International cross-disciplinary Conference

BEYOND ISM.

The landscape of landscape urbanism

Malmo, 19th-21th of October 2016



The international cross-disciplinary conference “BEYOND ISM. The landscape of landscape urbanism” – organised by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) – aims to contribute new and alternative formulations of the relationship between landscape and urbanism by reassessing Landscape Urbanism. The time is ripe to dig deeper into the concerns motivating the cascade of ‘isms’ that have proliferated over the last decade: landscape urbanism, ecological urbanism, infrastructural urbanism, process urbanism, bio-urbanism, etc. To advance a theoretically sound and practically relevant discourse, the conference invite the participants to take stock of Landscape Urbanism and its closely related theories to identify their strengths, weaknesses and potentials.

The aim of this conference is to reposition the relationships between city and landscape, as reflected in the practice and academia of various disciplines. To this end, the conference aims to revisit the academic discourse concerning landscape urbanism, and to engage with subsequent ‘isms’ as well as looking beyond, in order to enrich and broaden the urban discourse.

The conference will bring together advocates and critics of Landscape Urbanism, as well as scholars whose research complements its ongoing discourse, participants

from around the world, academics and reflective practitioners from disciplines such as landscape architecture, urban and landscape planning and design, architecture, cultural geography, cultural studies, as well as subject areas in the arts and humanities.

Hosted by a landscape architectural institution the conference proposes to discuss Landscape Urbanism from a landscape perspective, re-engaging landscape as a "lens" to understand and develop its theory and practice. In an attempt to tackle the complex ecological challenges that our contemporary built environments face under conditions of global change, some strands of Landscape Urbanism have tended to overemphasize scientific and technical solutions, neglecting aesthetic, cultural, social and political dimensions. The conference aims to address that oversight, to identify reductionist tendencies and to understand the motives behind them, seeking to contribute to alternative concepts.

Conference Themes

Papers and projects contribute to historical reflection, theoretical sharpening, and practical applications regarding three major themes, one wildcard session and one practice-meets-academia-session:

1. Ecology as panacea?

Contributors to this theme are invited to explore the role and multiple meanings of 'ecology' in Landscape Urbanism, analysing and discussing, for example, the (implications of the) largely unwittingly produced multiplicity of concepts of 'ecology', the aesthetisation of ecology and the ecologisation of aesthetics, potentials and dangers of the ecosystem service approach, as well as the relationship between (landscape) ecology and (green or hybrid) infrastructure.

2. The aesthetics as pejorative?

Contributions in this thematic strand are invited to think through the fate and status of the notion of the aesthetic in Landscape Urbanism, exploring, for instance, whether Landscape Urbanism is truly indifferent to aesthetics or simply advancing a new aesthetic, (mis)understandings of the notion of the aesthetic revealed by its explicit rejection, and the role of diagrams, and/or images and representations in Landscape Urbanism.

3. Contextual bias/ enriched by context?

Contributions to this theme are invited to discuss interpretations and applications of Landscape Urbanism beyond North America. We seek papers that challenge and enrich Landscape Urbanist discourse, for example: from a postcolonial perspective, by either discussing how it can be renewed both for and from the margins, the 'Global South'; or by illuminating discourses similar to Landscape Urbanism which have been developed in other countries and cultures in the 'Global North'.

4. Wildcards!

Furthermore, we welcome *papers that contribute to historical reflection, theoretical sharpening, or practical application of Landscape Urbanism but that do not fit any of the above outlined thematic foci.* Topics could include pedagogical issues, compare theoretical with practical issues, or critically chronicle the historiography of Landscape Urbanism. An additional theme will shed light on the relationship between theory and praxis, research and design:

5. Practice meets academia!

With this section we open up for practitioners' presentations of projects and urban transformations inspired by Landscape Urbanism in all possible ways, as well as for design critics' and researchers' investigations 'within' or 'upon' such projects. In practice landscape architecture, urban planning and management tasks are often mixed up. Offices are increasingly offering cross-sectorial services. Does that suffice to call the result "Landscape Urbanism"? Is the addition leading to something that is more than the sum of its parts, in practice?

Organisers

The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences Research

Platform Future Urban Sustainable Environment FUSE

Department of Landscape Architecture, Planning, and Management

Department of Urban and Rural Development, Division of Landscape Architecture

More information:

www.slu.se/conference-beyond-ism

Contact us:

info.beyond-ism@slu.se