Drawing time

The representation of change and dynamics in Dutch landscape architectural practice after 1985

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5. In between history, theory and current practice - a wider perspective

5.1 Introduction
It is unclear what the place of the representation of time in present-day landscape architecture is. This has to be the conclusion one draws from the results presented in Chapter 4. Even if an inspiring history of ideas is there (see Chapter 3), current practice is hesitating, and a cross-section of the current Dutch and West-European offices were only able to supply a limited number of drawings explicitly depicting aspects of time. There appear to be very few drawings in which the title or caption unmistakably mentions time as the subject. Thus, putting together a collection of drawings is in itself subject to interpretation, which just underlines the lack of clarity. The chosen examples, however, do show that it is possible to represent time. They also show that this is done only if necessary. It is precisely this proviso that characterizes the problematic position of representing time; it happens, but only under certain conditions, as was revealed in interviews. This is surprising. Landscape architects are keen on distinguishing landscape architecture from architecture, and one of the arguments supporting that specificity is the aspect of time: A landscape grows and changes. [Fig. 5.1] That is why most landscape architects believe time to be such an important feature of landscape architectural design - even if they not always draw it. Obviously it is important to distinguish between thinking about aspects of time and representing them. Aspects of time are often part of the design but are taken for granted, so that no further attention is given to time in the drawings. Equally, the interviews have shown that these aspects of time are often not explored in drawings, based on assumptions of what the client desires, or how the general public will react. In the Netherlands or Northwest Europe we find neither a lively debate on nor an intensive exploration of the representation of time. That is certainly amazing, as the rich history of ideas as explored in Chapter 3 reveals the historical foundations of what could be a much more solid approach to time than the one we see today. A more solid approach would help further professional emancipation. In this, drawings, texts, realized projects and theory have a mutual relationship: Practice needs a clear frame for the representation of time, and vice versa the development of theory responds to the production in practice and the innovation that comes with it.

This chapter wishes to offer a wider perspective by connecting theory, history and current practice. It does so by focussing on particular drawings as found in current practice, specific periods of history and particular concepts as found in theory. These are taken as a point of departure for a more detailed argument. Why, for example, is Corner’s written work so relevant for a better understanding of this problematic? How can a particular drawing by Lubbers be used as a driver to discuss a Dutch landscape architecture culture, and therefore a Dutch approach to the representation of time? The overarching message of this chapter is that landscape architecture as a discipline and as a profession can not only no longer neglect time is an essential dimension of
Fig. 5.1 Explaining the process of growth. Competition entry for Danevirke, B+B 2009, visualization.
landscape, but must also take decisive steps with regard to theory, practice and education. In that sense, the meandering organisation of this chapter is telling: it moves from a plea to revalue part of the discipline’s history to a deepened interpretation of texts and theoretical concepts to an extended understanding of actual drawings, and from the organisation of professional practice to the future oriented theoretical proposition of temporal representations, including the score - the last paragraph being an explicit challenge for practice, theory and education.

5.2 The meaningful invention of slides: re-assessing the discipline’s history

‘On lifting up the slip of paper, or slide, the landscape is seen as it will appear when the operations of the landscape-gardener are completed’. [1] This is how the editor of *Sketches and hints on landscape gardening* in a bulky footnote explains the reader of this 1840 book on the work of Humphry Repton what a slide is, ‘undoubtedly a very ingenious invention’. [Fig. 5.2ab] It is, having seen the collected examples of the representation of time in current landscape architecture practice in Chapter 4, somewhat bewildering that so far back in time, even before landscape architecture was coined, a principal step was taken in the representation of time. Bewildering, as on the basis of the preceding chapter we only can conclude that the position of the representation of time in present-day landscape architecture is unclear. Against the background of the lucid contribution Repton gave, too little seems to have been achieved since. Repton represents a period in pre-landscape architectural thinking, drawing and building in which time came to have an important place – see the work of Hirschfeld and note how we can trace relevant contributions to a vivid debate in the work of Wimmer and Laird. Repton, however, stands out amongst his fellow designers as he was able to link the issue of time with representation and practice, and he managed to both theorize on that, and apply it in his own work. In *Sketches and hints on landscape gardening* Repton argued that the term gardening did not cover the work of ‘improving the scenery of a country’. [2] He coined the term ‘landscape gardening’. This term was more appropriate, as it pointed towards ‘the united powers of the landscape painter and the practical gardener’. Just as the term paysagiste, coined in the same decades, this helped to shape an idea of the profession of landscape architecture. But it also alludes to drawing. The painter is seen in Repton’s quote as the one conceiving a plan, and the gardener as having practical knowledge in planting, digging, and moving earth. It is exactly the faculty of drawing (or painting) that made the transformation from gardener to landscape architect possible. As De Jong argued, in the time of Repton ‘the existing practice of intervening on site without the benefit of a plan or a ground plan was replaced by a practice in which any intervention was preceded by a visualisation on paper’. [3] In the case of Repton, ‘the faculty of drawing’ included these ingenious slides. Repton thought about slides in a very pragmatic way – as an instrument to convince his client- and in that he is a prefiguration of the 20th-century practitioner. In the case of Repton, being pragmatic was never far away from being reflective. ‘This made him conceive the phenomenon of the ‘Red Books’ as a new way of presenting his work to clients. Slides were key in this as they were ‘the only part of my labours which the common observer has time or leisure to examine’. [4]

[4] Loudon 1840/1988: 33. The remarks made by the editor, as discussed in this passage, are part of a long footnote. On the same pages some lines of the main text are displayed. The remark of Repton is part of the main text.
Fig. 5.2ab Plate 9 made for Hanslope estate, including slide. Drawing by Humphry Repton, 1791.
Immediate and future effect

The introduction of Loudon’s 1840 edition points out that ‘the monumental works of the landscape gardener’ are fragile: ‘Time makes unrelenting havoc with designs which, during the first ten or twenty years, may have afforded unmixed satisfaction’. [5] The ‘master-hand that first laid the foundation of the improvement’ may not be there anymore, but it is by ‘Mr. Repton’s printed works alone that his well-earned fame can be properly appreciated’. [6] This immediately puts Repton’s work in a context of time, and it points out the importance of presenting landscape architecture – and archiving it, for that matter. Repton himself was very aware of the dimension of time in his work, as we already saw in Chapter 3. The best example of this is a chapter in Loudon, appropriately titled ‘Of PLANTING for immediate and for future Effect’, indeed written in this way. [7] Here, Repton discusses that in some cases trees of larger size are planted to evoke present effect, whereas other plantations are meant for future effect. It is a given thing that such future plantations take time, and ‘in a naked country, the outline, however graceful, will appear hard and artificial; but when the trees begin to require thinning, a few single trees or groups may be brought forward’. [8] His clients were often impatient, and asked for more trees. In a letter to a client Repton defends the landscape gardener who sees things ‘as they will be’. [9] This is an important quality, as few persons consider the future shape of trees. A young tree that seems to be too little to create a certain effect easily, distort views when it starts to grow and ‘few who have planted such trees, have courage to take them away after they have begun to grow’. [10] Repton was also aware of the fact that a landscape architect operates in an existing landscape. In discussing his design for the estate of Hanslope he mentions the large trees planted in avenues. Even if this was the ‘false taste of former times’ the trees provide shade, and they should be kept as long as the new plantations are not big enough to do the same. In his design only a few trees are taken away to ‘induce to forget that they stand in rows’. [11] The avenue-effect will easily be remedied when, in the long run, ‘many of the old trees shall be either taken down or blended into closer groups’. [12]

Landscape cannot start on a white sheet of paper. There is always a before – an existing landscape. Repton’s slides solve that in drawing, and in that it is a conceptual thought on a specific landscape architectural drawing culture. At the same time, we could hold it against Repton that he considers only one ‘after’, probably the final situation, and in that respect, one could critically question his slides. His textual contributions however, suggest a rather accurate awareness of the development of designs over time, thinking in long stretches of commitment. One slide showing the ‘after’ stands for this commitment to time. It probably also was the pragmatic answer of the practitioner Repton, who knew that it had to be paid for by the client. Such tension makes the work of Repton highly relevant for today, and we can see that slides, also the modern technical version, have found their way into landscape architectural representation and presentation.

