Every Si(gh)t(e) a Painting
Landscape De/Re-Construction through Art
Alex Gonzalez, RISD Master of Landscape Architecture Graduate Thesis 2023
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Abstract

Contemporary landscape architecture practice and education primarily focus on ecological and technical interventions. The climate crisis we find ourselves in demands scientifically informed decisions and well-engineered execution of projects, but, more importantly, creativity and innovation.

The fine arts, which were once integral and foundational to design, are today largely unappreciated and appropriated. The spiritual power of Art, Aesthetics, and Beauty, explored at length through art history and theory, are often viewed as indulgent or secondary to execution. The gap between Art & Design has widened. As a result, designers face challenges in fostering in individuals the kind of care and respect for the environment that is critical for cultivating harmonious systems that would ensure life not only survives but thrives on earth.

Artistic practices within the context of contemporary landscape design have the power to help us better understand the ethereal dimensions of existing in space. Through a multitude of approaches, Art as Design and Design as Art can offer valuable lenses that lead to deeper questioning and understanding of individual and collective relationships to the external.

By modeling alternative methods and approaches, this thesis acts as a bridge and expansion of the field that draws on traditions while looking forward—fostering empathy, unity, and curiosity. Altogether, I hope this can lead to greater respect and excitement for the possibilities of what our world could be and how we make them happen.
Introduction

Nothing can be known independent of its context. Edges define boundaries between one and another.

At the most fundamental level of reality, we each individually collapse infinite possibilities into the single recurring chain of “Now.”

Everything we perceive with our eyes, supplemented by our other senses, becomes imprinted into our memory. Perception is an engagement that can be reduced to relationships between form and color in 3-Dimensional space. Everything external to the self is a vessel for us to project culturally reinforced or personally held associations and meaning.

As we receive external stimuli, we filter and re-contextualize them in our inner world in order to comprehend and operate externally.

Our eyes receive, flattening space into a recurring slideshow of present conditions. We trust what we see is there, but the mind is adaptive and deceptive. This suspension of disbelief allows us to get lost in screens and moving images. The visual is merely a symbol, indicating that physical presence is unnecessary to communicate or understand.

There is no you or me. Individuality is an emergent property of a system striving for complexity and diversity. Each of us lives to experience and give substance to a unique and particular set of possibilities.

Events build and branch off one another like a tree, like roots, like a river. We’ve stopped searching and stopped looking back. Aimlessly we wander, perceiving everything as strange and hostile.

You’re scared of falling. Look down; there’s nothing to worry about. Beneath our feet, we melt into a large blanket. It never ends, and you’re always warm.

One all-encompassing contiguous field of energy exchange. Actions cluster and create something new. Diverse compositions governed by the laws of reality bring about new laws by forcing limitations on themselves.

These compositions work because the whole is harmonized, allowing it to grow and build up.

The creative act is an invitation to engage with reality. To play our part within our space. Together, we must work towards the harmony of a sustainable whole.

Art represents and explores possibilities—functioning as a portal by filtering experience and containing feeling within legible formats. Using themselves as a reference point, the Artist collects archetypes from the language of symbols to speak to the collective.

My goal with this thesis is to highlight the contradictions in understanding landscape and landscape architecture by blurring, overlapping, and disintegrating boundaries in time and space across scales.

Many of the ideas I present throughout this thesis are, themselves, nothing new. I owe a lot to many people for guiding my thinking. What I’m doing that I believe is “new” is synthesizing and placing specific ideas within the discourse of contemporary landscape practice by offering a new lens to understand the world around us and the scope of work that falls under landscape architecture.

By redefining landscape and the mission of landscape architecture, we are then able to reposition and open ourselves up to the kind of change needed to ensure we not only survive but thrive.

Your body is a vessel like a ship. There are countless boats in a wide sea. You may pass by, bump, or occasionally slide shoulders along a vast ocean, but you’ll never know what the rooms in each boat look like. The secrets they hold. The forces that have shaped them. The feeling of being inside or what they’re made of.
The fundamental understanding and prerequisite for a system is heterogeneity. Meaning diversity. When there is more than one element, these elements begin to exist in relation to one another.

