**Units and Entireties: Landscape architecture as research, *for*, *on* and *by* design.**

This lecture will have three sections. *First*: Landscape architecture as an academic field, with design in its core, will be positioned in relation to other research fields, also in relation to its knowledge challenges. I will also sort out the field in its own different branches, using own and others’ examples, in order to clarify its potential for urban transformation and sustainable development. *Second*: The professional practice will be explored from the perspective to explain the role of design for implementing research from many disciplines. Urban planning and urban design are growing branches of landscape architecture, simply due to more people living in cities; the urban landscape being the human habitat, the landscape you grow up in as a child, as well as dwell and transport in as a student or employer, moving gradually slower in at old age. *Third*: “Design research” will be presented, as a branch of landscape architecture, but also as an aspect of “research Mode 2” – transdisciplinarity – launched by the European Research Council in the 1990ies. From this general approach, more specific directions for future design research within landscape architecture will be proposed and outlined. Landscape architecture has a purpose, from a societal point of view. Psychologists and neurologists have stated that we need, not only a safe environment, but also an interesting one. As biological organisms we also need a certain microclimate. As social beings we need space to meet, to recreate and to learn from each other. In the urban setting, the use of space becomes competitive; partly on an individual level as appropriation of space, partly as a market of land and real estate, which is also intertwined with a political power play. In the Swedish planning and building act, common interest is prioritized before single interests, when land use decisions are made, when plans are agreed, when building permits are given. In reality, this is not a simple task. We are in urban planning and design balancing on an edge between two ditches: one is too much laissez-faire for the profit maximizing of the landowners; the other is too less attraction of investors and entrepreneurs contributing to urban transformation. Landscape architects as professionals fulfill contracts with clients, but also use skills and knowledge in favor of the end users. This can sometimes cause value conflicts, which contributes to the difficult duty to take subjective decisions. Research and practice of landscape architecture today, is always connected to the forefront of sustainable development, following global, national and regional policies (e. g. UN:s SDG:s), combined with forefronts of research, disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary. With design, landscape architects use research from all kinds of fields, which is why you (from this perspective) can label design as a means to implement research. At the same time, this landscape is the visual interface of a market, consisting of urban land plots and real estates. This landscape is also a common resource, materialized during hundreds and thousands of years. Thus, every project in landscape architecture is a part of a larger landscape. In academia, this is mirrored as an interdisciplinary field. We can add – also a transdisciplinary field, since it often transgresses the borders between theory and practice. I will present urban landscape transformation as a branch of landscape architecture, fitting into this new purpose – transdisciplinarity - not only for being broad and inclusive, but also for its core of design. “Design” is the *approach* towards the multiple complexities of artefacts and natural processes, by which it is possible to create an entirety out of separate units, also units with different values, measured with different standards. *Design research* happens “for”, “on” and “by” design, with following different methods and theory, out of which only “research by design” is significantly different from other fields of research. In order to strengthen design as an approach and as the vehicle for transdisciplinarity, it is however necessary to acknowledge and understand the knowledge production within design action and processes, i. e. “design research”. The conclusion of the lecture will be an attempt to see research directions for design in landscape architecture, how the training of relating units to entireties can foster collaboration, e.g. with other kinds of landscape research and other branches and disciplines at SLU. Two research projects in-the-making will serve as examples: “Transdisciplinary images” and “Design qualities in public space”.