

persons and institutions, and the extended notes section can redirect the reader inside the book itself, or to other sources of information. Considering the continuous degradation of our environment due to land cover changes, the volume can be recommended to every professional involved in landscape ecology, architecture or design, or to anyone concerned about the future of our landscapes. For research and educational purposes, the book will serve as an excellent overview of this unique period in America's environmental history. Although not suitable for the inexperienced (forest) scientist or landscape manager, the volume is enrichment for every library, because it can fill gaps not covered by more general and widespread textbooks.

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NEW LANDSCAPE DESIGN

by Robert Holden. 2003. Boston:
Architectural Press. 192 pages, illus-
trated, \$49.99 cloth.
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Reviewed by Gale Fulton

N*ew Landscape Design* is a collection of 39 international landscape design projects, most of which have been constructed since 1995. The book attempts to survey recently built examples of landscape design and to distill possible directions toward which the landscape design professions may be heading. According to author Robert Holden, the purpose of the book is to "provide a stimulus: to collect exemplars of good design practice, to illustrate them generously and thereby provide an inspiration for students of landscape design of whatever age, experience and interest" (11).

Each chapter begins with a short text explaining the significance of each category and foreshadowing the types of projects and

designers included. Holden briefly describes salient aspects of the project such as its history, form, genesis, or designer. Each project is generally spread across four pages, and the majority of the imagery is photography (aerial and ground) although most projects also include some form of design drawing such as illustrative plans or an occasional section or elevation. The result is best categorized as a coffee table book, a characterization reinforced by the general lack of project photographs that convey the idea of landscape as anything more than scenography. While Holden compares landscape design to forestry as a process that may span decades before a project is considered complete, there is no imagery to demonstrate temporality beyond changes in light quality from day to night. One also wishes for a more thorough examination of the material detailing of the projects, several of which are obviously complex and intricate in their construction. Additions such as these would have aided the book in dislodging landscape from its eighteenth and nineteenth century footings as passive, objectified scene.

The book is divided into five chapters preceded by an introductory essay in which Holden outlines the state of landscape design at the beginning of the twenty-first century. He describes landscape design as a multidisciplinary, multi-scalar endeavor still attempting to find its direction and believes there is an increasing presence of landscape designers in urban situations previously considered the realm of architects and planners. Ultimately, Holden believes the common theme in the projects included in *New Landscape Design* is that of place-making—a condition he feels is fundamental to good landscape design.

In the first chapter, entitled "Pattern as Placemaker," pattern is described as "decorative or artistic design" (13). Holden attempts to show the continuing power of pat-

terned the landscape to evoke or create a sense of place. Projects in this section range from Spanish gardens to corporate campuses, and the use of patterning ranges from Hargreaves Associates' concrete walkways (that refer to a former braided stream on the University of Cincinnati campus) to yet another iteration of the regular square grid by Dan Kiley at Pittsburgh's Agnes Katz Plaza. While pattern is evident in some form in all of the examples in this chapter, it is difficult to discern at times whether it is actually the use of patterning in the designs that results in successful places.

In "Minimalism," the book's second section, Holden argues that the selected projects generally eschew ornamentation while providing a framework for "reaction and response" (48). While it could be argued that the projects in this section probably do fit the criteria established by Holden, it may also be considered a procrustean attempt to fit projects far richer and more complex in their programmatic and tectonic makeup into a minimalist language incapable of accommodating such complexity. Such projects as Battle I Roig's Tramvia Park in Spain and West 8's development strategy for Borneo Sporenburg exemplify this complexity in their accommodation of large-scale infrastructure and varying and often-times competing programs.

Holden believes the next group of projects, the "Post-industrial," demonstrate what he terms the "biggest shift in landscape architecture in the late twentieth century" (10). The projects shown here are the first in the book to stretch the word "New" in the book's title to imply more than recently built. Büro Kiefer's "Ferropolis" project near Dessau, Germany, challenges, as Holden suggests, traditional notions of landscape aesthetics but, more importantly, Ferropolis challenges concepts of program and the occupation and unfolding of a landscape over time. Similarly, the Hedeland site in Denmark mixes various recreational programs such as golf, motorcross, wildflower meadows, and footpaths

with the ongoing practice of gravel extraction. In these projects, designers have found ways to escape the ameliorative tendencies underpinning much contemporary landscape design; these landscapes ask the visitor to reconceptualize landscape and their relationship to it.

