies. Not only will the city learn from their experiences to adapt their designs, but this information will be widely shared through publication of monitoring results and case studies to ensure that municipalities across BC can benefit from the foundational work coming out of Vancouver.

Learn more about how you can be a part of the Rain City Strategy: www.vancouver.ca/raincitystrategy

Image: City of Vancouver

Not just a left-over forest, Stanley Park is a fragment of occupied land

PERSPECTIVE By Emily Dunlop, Senior Planner, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and member of the Stanley Park Intergovernmental Working Group

Somebody's land: Decolonizing perspectives of Stanley Park

Reminding us of how downtown might have looked many years ago, Stanley Park is generally professed to be a "natural" wilderness. As a landscape architect by training, it was hard to imagine the park's perceived success was attributed to the idea that landscape design interventions were, for the most part, limited. But this quickly became irrelevant when I learned that it was designed, in fact, to "appear" untouched. But the truth is, it has been inhabited and stewarded for thousands of years.

Stanley Park to the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh (MST) peoples, is not known to be a "park" but rather the remains of a vast landscape, greatly altered yet still holding secrets, cherished family memories, important stories and traditions forming a cultural confluence of three Nations. With a deep respect and understanding of the land, each Nation's inherent knowledge of natural systems was developed and passed down, time tested through countless generations. However, these deep rooted interventions were believed to be non-existent to new comers.

Colonial settlement, laws and power structures rely heavily on the myth of *terra nullius*: the idea of "empty land." It justified early colonization, and continues today. As we embark on a new relationship with MST, we see Stanley Park as a continued place of *terra nullius* in part by the ongoing pressures faced by the Park Board. Other governments, institutions, organizations, and individual citizens, all continue to request to take up space in the park under the assumption that it is empty land – that it is just "park space." These perspectives might be familiar, as they tend to show up in curious ways, some as simple as utilities that end up in less expensive available green space, or more complex situations in which plaques and artwork are installed with no connection to a place because there is "no recognizable identity." Without this regard for nature as already occupied space, we fundamentally value built form over natural form at every turn.

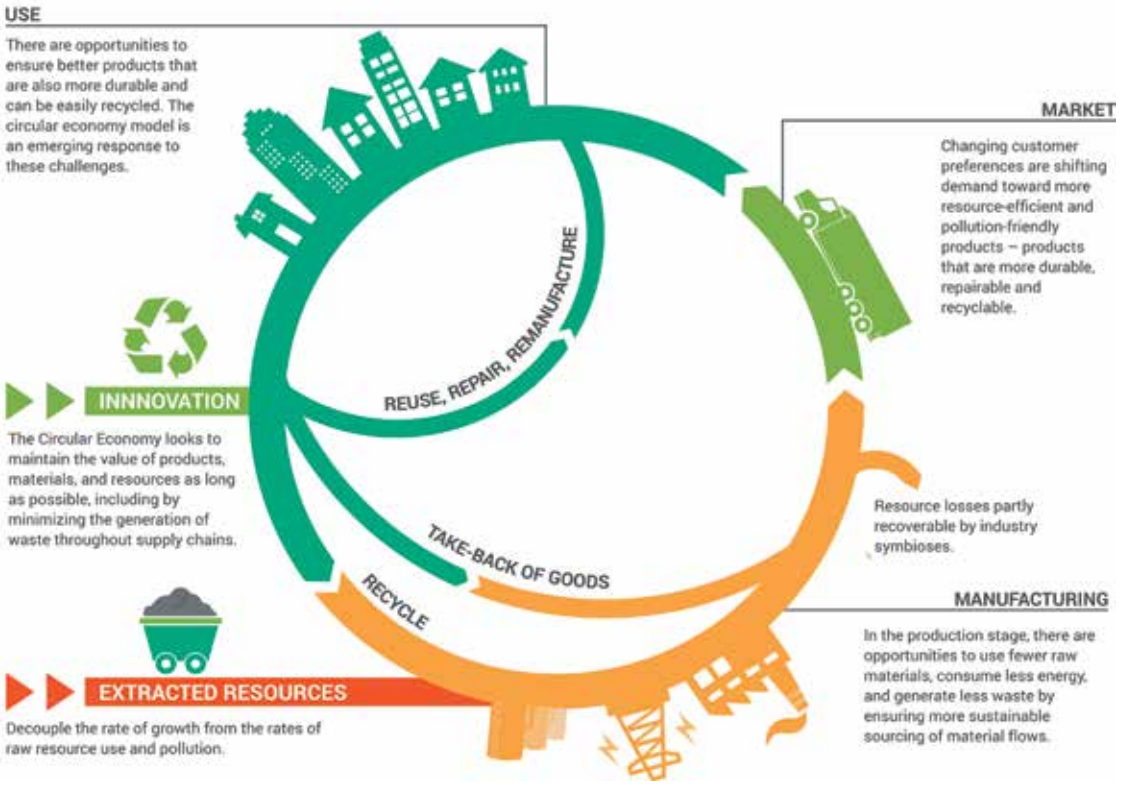
The narrative of *terra nullius* is further enabled in Stanley Park by the absence of physical acknowledgement of MST people and territory, and the lack of those voices in the decision-making for the area. When people come to the park they see features that represent a small fragment of time and come from a culture born in another place. There is almost no representation of MST and you would have no visual cues to the vast history and their connection to this place. If this is how people are interfacing with the park, what depth can they possibly go to? We limit people's ability to form a relationship to a place by denying them its history.

Landscape architects are in a remarkable position to be great allies of Indigenous nations leading and transforming new ways of working. How will you guide your leaders, your clients and your decision makers to see your projects differently? How are you treating spaces as empty? How do you know if your blank slate is not an erased place? If we are rethinking the landscape architect's approach to spaces, then we need to revisit what we know about its existence and our connection to it. The garden has always been there, and it is waiting for us to discover it.

Image: City of Vancouver

 By Marcos Alejandro Badra, Waste Management Analyst and Miriam Plishka, Park Planner, City of Richmond

A case for throwing away the linear economy



On March 21, 2020, Canada, as a nation, surpassed its earth overshoot day. In a nutshell, resource consumption country-wide exceeded the capacity of the earth to regenerate those resources within the same year. The rate at which raw materials are being used in Canada is measurably unsustainable and the country is officially spending on an ecological deficit.

This issue is not unique to Canada and is largely due to a "take, make, and waste" system known as the linear economy that has been in place since the Industrial Revolution. The linear economy involves extraction of natural resources, processing of those resources, use of the resulting product (including furnishings, landscape products, and buildings), and finally, disposal of the product, at or prior to the end of its useful life. The linear economic system has been adopted globally because it offers competitive low pricing, which stems from the perception that natural resources are abundant in concert with efficient extraction, processing and/or manufacturing from continual advancements in technology. This system is reliant on a large consumer base and high sales figures that allow artificially low prices.