Here I come back to Humphry Repton rather extensively as it occurs to me that we lost something in the course of history. Few know Repton’s textual work. It is important to support the positive but fragile engagement with time and drawing in current practice by digging up what is there already. We cannot escape the conclusion that Repton offers us quite a comfortable starting point
for thinking about time – and challenges us to take up the good work. Ironically, Repton and his slides also received criticism, and even this criticism is insightful for us. Stephen Daniels notes that Repton’s slides in their time were judged with reservation. Critics spoke about ‘stage tricks’ and ‘rural pantomime’. His drawings were accused of making the ‘before’ look worse than it was. [13] Daniels provides an interesting quote from the poet Mason. As Mason wrote, Repton ‘can draw in your way very freely… by this means he alters places on Paper & makes them so picturesque, that fine folks think that all the Oaks &c he draws on Paper will grow exactly in the same shape and fashion in which he has delineated them, so they employ him & at great Price’. [14] This critical note could just as well apply to some of today’s visualizations!

**Drawing and text**

From today’s perspective a focus on drawings is almost self-evident if we want to speak about the representation of time, as there hardly seems to be any alternative. It is good to remind ourselves that drawings did not always have such an autonomous position in the history of the communication of designs and design arguments. What about text, for example? I already mentioned Adrian Forty, who considered it striking how little discussed language has been compared to drawing. [15] Forty, although rooted in architectural history, refers to John Evelyn – his writings on forestry were mentioned in Chapter 3. Evelyn, whose interests were wide-ranging, also wrote about the architect as a phenomenon. He saw the architect as divided into four persons. One of those was the ‘architectus verbarum’, or ‘the architect of words, skilled in the craft of language, and whose task it was to talk about the work and interpret it to others.’ [16] It makes Forty pose the question: What can language do that drawing does not? [17] ‘[Drawings] presuppose that one is outside the object: subject and object are conveniently separated by the surface of the paper’, argues Forty, and he continues that ‘language places no such demands upon us: the words themselves carry no illusions, but act directly upon the mind’. [18] That is a thought to take seriously, as today, at least by fellow practitioners, design is mainly judged by its built products or its drawings, and seldom by its writings.

**Keep the client connected**

I refer to Forty, as he leads me to Frederick Law Olmsted, again a nineteenth century landscape architect (Olmsted indeed used that word) that is very relevant for the exchange on time, landscape architecture and representation. In the case of Olmsted, language in written text is an essential and strategic instrument. Reading the many letters, articles and pieces of advice Olmsted wrote, it becomes clear that it was his primary problem to keep both the client and the public connected to the ambitions of the project, even if it might take decades for such ambitions to be realized. Olmsted had to permanently fight ‘the confusion of the popular mind in the early years of a large park work’ as this only ‘gradually passes off with an experience of the benefits resulting from an habitual use of the finished ground. The chief peril from it occurs during the period of constructive operations, and before any important results of growth have been attained.’ [19] For Olmsted written text became so important that he even paid to have articles placed in journals or magazines to reach the public if he considered it essential for continued support, or to prevent

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[14] As quoted in Treib 2008b: 44. The text here, including what can be mistaken for a failure, is exactly as Mason is cited.
[16] Ibid.: 11.
[18] Ibid.: 41.
Fig. 5.3 Plan for portion of parkway, Brooklyn. Drawing by Frederick Law Olmsted, 1868.
commissioners from loosing grip of the original intentions. Often, Olmsted directly addresses his commissioners: ‘Wisely or unwisely you have bought the property, and must do something with it.’ [20] Yet it is more the commitment over the years he cared for. No plan will at the outset be so complete that no additions or modifications will be made, but ‘it is of the utmost consequence that the essential ends should be clearly seen before the work is organized, and that from the moment it begins to the end, be that five or fifty years hence, and under whatever changes of administration and changes of fashion, these great ruling ends should be pursued with absolute consistency.’ [21] With statements like this, Olmsted shows a remarkable strategical insight in the processes of designing and building, and the time involved in that. The drawings of Olmsted hardly show any aspects of time, but Olmsted was certainly interested in time. The growth of vegetation was on his mind. Olmsted was very aware of the time a landscape takes to mature, and thus the value of existing trees. In a text from 1866 he stresses the importance of a large body of existing trees, ‘not too old to be improved, yet already old enough to be of considerable importance in a landscape’. [22] His writing capacity is fully shown in his 1870 article on public parks and the enlargement of towns, in which he passionately discusses trees in an urban environment. They are mistreated: ‘Thousands and tens of thousands are planted every year in a manner and under conditions as nearly certain as possible either to kill them outright, or to so lessen their vitality as to prevent their natural and beautiful development, and to cause permanent decrepitude.’ Can trees not ‘remain a permanent furniture? I mean, to make a place for them in which they would have room to grow naturally and gracefully.’ [23]

I conclude that we should revalue individual authors such as Repton and Olmsted for their contribution to landscape and landscape architecture theory, and more specifically for their dedication to the issue of time. We should also re-assess the relations between thinking, writing, drawing, making and maintaining, and observe that the drawing is both powerful and limited. And we should acknowledge today’s practitioners that try out new roads in terms of drawing, and reflect on that in text. That does not happen very often, but it happens: The offices of Vogt, atelier le balto, Desvigne and H+N+S are forefront runners in the sense that they created projects and landscapes with a clear accent on time; they found ways to represent this and they explicitly discussed time and representation in texts. [24]

5.3 Representation and landscape, an unfinished exploration

James Corner’s essay on ‘Representation and Landscape’ was taken as a point of reference in both 3.2 ‘Time, landscape and intervention’ and 3.3 ‘Drawing, drawings and the design process’, underlining the importance of this text from 1992. In 2009 Desvigne produced a book titled Intermediate Natures, and Corner wrote the introduction to it. Almost 20 years after ‘Representation and Landscape’, this introduction shows that Corner’s opinions have shifted slightly. The aspect of time, in particular, is emphasized, so that this introduction comes even closer to the study at hand: ‘Desvigne considers landscape architecture as a living art form that is more about cultivation, process, and change over time than it is with more familiar landscape architectural practices such as formal composition and representation.’ [25] The emphasis on
Fig. 5.4 Plan for Emerald Necklace, Boston. Drawing by Frederick Law Olmsted, 1894.
agriculture ‘allows Desvigne to infuse his landscapes with the capacity for growth, change, and adaptation over time, allowing for a loose flexibility rather than an overly deterministic regime.’ [Fig. 5.5ab] [26] Young landscapes are especially attractive, according to Corner, because of the ‘anticipation of things yet to come’. [27] A new word, ‘unfinished’, appears in this introduction. Unfinished landscapes are attractive because they hold promise, especially those which develop quickly and surprise visitors with their rash development. For that, ‘Desvigne views landscape architecture as a work in process, never really attaining an ideal state at any moment in time, but always exceeding expectations when set in motion over time, when viewed as an active palimpsest accruing new properties, qualities and potentials in time’. [28] Corner’s concluding sentences indicate that he extended the interpretation he gave in his earlier essay in several ways, as there is an implicit but unmistakable reference to users, clients and various other parties, different from ‘Representation and Landscape’ in which users of landscape were absent. Furthermore, Corner starts to talk about much more concrete topics such as rainwater, different from the rather abstract character of the earlier essay. He speaks about landscape as ‘instrumental in its effects’, such as rainwater storage. In such cases ‘technical performance criteria’ are required, ‘shaped with an artistic twist.’ [29] Evidently, this widening-up of Corner’s ideas was also helped by the landscape urbanism debate – a debate that is very relevant for any conversation on landscape architecture, time and drawing, but which also marks the different engagement American landscape architecture had with these issues: It was much more present in America than it was in Europe. As Waldheim puts it, ‘landscape has improbably emerged as the most relevant disciplinary locus for discussions

Fig. 5.5ab  Mapping the agricultural landscape to prepare for a future extension of the city. Issoudrun district, Michel Desvigne paysagiste, 2005.
Fig. 5.6 Drawing for unCity project by D.I.R.T studio, 2001.
historically housed in architecture, urban design, or planning.’
[30] The aspect of time plays a role here: ‘Across a range of disciplines, many authors have articulated this newfound relevance of landscape in describing the temporal mutability and horizontal extensivity of the contemporary city.’