Chapter 4 showcases "Places of Allegory and Meaning." While projects such as the landscape of Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin and the Garden of Australian Dreams by Room 4.1.3 in Australia demonstrate obvious examples of poststructuralist interpretations of narrative applied to landscape design, other works leave the reader questioning their inclusion in this chapter. Christophe Giro't's Invalidenpark in Berlin, described as commemorating the site's history, is visually represented here as more a minimalist work than one conveying the complex history or narrative of a site. Insel Hombroich, designed by Bernhard Korte, is the most heavily documented project in the book covering eight full pages, but neither the imagery or the text adequately describe why this garden is so significant as a "place of allegory and meaning."

In the final chapter, "Ecological Diversity," many of the projects display habitats or ecologies in such a way as to educate visitors about distant ecosystems or natural processes. Projects in this category are the Earth Centre in Yorkshire and the Solar Living Center by Land and Place in Hopland, California. The second type of project in this chapter are less concerned with the didactic aspect of the aforementioned projects, focusing instead on a more functional engagement with ecological process. Atelier Dreiseitl's Potsdamer Platz Redevelopment works to cleanse stormwater runoff in a series of pools and underground cisterns prior to its entrance in a nearby canal while simultaneously providing a beautiful and playful amenity to the city of Berlin. Murase Associates' design of the landscape at the Portland, Oregon, Water Pollution Control Laboratory focuses on the diversion and filtering of stormwater runoff from a

nearby 50-acre residential and commercial development before it enters the Willamette River. The design employs various stone channels and wetland plantings to reduce flow and aid in sedimentation while simultaneously cleansing heavy metals and fertilizers from the water.

While both types of projects aid in educating the public about ecological diversity and process, the second group seems to offer the potential for a more poetic and revelatory understanding of such processes perhaps due to its freedom from a more rigid educational program.

New Landscape Design was compiled to inspire readers by showing recently built projects that demonstrate current areas of research in the landscape design professions. Holden is successful in displaying a wide range of projects, and it is refreshing to see a cast of designers rarely mentioned at least in the landscape literature of North America. But there is a lack of cohesion in the "major stylistic themes" (6) he hoped to outline as new directions for landscape practice. In addition to this failure to build a cohesive case for new directions, some of the author's categories, (such as "pattern" and "minimalism") may actually be obstructing landscape practice from achieving new forms of expression.

While hints of "new" landscape practice do appear in the book, particularly in the post-industrial and ecological diversity sections, a convincing departure from the static, object-oriented tendencies of so much landscape design in the twentieth century has not been made. For this departure to take place, designers must leave behind their preconceptions of "landscape," and study the landscape of the twenty-first century with fresh eyes.

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URBAN OPEN SPACE: DESIGNING FOR USER NEEDS

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Reviewed by Georgia Harrison

Urban Open Space: Designing for User Needs is the first issue-based case study in the continuing series by LAF, *Land and Community Design Case Study Series*. Following LAF's publication of the first two place-based case studies, *Village Homes: A Community by Design* and *The Paris-Lexington Road: Community Based Planning and Context Sensitive Highway Design*, Mark Francis has initiated the prototype for issue-based studies. Drawing on the research and writings of notable social scientists and designers such as William H. Whyte, Clare Cooper Marcus, Kevin Lynch, and others, Francis has compiled and distilled previously published information about the use of urban spaces. His stated purpose is to "critically review this past research and make it accessible to students and practitioners" (1). His methodology draws on archival research, case studies, internet searches, site visits, as well as interviews with open space designers, managers, and users.

As a resource, the book is a helpful contribution to urban open space literature. The comprehensive approach begins with basic definitions and typologies of urban open spaces, explains the case study methodology, elaborates on key success factors in design, presents a representative case study, evaluates the importance of community participation, and concludes with cogent summary comments. Data from previous studies is presented in tabular format, and footnotes elaborate on additional sources of information. The extensive bibliography, list of related journals, websites and listservs, and additional sources of information present a wealth of leads for anyone pursuing research in this area of interest.