In recent decades, the finite nature of natural resources has become abundantly clear, especially given their current rate of extraction and use. There is a growing appreciation for the inherent value of raw materials, along with the economic, social, and environmental impacts of our current linear economic system. In response, a burgeoning global movement is seeking to disrupt this system and transition from a linear to circular economy.

By trade, landscape architects have a significant influence on resource extraction and material use. As a result, we are well positioned to become world leaders in waste reduction and preservation of natural resources. We must acknowledge the scarcity and true value of natural resources and the impacts of their use. We must begin to explore the potential to repurpose and recycle existing materials; discover and experiment with materials that contain recycled content and have long life spans; develop design approaches that offer potential for repair and renovation; and consider the capacity for materials to be repurposed or recycled at the end of their useful life.

Circular economy online resources

Land8
Landscape architects network, How Circular Economy Can Build Sustainability bit.ly/Land8CircularEconomy

Ellen MacArthur Glen Foundation
Circularity in the Built Environment: Case Studies bit.ly/Buitl-Env-Co-Project

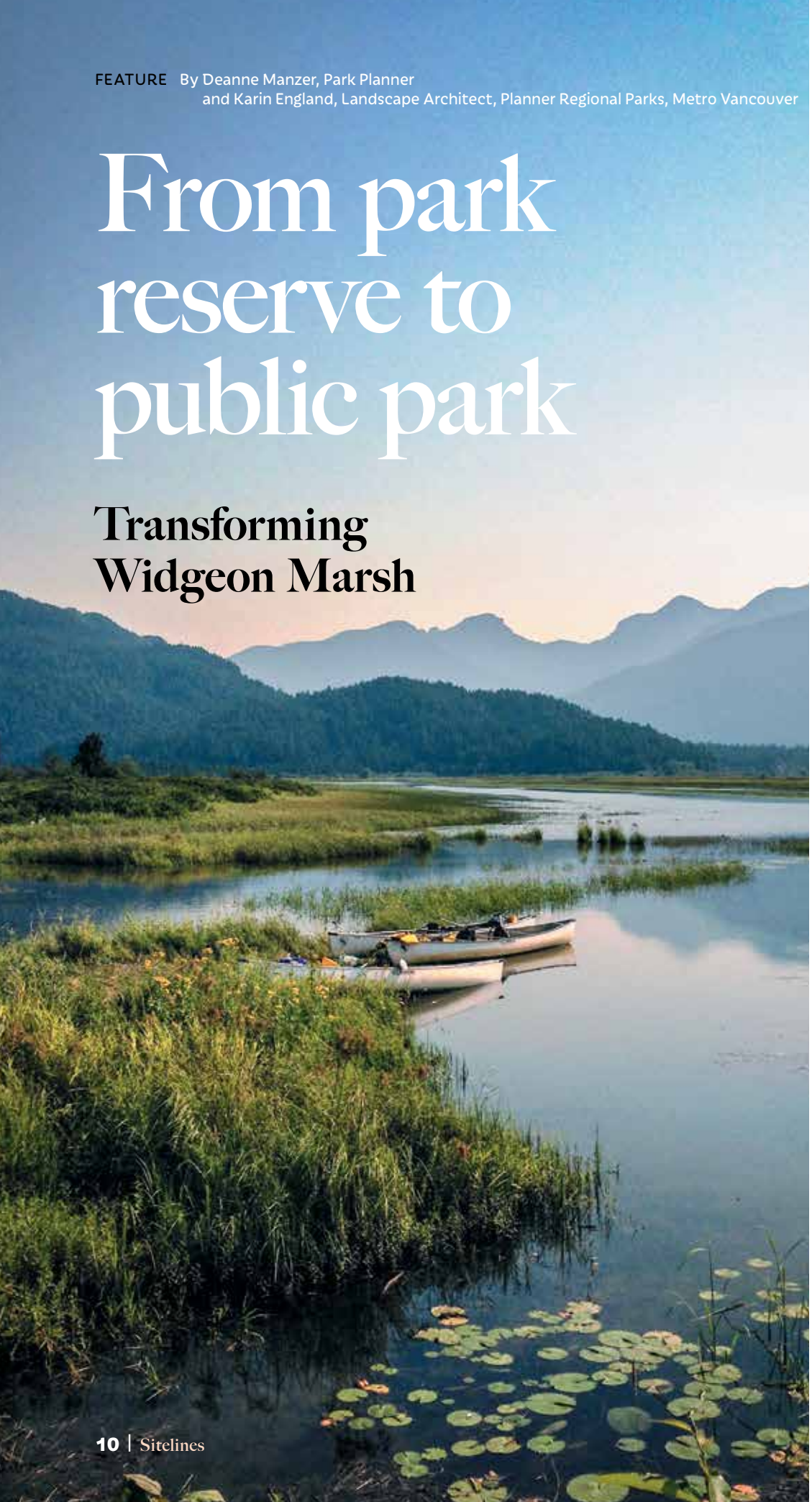
Dezeen
A selection of articles from dezeen related to the topic of circular economy: dezen.com/tag/circular-economy/

Image: City of Richmond

FEATURE By Deanne Manzer, Park Planner
and Karin England, Landscape Architect, Planner Regional Parks, Metro Vancouver

From park reserve to public park

Transforming Widgeon Marsh



In 2023, Widgeon Marsh Regional Park will be the newest Regional Park in Metro Vancouver to open to the public. Located in northeast Coquitlam at the confluence of Pitt Lake, Widgeon Creek and the lower Pitt River, the park encompasses 621 hectares of wetlands and uplands. These lands provide the opportunity to bring people to the edge of the wilderness, and to the edge of a group of protected lands that extend up north past Whistler, west to Indian Arm and east to Golden Ears Provincial Park. While the park is just under 3/4 the size of Pacific Spirit Regional Park, it's also two thirds wetland, nestled up against steep mountains. What remains is a strip of land between the mountains and the wetlands, providing opportunities for trails to weave through forests and fields, connecting visitors to the truly awe-inspiring viewshed surrounding the park.

Land assembly for Widgeon Marsh Regional Park began in 1992 when the majority of the park was bought in partnership with The Nature Trust of BC and Ducks Unlimited. As lands have become available, Metro Vancouver has added to the park. This includes previously developed sites, which provide opportunity for park entrance facilities and a paddling stop over.

The pre-planning process began in 2015 with biophysical, site analysis, and archaeological studies. After pre-planning, staff gathered insight and feedback through engagement with First Nations, government agencies, stakeholders, and the public. Staff conducted a number of tours of the park including advertised public tours, partner agencies tours and tours with elected municipal counsellors. Engagement results informed the development of a draft management plan for the park. The plan was tested and refined through a second round of outreach and engagement in 2019.