For something to be understood, it must be understood in relation to what it is not or the "negative" space that defines or surrounds it.

Systems can also be understood synonymously with "Landscape." Landscape is a term most often associated with the organization of "space" and "natural" elements in space; however, its adoption and use can be a grounding force that denotes dynamic Systems at scales that are within our human capacity to perceive, understand, inhabit, and, therefore, empathize with.

Systems follow fractal patterns of organization with and within increasing levels of complexity. These patterns are a way to understand the seemingly chaotic and entangled nature, organization, and relationship of elements.

The relationship between the circle, its boundaries, and the defining context establish it as a System and Landscape.

Proximity forces relationships between elements, creating what we can define as a Composition.

Types of Systems

Nested:
All systems and things/elements exist within a nested system. All parts could, to some capacity, be understood in isolation, but they also exist within a larger web of interdependent connections.

Open:
A system that interacts and exchanges with other systems in its environment.

Closed:
A system with minimal interaction and exchange with its environment.

Keywords:
The Inert:
Humans exist within a carbon-based system; however, we act as an interface between the carbon and non-carbon-based through our ability to create, synthesize, innovate, and engage with our environment. Through this, we create "new" modes that, through ignorance and negligence, may become unbalanced and volatile. These elements often have "life cycles" that operate at currently incompatible time scales, that of "the Inert."

Example:
Plastics damage our ecosystems because they are not effectively integrated or compatible with them. Plastic takes a long time to decompose and is not compatible with most functions of carbon-based organisms.

- As a result of occupying this liminal space, plastic damages carbon-based life forms— including our own bodies— both through direct interference with the greater system and in the form of microplastics.
- The overuse of concrete to operate our cities may have been convenient, but its overuse has become incompatible with natural systems. This has led to huge repercussions in the form of flooding, migration and extinction of wildlife, greenhouse gas emissions, the urban heat island effect, etc.
Empathy is cosmic self-awareness. It is the recognition that we are one and the same with all that exists. This degree of awareness—that we are connected with not just all living things but all things—challenges the human-centered, egotistic, and individualistic models for society that have led to the problems that now threaten our continued presence on earth and our capacity to thrive in the world as humans.

Empathy requires stepping back and understanding our role and place within the greater whole. This allows us to engage with each other and the world with heightened degrees of respect, care, and responsibility while striving towards balance, cohesion, and ways to operate with other elements in the ecosystem more effectively and with resilience.
the Concrete

Contrasts with the Ethereal and describes that which is tied to physical reality—given form through matter—and can be perceived by the senses. Our senses act as filters and are registrations of our limited capacity to understand reality.

Ways we understand the Concrete

- “Objectivity”
- Physics
- Science
  - Cooperation as a form of validating elements and qualities of our shared physical reality
- Subjective Perception
  - Knowing through experiencing something first-hand.
  - Reality can only ever be perceived subjectively

the Ethereal

Contrasts with the Concrete and denotes the qualities of being and existence that are beyond our physical capacities to perceive and/or interface with.

Certain things may hold a physical form or be understood in relation to something physical but may still challenge or be beyond our perception and/or understanding. Ex: Air, Language

Ways we understand the Ethereal

- “Subjectivity”
- Feelings
- Experience
- Art
- Language
- Meditation
- Transcendental experiences
- Entheogens and psychedelic substances
- Dreaming
- Imagination
- Mindfulness
Vessels

Vessels are means of interface and transcendence between the Concrete and Ethereal. They are understood by what they facilitate and allow—and are denoted not by what they are but by what they do. Therefore, the physical/concrete or ethereal forms that facilitate this interface and interaction can be understood as “containers” that hold meaning, feeling, experience, and memory that, when engaged with, become vessels for specific outcomes.

Our bodies and different systems act as vessels that allow the body to interface with the mind through action & reaction, cause & effect.

Types of Vessels

The organization of these vessels can be understood as nested systems that aim to transcend each level’s limitations.

Concrete Vessels

- Bodies and various systems that compose it
- The physical form and material of artworks
- People can also act as physical vessels for the ethereal. We transmit feelings and experiences through our actions.

