



NAF/NAAR Symposium 2024

19-20 September 2024 at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Department of Landscape Architecture, Planning and Management, Alnarp

Call for Papers

The Death and Life of Great Nordic Landscapes – Transformative Action Needed

The title for the 2024 NAF/NAAR Symposium 'The death and life of great Nordic Landscapes', holds a reference to Jane Jacobs' title *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, in which she challenged the planning and urban design paradigm of her time, and critiqued its rational and car-centered planning for 'killing' cities. 'Life' and 'death' should in the context of this symposium be understood more broadly – from ecological and social life and death, to the vitality or stagnancy of theory and discourses. The symposium embraces a variety of landscape perspectives, such as urban landscapes, architectural landscapes, cultural landscapes, social landscapes, ecological landscapes, as well as academic landscapes, as a rich field for knowledge production through architectural research. The definition of 'landscape' by the European Landscape Convention (ELC) is: '*Landscape*' means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. Landscape thus includes buildings and architecture and their natural surroundings, as well as regions in a wider sense.

Today, more people live in urbanized than in rural areas. An effect of these new conditions is that urbanized areas become an essential part of our landscapes, where e.g. buildings and infrastructures are important elements. Urban and rural environments are interdependent on each other within systems of continuous flows of energy, materials, and waste. However, during the Anthropocene, the relationship between urban environments and their surroundings has become increasingly abstract and out of sight in everyday life. People living in cities do not always know where their food comes from, beyond the local shopping center, or what goes into their laptops, or how electricity is provided beyond the wall plug. Raising awareness about natural resources and overconsumption is an important aspect of working towards a sustainable planet. But is that enough? Rather than awareness raising, comprehensive transformative action is urgently needed.

The symposium theme is based on a holistic perspective and responds to the potential of transdisciplinary studies/collaborations between the fields of landscape architecture, architecture, urban planning and urban design. We believe that an expanded collaboration between different architectural disciplines is an important prerequisite for a transformative change, as is collaborations with engineers, ecologists and many other professions. Discussions during the symposium will thus

focus on how urban and rural landscapes meet future challenges regarding e.g. energy, biodiversity, climate, living together, and the collaborative and transformative actions we need to address.

We aim to draw on the duality of life and death to evoke questions, and to make the challenges related to urban and rural landscapes appear visible. What ideas and understandings of landscapes are dying or thriving today? What actions are impairing or sustaining landscapes? Are planners, landscape architects and architects involved in sustainable life-cycles and life-supporting actions, or are we just a part of a housing and development industry, i.e. window dressing in order to hide the most negative consequences of our exploitation of natural resources?

In sum, we invite teachers, researchers and PhD-students to the 2024 NAF/NAAR Symposium to gather around the “health” status of contemporary landscapes and architecture. All forms of OB needs are just as welcome as ideas for future solutions. The symposium takes place on September 19-20, 2024, in Alnarp, Sweden. Key-note lectures will be provided and you are invited to send in your abstract referring to any of the tracks below. The organizational committee reserves the right to adjust the number and the final titles of the tracks after having evaluated the abstracts.

Changes in ‘Nordic’ design discourse and theory

Theory on design for urbanity, landscape and architecture is, at its best, a rich, broad and vibrant world of writings and ideas, crucial for providing understanding and developments of design work process and practice. However, the understanding of what ‘design theory’ is differs, and it can sometimes be perceived as detached and falling short in the face of urgent contemporary challenges that seem to demand quick and straightforward answers. Given current changes – cultural, ecological, or political – it becomes worth reflecting upon how landscape-relevant theory, as well as thereby associated discourses at large, is keeping up with the pace of the world. In particular, this track picks up on the 2020 NAF/NAAR Symposium’s focus on ‘northernness’, and continues the wish to shed light on and discuss the specificities of the Nordic countries as a context. How is design theory changing and maintaining its relevance, and is there anything ‘nordic’ about how this happens? What discourses do we seem to be leaving behind, and what can be expected to enter tomorrow? How may this matter for the life and death of great Nordic landscapes? For this part of the symposium, we invite any project/scholar that can contribute to a fruitful discussion and re-wording of design theory and associated discourses.