Photo: Metro Vancouver

Photo: Miriam Plishka

The management plan establishes a framework for opening the park and sets priorities for resource management, operations, programming, and park amenities. The park plan is guided by four overarching goals: protect and enhance the park's ecological values; collaborate with First Nations; balance public use with ecological values; and connect visitors to the park's natural values and cultural heritage.

With the support of the Regional Parks Committee, the Metro Vancouver Regional District Board and Regional Parks Committee approved the start of the management plan process in 2017, reviewed and approved the draft plan and engagement strategy in spring of 2019 and approved the final management plan in November 2019. Once the park is open, there will be ongoing monitoring of the impacts of public use on this sensitive landscape. Park management practices will be adapted as necessary to protect sensitive ecosystems and better connect visitors with nature.

In 2020, consultants will be engaged to design the park from conceptual ideas to tender ready documents. Construction will take place from 2021-2023. In the meantime, staff and contractors are doing work to prepare the site for development.

PRINCIPLES

Protect and enhance the park's ecological values

Collaborate with First Nations

Balance public use with ecological values

Connect visitors to the park's natural values and cultural heritage.

Buildings that will not be needed once the park is opened are being removed. Some of these are home to wildlife such as birds and bats. This past winter Metro Vancouver natural resource management staff were busy removing bird boxes from exterior walls of houses, and excluding bats from attics before these animals return in the spring. Bird houses have been relocated nearby, and a new bat condo installed to ensure that shelter is available when they arrive.

Invasive species have been mapped, and a strategy developed for their removal. Flailing of blackberry is currently underway, and volunteer stewardship events are scheduled throughout 2020.

Archaeology is an important part of the work taking place at Widgeon Marsh Regional Park. A team of archaeologists will undertake an assessment to ensure potential sites are protected and guide park development advising on mitigation of impacts to cultural resources.

We are very excited to share this spectacular place with the public – a place for hiking, picnicking, kayaking and canoeing and appreciating solitude in nature. For more information, please visit bit.ly/WidgeonMarsh

FEATURE By Teena Aujla

Cornelia Hahn Oberlander's enduring influence

As we arrive through the opening in the hedge, Cornelia opens the door. Soft plantings in clean edges frame the entrance. She has planned how this will go: first we visit the studio, then the kitchen for tea, then the garden to observe.

No person is an island, and Cornelia Hahn Oberlander – tireless advocate for the profession, climate action and public life—is no exception. Canada received her when our history was young, and benefitted from her international modernist perspective, sensitive to both environment and form. "Cornelia has a huge respect and regard for people and is very curious about what they know. She engages in the most genuine way with anybody that she talks to whether it's a construction worker or a plant person," says Kate Clark, landscape architect with the City of Burnaby, who worked with her. This approach has had an exceptional impact on her work and her influence across professions.

Photo: Teena Aujla

Q: The theme of this issue is transformation. What comes to mind when you hear that term?

A: Well I haven't thought about it – because I've done it.

The studio

In our first five minutes in Cornelia's studio, she walks us through two European publications on playground design, a recent study she conducted on highrises, one in-process project, a recent award and one documentary in which she is featured (City Dreamers, 2018). A comprehensive exhibition of her work will be on display at the West Vancouver Art Gallery in December. The playground books are recently published.

Q: You are very prolific. Tell me some things about your studio.

***A**: Have you seen these books? This one is published in Bonn, and this in Basel. It has all my playgrounds in it, that I ever did: 70 playgrounds.*

For every job, I have a workbook. This is for the public library – the garden in the sky. I flew to Boston to show Moshe [Safdie], and he liked it, and he's happy.

The kitchen

We move from the studio to the kitchen for tea and sweets. Arriving in Vancouver in 1953 after practising as a landscape architect in Philadelphia, Cornelia began her chapter as a wife and mother. She and Peter Oberlander lived on the University Endowment Lands, getting groceries at the Safeway on 10th Avenue and raising three kids only a year apart from each other. Her Viennese mother-in-law told her that due to her husband's position as head of the School of Community and Regional Planning, "Peter mustn't be seen carrying the groceries," so Cornelia did that too.

Q: What do you recall about those days?

***A**: I cooked 183,000 meals for my husband.*

Q: I think it can be tough for women in the industry to have children and have a career.

***A**: Yes. I had a husband who didn't cook; who didn't shop; you sent him for an apple, he brought back an avocado. He worked every night on a project. Every night. Day and night. I was a hausfrau but I never looked back.*

Her work during the years when her children were young included the Creative Centre for Play at Expo '67 in Montreal, when her youngest was around seven years old. She slowed her professional momentum while their children were young."I promised Peter," she said. Yet her work in Montreal was memorable – its functional, innovative and engaging design set her apart from her contemporaries as someone with an intimate relationship with how children play, and how to artfully and functionally execute habitable environments on a world stage.

The structured garden

As Cornelia leads us to the garden, we see that its structure remains from when it was built. The berm, hedge, frame and exit points. It has a quiet beauty.

Q: Did you ever want to live anywhere else?

***A**: No. [It's been] 48 years. Now please look: Here. Look around. What's different than any other garden you've been in? You don't see the street! Why? Because I pushed all the extra soil into a mound and planted it up with azalea. And this kind of a garden cannot be destroyed by any climate change.*

Q: How has your modernist aesthetic driven your philosophy of design? Can you tell us a little about your formative experience with Dan Kiley's office, following your time at Harvard's GSD?

***A**: Yes, I loved it. I'll tell you a story about him. I lived at a house where he had nine children. And every night my bedroom was occupied by one of the kids, so I slept on the floor. By Friday I was very tired, and you were allowed to go swimming in the lake early in the morning; and one day he says to me, "Cornelia, tread lightly in the woods."*

Q: In the face of climate change, is there still a place for things to be beautiful in the landscape?

***A**: Yes, they can still be beautiful. These areas here – no snow, no rain can destroy.*

ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Pulled from public lecture archives, Cornelia often shares her trade secrets to becoming a good landscape architect

5 P's:

Patience
Persistence
Politness
Professionalism
Passion

3 R's:

Research
Responsibility
Risk-taking

VIM:

Vision
Imagination
Motivation

In her home, the house floats above the landscape, nestled into the evergreen trees with the ravine's steep drop behind

The wild garden

Cornelia leads us to the north end of the property, where we overlook a ravine off the side of the sheltered driveway.

"So now, here comes the new style of landscape architecture," she states. "The ecology restores itself. See now here? Nothing ever happened and now I have huckleberries and salal, so that is the new kind of landscape architecture called *wilding*. You can learn about it from the University of Pennsylvania, a man called Richard Weller. 'Wilding' means an area where everything that grows there is from our local ecology."

