

## New call for papers

# Reflecting Histories and Directing Futures

## NAF Symposium 15-16 June 2017

### Keynote speakers

Michelle Provoost (International New Town Institute)

Mari Hvattum (The Oslo School of Architecture and Design)

Karsten Jørgensen (The Norwegian University of Life Sciences)

«After the Renaissance, the idea of “the future” acquired new meaning. It hung in the air like a challenge, waiting to be defined.»<sup>1</sup>

### Symposium - Focus and Issues

The above quotation from Donna Goodman's *A History of the Future* sets the scene for this symposium in two ways. First, it establishes a historical perspective on the future, which is crucial to the investigation of this concept through modern history. Second, it serves as an invitation to seize the future by shaping it through concepts and visions developed by planners, architects and landscape architects. The aim of this symposium is to balance these approaches by inviting both academic scholars and practitioners to present research findings and work in progress. In so doing, we hope to shed further light on the historical dimension of physical landscapes and the built environment and the futures directed for them – through papers rooted in disciplines such as landscape architecture, architecture, architectural history, cultural heritage studies, planning and urbanism.

The symposium coincides with the NAF's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This occasion calls for a critical assessment of past doings as well as future dealings. After 30 years as a proponent of architectural research, the NAF is a natural forum for addressing the duality between academic research and practice-oriented investigations. Papers that deal with methodological frictions between different scholarly approaches are therefore strongly encouraged.

Visions of the future are known to «conjure up images of invention», as Goodman puts it.<sup>2</sup> With this in mind, we encourage prospective participants to deliver papers that reflect on the following questions: How can we learn from historical futures through creative critical reflection? Is it possible to take inspiration from historical material without succumbing to static ideas about originality, authenticity and quality? How can professionals in architecture, landscape architecture, urbanism and planning project new futures along with a critical discussion of these projections? How are new futures imagined, directed and critically reflected in contemporary practice?

Reflecting histories and discussing futures, this symposium builds on an understanding of time that represents the gradual transformation of physical spaces like cultural heritage sites as well as being a source of imaginary future life. We therefore invite papers that challenge the hegemonic position within cultural heritage management, which tends to treat historical buildings, landscapes and cityscapes as entities frozen in time. There are other ways of dealing with past qualities, for instance as sources of methodological inspiration and alternative solutions to current issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Goodman, Donna, *A History of the Future*, New York: The Monacelli Press, 2008, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

In adopting a backward-looking yet future-oriented framework for the symposium, we particularly encourage potential participants to explore how the making disciplines, a concept introduced by Halina Dunin-Woyseth, have been and are being formed by different political, cultural, social, economic and jurisdictional circumstances. Planning, architecture and landscape professions have always been informed by the specific societal framework from which they emerged, and vice versa: The making professions have also shaped the societal framework by directing a number of possible futures. We welcome papers that deal with this issue from a historical point of view or with a contemporary focus.

## **Sub-themes**

Papers can be submitted as either scientific articles or academic essays having theoretical or practice-oriented approaches, or a combination of both. It is also possible to submit applied projects. These will be reviewed according to thematic relevance rather than scientific standards. We invite scholars and practitioners to submit papers within the following sub-themes:

### ***The Past in the Present***

This sub-theme calls for critical perspectives on cultural heritage issues and other forms of critical reflection in historical research on built structures and land-use. This could, for instance, be an exploration of cultural heritage management as a practice-field and governance model through modern history, or theoretical analyses of key terms such as “experimental preservation” which redefines preservation as a forward-looking creative field.

### ***Tomorrow belongs to nobody***

Le Corbusier proposed the idea that “tomorrow belongs to nobody” in *The City of To-morrow and its Planning*, in which he claims that contemporary needs are more important than remote futures. Herein lies an encouragement to explore the relationship of the present and the future in planning and urbanism, as well as historical configurations of this dilemma.

### ***The Architect's Dream***

*The Architect's Dream* is an oil painting created by American painter Thomas Cole in 1840 by commission from architect Ithiel Town. Town was a declared revivalist, and the painting helped spark a renewed interest in historical architectural styles in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Under this sub-theme we welcome theoretical, historiographical and practice-oriented papers that highlight the recurring tension between revivalism and the search for new directions in architecture, in the past and into the future.

We also invite papers that critically discuss questions of representation in architecture and landscape architecture, and how architects have articulated their visions for future designs at different times.

### ***Utopian landscapes of Reality***

Landscape architecture and other “green” disciplines” are currently spearheading a quest to make the management of cities, buildings and natural resources more sustainable. This desire to create a better planet has a long-standing tradition within the making disciplines, and it has made the leap from utopia to reality in a variety of different ways. This sub-theme invites papers that deal with the history of ecology awareness in landscape design, the current appreciation of historical landscapes in contemporary practices, and new efforts at turning green visions into realities. In this context new management tools and requirement for “Green landscape and building” such as guidelines by LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) become problematic as they support instrumentality in design rather than architectural quality, fantasy and utopian ideas.

## **Practical information**

### **Paper deadlines are as follows:**

Abstract of maximum 400 words: **10 December 2016**

Full paper of maximum 8000 words: **28 April 2017**

Abstracts and papers must be submitted in **English**, which is the official symposium language. Papers must be marked as either A. Scientific article, B. Academic essay or C. Applied project.

The organizing committee will prepare a peer-reviewed conference proceeding. Further info will be provided at a later stage.

Venues: The Norwegian University of Life Sciences and the Oslo School of Architecture and Design

Conference fee: 1500 NOK.

Further practical information and an official symposium website will be provided at a later stage.

### **The organizing committee:**

Lisbet Harboe (Assistant Professor at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design)

Magnus Rönn (Senior Researcher at KTH Royal Institute of Technology)

Elin Børrud (Professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences)

Anne Elisabeth Toft (Associate Professor at Aarhus School of Architecture)

Even Smith Wergeland (Associate Professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences)

**Contact:** [even.smith.wergeland@nmbu.no](mailto:even.smith.wergeland@nmbu.no)