Ethereal Vessels

- The ethereal can direct interactions with the concrete
- Perception
- Memory
- Art
- As vessels to the spiritual and transcendent
- Experiences and Feelings can also act as vessels to new ways of being as they change and transform those who contain them.

Static Vessels

Static vessels are those that facilitate movement, but themselves are passive or static. These can be understood as “Portals” or “Windows.”

They create a corridor or allow passage from one state/place to another. They are in the “in-between” and don’t take on the identity of what they connect. Rather their identity is as that point of connection.

These passive vessels are a quality of vessels that is not mutually exclusive from concrete and ethereal. Concrete and ethereal vessels can be static.

- Arrows
- Windows
- Portals

Containers

Certain things can be vessels and/or containers depending on whether they activate or are activated.

Examples:

The Body:

- A vessel for interfacing and a container for a certain subset of humans.
- Our different systems act as vessels that allow the body to interface with the mind through action & reaction, cause & effect.
- The mind can also serve as a vessel for the transmission of action.

Language:

- Language is a container for meaning and a vessel for communication and transmission of feeling.
- Letters are symbols and containers.
- The wide variety of fonts, typefaces, and lettering styles are examples of how meaning is held beyond any exact form as long as they allude to certain relationships.

Art:

- Art is a vessel for and into feeling and a physical container for the potential energy that activates feelings.
- Color
- Form
- Space
- Materials

Art Acts as a portal

Artifact

The central A concrete container
Abstract
To condense into a communicable essence.

Catharsis
Release induced through imprinting. Coming into contact with the negative of a trauma.

Collapse
A pressured consolidation of complex interrelated elements into a single unit that carries the essence of the whole.

Filter
A threshold that selectively permits and denies access.

Fractal
An infinitely repeatable pattern across scales. A reflection of fundamental representations of order in the universe.

Imprint
A critical interaction in time and space that shapes an individual unit’s sense of identity and has influence over the ways they engage with their environment.

Moment
A specific point/instance in time and/or space.

Negative
The space that delineates the exact boundaries of something.

Network
An organized arrangement of interconnected elements/parts.

Portal
A threshold that allows passage from one state to another.

Site
An area of interest for study or intervention.

Suspend
To temporarily pause in motion.

Threshold
The transitional space between two states.

Visceral
Felt deeply and inwardly.

Witness
Attest to the existence of.
CH 1 Context
Here there is no circle because there is no clear delineation between the circle and its context (the paper).

Form is established by outlining a void in the field. The circle is made visible.
Greater distinction is made between what constitutes the form and its context.

The illustration above is a simplified way to understand how individual entities in space are defined by their context and contribute to a compositional whole.

In a fundamental sense, context is the setting in which a thing or event is understood.

Landscape is Context

In a fundamental sense, context is the setting in which a thing or event is understood.

Landscape is as fundamental of a concept as the word “thing.” “Thing” can be used to describe just about anything.

Any “thing”
Landscape is everywhere.
Landscape = “Every” “where”

Landscape architecture concerns more than just well-manicured gardens or pleasant strolls through a park. It is the most ubiquitous substance that exists because it is substance itself.

The environment is what we share—what connects us as individuals in space with every “living” and “non-living” thing around us. Or better yet, the “human” and the “non-human.” It is the binding agent that makes the universe whole.

Given this, landscape is synonymous with context as it is the ubiquitous space that allows for the emergence of individuals and their ability to relate to one another.

Nothing can be known outside of its context

Our environments shape who we are

Landscape is everywhere.
Landscape = “Every” “where”

05/26/2015

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Throughout human history, religious institutions and the ruling class have held significant influence over people’s lives and minds. Through places of worship such as churches, cathedrals, mosques, etc., design facilitated the creation of sacred sites—places of worship that brought people closer to the ethereal dimensions of being.

Architecture, as structures, provided a degree of safety from the outside world—the forces of nature we had not yet learned to tame. The landscape in turn provided a groundedness rooted in a connection with the earth.

Well-designed landscapes, as we might understand them today, have long been treated as a luxury—an exertion and display of wealth, power, and influence. Those endowed with the privilege of wealth and comfort could dive deeper into the aesthetic pleasures of life provided by art and aesthetics.