Q: People like structured landscapes. So how do we tell them to like something different?

***A**: You just design it and present it. Don't talk about it. Because if you talk too much, then that's no good.*

Q: After seeing your gardens, Cornelia, you don't seem to water. So, what do you think of sustainability and water usage in the landscape? Right now, we do a lot of irrigation in our cities. Do you see us stopping?

***A**: You don't need irrigation. Because the garden is in the wilderness. In the wilderness we don't have irrigation. And people who ask for irrigation have to withdraw. Because we don't have enough water. And refer them to David Suzuki's five points: clean air, clean water, clean soil – he has five points, and that does not include irrigation.*

The street

Q: We have talked about the garden; now what about the street?

***A**: I'm very insistent on the street. I think the street is the most important thing.*

Q: Do you mean in regards to festivals and events? Programming, plazas...

***A**: Plazas aren't enough, you have to address the street. Don't forget. The street is the most important part of our landscape today. It has to remain palatable so that people will enjoy to use the street.*

The past

We settle back inside. It's early spring and the late afternoon light filters in.

Q: Can you say a little about how the industry has changed since you arrived here?

Installation of the Vancouver Public Library rooftop patio, September 2018

***A**: Do you know, we had lovely discussions with very important people, which we don't have today because we are always told, get on with things. And you don't meet people like that. It's a lonely job. We used to design much more in teams. We didn't just design by ourselves.*

Q: Who are some of your most memorable collaborators?

***A**: Eva Matsuzaki, Arthur Erickson, Moshe Safdie. [Working with Erickson was] always positive. Arthur never scolded anybody. He just said, "I think we would do it different." That challenged you to do something else.*

The future

Q: What you are most excited by about the Cultural Landscape Foundation's C.H. Oberlander prize?

***A:** On that prize, I hope that somebody will come forth, that does exactly what I'm doing with the community and the environment, but they haven't found that person yet.*

Q: There are a lot of people who are involved in the community and environment. What is it they're missing?

***A:** They are missing the design... They are not artists.*

Q: Do you have a message for our readers?

***A:** I have had a fantastic life with Peter, getting to know very interesting people. And he told me to carry on. I keep doing it and will be doing it. So this article should say that [Peter and I] were formally trained and that we realized that we were in a different part of the world, and that wilding is the thing to do.*

With that, our visit draws to a close and we head back through the hedge.

CORNELIA'S RECOMMENDED READS

In order to be effective as a landscape architect, Cornelia believes it is crucial to stay current. She recommended these books during the course of the interview.

The Playground Project, ed. Gabriela Burkhalter (2019)

The Benefit of Nature in High-Density Urban Areas (Report) by Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, Deanna Manzer & Kaitlyn Gillis (2018)

Showing the Way: Peter Oberlander and the Imperative of Global Citizenship by Ken Cameron (2018)

The New Landscape Declaration: A Call to Action for the 21st Century, by Landscape Architecture Foundation (2017)

Urban Solutions to Global Problems ed. Patrick J. Smith, H. Peter Oberlander & Tom Hutton (1996)

Biophilia by E.O. Wilson (1986)

Silent Spring by Rachel Carson (1962)

Facing page: Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, 2019. Photo © Charles A. Birnbaum, courtesy The Cultural Landscape Foundation. This page: Photo by Marina Rommel

Cornelia's legacy: In conversation with Kate Clark

By Teena Aujla

An artist and a 28-year veteran landscape architect in Burnaby's city parks department, Kate Clark carries Cornelia's philosophy with her still.

Q: What did you learn from your time working with Cornelia?

A: Cornelia is very much an innovator – she wanted to know what was happening in the rest of the world. She would cold-call someone after reading an article in a magazine, and be interested in a technique somebody had used on a rooftop deck or something and introduce herself and ask and she would just be so enthusiastic about learning something new that I thought "That's really a key to her expertise, to be ahead of the curve."

The legacy that Cornelia has for me in the work that I do is that I've always approached design as an art form; she used plants as paints, as a medium that could create art, create a design, that had all kinds of interest to it.

Q: Cornelia is an advocate for climate change action. Do you think that we as a profession could be doing more to fight climate change?

A: Often at the level of the City we need to do less, not more. Less grass cutting – let grasses grow to be tall grass – less clipping of shrubs that should be natural, less decorating of public space with bedding out plants. If we use plants that have less or no maintenance – native or otherwise – then we reduce the carbon load of our work.

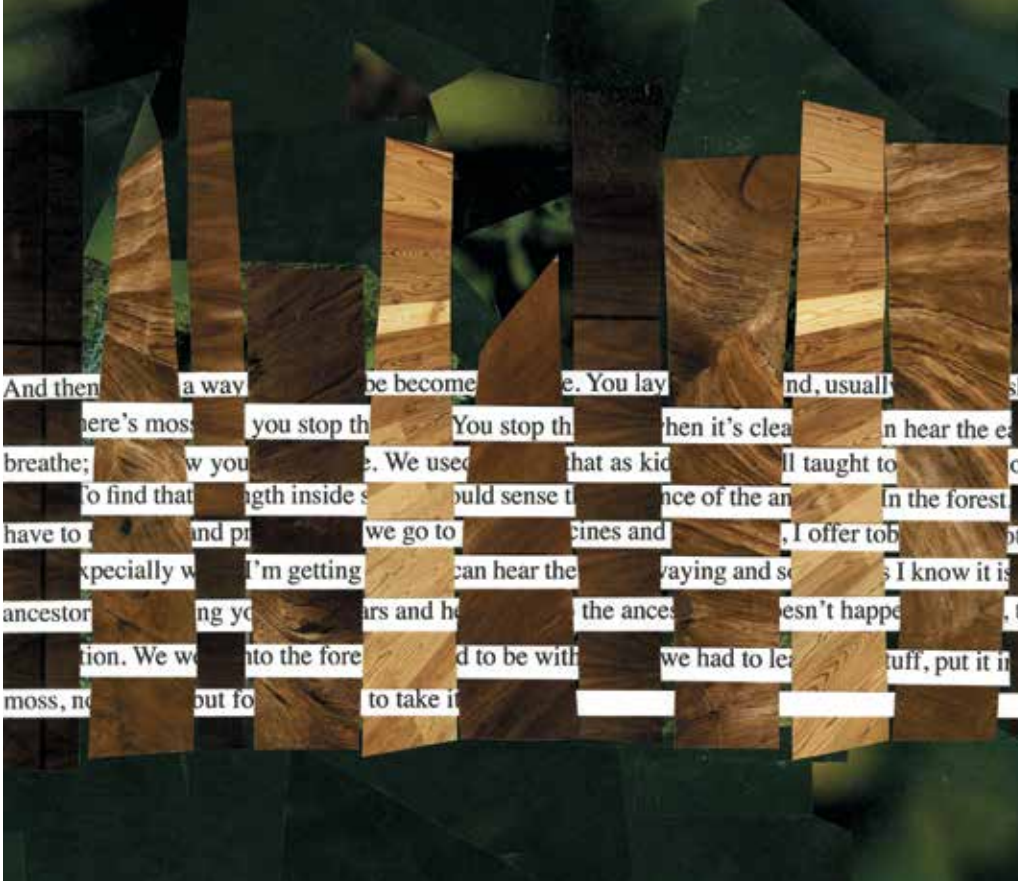
But before we as landscape architects can do less, we need to better understand plant communities and plant ecology: The interaction of soils, water and shade on selected plant materials, and their relationship to pollinators and birds and other wildlife. And to do that, we will need to expand our design team to include ecologists and horticulturalists that specialize in these areas. With better knowledge about plants and their inter-relationships, we will be better able to design meaningful and appropriate landscapes.

