

# Editor's Introduction

**W**e welcome the addition of Nicole Peterson to our editorial staff as an editorial assistant. Before commencing her graduate studies in Landscape Architecture at the University of Minnesota, Nicole was an English and Media Studies major at St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN.

## ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This special issue of *Landscape Journal* joins a tradition established by 12 others that either focused on specific themes or contained articles compiled in special issues. Thematic issues examined topics including Landscape Perception and Visual Assessment (3:2 Fall 1984), Landscape Archaeology (12:2 Fall 1993), Theater (15:1 Spring 1996), Bioregionalism (19:2 2000), Teaching with Culture in Mind: Cross-Cultural Learning in Landscape Architecture (24:2 Fall 2005), the Modern Manifesto in Landscape Architecture (26:2 Fall 2007), and Myths and Realities of Ecology, Design and Ecosystem Health in Metropolitan Landscape (27:1 Spring 2008). Previous special issue compendia presented articles devoted largely to topics ranging from Nature, Form and Meaning (7:2 Fall 1988), the Avant-Garde (10:1 Spring 1991), Women-Land-Design (13:2 Fall 1994), Eco-Revelatory Design: Nature Constructed/Nature Revisited (17: Special Issue 1998) to Race, Space and the Destabilization of Practice (26:1 Spring 2007).

Entitled "The Scholarship of Transdisciplinary Action Research: Toward a New Paradigm for the Planning and Design Professions," this special issue is guest edited by Susan Thering, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Victoria Chanse, University of Maryland. It presents eight case studies that apply Transdisciplinary Action Research (TDAR) approaches (Stokols 2006) to an array of topics relating to landscape design and planning. Three of the cases are set in an urban context. Marcia McNally, formerly of the University of California, Berkeley, reflects upon coordination of open space initiatives in the greater Los Angeles area. Caru Bowns of the Pennsylvania State University applies TDAR perspectives to interpreting student projects focusing

on the revitalization of downtown neighborhoods in the Middle Susquehanna River valley in Pennsylvania. Victoria Chanse examines the contribution of TDAR perspectives for organizing and managing multiple volunteer groups in a regional watershed stewardship initiative in Contra Costa County, California.

Three of the cases occur in rural settings. Christine Carlson, John Koepke, and Mirja Hanson from the University of Minnesota offer TDAR perspectives on their efforts to organize and coordinate the activities of the Laurentian Vision Partnership in reframing iron ore mining as a tool to make future ecologies and economies on the Mesabi Iron Range in northern Minnesota. In Entlebuch, Switzerland, Olaf Schroth, Ulrike Wissen Hayek, Eckart Lange, Stephen R. J. Shepard, and Willy A. Schmid of the Institute for Spatial and Landscape Planning, ETH Zurich and the University of British Columbia examine the contribution of interactive landscape visualizations for constructing transdisciplinary knowledge, dialogue, and consensus building in the search for solutions to rural landscape planning problems. Working with the Wisconsin-based Green Communities and Green Affordable Housing in Indian Country Initiative, Susan Thering integrates a grounded theory approach informed by social science literature to document and evaluate the intangible outcomes of transdisciplinary partnerships with Native American communities.

Finally, two of the cases are statewide in their geographic focus. Cheryl Doble and Maren King of the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry discuss lessons learned from the creation and operation of a statewide partnership to address remediation and redevelopment of small city waterfronts throughout New York State. Through his work with the Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity, Michael Rios, of the University of California, Davis, demonstrates the utility of social ecological approaches sensitive to various scales of social and spatial production to inform the development and evaluation of transdisciplinary approaches in the context of an obesity prevention initiative in Pennsylvania.

Daniel Stokols, a seminal figure in the development of TDAR theory and methodology (Stokols 2006), presents a foreword to the issue. Stokols introduces fundamental TDAR concepts and suggests that application of qualitative meta-analysis and meta-synthesis across various studies elucidates patterns of common experience and helps identify factors that enhance collaborative capacity and success across multiple contexts.

The guest editors follow by offering a meta-analysis that introduces and comparatively examines the eight cases, providing a theoretical perspective to advance the scholarship of transdisciplinary action research in plural and participatory landscape design and planning. The framework presented in the introductory article as well as that presented in the conclusion to the Thering (2011) article offer conceptual and methodological guidance for pursuing scholarly evaluation of case study research in planning and design. By providing a consistent framework for conceptualization across cases and allowing the similar orders and types of questions to be examined in multiple cases with similar methods, these frameworks hold promise for multiple case analyses (Noblit and Hare 1988; Paterson et al. 2001; Yin 1994) that move beyond the dilemma of having to decide “what to do” with “one off” case studies. The frameworks presented in this issue offer the prospect of being a model to “validly and reliably identify general themes through systematic inquiry across a series of similarly prepared cases” (Deming and Palmer 2005: iv–vi). The TDAR rubric provides a promising set of conceptual frameworks that can be used to examine single case studies. Thering’s framework suggests further operational protocols that adapt the framework to specific kinds of cases involving people and places in states of duress.