A discipline-based approach
The reason to come back to Corner is evident: He and related landscape urbanists are taking the first steps – theoretically, anyway – towards a discipline-based approach to representation, one which can facilitate specifically landscape architectural issues. The introduction to the book of Desvigne confirms this, and builds a powerful link to current practice as presented in this study. In The Landscape Urbanism Reader Corner explicitly puts the issue of time on the agenda, and stresses the move away from Modernism. There was no place in Modernist thinking for ‘processes over time’, but our attention needs to shift away from ‘the object qualities of space (whether formal or scenic) to the systems that condition the distribution and density of urban form’. Whereas Modernism strongly accentuates form, landscape urbanism regards form as ‘a provisional state of matter’. [31] The second issue on Corner’s agenda is ‘staging of surfaces’. It is about sowing the seeds of ‘future possibility, staging the ground for both uncertainty and promise’. This shifts the focus from ‘compositional design’ to ‘operational logic’, which in turn leads to another much used word in the rhetoric of landscape urbanism, ‘performativity’. A drawing by the American studio D.I.R.T. is not explicitly linked to landscape urbanism, but displays this notion of performance very well. [Fig. 5.6] Putting greater emphasis on the city means that landscape urbanism has had a great deal of influence not only on landscape architecture but also on urbanism, which embraced these issues earlier and with even more conviction. This is confirmed in Dutch urbanism practice. ‘Third, landscape is dynamic, and bears the traces of time. Landscape is constantly subject to change. It is time, momentarily solidified. Multiple dimensions of time are expressed in it. It is a narrative; it tells stories about its history, about its origins and development.’ [32] Fitting perfectly into Corner’s argument, this is a quote from Drawing The Ground. Landscape Urbanism Today by urbanist Frits Palmboom, who followed Corner in the search for ‘a kind of urbanism that anticipates change, open-endedness, and negotiation’. [33] As far as Palmboom is concerned, drawings play a crucial role: ‘In our drawings we also seek to make the operation of time visible. They visualize strategies in which time and uncertainty play a role. We practice the art of determining things minimally and leaving as much as possible open.’ [34] Landscape architecture and urbanism, when compared to architecture, are positioned differently, being ‘at the side of slow time, the longue durée.’ [35] In the collection as presented in Chapter 4 the work of Quadrat comes close to this way of thinking (and drawing). Quadrat positions its work in a tradition of urbanism in which plans are regarded as growing entities that evolve in phases and always leave sufficient room for deciding on the following steps to be made. Drawings do not represent the anticipated end result, but instead speculate on how the city might react to an intervention. [See Fig. 4.27a-c / drawing 25] But obviously it is the work of Desvigne that connects the important work of Corner to current practice as presented here, and to mention it again, a link that is just as much about drawing as it is about writing. As Europeans, we have to acknowledge though

[34] Ibid.: 41.
[35] Ibid.: 36.
Fig. 5.7  Image as taken from Nadia Amoroso, *Representing Landscapes*. Drawing by Alex Fossilo.
that the debate in the US is ahead, as can be seen for example in Amoroso’s *Representing Landscapes. A Visual Collection of Landscape Architectural Drawings*. Despite the lack of a larger framework, this book does demonstrate the renewal in representation over the last few years, and its relation to time also is underlined in Walter Hood’s introduction: ‘How do we graphically represent the environmentally dynamic, ever changing social, cultural and political landscape?’ [36] Hood identifies landscape architectural drawings which no longer romanticize how one experiences landscape but which ‘seek to elucidate landscape performance’, and that word can be considered as one of the expressions of the dimension of time. [37] In this book, Richard Weller presents a drawing that is of interest because of its caption: ‘We often hear that time is one of landscape architecture’s most distinguishing qualities and yet, apart from the recent trend of producing long diagrammatic timelines to show the possible staging of a project and its increase in biota, there is still little representational attention to really engaging time in landscape imagery. This drawing introduces the problem of denoting time in landscape architecture.’ [38] In fact, Weller confirms the challenges as posed by Torres and Balmori, of seriously engaging in the representation of time, but he does so in a book that at least manages to show several interesting examples. [Fig. 5.7]

**Critique**

There are obviously also reasons to be critical of landscape urbanism and the thinking as presented here. In 2012 Ian Hamilton Thompson formulated a critique that is of interest because of its accent on time. He states that ‘there is much talk of process, development, flux, duration and phasing, which draws attention to extension in time, but landscape urbanists (unwittingly perhaps) follow Heraclitus in believing that all is flux’. [39] Thompson is critical of the vocabulary, such as the word ‘performance’. In the thinking on landscape urbanism, one can evaluate the performance of a landscape as if it was an engine or a machine. [40] Even if, according to Thompson, landscape urbanism consciously avoids talking about machines too much, it is still closely tied to philosophers such as Guatteri and Deleuze, who ‘stretch the metaphor of the machine in ways it has never been stretched before’. [41] He also criticizes drawings by proponents of landscape architecture for neglecting human beings. And indeed, except for the introduction to Desvigne’s book, Corner too in his texts pays hardly any attention to all the individuals and groups involved in making decisions about landscape architectural designs and to the demands that makes on representation. Alongside that, Corner speaks about growth, change and movement but hardly mentions the uncertainty accompanying them. In fact, Corner discusses landscape in an extremely architectural way. Landscape in his view seems to be more an object that can be moulded in terms of artistic perspectives, than a complex space with many parties trying to achieve their ideals by following a variety of scenarios. And is landscape always produced by design and drawings? The fact that Corner does not address that point probably has to do with his affinity with the artistic aspect of drawings. Yet even if it can be criticized, the work of Corner stands out in the discourse on landscape, representation and time. If, as we have to conclude having read Chapter 4, up to today the representation of time has a marginal position in both practice and theory, we urgently need a landscape architectural view on representation, and this by default

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[37] Ibid.: xi.
[38] Amoroso 2012: 70.
[40] Ibid.: 11.
[41] Ibid.: 13.
includes time. In taking the necessary next steps, ‘Representation and landscape’ and subsequent texts are still signposts pointing in the right direction.

5.4 Actuality and afterlife: a conceptual contribution to theory

It is telling that a more theoretical approach towards time and landscape does not come from landscape architecture theoreticians but from adjacent disciplines such as anthropology and architecture. I come back to Ingold, Leatherbarrow and Hunt, who already figured in Chapter 3, as their theoretical concepts can be of help for the appreciation of some of the examples as presented in Chapter 4.

The fact that the theoretical concepts as presented here mainly derive from other disciplines could be seen as a sign for landscape architecture theoreticians, and it is. Yet there is also a possible explanation that runs the other way around. That is that the world is more landscape than we generally think. For example Ingold, as an anthropologist, discusses the building of a house and how the house is often regarded as a solid object, the unequivocal outcome of a design. Ingold sees it differently: ‘Working in a fickle and inconstant environment, they have continually to improvise solutions to problems that could not have been anticipated’. [42] In reality, the building process is a ‘messy practice’, a concept also put forward by Donald Schön. [43] Ingold wants to look at design and at making in a way he borrowed from Spuybroek: ‘forward-looking, in the direction of as-yet-unknown creation’ and ‘improvising a passage’ instead of ‘predetermining final forms’. [44][Fig. 5.8ab]

Fig. 5.8ab  Exercising with ‘emergent form’: Summer workshop in willow forest, Academy of Architecture Amsterdam 2007
Ingold concludes that design ‘far from seeking finality and closure, would be open-ended, dealing in hopes and dreams rather than plans and predictions’. [45] And that is a way of reasoning that comes close to this study.