Q: Describe what transformative means for you.

A: What Cornelia really taught me is that one does not have to lose anything as one ages. When I started working for her, she was the age that I am now (65). Her career was just beginning to take off and the word that I think best described her at 65 is *puhpowee*. This is a Potawatomi word that describes the energy of an emerging entity. In the book *Braiding Sweetgrass*, the author Robin Wall Kimmerer describes it as "the force which causes mushrooms to push up from the earth overnight." It is an apt and beautiful description of Cornelia's enduring intention, force, energy and purpose.

Photo: Teena Aujla

By Michelle Gagnon-Creeley



Artwork by Michelle Gagnon-Creeley, excerpted from her UBC Master of Landscape Architecture thesis "Lost Wor(l)ds: The role of landscape architecture in Indigenous language revitalization, Haida Gwaii (BC)," completed in 2019

What does reconciliation look like for landscape architecture?

I have struggled to articulate the feelings that I am having with regards to the Wet'suwet'en, something that I think many Canadians are feeling right now. On some days I avoid listening to the news and try to push that reality away. On other days I feel immensely powerless but feel like I need to bombard the world with all of the information I am seeing before me. On a daily basis I am trying to come to terms with what it means to be a Canadian in this time: this time that our federal government refers to as the time of reconciliation with Indigenous communities. I often ask myself what can I do as an individual to make this right? Not only in this moment as I witness what is happening with the Wet'suwet'en, but as I grow older and begin to develop a professional career as a landscape architect. As a white settler, whose ancestors settled on land that we now refer to as Canada, what does reconciliation mean for me not only as an individual, but also as a professional?

The roots of landscape architecture lie in a colonial past. In tandem with planning, landscape architecture was used as a means to control space. Planning in particular was a colonial tool in early Canada that has long been seen by Indigenous communities as an "apparatus of colonization."[1] Planners were known in Indigenous communities as those that took away land and controlled whatever was left. The decisions made then continue to hold significant impact on the spatialization of Canada today.

Within the Canadian planning profession, important discussions are being had about how best to acknowledge its colonial past and how to move forward. There has been an important shift from top-down planning to comprehensive community planning, in which voices from the entire community are considered carefully in every step of the planning process. While including a diverse group of voices may take much longer than the average planning process, it shifts the dynamics into the hands of the community. The professional planner exists in the process as a guide, not as a leader; they serve the community rather than dictate what is best for it. It has been a powerful shift within the planning community.

I believe that our profession could learn from planners. Landscape architecture has the capacity to pave the way for reconciliation within the design world. Our line of work literally shapes the ground that we walk on. We have the power to create spaces that force people to interact with their outer world, to immerse themselves with the plants, with the wind, with others. We are continuously trying to foster a sense of belonging and interaction to the greater world, the world beyond the individual. I feel very strongly that landscape architecture can and should play an important role in shaping spaces of the future in a way that acknowledges where the land comes from and empowers those who care for it.

This is a call for us to do better. Yes, these conversations about reconciliation and Indigenous sovereignty are uncomfortable. Let us lean into that discomfort. These conversations strike us at the core of our identities as Canadians. Let's bring the Nations whose land we work on into those conversations. How can we shift the influence that our profession holds and use our skills to guide rather than overpower? The path towards reconciliation is non-linear; mistakes will be made, uncomfortable discussions will be had, but they need to happen. But we can no longer avoid and be inactive. Our particular skill set holds inherent value in shaping the world that we live in. We have a direct role to play in mending land relations and connecting communities. I encourage you to read, to learn, to speak up and to not be afraid to be vulnerable. The more we choose to learn about ourselves and understand our place in the world, the stronger our work will be in connecting communities and even the world.

1. Erfan, A. & Hemphill, J. (2013). Indigenizing and Decolonizing: An Alliance Story. In *Plan Canada*, 53(2): pp. 18-21.

City soil: Regenerating soil in the city

Imagine. It is the year 2050 and society's attitude towards soil has shifted. We no longer see soil as lifeless dirt or garbage. Healthy soil is celebrated like fresh air, clean water, and nutritious food. We take ownership over its health and every person understands its value, doing their part to protect it.

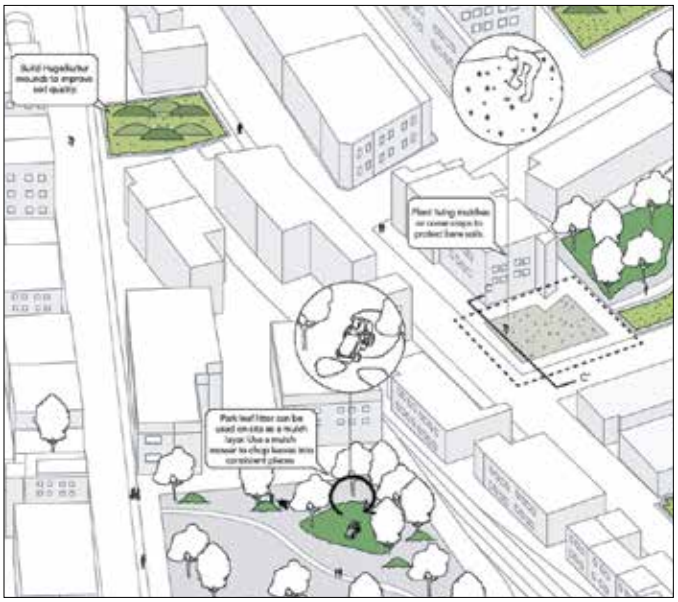
The state of the world's soil today is grim. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations has predicted that there is only 60 years of fertile topsoil remaining. Human pressures on the soil are reaching critical limits and leading to irreversible consequences. In urban centres, we have lost our connection to the soil and rarely interact with it. How can this be, when soil is the foundation of all life on earth?