At the invitation of the guest editors, Randy Hester, Professor Emeritus of Landscape Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley, provided an afterword to the issue. His lengthy record of teaching, practicing, and writing about participatory planning and design serve as a basis for his reactions to the presentation of

the provocative findings of the authors, whose work he reviewed in manuscript form.

## THE DESIGN AND PLANNING OF MULTIFUNCTIONAL LANDSCAPE

In a previous issue of *Landscape Journal* (29:2 Fall 2010), we issued a call for papers related to multifunctional landscape. The 21st century impels landscape architects to design and plan multifunctional landscape in the domestic, civic, and regional realms. This concept involves the integrated and multiple uses of public and private land to produce both ecosystem and culturally valued services. It implies flexibility and potential adaptive repurposing of program as well as designing for and monitoring the performance of the multiple services afforded by natural ecosystems across a landscape’s effective life cycle. It compels us to think and act in all spatial dimensions across all systems of the landscape and multiple time frames, necessitating new (and a mix of old) aesthetic propositions to reshape (and selectively retain) the value of landscape in the next millennium.

The application of the transdisciplinary perspectives on design and planning presented in this special issue are an important component in the making of multifunctional landscape. Inherently, the creation of multifunctional landscape involves the weaving of natural and cultural systems into a landscape fabric that integrates complex and sometimes competing value systems across both space and time. Finding an optimal mix of performance across multiple criteria relating to socio-cultural and biophysical systems in the landscape necessitates engagement of multiple disciplines and stakeholders and the non-parametric data and inefable qualities of affect. Engaging the multiple interests and disciplines needed to construct multifunctional landscape fabric is inherently an exercise, which in this volume is framed as transdisciplinary action research. Accordingly, we invite potential respondents to our call for papers on multifunctional landscape to consider their endeavors from the transdisciplinary perspective

outlined in this issue, but also to consider their work in the context of other frameworks, rubrics or processes that engage the multiplicity of issues present in the multivalent media of land and landscape.

#### CHANGES IN MANUSCRIPT REVIEW PROCESS

Having followed three issues (29 (1), 29 (2), and 30 (1)) of *Landscape Journal* from conceptualization to publication, we are instituting two sets of changes in the manuscript review process. Henceforth, the *Landscape Journal* manuscript guidelines ([http://uwpress.wisc.edu/journals/pdfs/LJ\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://uwpress.wisc.edu/journals/pdfs/LJ_Guidelines.pdf)) will specify a requirement that all authors submitting contributions to *Landscape Journal* identify three potential reviewers for the manuscript they are submitting. This policy is in keeping with manuscript policies of other journals (for example, the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences at <http://www.pnas.org/site/misc/iforc.shtml#online>). While we reserve the right to identify all reviewers for contributed manuscripts, we are interested in the authors' perspectives on suitable reviewers.

In the 29 (2) issue of *Landscape Journal*, we declared a general call for mentorship of authors submitting contributions to the *Journal*. In this regard, we called upon senior faculty to devote themselves to mentoring their junior cohorts in developing and presenting ideas for manuscript submission to the *Journal*.

In this issue, we submit a general call for expression of interest among the readership in participating in the manuscript review process. We ask that you submit an e-mail message to [ljjournal@umn.edu](mailto:ljjournal@umn.edu) specifying your name, e-mail address, and topics for which you would like to review manuscripts. We extend the offer to readers regardless of their employment status. We are particularly interested in engaging thoughtful and reflective public and private practitioners in the manuscript review process.

#### CALL FOR PAPERS

In preparation for a special issue on life and work of Lawrence Halprin, *Landscape Journal* and guest editors, John Beardsley, Director of Garden and Landscape Studies, Dumbarton Oaks, and Judith Wasserman, Associate Professor and MLA Advisor, College of Environmental Design, University of Georgia, invite paper submissions that treat the design processes, media, and projects that constitute his legacy and the legacy of his practice and its impact both at the time of its creation and today. The *Journal* is especially interested in papers on Ghirardelli Square and Freeway Park. Submission deadline is May 1, 2011.

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