Ingold’s approach has parallels with the argumentation put forward by Steward Brand in How Buildings Learn and by David Leatherbarrow who produced Architecture Oriented Otherwise and On Weathering, with Mostafavi. [46] ‘Building is a present continuous’, Brand states. Ideally a design should anticipate, or even invite, change. Leatherbarrow speaks about buildings as ‘extended temporalities’ - an original concept that also perfectly suits landscape. [47] He suggests that buildings are unavoidably subject to decay, only to be ‘retarded’. We like to think that buildings are permanent structures, but that is not the case: ‘No building stands forever, eventually every one succumbs to the influence of the elements, and this end is known from the beginning.’ [48] Natural elements act upon the outer surface and this, if not stopped, will lead to failure of materials and the final dissolution of the building itself. This is an interesting piece of reasoning because it links maintenance with design, realization and survival – if we want to prevent decline, maintenance is necessary. [49] In fact all buildings have a ‘provisional finality’: The world in which buildings exist is ‘not so lawful that there is never a need for continual adjustment’. [50] Leatherbarrow introduces a landscape component here. A building stands in a landscape where all sorts of forces are at work: ‘The true measure of a building’s preparedness is its capacity to respond to both foreseen and unforeseen developments.’ [51] This amounts to a critical view on Modernism which reasoned in terms of homogenous spaces, whereas the reality of a building is that it stands in a particular type of topography. ‘If we understand topography as the milieu in which performance unfolds, it is very heterogeneous and concrete, and also made understandable only in time’, according to Leatherbarrow. [52] The use of the word ‘performance’ certainly helps bring this idea closer to the ideology of landscape urbanism, as sketched out in the previous section. He concludes: ‘There would seem to be three chapters in this story: before, while and after a work has been finished’, a formulation which supports the central argument in this research. [53]

_Actuality_

An important concept here is ‘concrete actuality’: what the building is and how it performs, at a certain moment. [54] Architectural theory ‘should focus less on what the building is and more on what it does’. [55] I suggest introducing this concept of ‘concrete actuality’ into landscape architecture. Designs made by landscape architects have to grow for years if not decades, and therefore they take a long time to become what they promised to be. That lengthy process of ‘becoming’ means that the end result will probably be different from the design, because new developments will have meanwhile taken place. It also means however that the whole concept of an anticipated final situation is a relative one. The perception of a project as a straight narrative, beginning and ending at precise moments, is rarely true. ‘Concrete actuality’ as a concept does not yet exist in landscape architectural theory. A framework for both the designer and the user to think about or optimize the concrete actuality is thus missing so far – but adjacent theories such as Leatherbarrow’s writings offer at least the starting point to solve this.

[45] Ibid.: 71.
[49] Ibid.: 5.
[51] Ibid.: 60.
[52] Ibid.: 63.
[53] Ibid.: 101.
[54] Ibid.: 50.
[55] Ibid.: 43.
28/32. Als men in kleine tuinen een gunstige invloed wil uitoefenen op de vorming van microklimaat situaties dan kan meestal worden volstaan met de inbreng van enkele stenen, wat puin, grotere takken van bomen of boomstobben (foto 5).


Wil men de paden op belangrijke punten duidelijker markeren dan kan dit gebeuren door stapelmuren te plaatsen (foto 32). Worden eerst terrassen gevormd met een geringe hoogte dan wordt het geheel snel door planten overgroeid. De terrassen moeten niet worden afgedekt door een laag aarde, omdat daar door de kansen voor het vormen van gunstige microklimaatsituaties weer zullen verminderen (herdoor worden namelijk de gaten opgevuld).

Wordt later opnieuw materiaal aangevoerd dan kan men zich wat betreft de vormgeving richten naar de vorm van de inmiddels gegroeide vegetatie. Op deze wijze ontstaat de vorm van het landschap volgens een proces dat over een langere tijdsperiode plaatsvindt (vorming in ruimte en tijd).

Fig. 5.9 How to create microclimates? Pages as taken from *Natuur uitschakelen. Natuur inschakelen* by Louis le Roy. Photographs by Louis le Roy.
Landscape architecture does not remain completely silent on this point. As mentioned earlier, Raxworthy has noticed that landscape architecture and architecture have recently been moving closer together, for the very reason that they both pay attention to process and change. Raxworthy speaks of ‘the process discourse’. Nevertheless, in projects that emerge from that discourse, the actual design does not necessarily target change or, as Raxworthy formulates it, ‘the spontaneous emergence of novelties’. Raxworthy is interested in designs that really do target the latter. The set of drawings as presented in Chapter 4 gives various answers to this. Many of the drawings show how particular situations are to be changed. Some of the drawings however show an interest in change as such. Perhaps the RAAAF drawing of wheels patterns in the landscape is the most extreme example. Raxworthy argues that in landscape architecture ‘change is an inherent part of the discipline’ because of the role of plants in the landscape design, plants being ‘the most tangible changing material in the landscape’. Raxworthy is not so much placing landscape architecture and architecture in opposite corners as comparing these disciplines with gardening, and in that case, architecture and landscape architecture are not far removed from each other: ‘Landscape architecture, like architecture, has become an office-based practice that uses drawings to guide later implementation, its role ending soon after construction.’ ‘Gardening’, however, ‘continues to operate in gardens over a long period of time. Gardening is able to work with change and to encourage novelty in real time in a way that landscape architecture and architecture cannot.’ This is an interesting link to the anthropologic perspective on the profession of landscape architecture as given in Chapter 3, and a relevant comment on most of the drawings as presented here, as only in rare cases there is indeed a ‘continuous operation’. Because of that, landscape architecture should seek to strengthen its links with gardening. It would certainly help increase the potential to integrate constant change.

Raxworthy also provides a fruitful link to the work of Louis e Roy with this thinking, and perhaps a more general reference to ecology for its interest in dynamics and change. Raxworthy took Le Roy’s Eco Cathedral as one of three case studies. At the end of Chapter 3 I made a plea for reconsidering Le Roy’s position on the history of recent landscape architecture. Le Roy has been applauded by many, often from other disciplines. Here we have a theoretical study in landscape architecture that puts Le Roy in focus. Le Roy himself describes the Eco Cathedral as a ‘structure that is able to develop towards its natural peak form, endlessly in time and space, and based on cooperation between people, plants and animals.’ Formulas such as ‘natural peak form’ confirm the influence of ecological theory. Raxworthy believes that Le Roy is aiming for continual change: ‘Le Roy regards the building at the Eco Cathedral as producing more novelty than design could, because design works via representation at scale and seeks to control effects, whereas the construction at the Eco Cathedral directly engages ecological relationships.’ Even if Le Roy remained an outsider in the recent history of landscape architecture, precisely because his projects are so far removed from more conventional design processes, other authors also invoke Le Roy as reference point. In 1988, Jörgen Milchert for example pleaded the case for ‘die Ästhetik des Wachsens’
Fig. 5.10 Drawing for Greenwich Millenium Park, London, realized 2000. Michel Desvigne paysagiste.
aesthetics of growth] and regarded Le Roy as an example of this. [61] Lucia Grosse-Bächle in her dissertation Ein Pflanz ist kein Stein, mentioned already in Chapter 3, also took Le Roy’s work as a leading reference. [62]

Many of the drawings as presented here concern processes of becoming that take years if not decades. Unavoidably therefore actuality is a crucial concept when looking at these landscapes, if we want to understand the role of time. In several drawings we see attempts to at least come close to a sense of actuality. In conceptual terms the Desvigne drawing for Greenwich has to be put in the spotlight. This drawing not only represents the development over time -even if the individual drawings are not dated- but more than that, it presents the maturing landscape as having certain states that are of equal significance. [Fig. 5.10] That is an essential message: it is easy to deduce from an imagined final state that all early stages are less significant, as they are only steps to be taken towards the destination. This drawing proposes looking at landscape for what it is. Not because every landscape in all its states is OK - it is interpreted as a design challenge to make individual stages meaningful.