Keywords: design theory and discourse, design method, design process, northernness

Collaborative actions for tomorrow

More than ever, the world demands that we recognize our capacity for collaboration. Only through collaboration can we tackle the challenges we – as cultures, as groups, as individuals – face today and tomorrow. For a future sustainable social development, collaboration across subject boundaries is crucial, as do collaboration between academia, practice, policy makers, citizens, and other spheres of society. What can the shared methods and common methodological approaches for the collaborative actions of tomorrow be? How can participatory processes, collaboration with municipalities and/or companies, and new ways of cross-disciplinary be tested and developed to impact and improve the actions needed for a lasting future? What is, and what could be, the contribution of the landscape architect, the architect, and the planner, in collaborations? This track will focus on cooperative actions between various disciplines and actors to promote the development of sustainable landscapes and cities.

Keywords: multi-trans and interdisciplinary, participatory processes, democracy

The green energy transition and climate change

Will the available land in and around our cities be sufficient when considering the urgent need for both protecting ourselves from the effects of climate change, and the green energy transition? Solar and wind farms are to a great extent being located on the very same lands where we need to produce our future food. At the same time, cities are sprawling while more land would need to be set aside both to secure biodiversity, and to prevent the risk of flooding due to rising sea levels. This track will focus on the many challenges provided by climate change and the green energy transition. Can a green energy transition be further supported through planning and design actions that reduce or redistribute energy needs and uses?

Keywords: green energy transition, climate change, sustainable urban-rural interaction, regenerative design

The great Nordic urban-scapes of the future

Within this theme, we would like to encourage you to reconsider what a city landscape *is*; i.e. contributions that blur the lines between rural and urban, nature and culture, productive (production) forests and recreational areas, between “mixed use vibrant environments” and landscapes of material transformation. *The Diffuse City* (La Citta Diffusa) by Francesco Indovina, and *The In-Between City* (Zwischenstadt) by Thomas Sieverts, are both studies addressing critical aspects of a city landscape. They share a common concern about the evolving urban landscape, spatial dynamics, and the challenges posed by uncontrolled growth and spatial inequalities. Indovina (1990) investigates processes causing fragmented, sprawled, and low-density urban forms. Sieverts (1997) highlights the need for flexible and adaptable planning strategies to accommodate in-between areas of the city. Sharon Zukin (1995) further shows how urbanity and urban culture, also in denser ‘mixed use’ environments, increasingly has become defined as spaces of leisure and consumption, where anything challenging such a character and activities tends to be pushed out, suppressed, or excluded. Where are the factories, energy forests, and mines in our concepts of urbanity in the Nordic countries? This is a theme that embraces “multi-functionality” in more challenging and provoking ways, while searching for new landscape typologies.

Keywords: urbanity, rurality, multi-functionality, experience versus function, landscape typologies

Reference

Sieverts, T. (2022). *Zwischenstadt* (In-Between City) (1997). In: Barcelloni Corte, M., Viganò, P. (eds) *The Horizontal Metropolis*. Springer, Cham.

Indovina, F. (1997). *La Citta Diffusa* (The Diffuse City), “Quaderno Caest” n. 1. IUVA.

Zukin, S. (1995). *The Cultures of Cities*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Organizing committee

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Important dates and deadlines

Call for papers: 1 November 2023

Abstract deadline: 15 January 2023

Full paper: 23 August 2024

Symposium: 19–20 September 2024

Key note speakers

Dr. Kjetil Fallan, Professor of Design History. The University of Oslo

Dr. Johanna Deak Sjöman, Researcher in Green Infrastructure and Urban Ecosystem Services.

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