

Mappings

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Maps are potent analytic and generative tools. While often assumed to be objective, maps are inherently subjective. The choice of what and how to map is core to a map's meaning. The mapping process, therefore, embodies power and knowledge and can be harnessed in the imagining of new understandings and new visions. The thread of mapping can be traced through the four papers in this issue of *Landscape Review*. Each paper engages explicitly or implicitly in mapping and enlists maps across a spectrum, from description to subversion.

First, Hannah Lewi, Andrew Saniga and Wally Smith present a contemporary version of a map: an iPad app. In their paper, 'Immersive and Temporal Experiences in Historic Landscapes: Designing a Mobile Digital Guide for the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne', the authors discuss how Master of Landscape Architecture students at the University of Melbourne used this modern mapping approach to interpret the historical landscape of the Botanic Gardens. The approach draws on a centuries-old legacy of guiding visitors through designed landscapes using some kind of interpretive tool. In the past, it would have been a guide book or literally a map. But devices were also available that helped amplify and shape a viewer's perception of the place they were exploring.

In imagining the iPad app developed by Lewi, Saniga and Smith, another device comes to mind. In an uncanny echo of the iPad, many eighteenth-century tourists would have travelled holding a flat device about the size of a large envelope with a shiny black surface. For the eighteenth-century tourist, however, this was about being connected not to the internet and the virtual world of an app but to the highly polished convex black-glass surface that distorted the view so it appeared more like a painting by Claude Lorrain. Lorrain was a painter whose work provided a template for the composition of 'picturesque landscapes' and, in recognition of this, the curved glass mirror was known as the Claude glass. In both cases – the iPad and the Claude glass – the hand-held device is interactive, providing both a shared experience in terms of common conventions and one that the individual controls through their own itinerary. This dual use highlights how the process of interpretation negotiates both the collective and the individual relationship with the landscape.

While the iPad app provides objective information about the historic aspects of sites within the Botanic Gardens, the process of walking, looking and listening also becomes immersive. This was an important aspect for Lewi, Saniga and Smith who were interested in how students could become fully engaged in the site through undertaking their own journeys. The authors were striving for both the instructive possibilities of the iPad app and the richness of experience that comes through immersion, through having all of the senses stimulated while travelling around a site.

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EDITORIAL

Brent Greene and Heike Rahmann explicitly use mapping in their paper, 'Glitterosophy: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly'. In reflecting contemporary trends towards mapping as a generative design tool, Greene and Rahmann draw in particular on the composite mapping approach – of mapping several variables at once. They explain that composite maps allow for multiple time periods to be shown and, through this, to reveal latent patterns. This revelation leads towards the generation of the physical form that draws on these historical layers, and engages with the processes that have shaped the landscape. For Greene and Rahmann it is the place of weeds that is of particular interest, and they explain how species classified as weeds have important attributes that can help with the rehabilitation of toxic soils. Their design process outlines the possibilities for enlisting and enabling these species to infiltrate sites and create positive benefits.

This elevation of the other, of that often excluded, presents a further form of mapping as it echoes with the concept of counter-mapping – an approach that maps against the grain of dominant power differentials. Counter-mapping – the term was coined by Peluso in her work in the forests of Indonesia (Peluso, 1995) – is a type of critical cartography, where the process of mapping is in itself a form of critique. This perspective presents a potentially useful tool for landscape architects working against the grain, in the way that Greene and Rahmann are with their 'Glitterosophy' project. Many of the counter-maps produced reflect a 'grass-roots' philosophy, where those who otherwise lack a position of power are able to make a point through mapping.