Afterlife

The existence of stages in the life of a landscape design can also be found in John Dixon Hunt’s The Afterlife of Gardens. The title immediately introduces another interesting notion: afterlife. [63] On one hand Hunt suggests that ‘both journalistic and academic approaches [of contemporary landscape architecture] privilege creators and designers’. On the other hand, Hunt is interested in the fact that the way visitors receive a design will change over time and he asks himself how ‘an interest in garden reception might effect the on-going practice of design’. [64] Here, Hunt is putting forward a problem that leads to heated debates in many forms of art: How important is the maker’s intention and to what extent should the visitor be familiar with that intention? Taking this a step further: Do visitors ever get the chance to familiarize themselves with this intention? Hunt assumes that reception unavoidably changes over time, and moves away from ‘authorized readings’:

“So we must give some credence and support to the argument that over the longue durée of its existence a great design can stimulate a whole cluster of meanings that were not intended or envisaged for the original designs.’ [65] The concept of an ‘afterlife’ is appealing as a means of distinguishing between the designed object and its actual life. This is crucial in the context of this research. Hunt, who in particular wants to reflect on the reception of gardens and parks, interprets his own concept rather narrowly. In fact, it is so limited that it hardly has any significance for more complex landscape designs. His ‘afterlife’ begins the moment a garden is ’ready’. The processes of laying out a landscape and allowing it to become mature may cover a period of many years, but Hunt takes no account of this. As I believe the concept of afterlife is a promising one, I would like to look at it in a broader sense. In more complex landscapes, the afterlife begins when the design is declared ‘open’ but at that point it is far from ready, or mature. That can be worrying because the way in which the design is received will then be determined by two forces. The designed landscape grows and changes, thus offering a variety of sensations. At the same time, the value users attach to the design shifts over time because the cultural context or the users’ knowledge of the inten-

[65] Ibid.: 205.
Fig. 5.11 Diagram for Barendrecht. *Aanlegprincipe* is roughly translatable as ‘realisation principle’. Drawing by Lubbers 1998.
tion changes. And that is exactly what Olmsted tried to influence with his writings.

The works of Ingold, Leatherbarrow and Hunt all revolve around the idea of time, an idea that can enrich landscape architectural theory enormously, and concepts such as afterlife and actuality in particular are important contributions. In several ways the set of drawings as presented here respond to such concepts, even if they were never mentioned by their makers. For example Anouk Vogel’s drawing for a garden [Fig. 4.1 / Drawing 1] communicates that actual states are more important than only one final stage, just as Lola wants to have us know that the public space design should be understood as having a diversity of characters, instead of only one. [Fig. 4.6a-d / Drawing 6] VPxDG’s section for an estate in one way comments on afterlife. [Fig. 4.18ab / Drawing 18] The young trees need protection, and the designers take into account how the solution for that can just as well be part of the narrative of the mature design, even after decades. Quadrat treats afterlife in another way; the office tries to influence future readings of the project by speculating on useful further transformation. [Fig. 4.26ac / Drawing 25]

5.5 A Dutch angle

In my collection of drawings there is one that is eminently suitable for addressing the idiosyncrasies of Dutch landscape architecture in recent times, and as an example it therefore also represents a typical Dutch approach towards time, dynamics and change. Titled Aanlegprincipe, roughly translatable as ‘realisation principle’, the drawing consists of four schematic sections. [Fig. 5.11] As the drawing as a whole explains the function or build-up of the plan in a schematic fashion, I classify it as a diagram. [66] This diagram describes steps in time, but in actual fact it is a short story or, if you like, an explanation that would run as follows: ‘In this area we encounter meadows and ditches. As an intervention, we remove the top layer of soil and use this to make low embankments along existing ditches. In wet periods, water piles up between these embankments. As a result, an attractive and natural wetland vegetation develops’. [67] No time scale is indicated but anyone with some understanding of how reed vegetation develops knows that this can get going within one season of growth. The drawing comes from the Barendrecht project by Lubbers, drawn in 1998. This particular project can be regarded as typical of the design climate in the Netherlands of the 1990s. There was no single, specific question; the client - a developer - wanted a study of the possible uses of this area. Lubbers described it as an example of ‘plans without a final picture’. [68] The idea was to aim for a phased approach without committing oneself to a final situation. There was a lot of interest in the project; it appeared a number of times in Dutch language publications and was included in the Dutch yearbook Landschapsarchitectuur en Stedenbouw 97-99. It was selected because of ‘the integration of time as a factor in the planning’. Essayist Rik Herngreen complimented the plan as ‘ever richer but never complete’. [69] Lubbers is mainly known for public realm plans, however, this office has also produced strategic studies. They originate in fact from Lubbers’s own final-year dissertation study at the Amsterdam Academy of Architecture, in 1989. In this study, he mentioned the ‘temporary usage of fields’, fields here being an abstract term in the same way as landscape

[66] Garcia (2010: 18) provides a broad definition of a diagram: ‘A diagram is the spatialisation of a selective abstraction and/or reduction of a concept or phenomenon. In other words, a diagram is the architecture of an idea or entity.’

[67] The drawing formed part of Kansen in de Zuidpolder [Opportunities in the Zuid polder], produced in 1998 for TRS Ontwikkelingsgroep.

[68] Plannen zonder eindbeeld [Plans without any final picture] is the title of a brochure the office published. To be found at: http://www.burolubbers.nl/projecten/projectblad/419_BL_120807_Barendrecht_low.pdf

Fig. 5.12 Principle for nature development after sand mining in the Ontgrondingen Brabant project, H+N+S landschapsarchitecten, 1995.
urbanism uses surfaces, or grounds. [70]

The Barendrecht drawing stands for a crucial line of thought in Dutch landscape architecture: Landscape architectural measures, symbolized by the excavator, can remodel an area in such a way that precisely the right conditions result for particular ecosystems to come. In the rhetoric of Dutch landscape architecture this is spoken about as ‘natuurontwikkeling’ or developing new nature - a man-made act that for many outside the Netherlands still is a *contradictio in terminus*. In fact, we could connect this to a second line of thought which is that the landscape consists of supporting structures remaining in place for a long time, and within these, there are fields that can change in usage. By designing strong main structures, landscape architects can ensure the dynamics of the landscape are free to function, while at the same time the broad identity is retained. I will not pursue this second line here, but it is relevant to keep in mind that two opposing landscape criteria are satisfied in this second crucial line of thinking, more often referred to as the ‘casco concept’ or shell principle: New functions are given precisely the freedom our modern society demands, while on the other hand, the identity of the landscape is preserved. [71]

*Developing nature*

The first line of thought, creating conditions, may be traced back to 1926, the year Jan Bijhouwer obtained his PhD, and to his eleventh postulate, originally in Dutch: ‘In the reclamation of the Zuiderzee, it is important to preserve some complexes for the study of plant community succession’. [72] In combination with a remark on the loss of peatland –Bijhouwer's advice is to look for a suitable place, stop farming it, and create the conditions which will lead to recovery of peatland growth—this can be understood as a first instance of developing nature. [73] In this study, the work of offices such as H+N+S and Vista most explicitly represents this line of thought in present-day Dutch practice. Early examples from the H+N+S office are the Westpolder design and Ontgrondingen: een bijdrage aan natuurontwikkeling [Sand removal: a contribution to the development of new nature]. H+N+S produced drawings that, according to present standards, may not be regarded as ‘slick’ but, even more successfully than in recent projects, these drawings provide a fascinating insight into the underlying ideology. Just as in the case of the Lubbers example it is actually a drawn argumentation in three steps: ‘(1) If this is the situation as we find it, and (2) if we alter it in a specific way like this, then (3) we would expect the following to happen, based on our expertise’. [74][Fig. 5.12] In both H+N+S projects the aim was to combine sand extraction with the creation of new nature. The upper layer of soil is removed from all parcels of land. They become permanently wet due to seepage water. As the parcels are oriented variously, the predominant wind direction will cause erosion in different ways, allowing the element of chance to have free rein. The aspect of sand extraction also highlights another tenet of recent Dutch landscape architecture. Sand extraction is normally regarded as a hostile intervention in the landscape, but here it is deployed in a positive way: Sand extraction creates the conditions for interesting new nature, at no extra cost. In extracting the sand, the existing topography is adhered to, which is equally essential to the approach. It means there is no separate design for the sand extraction because the configuration already exists, being present in the landscape. In

