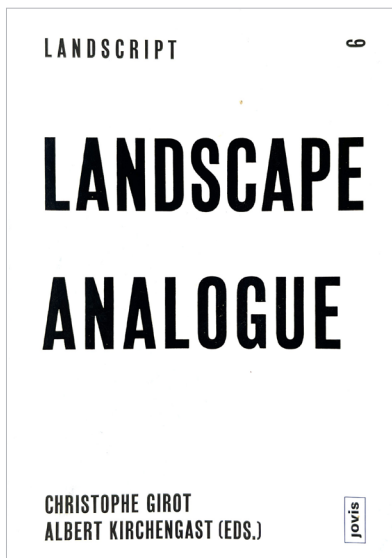


Landscript 6 Landscape Analogue

Editors: Christophe Girot, Albert Kirchengast

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Is poetic design dead? When facing challenges such as climate change, is technological and solution-based design instead the only way forward? Christophe Girot, landscape architect at ETH Zürich, together with architecture theorist Albert Kirchengast, has invited fifteen authors to share their views on this topic.

The essays in this anthology are thematically structured around analogues, meaning things that are similar or comparable to other things. One example is the English landscape gardens, a historical style that expresses an analogous view of idealised nature. However, since the topics of the book span from Japanese pottery to the swimming baths of Álvaro Siza, the reader will find new and unexpected approaches in every text. Most of the contributing authors have backgrounds in architecture and landscape architecture, but there are also other disciplines represented such as art history and philosophy. This results in a diverse assembly of interdisciplinary texts, which makes the contents difficult to summarize. One typical piece is the essay on Aldo Rossi's "cittá analoga", where the theory behind Rossi's abstract analogy-collage map is described. It was created as a postmodern counterproject in a time marked by rationalism, and it is argued that this contemplative way of design still could inspire us today to find more qualitative and independent answers to architectural problems.

Since the anthology is written on a scholarly level, some of the essays are heavy in sociological and philosophical references. Even though the used terminology is explained, knowledge of interdisciplinary theory is needed to fully grasp the content of some of the texts. This complexity might frustrate student readers, but since the format allows selective reading, it doesn't have to be a problem. The more easily approachable essays are generally as inspiring as the scientific ones, making it a worth read in any case. The variation of tone and topics of the book inevitably causes a lack of consistency, as each essay first and foremost stands for itself. Nevertheless, the editors have skilfully arranged the texts, keeping the appeal throughout the volume. Accompanying are monochrome images, often too few to get a full visual impression of the topics and sites discussed. However, the generous notes encourage the reader towards further independent research which will elevate the reading experience. With a bit of persistence, new insights are to be gained on topics such as climate change, ruralism, urbanisation and densification of cities, which are relevant issues all landscape architects must cope with.

The editors want to inspire their readers to keep searching for information, reflecting upon their surroundings, and practice using their critical thinking. This anthology is recommended for students and academics of landscape architecture, who are interested in theoretical approaches to the built environment and want to receive plenty of leads for further discussion.