Soil holds more carbon than all of the above ground vegetation combined. It is the world's natural water filtration and storage tank. A single teaspoon of soil holds over one billion microorganisms, responsible for recycling waste products, turning them into nutrients for plants (FAO, 2015). Soil is vital. We need to stop taking it for granted and we need to start respecting it.

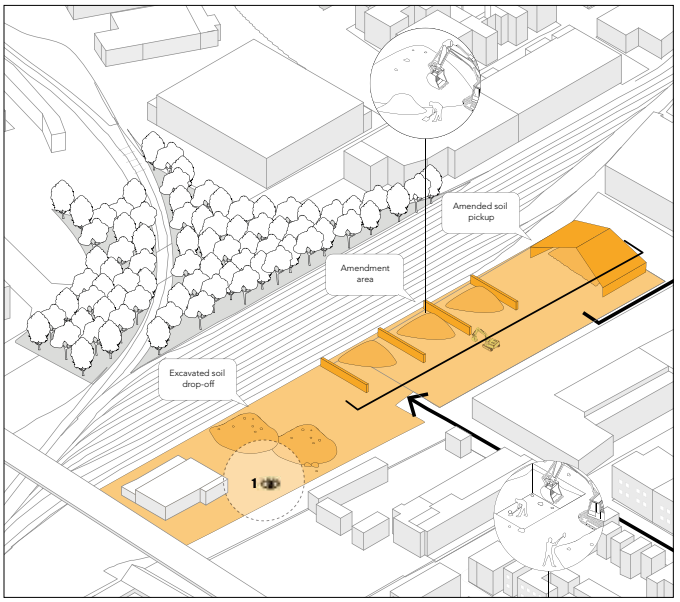
The City Soil Project is imagined as a system designed to re-use, protect, and restore urban soil. Adopting permaculture practices such as rotational grazing and cover cropping, the system provides the infrastructure necessary to localize the processes surrounding soil use at a neighborhood scale. The City Soil Project explores an alternative understanding and respect for this vital resource, providing strategies for our profession and reforming a connection to what truly matters.

Adapted excerpt from author's Master of Landscape Architecture graduate design project (UBC 2018).
Author may be contacted at jaclynsimon6@gmail.com

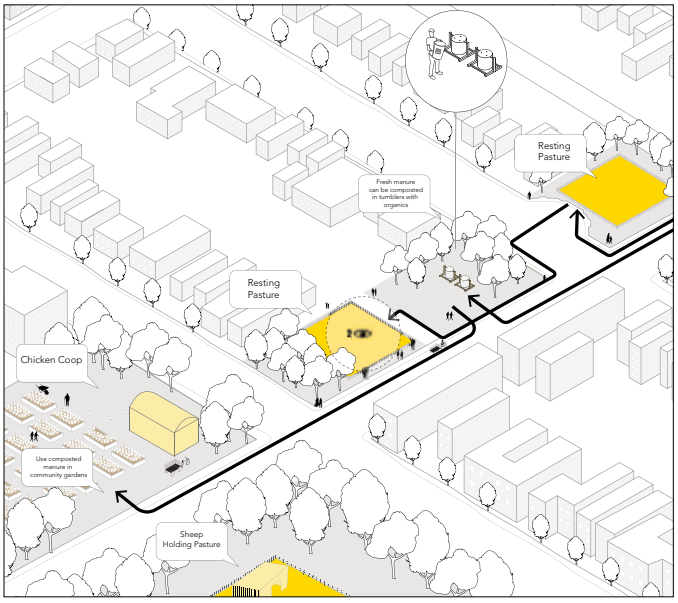
Lessons



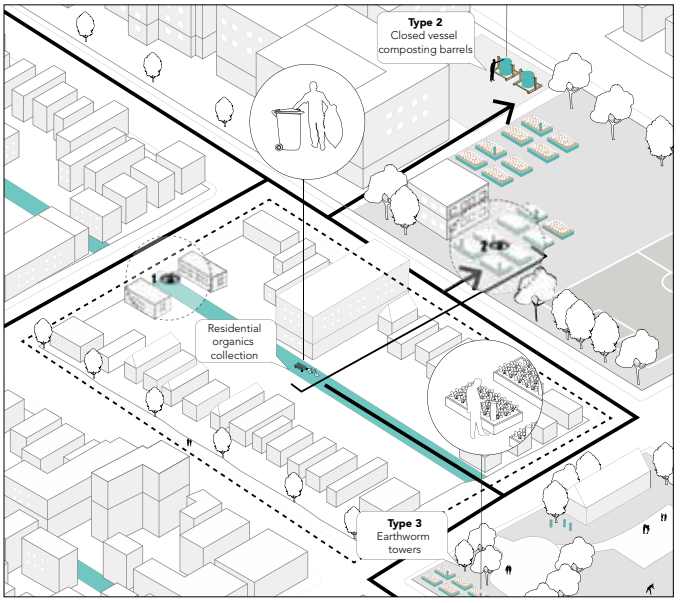
1 Protect natural soils in place with in-situ restoration techniques whenever possible



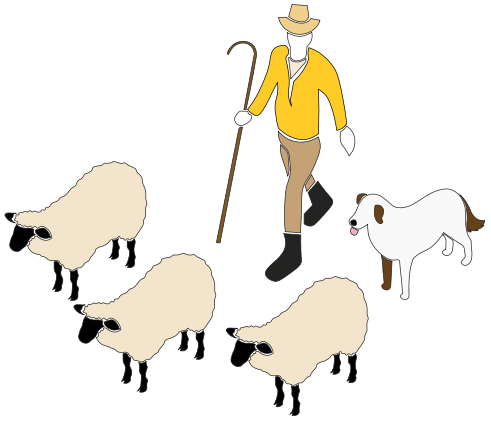
2 Re-use urban soil excavated from development projects when protection is not possible

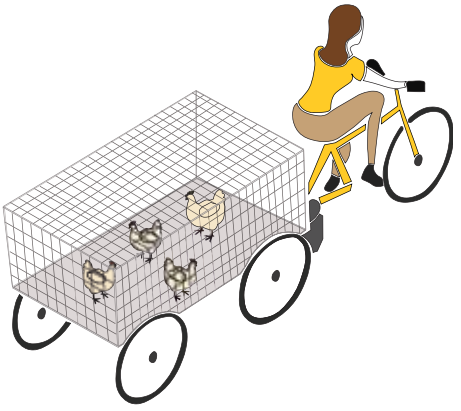


3 Restore degraded urban soils back into resilient ecosystems



4 Localize and decentralize the processes surrounding soil management including the production of soil amendments





All images by Jacyln Simon, excerpted from author's graduate project

Photo: Dina Dudokh

Across the ocean: Green infrastructure in Jordan

"Take your knowledge and skills where you can make a bigger impact and transformation." This statement struck a chord in me and has led me onto a different path.