[70] As discussed in the interview with the office in June 2011.
[71] See Vroom 2010. Both the founders of H+N+S and the Wageningen researchers Klaas Kerkstra and Peter Vrijlandt were engaged in the development of this concept.
[72] Bijhouwer 1926: 172. The original Dutch text is: ‘Het is van belang bij de droogmaking van de Zuiderzee complexen te reserveeren voor de studie van de successie der plantengemeenschappen.’
[73] As quoted in Andela 2011: 76. The quote comes from Vakblad voor biologen 4: 46 (1943). The Dutch text is: ‘We moeten vooruitzien; is er geen komveen zoals het Soesterveen meer over in gave toestand, dan zoeken wij een geschikte plaats op, nemen die uit cultuur en scheppen de voorwaarden, die binnen twintig, dertig jaar zullen leiden tot herstel van de weergroei’.
[74] This was part of the project *Ontgrondingen: Een bijdrage aan natuurontwikkeling* [Soil dispossession: a contribution to nature development], 1991. The client was the province of Brabant.
THE RESULT IN DIFFERENT TIME FRAMES

relief soil seeping water ditches building structure road pattern properties (fictional)

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE FUTURE NATURE AREA

THE ALTERATIONS IN THE WATERSYSTEM

agricultural lands fed by river water, nature areas fed by rain water, city water fed by water from nature areas.

Fig. 5.13 Detail from study for Uit de klei getrokken, Vista 1996. See the entire drawing in Chapter 4.
‘Nieuwe avonturen tegemoet’ [Encountering new adventures] Dirk Sijmons refers to the popular philosophical writing of people like Ilya Prigogine, who makes the case for giving chance free rein. That does not mean that anything goes. Attention is given to creating a ‘new-start’ situation. Thereafter ‘bifurcations can lead to developments taking place in completely different directions’, which is another way of speaking about Zerabuvel’s multilinear narratives. [75] Sijmons hopes ‘to be amazed at development paths which were not predicted and which arise through self-arrangement’. Knowledge of the natural system makes it possible to describe what might occur, but it is impossible to say what is really going to happen. In designs like these you cannot therefore talk about the final picture; any plan map is only going to be indicative. This evidently also reminds one of Raxworthy, looking for landscape architecture approaches interested in change itself more than particular outcomes.

Not everything is left to nature in the Westpolder project. Sand extraction is the ultimate target, so the sand has to be removed, which requires access roads. These roads are then part of the design, built on low embankments planted with trees. The designers looked for a contrast between fickle, only partially predictable, processes and permanent, linear constructions that make it possible to experience what is changing. The 1996 project Uit de klei getrokken -a typical Dutch expression- by Vista illustrates the same theme, but in a slightly different way. [76] [detail, Fig. 5.13; See also Fig. 4.36] This study project for the Haarlemmermeer polder offered a whole series of ‘starting’ situations, all of which dealt with the depth of soil removal and the level of the water that eventually stood in the dug-out area. A knowledge of the soil and of natural processes makes it possible to predict the outcome reasonably well, but not completely. Events which are only partially predictable such as a storm, summer drought or a cold winter can have a big impact. However, more importantly, Vista added management to the project. If you try to predict developments over periods of 5, 50 or 100 years, some form of management is essential. Is a herd of grazing animals going to be deployed? Will the area be mown, or not, so that woodland arises? This study project aimed to provide a toolbox or – yet another much-used word – a recipe so that ‘if you do this, you will get that’. This is exactly why this approach came in for criticism: It seemed as if natural environments could be made to order. To a certain extent this is true, but more importantly there are also many uncertain factors playing a role here. Within a framework that provides some certainty, the surprise element is challenged. A study like Uit de klei getrokken was not meant for direct implementation, which was in no way regarded as a disadvantage. On the contrary, it allowed more scope for committing innovative thoughts to paper, and for gaining insight into the consequences of certain measures. A recent final-year design study by Lieneke van Campen at the Academy of Architecture Amsterdam illustrates that this thinking has also engaged new generations of landscape architects. Her design aims to solve the need for coastal reinforcement. A huge sandbar in the North Sea, De Razende Bol, is cut in two. Knowledge of maritime processes aided the intervention. This basic intervention is ‘designed’, and thereafter the two halves are left to the mercies of sea currents which transport sand to the existing coast. [Fig. 5.14] This is a variation on the theme ‘create the conditions’. Interestingly enough, a symbolic scissors is part of the main drawing, thereby emphasising that such plans are related to the process rather than the form. The scissors is

[76] Uit de klei getrokken is a sample study on the Haarlemmermeer, 1996. As an expression it refers to the assumed rustic or even lumpish manners, attributed to farmers acting in the clay polders of the low Netherlands.
Fig. 5.14  Plan drawing for *De Razende Bol*. Final work Lieneke van Campen, Academy of Architecture Amsterdam 2005.
reminiscent of Christopher Tunnard’s *The man-made landscape* diagram, as mentioned in Chapter 3, that also was a drawn argument: By this means...to this end. [77]

I have portrayed the approach used by a number of offices as specifically Dutch, but it would be wrong to claim that this approach is exclusively Dutch. In the work of Studio Vulkan and of Desvigne we find elements of this thinking, and even more if we would take the second line of thinking on the casco concept or shell principle also into account. We can thus observe that internationally there is a group of designers with related ideas, but so far this phenomenon has not been described. Therefore, if speaking of a Dutch approach to landscape architecture in which the key aspects are creating conditions for further development, often in relation to nature, this is not a geographic demarcation, but a conceptual familiarity that crosses borders. This approach is seen in texts, projects and drawings. The drawings combine traditional ingredients of landscape architecture (topography, composition, functions) with an unusual amount of attention being paid to processes and actions. This is partly to serve the general public, by giving them a better understanding of what is happening, but much more so, it is an approach that leads to another landscape. Obviously, time has an important role in this approach. Remarkably, so far this only incidentally led to radical changes in drawing. This may be due to the specific type of knowledge involved, but also to a preference for the element of surprise, and certainly current drawing standards are of influence. Given the recent developments in representation, especially sophisticated software that can help to run many possible scenarios, one may expect that future projects in the same category will be more likely to choose time drawings.

5.6 A project perspective: daily professional reality

The word ‘project’ in design professions generally refers to a specific design process that starts with an assignment—a request from a client for a particular place or subject—and ends in a drawn or built design, best illustrated by a large drawing displayed on a billboard at the site. [Fig. 5.15] Of course the designer may also start a project without a client requesting something either. However, the importance of the word project is, that it places the work of designers in the context of the real world. That is a world in which physical topography restricts design fantasy, people and politics may approve of designs or not, conditions change over time, money is scarce, and clients have expectations, many of which are only to be revealed during the design process. Several authors, such as Donald Schön, speak about design as happening in a ‘messy’ context, because of such restrictions [78]. If the role of time in landscape architecture drawings is studied, this messy context of practice must be taken into account, and projects are the most concrete instances of practice.

