



## Foreword

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The aim of this issue of *Landscape Review* is to turn the page on yet another chapter in the development of this landmark publication in landscape architecture. Having learned about the evolution of the goals of *Landscape Review* from Emeritus Professor Simon Swaffield and Professor Jacky Bowring, the new editorial team is repositioning the journal a little closer to home, in Oceania, a slight shift in the geospatial scope for us from the whole of the southern hemisphere to Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. This focus seems more achievable, timely, relevant and strategic at this point for our profession and discipline, although our international aspirations remain steadfast. Our part of the world is unique in many ways: we are an archipelago of island nations and territories; our First Nations peoples are diverse and important to us; we have inherited legacies from British, French and Dutch colonisations; the Pacific Ocean and our maritime responsibilities are a critical part of what we do; and our region is flanked by the two most significant geopolitical powers of the twenty-first century, the United States of America and China. As landscape architects, we are also caught up in a global revolution of contested information, knowledge exchange and machine-learning. Our new Editorial Board reflects these interests and concerns for our region. We are therefore keen to traverse the discursive space between practice and research in Oceania with our authors, reviewers, editors and readers in this and coming issues.

This issue of *Landscape Review* opens up a discussion about bridging the apparent divide between professional practice and academic research in landscape architecture. The impetus for this theme stems from recent shifts in professional practice and higher education following the abatement of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of us have experienced a divergence in our understanding of goals, perspectives and outcomes related to both of these sides of landscape architecture. Nevertheless, some landscape architects straddle this divide by undertaking projects underpinned by research approaches and critical thinking. Others take up practice itself as research, reflecting the multiple ways of expanding landscape architectural knowledge production in these volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous times. The first two papers in this issue are critical provocations about what we could or should consider as knowledge bases for our discipline and profession. The other three provide valuable examples of integrating research with practice using design thinking, horticultural expertise and local knowledge in key projects.

Emeritus Professor Peter Downton presents us with his so-called rumination on experimenting with self-remodelling practitioners as researchers. He challenges us to imagine practitioners operating by *inquiring through doing*, as prior work could be categorised as a built experiment with outcomes that could provide new knowledge forming the basis for further experiments. He reflects on researching as a backward-facing pursuit and on practising as forward-facing. Deployed together, the two offer a whole not available to either one alone. His short and pithy paper provides much food for thought.

Associate Professor Katherine Melcher states that landscape architecture research has focused on the development of 'knowing-what' or 'knowing-that' – that is, substantive knowledge – over the past decades. However, in general, the outcomes of this research have not been well integrated into professional practice. She advocates for the development of 'knowing-how', by which she means procedural knowledge, defined as a collectively shared and critically examined understanding of landscape architectural

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practice to replace our sole reliance on ‘know-how’ or individual tacit knowledge of designing. She argues that knowing-how to plan, design and manage landscapes is the core knowledge-base of the field but developing transferable knowledge in this area can be challenging for beginning designers and those who educate them. Her position is that procedural knowledge can be developed from practice or research or some combination of the two and, therefore, can also build stronger ties between them. ‘Research into design’, she suggests, could make significant contributions to procedural knowledge. She sets out a fascinating proposal to read and digest.

Associate Professor Jillian Walliss and Dr Heike Rahmann explain how the *Landscape Architects as Changemakers* project arose from the limitations of translation in investigating how Japanese designers work. This project then fortuitously expanded into a cross-cultural engagement with Australian landscape architects. The authors discuss the potential of the reflective practitioner, along with the research possibilities afforded by audiovisual media, in developing new knowledge in landscape architecture. They posit a hybrid approach, where characteristics of ‘research-on-design’ mix with the creative practice of ‘research through design’. The project shows how the tacit knowledge of designers and design outcomes can be revealed through the combination of interview and film. It’s an inspiring example of impactful research methods.

Dr Wendy Walls and Dr Brent Greene demonstrate how the Woody Meadows project in greater Melbourne revealed the challenges of integrating experimental horticultural research (for climate resilience, reduced labour and financial inputs, and striking visual appeal) into landscape architectural design work in Australia’s public realm. They foreground the significance of managing community and professional expectations, alongside the need for better strategies to incorporate innovative horticultural research methods into established workflows and processes in professional practice. In advocating for bridging research and design practice, the authors focus particularly on responding to the challenges of climate change and urban warming. They insist we challenge the assumption that rigorous research will easily flow through to design. In essence, the paper makes an ardent plea for integrating research into broader design practice.

Professor Ray Green addresses impassioned complaints from local community members about how the ‘character’ of their coastal ‘sea change’ towns and neighbourhoods is being degraded by accelerated urban growth and development. He illustrates how people living in these settings experience environmental change and its impacts on their sense of place. His research on nine Australian coastal towns, from Byron Bay to Airlie Beach and the Great Ocean Road, has guided local planning schemes and could inform landscape and architectural design practice to optimally ‘fit’ into the existing character of these places. This work offers a powerful approach for communities coping with change.

As this is the first issue of the next chapter of *Landscape Review*, my thanks go to our authors, who have been so responsive to our call for papers and our deadlines, and to our international panel of reviewers, who kindly accepted the challenge of reading the work of others, and reflecting and generously commenting on it, in a timely manner. Without your efforts, we would miss out on reading broader arguments related to landscape architecture in this part of the world. Special thanks to the behind-the-scenes team. Thanks to Yanan Zhao, who has been invaluable in working with me so closely to master the OJS platform to ensure it performed its duties for authors, reviewers, editors and readers. What a mission it has been! Thanks to Tanya Tremewan, who has been patient and diligent in copy editing the papers in this issue, as she has done in many previous issues with Simon and Jacky. Finally, thanks to Jenny Heine, who has helped update the layout to a streamlined author’s template and pushed for a little more visual appeal from the front cover to the end of each paper.

We hope that the papers in this issue will provoke other authors to have their say.