After a brief working experience in a landscape architecture office in Vancouver, BC, I had an opportunity in Jordan to join the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) with the "Improvement of Green Infrastructure in Jordan through Labour-Intensive Measures" project team. The project is funded by the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) special initiative "Tackling the root cause of displacement, stabilizing host regions, supporting refugees."

To briefly explain the context, Jordan is a middle-income country with limited resources. Even though it is considered one of the driest countries in the world, it has high biodiversity as it lies within four bio-geographical zones, the Mediterranean, Irano-Turanian, Saharo-Arabian and Sudanian or Tropical penetration. According to statistics from the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), Jordan has 2,500 recorded plants species, 434 bird species, 82 species of mammals and 98 species of reptiles.[1] It has high biodiversity but also a fragile ecosystem.

The project's approach of involving the local community and building on local knowledge and practices creates a sense of ownership and social cohesion not only between the participants and the community they work for, but also between Syrians and Jordanians.

Women from the community are employed to relocate stones used to help build an entrance park at the Umm El Jimmal archeological site

Photo: Farah Tell

Jordan has witnessed significant transformation in the past eight years, becoming a refuge for many Syrians displaced by the war in Syria. According to the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR), Jordan hosts around 663,000 registered Syrian refugees,[2] making it the second highest refugee hosting country per capita. Unofficial counts estimate their number at over one million. All this has accelerated the population growth, which resulted in further pressure on its infrastructure, natural resources and an already tough job market.

GIZ aims at improving the green infrastructure country wide and relieving financial pressure by providing short term job opportunities to (50/50) vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees, with a minimum of 20 per cent women, working on the enhancement, rehabilitation and revitalisation of green infrastructure in the country and providing the beneficiaries with trainings on these topics among others.

Photo: Dina Dudokh

The coloured bench (middle) was constructed by workers using a superadobe technique taught to them through on-the-job training with Emergency Architecture and Human Rights (EAHR)

GIZ supports creating green networks across the country at different scales in rural and urban areas while addressing community needs in collaboration with local and international partners. In rural areas, we are working on natural rehabilitation in seven natural reserves and one special conservation area, supporting sustainable practices and promoting the preservation of nature and ecotourism. While in urban areas, we are working on the rehabilitation of parks and creating safe public spaces in 14 locations in collaboration with national and international landscape architects. The project's approach of involving the local community and building on local knowledge and practices creates a sense of ownership and social cohesion not only between the participants and the community they work for, but also between Syrians and Jordanians. And in all our practices, we consider sustainability, environmental consciousness, local practices and try to reduce the use of concrete and use local materials such as mud bricks and local stone instead.

For example, in the Qweirah, which is located in the south of Jordan, two park rehabilitations were made possible with the support of local leaders, the mayor, the local community, community based organisations and our implementing partner there, AVSI Foundation. Like all other interventions, the project began with community participation events to understand the community's wants and need. Such events result in building trust and mutual understanding. We also conduct skill assessments to better understand the community's capabilities and find ways to develop those skills and build their confidence. Based on the skill assessment and the community events, a design that responds to the community's needs and skills was developed. Workshops were established for developing materials for the project, including brick making and mosaic workshops, as well as a weaving workshop that focuses on using the local knowledge, materials and techniques. Through the workshops and the works in the park, a new sense of community and social cohesion was achieved. When visiting the workshops or parks, one can instantly feel the positivity, excitement and the connections that were built.

As a UBC landscape architecture graduate, it is fulfilling to see that through this project and similar initiatives, we are able to support in the conservation of biodiversity, rehabilitation of public parks, promotion of ecological practices and are able to spread the awareness about the benefits of green infrastructure and nature protection and preservation.

1. The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), www.rscn.org.jo/jordan-biodiversity-and-ecosystem Accessed 25th Feb. 20202.
2. UNHCR in Jordan: www.unhcr.org/jo/who-we-are

Leveraging laneways:

Reclaiming spaces for wildness

Photo: Kevin Fraser

Curated blandness: a typical grey laneway in Vancouver

Photo: Kevin Fraser

Impromptu wildness: an untamed laneway in Vancouver's Riley Park neighbourhood

Photo: Andre Williams

Curated wildness: one of Montreal's many "ruelles vertes"

Laneways have featured prominently in recent civic discourse. Case in point: a 2019 cover of Canada's preeminent urban issues publication, *Spacing* Magazine, proclaimed "Laneways: No Longer Overlooked." In Vancouver, a city endowed with nearly 700 linear kilometres, neighbourhoods such as the West End have recently had formal names assigned to these hidden thoroughfares, evoking connections to forgotten histories. Alley activation projects have taken root downtown, bringing colour, whimsy, and people to formerly derelict grey areas. Overlooked? Maybe not. But still very much underutilized.

In many cities, laneways comprise a significant public realm footprint that serves overwhelmingly utilitarian functions. In Vancouver, these include accommodating utilities, facilitating services such as waste and recycling collection, providing access to private parking (read: garages), and, increasingly, serving as frontages for laneway housing. Despite the high visibility, the lanes are disproportionately mundane: asphalt surfaces and neglectful qualities prevail; fenced yards turn their backs, avoiding interface; impervious surfaces present challenges for stormwater management, and missed opportunities for interception; permeable gravel lanes are an improvement on this front, but most remain underwhelming. Why the lack of imagination?

Where the presentation falls flat, the experience excels. A laneway stroll in one of Vancouver's older residential neighbourhoods reveals a veiled, vibrant world of wonder; an altogether new lens for viewing an unkempt wildness of the city with intrigue and inspiration in spades. From an urban planning perspective, laneways present an opportunity to strengthen green networks while addressing the challenge of equitable access to nature; their linear geometry affords proximity to more people than isolated park "islands." A network of laneways as comprehensive as Vancouver's is well-positioned to enhance and mend fragmented ecological corridors. For a city in a housing crisis with sky-high property values, new green spaces are hard to come by. Laneways offer an existing infrastructure that could be retrofitted to yield similar benefits.

A network of laneways as comprehensive as Vancouver's is well-positioned to enhance and mend fragmented ecological corridors.

There are many successful case studies to look to for inspiration. In North America, Montreal has perhaps the most impressive network of green laneways ("ruelles vertes"). They range from formal interventions to spontaneous and haphazard, but consistently extend the eclectic wildness of the personal into the public realm. Vancouver saw its own pilot project realized in 2003, with three traditional laneways converted to "Country Lanes." The initiative aimed to reduce impervious surfaces, increase stormwater infiltration, and establish an aesthetically pleasing rural character. Unfortunately, due to operational challenges, cost, and perceived tax burden on residents, the project stopped short. As is too often the case, a complete quantification of benefits – including environmental (importantly, stormwater runoff and heat island mitigation), social, and economic – failed to factor into the financial equation.