Cultural category

The project as an organizational category seems obvious, but how does one understand the project as a cultural category? In a fascinating essay, the German political scientist Wilhelm Hennis researches the roots of the project as an abstract entity. He argues that the renewed scientific thinking, which began with Descartes and Bacon, allowed the notion of the project to emerge: ‘Man may undertake something, maybe utopically dream of it first, but will ultimately get to the realization of the project by means of scientific knowledge and properly applied technical means.’ [79] Projekt-macherei, as Hennis calls it, and best translated as projecteering,
The project was greeted with much scepticism, as expressed by ‘das Volk’ [the people] in verse 4888, originally in German: ‘That is a rogue / plays well his part / he works by lies / so long as they act / I know now what / there lies behind / and what is’t more? / a project then.’ [81] Ingold, who we have encountered already, examines the thinking involved in projects very critically. ‘We are accustomed to think of making as a project,’ Ingold states in Making. Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture. He proposes a different approach: ‘I want to think of making, instead, as a process of growth’. [82] This criticizes ‘the overwhelming focus on finished objects’ so that ‘processes of making appear to be swallowed up’. [83] Ingold rejects the notion that an architect or artist begins with matter and then proceeds to give it the stamp of an idea that has formed in his head, so that an object results - the aim of the project. Thinking in terms of processes of growth is ‘to place the maker from the outset as a participant in amongst a world of active materials.’ [84] By ‘active materials’ Ingold means that the artist joins forces with his materials ‘in anticipation of what might emerge’. He illustrates this with basket making and brick making, but his argumentation applies, as far as I am concerned, to most landscape architectural projects. According to Ingold’s approach, the designer is someone who intervenes in processes that are already taking place. This corresponds well with landscape architecture where, except for...
Having graduated 1984, he was invited to study at the Academy of France in Rome. The *Jardin Élémentaire* drawings, resulting from this period, have been published numerous times and made the young landscape architect a well-known artist. For the study at hand these *Jardin Élémentaire* drawings are of interest, as they research processes of transformation over time - in an abstract way, and from an artistic perspective, but certainly providing a basis for a later interest in processes in landscape. [Fig. 5.16]

Greenwich Millennium Park is the first of what, in retrospect, is a series of comparable projects. The *Bordeaux Rive Droite* project from 2004 is another example of this series. The park is part of the regeneration of a former industrial area in London. About one fifth of the 120 hectare area was re-designed by Desvigne. The plan introduced an urban forest. Due to serious pollution trees were planted in separate boxes with clean soil. To create a natural atmosphere both in the initial plantation and the subsequent steps, the office opted for planting large numbers of whips. [Fig. 5.17] As a consequence, many trees had to be taken out over time. This development process was considered a quality of the project – introducing a conceptual focus on aspects of time. It was expected that each new development stage of Greenwich would pose new design questions. Desvigne intended to have a role in this thinning process, but that was not granted. Therefore, the actual development of Greenwich is only to some extent as the designer drew it. It is not easy to convince clients that the long-term involvement of the designer is a necessary part of a project. It is telling that, for that reason, Desvigne started to review all projects in which the office chose a forestry approach. [89] The obvious goal is to map the development of these sites over time.
Fig. 5.16  *Jardin Élémentaire*. Graphite and colour pencil on paper. Drawing by Michel Desvigne, 1987.
in relation to maintenance, and to arrive at successful recipes. In the more recent Bordeaux project Desvigne was appointed as advisor to follow the development of his own master plan. When a new part of the project is under consideration, the designers return to update the master plan for that specific part. That also allows for a check on how former parts developed, and whether they need adjustments. Generally, no specific drawings are made for the proposed changes in earlier developed parts; such changes are discussed and agreed on on site. Thus the actual development of these parts is not documented in drawings, and can only be followed via photographs and written notes.

The Greenwich project was started in a time during which the office made almost all of its drawings by hand. The main drawing for Greenwich as presented in Chapter 4 originates from an aerial picture of a poplar grove. [Fig. 5.18] Aerial photography as a way to study textures in landscape has had an important place in Michel Desvigne’s office since his stay in Rome. Inspired by the aerial photo, trees were redrawn in a few basic types and photocopied to create a collage. This collage is the basis for the known drawing. Greenwich is a typical example of a project in which one drawing took on an existence of its own, no longer connected to the project documentation as a whole, or to the project actuality - an example of the ‘twinned body’ theory by Goffi. [90] By this, in fact an out-dated perspective on the project is kept alive. Other projects may even be more coherent in terms of their time-based character, but do not enjoy this presence in media. At the same time, because of this one famous drawing the project survives as an idea, even if the reality is different.

Fig. 5.17 Massive planting of young trees in *Greenwich Millennium Park* design. Michel Desvigne paysagiste, 1999.

[90] See Goffi in Frascari, Hale and Starkey 2007
In articles and lectures the background of the time aspect of Greenwich is described. Desvigne spoke about the central idea as ‘how nature itself might have colonized the site’: ‘Our young forest, planted on a regular nursery grid, will develop in two successive phases: composed in the first instance of a homogenous stratum of 12,000 densely planted saplings, [would] over time [be thinned out] and be replaced by larger nobler species, birch, alder, oak and willow, [...]. These more mature woods will themselves be sculpted according to future urban demands that were impossible to predict at the outset.’ [91] Desvigne started to address this type of temporality as ‘intermediate landscapes’, which also became the title of his recent book. [92] Much has been published on the Desvigne office, including the Greenwich project. André Schmid compares Greenwich with the Züricher Oerlikon Park by Studio Vulkan, at that time Schweingruber Zulauf, in ‘Zwischen Kontrolle und laisser faire’ [In between control and letting go]. [93] He cites Desvigne speaking about a ‘strategie d’invasion’, an invasion strategy, suggesting the plantation of numerous small plants that only later would evolve into a park that is adapted to the site. That the planting strategy and the thinking about time were noted by others, is certainly thanks to the verbal explanation Michel Desvigne gave.

It is by this extended description of Greenwich Millennium Park that we can appreciate the selected drawing even more, and understand that for many more drawings the history, the professional context of the office and the background narratives help to position them properly within the ‘project reality’. At the same time it reveals the fragility of the drawing as a fixed object that becomes redundant when reality takes over. In this specific case however

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it ‘proves’ the position of Goffi that the drawing and the project reality can be a twinned body, and just as in other cases -think of early West 8 drawings- this drawing ‘lives’ autonomously, still embodying the ideas on processes over time it wants to express.

5.7 Towards time drawings in the representational system

Very early in this study the concept of the score emerged and was assumed to be an innovative option to represent time in landscape architecture. The word ‘score’ has many meanings, but in this context I refer to a notational form deriving from music and dance. [94] Dance performances do not need to be anticipated in notations, but if they are, these notations, more than in the case of music, include instructions for movement in time and space. Therefore, there is certainly a link with landscape architecture, and it was Lawrence Halprin who already saw this link decades ago in his 1969 The RSVP Cycles: Creative Processes in the Human Environment. [95] With this unique work Halprin introduced the score into the domain of landscape architecture as a new drawing concept. For Halprin, scores were ‘symbolizations of processes which extend over time’. [96] [Fig. 5.19] I propose to understand the score as a notation of who (the actor, the performer) is doing what (the gesture, the form), where (the place), and when (the moment). For that last aspect, such a notation incorporates time by default. What would happen if landscape architects would draw scores as easily as they draw plans? And what would such scores look like? These were the questions which provoked me to have an experimental track in this research, to test the idea of the score through design.

If a landscape architect draws a map, or a section, he or she operates within the taxonomy of landscape architectural drawings. Such drawings follow the conventions given by the taxonomy, often in an implicit way, as part of a professional culture that is handed over in schools and in practice. As was already argued in Chapter 3, such a taxonomy is neither fixed nor entirely clear and objective. Developments in representation challenge every taxonomy, there is always a danger of not being on a par with the latest techniques and opinions. Following Lipstadt, a drawing is an architectural drawing if it is made as part of an architectural production. [97] That is an approach that is as pragmatic as it is valid, but that does not imply that we know how to denominate and order such drawings. That may seem a rather academic concern from the perspective of practice, but in the end it is not. In this research the issue of time and its presence in landscape architectural drawings is studied, and it is assumed that issue of time is crucial for landscape architecture. Therefore, it warrants its own representational type that first and foremost enables aspects of time to be drawn. I consider the score a new type of representation. That is not without debate: Is the score indeed an autonomous type of representation in the range of plan-section-model-visualization-diagram or is it, from a different point of view, a specific form of diagram? Due to the vast range of information that can be visualized in a diagram, a score too would fit in the abstract diagram description just as easily. But the point is, that a score requires one to consider time – the diagram merely allows the depiction of time, and can very well do without. For that reason, I suggest seeing the score as an autonomous type.

