

CALL FOR PAPERS

FOR WHOM?

EXPLORING LANDSCAPE DESIGN AS A POLITICAL PROJECT

With this call for papers, *JoLA* invites submissions for a special issue that explore landscape design as a societal and political project. The aim of the issue is to position the question 'For whom?' central within landscape architecture as a design discipline, by recasting landscape architecture's agency for a decidedly urban project, embracing concepts that articulate spatial reflections of sociopolitical priorities and agendas. In this issue, we forward the hypothesis that recent -isms, like landscape urbanism and ecological urbanism, follow a technical and managerial rationale, thus overlooking sociopolitical questions about who and what is in- or excluded in the planned spatial interventions and whether this is socially just. We seek

(a) contributions that critically assess how the good and the bad of present landscapes built under the banner of new -isms affect different social groups;

(b) studies that unpack political agendas and their spatial responses in landscapes imagined or built in the past;

(c) papers that speculate about the potential of landscape design to formulate alternative urban futures, or indeed new political imaginations and/or imaginaries.

After more than a decade of influential publications, successful landscape programmes at design schools, and worldwide large-scale investments in landscape projects, we could state that the new -isms have reinvigorated the disciplines of both urbanism and landscape architecture, nurturing new professional approaches. Discourses endorsed by landscape urbanism and ecological urbanism explicitly oppose a top-down modernist design and forward bottom-up processes over deterministic planning and lifecycles over linear progress, eventually conceiving landscape 'as the basic building block of contemporary urbanism'. However, this reorientation has been generally averting sociopolitical questions and priorities. As a result, the new -isms have generated projects uncritical of capitalist urbanization and suspicious of governmental leadership. What started

as a way out of the disciplinary crisis has in many cases been implicated in an explosion of neoliberal, mostly conservative approaches to urbanization, in which landscape architecture serves as a frame for aggressively market-driven and elitist interventions exacerbating gentrified and depoliticized urban form. Now that urbanism has been 'saved' by landscape architecture, it is time to put societal and political questions back onto the landscape architectural design agenda. This issue calls for theoretical and practice-based experiments that start to unpack the myriad relations between landscape design and the political project, by asking the simple question 'For whom?'. For whom were, are, and should landscapes be designed as stage for claiming and shaping rights?

We invite authors to re-engage in a strong lineage with the humanities and the social sciences, more specifically critical urban theory, in relationship to design. We encourage authors to take stock of recent -isms in a way that scrutinizes how they produce socially (un)just assemblies, as well as to explore how landscape design has contributed to political agendas in the past and how it can be mobilized today in imagining alternative futures of large-scale sociospatial transformation, beyond neoliberal market logics. In so doing, this issue aims to advance a theoretically sound and practically relevant discourse—rather than launch yet another modified -ism.

We are looking for original research articles (up to 4,000 words), as well as contributions for the sections Under the Sky (up to 3,000 words) and Thinking Eye respectively. See submission guidelines of *JoLA*:

http://www.jola-lab.eu/www/pdf/jola_guidelines.pdf

Please read the guidelines carefully, also concerning the quality of images.

Submission process and time-plan

Please send your extended abstract of no less than 1,000 and no more than 2,000 words (including endnotes and figure captions) to

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and Vera Vicenzotti (vera.vicenzotti@slu.se)

by 15 November 2019. The abstract should clearly state the paper's objective, research questions, main results, structure, and key literature.

Timing

Abstract: **15 November 2018**

Full papers: **15 February 2019**

Publication date: **issue 3-2019**

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