The idea of counter-mapping, or subversion of traditional mapping conventions, also underpins the paper by Fiona Johnson and Jillian Walliss, 'Reconciling History: Inserting an Indigenous Space into the University of Melbourne Campus'. Again working with Master of Landscape Architecture students at the university, Johnson and Walliss explore how mapping can reveal aspects of suppressed history, in this case of the landscape of the University of Melbourne. Through the process of mapping aspects of the campus that had been overlooked or edited out of the understanding of the campus history, students generated ideas for a space that could do more than simply represent aspects of history. The challenge was to create a space that could support reconciliation. Through the design process, however, it became clear it could not be achieved by landscape architecture alone. As well as reflecting on the complexity of creating such a place, the paper reports on a very tangible outcome. The mappings produced as part of the studio project became the basis for a new guided walking tour of the campus, one that reveals previously invisible landscape elements.

As a form of description, maps can provide the necessary coordinates for understanding the spatial nature of a phenomenon and, subsequently, supporting its protection through legislation. The fourth paper, by Alison Loveridge, Rebecca Duell, Julie Abbari and Michelle Moffat, examines the Aoraki Mackenzie Dark Sky Reserve in the South Island's Mackenzie Basin, and the possible consequences of its becoming a World Heritage Site. The extent of the starlight reserve means a range of other land uses is included within the site, and, as in the case of other sites recommended for World Heritage status, some have reservations about how this status may limit other activities. The authors, however, highlight a move towards guidelines that embrace multifunctional landscapes, rather than require a pure focus on the one element that is worthy of World Heritage recognition.

In this context, mapping provides vital spatial information about the coalescing uses in the area and the ways in which growth and development can be carefully controlled to avoid destroying the night-sky darkness through light pollution.

The three book reviews in Issue 15(1) could also be seen as maps of sorts. Two of the books reviewed have specific geographic locations, and the other is more of a guide for a designer's journey. Ian Henderson reviews James Beattie and Duncan Campbell's *Lan Yuan: A Garden of Distant Longing*, which explores the Chinese garden in Dunedin within a broader cultural context of the Chinese in New Zealand. Henderson draws attention to how this book is part of a wider discourse of particularity within landscape architecture, with this point of departure providing a reflection on the place of imported gardens in New Zealand.

In the second review, Shannon Davis critiques *Go With Me: 50 Steps to Landscape Thinking* by Thomas Oles with Marieke Timmermans and Jacques Abelman. Davis frames her review around the idea of a book of tools and how it can be used as a way of seeing things anew. As Oles himself advises, it is a book to be taken everywhere from half-frozen lakes to canals and deserts; it is perhaps another kind of mapping device, one that is about both orientation and invention.

And, finally, I review Andrew Saniga's *Making Landscape Architecture in Australia*. Saniga has produced what is destined to become an important work on the history of the landscape architecture profession in Australia and beyond. The sense of geographic particularity is also significant in this book, which traces relationships between people and their environment within the specific frame of an emerging profession.

While the theme of mapping interweaves throughout the issue, at the same time it embraces another form of representation, the snapshot. This is a word borrowed from Thomas Oles's book, as quoted in the review by Shannon Davis, where Oles is seeking to capture the very nature of 'landscape' itself. The idea of landscape as a snapshot of cultural and natural processes resonates in the papers and books reviewed, each of which provides a perspective, a way of seeing and an outlook. We are offered snapshots of many landscapes, with views into the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, into a river edge in Melbourne and a creek margin in Canberra, the University of Melbourne campus, the Mackenzie Basin's dark-sky reserve in the South Island, a Chinese garden in Dunedin and the entire continent of Australia.

While embracing the southern hemisphere focus promoted by *Landscape Review*, these views also reverberate much further afield. The richness of observation and experimentation in this issue demonstrates the potential of landscape architecture as a profession and a discipline to continue to enhance our understanding and experience of the landscape.

This issue of the journal has been some time in the making, and it represents another important contribution to the growing body of research that *Landscape Review* has established. The next few issues of the journal are already in formation, with several special themes being explored. We are always interested in receiving submissions for the journal, including proposals for themed issues.

REFERENCE

Peluso, N L (1995) Whose Woods are These? Counter-Mapping Forest Territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia, *Antipode* 4(27), pp 383–406.