In our increasingly astute urban sphere, laneways may no longer be underappreciated. The City of Vancouver acknowledges that laneways remain "...broadly under-utilized as public space" but "... are being reimagined as 'people-places.'" What about places for wildness? Our latticework of lanes could double as an alternative trail network, connecting nodal parks to serve both humans and wildlife. A biophilic approach could improve their aesthetics, offer ecosystem services, and make them more inviting to people. Space limitations and functional requirements present a challenge, but would be no match for a bit of creative thinking, perhaps incited by a city-hosted design competition or incentives for adjacent residents. Laneways have flown under the radar for too long, and it's time they are recognized as an integral part of our urban fabric and a potential mechanism for reinvigorating wildness in our cities.

FOLLOW-WORTHY INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS FOR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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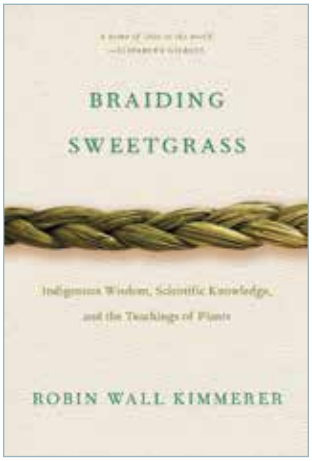
Books

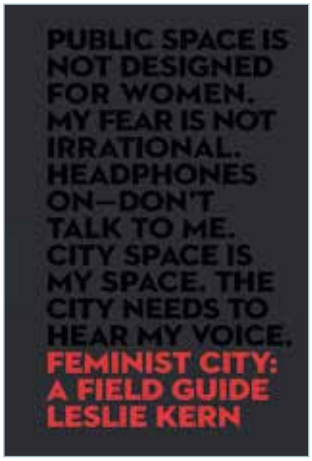


Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants

By Robin Wall Kimmerer
Milkweed Editions, 2015

Despite our profession's identity being so entangled with the land itself, landscape architecture still has a lot to learn about how to heal degraded environments and our relationship to the natural world. In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall Kimmerer thoughtfully weaves together her knowledge of botany, science education and Indigenous wisdom to offer expansive perspectives and timely reminders of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. Straddling art and science, fact and myth, this collection of essays is a refreshing and illuminating read for anyone who strives to design with nature.

Reviewed by Sophie MacNeill

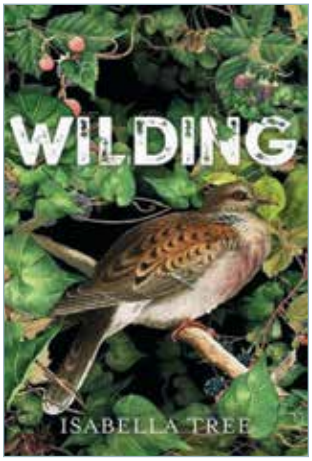


Feminist City: A Field Guide

By Leslie Kern
Between the Lines, 2019

How do we create a public realm that works for everyone? That's the question at the heart of Leslie Kern's short but comprehensive *Feminist City: A Field Guide*, an exploration of the many barriers faced by women in cities that have been predominantly designed by and for men. Kern's approach is an intersectional one that takes into account the experiences of all marginalized groups. Successfully blending personal anecdotes with urban theory and cultural references, *Feminist City* is essential reading for anyone who loves cities and wants to make them more inclusive, accessible, caring and fun for all of us.

Reviewed by Claire Adams and William Dunn



Wilding

By Isabella Tree
Pan Macmillan, 2018

Intensive agriculture is a common sight across the world today, and with it comes many varied and accepted issues as a direct result. None more so than habitat loss and species decline. *Wilding* is a beautifully written autobiography of a farm and its owners, as intensive agriculture is stopped and wildlife is allowed to return. Wilding is an uplifting tale of rewilding intensive farmland and returning degraded fields to bountiful landscapes.

Reviewed by Jack Tupper

Sitelines Autumn 2020: RESILIENT FUTURES
CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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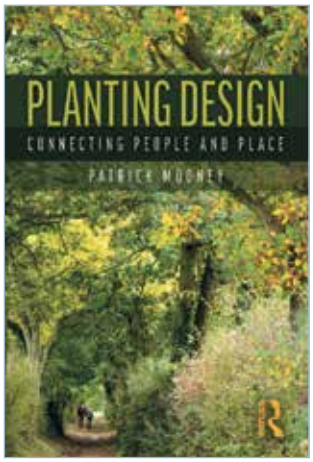
Submission deadline: July 31, 2020



Planting Design:
Connecting People and Place

By Patrick Mooney
Routledge, 2019

Landscape designers have long understood the use of plants to provide beauty, aesthetic pleasure and visual stimulation while supporting a broad range of functional goals. However, the potential for plants in the landscape to elicit human involvement and provide mental stimulation and restoration is much less well understood. *Planting Design: Connecting People and Place* meshes the art of planting design with an understanding of how humans respond to natural environments. Many of the principles and techniques that may be used in planting design are beautifully illustrated in full colour with examples by leading landscape architects and designers from the United Kingdom, Europe, North America and Asia, including: Andrea Cochran, Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture; Design Workshop Inc.; Richard Hartlage, Land Morphology; Shunmyo Masuno, Japan Landscape Consultants Ltd.; Piet Oudolf, Hummelo; Melody Redekop; Christine Ten Eyck, Ten Eyck Landscape Architects Inc.; Kongjian Yu, Turenscape Ltd. Because there are many valid processes and intentions for landscape design, the book is not intended to be overly prescriptive. Rather than presenting a strict design method and accompanying set of rules, *Planting Design* provides information, insight and inspiration as a basis for developing the individual designer's own expression in this most challenging of art forms.

Reviewed by author

Love Without Hope VI

By Amory Abbott
BC Artist and Illustrator
Professor, Emily Carr University of Art + Design
www.amoryabbott.com
Media: Charcoal and Chalk Pastel on Paper

The *Love Without Hope* series explores the paradoxical subject of wildfires symbolizing both cleansing resilience and being at odds with the anthropocentric perspective of death as a dramatic final end. The transformation a wildfire invokes is not only in ecological succession, but also in our perspectives about forest protection and management, life and death, sacrifice and incarnation. I see the ethereal, glowing devastation in my work as a reminder that the beauty of what there is to lose and the beauty of what comes after are inseparable – an ecological memento mori – and here we are standing in the midst of it all.

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