



USC School of Architecture

ARCH 541B:
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE DESIGN
UNITS: 6
LOCATION: LANDSCAPE STUDIO
INSTRUCTOR: SARAH COWLES
OFFICE: WATT 321
OFFICE HOURS: FRIDAYS 11-12
CONTACT INFO: SCOWLES@USC.EDU

Sara Sze: Guggenheim in a Ruin, 2009

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This design studio focuses the development of urban landscape proposals for underutilized parcels and infrastructural spaces to enhance connectivity, improve quality of public open space, enhance ecological function, reveal site histories, and contemporary cultural entanglements. Successful projects will meet technical challenges of negotiating large-scale urban infrastructure through intelligent approaches to grading and circulation, in tandem with the invention of contextually relevant, novel and coherent landscape. The three major projects we will undertake during the semester include:

- A detailed precedent analysis of an urban landscape.
- A proposal for an enhanced pedestrian landscape of the Corralitas Red Car trail between Silver Lake and Atwater Village.
- A proposal for a networked landscape that links several vacant parcels, aligns and intersects major infrastructure, and reconnects divided neighborhoods.

EXPECTATIONS

This studio will be operated as a laboratory, with a series of guided charrettes with strict dimensional and material parameters. The pace will be very intense and the workload—both assigned reading and design studies—will be significant. Warning letters will be issued before and after mid-term reviews.

METHODOLOGY

FIELD TRIPS: We will have several visits to our study sites during the semester to conduct research and collect field data.

Modeling and physical construction of drawings will primary method of design development within this seminar and studio. The goal of these exercises is to produce a large array of alternatives in a short period of time for evaluation and response.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this studio, you will

- » Complete a comprehensive precedent study of a contemporary, medium-scale urban public landscape
- » Complete a detailed proposal for a linear public landscape in an urban neighborhood that integrates with and or crosses major urban infrastructure and provides social and ecological connectivity that includes precise drawings, diagrams and models.
- » Complete a detailed proposal for a network of public landscapes that stitch together underutilized parcels and reflect and amplify local cultural and ecological themes that includes precise drawings, diagrams and models.

FORMAT

Class meets M F afternoons.

You are required to have work ready (printed out or sketched) to pin up every class meeting, unless we are meeting off-site. Sometimes we will work in small groups around a table; other times we will have pin-ups. These are not scheduled, as continually producing work for review is part of the studio culture. Anyone who does not have work ready and pinned up will not be seen that day. Always be prepared with work, and trace, scales, and pens or pencils.

The following excuses are unacceptable:

“ I am stuck” : keep sketching, modeling, try another method or medium

“I haven’t printed it yet, can you look at it on my computer”: No work will be reviewed on screen.

The schedule is subject to revision as field trips and guest lectures are added. Project assignments will contain more detailed schedule information.

EVALUATION OF STUDIO PERFORMANCE

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

SELF EVALUATION

The following criteria will be used in evaluation of a participant's progress during the semester, and will be used to determine the participant's final grade.

- **Theory to Practice:** Give examples of how you engaged the theoretical topics investigated and presented in precedent research and readings:
- **Productive experimentation and risk taking:** Did you consistently draw, model, and test ideas, creating a clear series of experiments that lead moments of resolution and definition? Give examples when you created rigorous, scaled study models and drawings with new iterations ready for review in each class meeting. Did you build on these studies?
- **Participation and collaboration:** . Did you productively collaborate and share information and tasks with other students? Were you able to participate in constructive internal critique within your group?
- **Response to Criticism:** Did you develop your work based on feedback from your critics? Did you ask for clarification if you did not understand the terms or concepts used?
- **Self-direction and ambition:** Did you actively seek out information and resources outside of the examples and assigned readings presented in the studio by the studio leaders?
- **Site exploration:** Did you re-visit the site to ground-truth analysis and design concepts. Did you utilize rigorous methodologies for your fieldwork and record the results of your fieldwork clearly in analytic drawings? Did you explore the neighborhood as well?
- **Presentation:** Did you clearly communicate the intentions of your project verbally and graphically. Did your presentation successfully not only communicate the content of your design, but also defend the reasoning behind your decisions?

STUDIO CULTURE

Your studio leaders will provide information to you in handouts, documents that are posted to a folder on Google Drive or other file sharing sites, and by email. Please do not email or text your instructors with the details of any personal academic, health, or interpersonal relationship issues you are experiencing. If you need to discuss these issues, contact us in class or send or email us to set up a meeting time to discuss the issues in person.

ASSIGNED READING

You will be assigned a number of readings during this semester. They are from a variety of sources, from planning, ecology, geography, urbanism, and landscape theory, so the language and vocabulary may be diverse and challenging. It is your responsibility to look up words you do not understand in the dictionary or to ask us. Try to read the articles at least twice. It may take a third or fourth reading of some of the papers throughout the semester for the concepts to sink in as you develop as a designer. We will have brief discussions of the reading in the beginning of class sessions.

FIELD TRIPS

We will have a number of field trips during the semester. Bring a camera and sketchbook. Wear appropriate footwear and clothing. Take pictures of where two conditions meet, of textures, of tones, of land and water interfaces; capture the big and the small scale. Consider future views you might make in your project.

MATERIALS

Take your tools as seriously. By now you should have a favorite marking device but also try out new ones such as a cartridge pen or graphite crayon to see the difference in expression. Use the right tool for the job or use the wrong one deliberately. Bring to table crits and small group pin-ups trace, scales, markers, pencils, and the assignment or exercise brief.