[94] The Oxford student’s dictionary of current English (1978, p. 586) for example gives ‘Cut, scratch or notch made on a surface’ or ‘Mark made by whipping’, and, apart from various other meanings, ‘Copy of orchestral, etc. music showing what each instrument is to play, each voice to sing’.


Fig. 5.19  So called *Motation Study* of Nicolett Mall between 16th and 17th Street, Minneapolis. Drawing by Lawrence Halprin, 1969.
Aspects of time

The results as presented in Chapter 4 suggest that the issue of time is dealt with effectively by using existing types of representation. But this does not address the crucial point: Within the landscape architectural taxonomy, there is up to today no drawing type that, in a compulsive way, asks for aspects of time, just as drawing a section is an imperative to come up with information on the vertical plane. I consider this a weak point in landscape architectural theory and in practice. Experiments as done in the context of this research suggest that, for the creative designer, there is a whole spectrum of ways to draw time. Many of these do not fit, for the moment, in existing traditions of drawing, and therefore do not relate to a certain type. An interesting example of this is a drawing made in the Drawing Time Now! experiment. [See Fig. 4.71abc / Exp. 11abc; detail Fig. 5.20] This drawing represents time as evolving from zero to 25 years, if you read from left to right. It may stand for a type of its own, or remain an incident. It certainly is, however, an interesting response. If we take a wider area into account, several representational strategies taken from other domains seem to be able to support the representation of time, next to the score.

Timelines, animation, comics

One could position timetables as contemporary management solutions, used to get to grips with the work to be done, and on that basis argue that such ‘drawings’ are common practice in landscape architecture. Both information design specialist Tufte and historians Rosenberg and Grafton convincingly show that one should understand timetables also, or mainly, as part of a very old drawing tradition, just like the way we can trace the history
Fig. 5.21 A timeline as a forward-looking instrument. Drawing for Mount Tabor reservoirs, 2005, Stoss Landscape Urbanism.
of drawing plans and sections. [98] Tufte digs into the history of public transport timetables and their graphical development. Some of his examples are far removed from spatial systems, but they teach us ways to graphically represent time. As Tufte’s last chapter is titled Narratives of space and time it is evident that such representations can also come close to (landscape) architecture. [99] Rosenberg and Grafton go further back, and show how mainly typographic approaches evolve towards diagrammatic drawings and illustrated text. In later ages, both genealogical charts and the desire to depict human history graphically inspired new solutions for the depiction of time. Tufte speaks about such illustrations as ‘envisioning information’ - also the title of one of his books. [100] Text, tables and illustrations are combined in these solutions, but without any doubt we must look at them as ‘drawings’. Many of such drawings could certainly inspire landscape architectural drawings, if we postulate that timelines can be used not only to depict history, but also to represent the future. In fact, some of the representational strategies chosen in landscape urbanism indeed seem to interpret the timeline as a forward looking devise. [Fig. 5.21]

Today’s animated film is often made with sophisticated software, with specialist’s input. That is one of the reasons that animated film is not deployed very often in landscape architectural productions. Yet animation does not have to be that complex, if we look at the ‘flip book’ for example, which is, as Paul Wells notes, an elementary form of animated film. [101] In fact, several animated films take the act of drawing as a subject, like J. Stuart Blackon’s The Enchanted Drawing. [102] A drawing comes alive and starts to interact with the hand drawing it. One of the pioneers of animated film was Oskar Fischinger (1900-1967). His aim was not so much to create narratives but ‘cinematic abstraction’. Fischinger’s employed techniques close to painting, but paintings in his view should start to move: ‘paintings in motion’. [103] It is fascinating that Fischinger also used drawings that certainly are scores. Many of his films take existing music as a starting point. Scores were the perfect representational technique to notate the correlation between music and image in a very precise way. Joseph Hyde in an essay on this specific notational technique notes that Fischinger’s scores were ‘time-accurate’: They were drawn on graph paper, and every block represented a frame of the animated film. [104] However, we have to see that even if the Fischinger scores are rather beautiful, they are means not ends. [Fig. 5.22] Time is essentially part of the notational system that supports animation. It is necessary to distinguish between different types of time. Animation often is short -only a few minutes- and needs smart cuts that signify the passage of time. Condensation ‘prioritises the most direct movement between what may be called the narrative premise and the relevant outcome’. [105] Wells puts it this way: ‘The idea of “a story” may be understood as a sequence of events taking place over a particular period of time. [...] Such events may play out in a number of ways - in a straightforward linear progression, as a parallel series of related scenes, as past events (memories, dreams etc.) re-told in the present context, as implied “off-screen” occurrences etc.’ [106] It recalls the vocabulary of Zerubavel.

In terms of notational systems, comics are very close to animation. The suggestion of time is, as McCloud argues in Understanding Comics, done with help of induction, using our mental capacity to finish an unfinished image, or to link two images and thereby
Fig. 5.22 Oskar Fischinger. Graph paper fragment, untitled, believed connected to score for *An American March*.
create a story. As McCloud observes, the white space between the individual frames is vital in this. Comics deploy written text, and therefore the graphical arrangement of text and image elements both shapes and restricts comics. It is very instructive that comics use a range of indications for the progression of the story: ‘the next year’ or ‘hours later’ or ‘he had no feeling how much time passed since’, and by that overcome the limitations of the medium. Generally a frame is seen as describing only one moment, but McCloud notes that in this way text and image can imply a certain span of time even in one frame: ‘Just as pictures and the intervals between them create the illusion of time through closure, words introduce time by representing that which can only exist in time - sound.’ ‘Action lines’ are a very specific comic tradition to suggest the span of time and more particularly, movement. In fact, the technique is not far from the experiments of Futurism, but used in comics in a more practical way.

A division into two domains
What does all this tell us about the taxonomic system of types of representation? I arrive at the tentative conclusion that this system needs to be updated in a conceptual way: a division into two domains at the highest level. These two domains would comprise a group of spatial representations, such as the plan and the section, and a group of temporal representations, such as the score and the timeline. Divided in such a way, a diagram would be an intermediate type, as diagrams can depict aspects of time, but do not necessarily do so. Drawings in the temporal group enable all relevant aspects of time in a design to be shown. These drawings also clarify the time scale at which the design operates, and the nature of time: progressive or cyclic, seldom or often, long or short and so on. Actions that provoke or manipulate or prevent the dynamics in a design are listed in these temporal representations, and the persons or institutions doing so are also addressed. By that these drawings can enlighten the way a design grows, develops and evolves. Such temporal representations also speculate on the (un) certain events that may occur over the lifespan of the design and the designed landscape, and they indicate the relevant phases up to maturity and decay. As with every type of representation, they can have an explorative role during the design process, or be part of the presentation to the client and the public. Perhaps such a domain of temporal representation would also be relevant for architecture, and certainly is for urbanism. But diverging from the history of drawing to date, this time the discipline of landscape architecture could take the initiative, as it certainly concerns a niche in the theory of representation that specifically addresses the character of landscape.

It is telling that after Repton’s invention of the score it took more than a century for an important conceptual innovation with regard to the representation of time in landscape architecture to follow: Halprin’s manifesto for the score. Even then, it did not result in a fundamental renewal of the taxonomic system. Corner and Balmori did not ask for scores specifically, but at least their work can be seen as a convincing argument to embark on this renewal. Yet up until today it has not been done, and therefore the main conclusion after exploring the history and theory, and after investigating current practice is in fact that we face a challenge: It is time to realize this thought, now, in theory, practice and education.