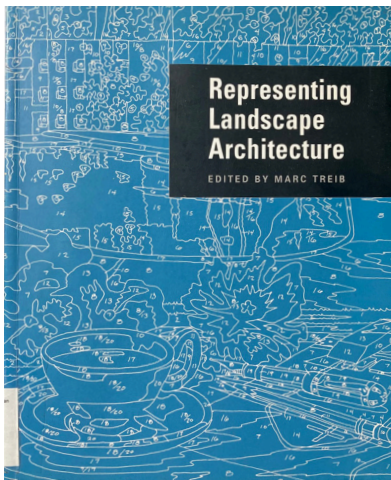


# Representing Landscape Architecture

Editor: Marc Treib

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Does representation really matter for idea generation, design quality and client reception? This collection of essays provides a thorough discussion around this topic. Marc Treib, professor of architecture and landscape historian at University of California, Berkeley, presents insightful elaborations by international experts which explain the strong influence of representations when designers communicate their intentions to clients and citizens. They all support the main message that the choice and use of representations should be carefully approached.

The 240-page book is divided into 14 essays written by 15 international landscape designers – mainly from universities in the US but also from Sweden, the Netherlands and the UK. In "On The Use and Misuse of Historical Landscape Views" for example, Dianne Harris and David L. Hays discuss how renaissance artists consciously employed the perspective view, not only to communicate design ideas but also as a manifestation of societal power. In essays like "From Paper to Park" by Thorbjörn Andersson, it is getting clear that today's need for different means of presentation varies with complex factors, such as the number of involved actors and the level of trust between client and designer. The following essays continue to discuss this complexity of communication, and delve deeper into specific types of representations such as axonometry, photography, construction drawings and simple sketches. Analogue techniques are embraced for truly unveiling the complex nature of landscapes, and also for enabling fruitful dialogues in participatory planning processes.

One of the most valuable aspects of the book derives from its diverse presentation of design cases, which collectively support the core message. The topics of the essays are not always seamlessly integrated into each other, but this lack of structure does not negatively affect the reception. On the contrary, it provides a most welcome variation, as the compact inclusion of diverse topics makes the reading very engaging. However, the introduction of the book also highlights the risk of sacrificing convincing ideas for weaker but more easily generated computer illustrations. A more comprehensive elaboration on the negative side effects of digitalisation within landscape architecture, could have further strengthened the relevance of the publication. In addition, had the complementary images which showcase the variety of representation principles not been converted to grayscale, reception would have been even more accessible.

This book provides both a historical and contemporary overview, as well as a clear reminder for landscape architects to reflect more consciously on their design practices. Simply dismissing the multidimensional purposes of analogue graphics could, as the book illustrates, negatively affect the development of convincing concepts. The publication is therefore just as relevant today – if not more – as when it was published 17 years ago.