TECHNOLOGICAL PROFICIENCY AND HARDWARE/SOFTWARE REQUIRED

Adobe suite, digital photography.

REQUIRED READINGS AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Zimmermann, A. 2015, *Planning landscape : dimensions, elements, typologies*, Basel : Birkhäuser.

ASSIGNMENTS

The assignments will build your familiarity with landscape representation and measuring techniques, the development and organization of personal and shared visual resources, and techniques for translating interpreting field research into visual media. You will receive detailed information on each assignment in a separate handout.

All assignments must be uploaded to Blackboard in the appropriate assignment dropboxes, as well as additional archiving folders as specified by the University/department. Please use the following naming conventions:

Label projects with Lastname_FirstInitial_assignment_version.pdf. For example: Cowles_S_Sitesurvey_1.pdf

Grading	
20%	Class participation/effort
20%	Precedent study
30%	Midterm project: Red Car
30%	Final project

PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Additional resources posted to Blackboard and listed with individual assignments.

SITE WORK

Burns, C., 1954 & Kahn, A., 1958 2005, *Site matters: design concepts, histories, and strategies*, Routledge, New York.

Lynch, K. 1971, *Site planning*, 2d edn, M.I.T. Press, Cambridge.

Petschek, Peter., Walker, Peter., Bruce, Laura. *Grading landscapingSMART, 3D machine control systems, stormwater management*, Birkhäuser, Basel.

Strom, Steven, Nathan, Kurt, Woland, Jake, 2013, *Site engineering for landscape architects*.

Waldheim, C., Hansen, A. & Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum 2014, *Composite landscapes: photomontage and landscape architecture*, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Ostfildern; Boston, Massachusetts.

Whitney Library of Design (New York, N.Y.) & Desvigne & Dalnoky 1997, *Desvigne & Dalnoky: the return of the landscape*, Whitney Library of Design, New York, N.Y.

Zimmermann, A. 2015, *Planning landscape : dimensions, elements, typologies*, Basel : Birkhäuser.

Zimmermann, A., 2009, *Constructing landscape : materials, techniques, structural components*, Birkhäuser, Basel; Boston.

LANDSCAPE THEORY

Amidon, Jane. "Big Nature." *Design Ecologies: Essays on the Nature of Design*. Ed. Lisa Tilder and Beth Blostein. New York: Princeton Architectural, 2010.

Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham: Duke UP, 2010. Print.

Corner, James. *Recovering landscape: essays in contemporary landscape architecture*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.

Czerniak, Julia. *Large parks*. New York Cambridge, Mass: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

Fletcher, David. "Flood Control Freakologies." *The Infrastructural City: Networked Ecologies in Los Angeles*. Ed. Kazys Varnelis. Barcelona: Actar, 2008.

Hill, Kristina. "Shifting Sites." *Site Matters: Design Concepts, Histories, and Strategies*. Ed. Carol Burns and Andrea Kahn. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Meyer, Elizabeth K. "Seized by Sublime Sentiments." *Richard Haag: Bloedel Reserve and Gas Works Park*. By William S. Saunders. New York: Princeton Architectural, 1998.

Reed, Chris. "The Agency of Ecology." *Ecological Urbanism*. By Mohsen Mostafavi and Gareth Doherty. Baden, Switzerland: Lars Müller, 2010.

Erik. "Reclaiming a Toxic Legacy Through Art and Science." Orion Magazine. Nov.-Dec. 2007. Web. 25 Aug. 2013.

A&T. Public: landscape urbanism strategies. Vitoria-Gasteiz: a+t ediciones, 2010.

Reed, Peter. Groundswell : constructing the contemporary landscape. New York, N.Y: Museum of Modern Art, 2005.

TOPOS 69: Re-Use

PAISEA 016: Scars

Solà-Morales, Ignasi. "Terrain Vague." Anyplace. Ed. Cynthia Davidson. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995.

Lewis, Peirce F. "Axioms for Reading the Landscape." Material Culture Studies in America. Ed. Thomas J. Schlereth. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1982. 175- 182.

Jackson, John Brinckerhoff. The Necessity for Ruins, and Other Topics. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1980.

Augé, Marc. Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity. London: Verso, 1995.

Daskalakis, Georgia, Charles Waldheim, and Jason Young. Stalking Detroit. Barcelona: Actar, 2001.

TOPOS 83: Plants in Design

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety

213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime. 7
Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>

Course Schedule: A Project Breakdown (subject to change)
See individual assignments for day-by-day activities

Week	Month	Day	Content
1	Jan	8 M	Introduction to Studio. Introduction to Precedent Study assignment.
1	Jan	12 F	Pin-up Precedent Study
2	Jan	15 M	No Class: MLK Holiday
2	Jan	19 F	Review Precedent Study
3	Jan	22 M	Introduce Mediating Landscape : Site Visit
3	Jan	26 F	Review study models
4	Jan	29 M	Grading Charrette
4	Feb	2 F	Review grading charette
5	Feb	5 M	Vegetaton charette
5	Feb	9 F	Review Vegetation charette
6	Feb	12 M	Material charette
6	FEb	16 F	Review material charette. Begin synthesis & Production
7	Feb	19 M	No Class: President's day
7	Feb	23 F	Synthesis & Production
8	Feb	26 M	Dry run presentation
8	Feb	28 W	Midterm Review: Mediating Landscape
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