Gardens in the Renaissance, although not exclusive to this period, epitomize the landscape as an escape into a world of sensory pleasure. The Medici family in Italy famously commissioned many of the greatest precedents in garden design studied in landscape architecture history today. As esteemed patrons of the arts, Florence became an epicenter of culture and artistic development. 1

A great deal of time, energy, and resources are necessary for creating spaces like these. As a result, we’ve often made decisions about space not by what is best for people collectively but by what is most economical—favoring those with the means and resources to bring an idea to fruition. The artist and designer, instead of fulfilling their shamanistic role in society, become subservient and accountable to those with the resources to allow them to continue their craft in a society not designed for them.

The professional practice of landscape architecture, as we know it today, builds on a framework developed by Frederick Law Olmsted less than 200 years ago. It emerged as a direct response to industrialization and capitalist-induced urban growth that was rapidly erasing native landscape and people’s access to their idea of “nature”. 1


Nature was seen as a commodity, offering a reprieve from the less favorable conditions of the city. This hard contrast between “nature” and “city” set in motion an understanding of aspects of nature as separate from man-guiding our approach to placemaking and urban design for nearly 200 years.

This incarnation of landscape architecture is a child of industrialization and capitalism, never meant to work against them. I believe this is why artistic approaches are widely regarded as unproductive and are only appropriated aesthetically to sell an idea. This lack of critical dialogue between art and design reinforces and upholds the starving role of art in our society.

I believe naming this profession “landscape architecture” was an initial mistake. It carries the implications of being a branch of architecture and, as a result, is often understood and practiced as a service profession focused on a certain growth-oriented approach to design.

Upon reflection, we realize people have been shaping and manipulating land and space since the beginning of time. It would be ignorant and self-aggrandizing to think that the imprint our ancestors and we have made as homo-sapiens are any more of an impression than the forces and creatures of the past or that coexist with us today.

Is the work we do building infrastructure to hold water, for example, different from the dam building of beavers? We are all reflections of and vessels for greater forces.

Why do we do things the way we do?

To change things, we have to understand why they are the way they are in the first place. I don’t think anyone is entirely at fault, but many designers and non-designers (since we all operate within a complex socio-economic system) are complicit in upholding existing structures. It is too difficult, if not impossible, for any one person to challenge and change the system as a whole. It usually takes a movement or revolution in thought that speaks to a collective spiritual need to

Why do we do things the way we do?
Here I will outline a few reasons I’ve observed through my own experience, study, and observations about how this field and system function and why it’s so difficult to bring about creative change into the discourse.

- There are proven working methods that experimentation is a gamble and not worth changing the formula.
- The pacing of getting projects completed under a capitalist and bureaucratic system creates a lot of pressure and time constraints, so designers have to work “efficiently” with the methods they know in order to meet deadlines.
- Design is a service profession, meaning we offer our services to clients who can keep us going. Because of this, it is most sustainable and economical to make as much money as possible for the least amount of effort. Therefore, wealthy clients or those with resources outcompete those who lack the resources to exchange with us.
- Designers aren’t the final decision-makers.
- Because we are liable to our stakeholders, ultimately, we have to please them, and there is less freedom for a designer to express their skills and knowledge more freely.
- So much land that can be used for the public good is privatized, so much effort is required even to compromise.
- Making decisions in the built environment is a responsibility. Licensure becomes vital to ensure agreed upon standards for safety, sustainability, and efficiency.
- The role of licensure in turn creates a degree of specialization that defines the landscape architect’s role in ways that close it off to other degrees of exploration and inclusivity of diverse approaches and viewpoints to the way space is designed.

**Landscape Architecture**

The study and design of anthropological systems and their context in order to bring about balance + harmony.

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**Mission of Landscape Architecture**

“To harmonize the whole is the task of art”
- Wassily Kandinsky, Concerning the Spiritual in Art

To harmonize the whole, I believe, is the mission of landscape architecture as well. Harmonizing, more specifically, the human and the non-human—anthropological and “natural” systems. When landscape is approached as an Art form is when it’s in the best position to do so. This is because landscape is an immersive medium. Other art forms are abstractions of landscape.

Decisions regarding the built environment are everyone’s concern. This impacts on the designer a great deal of responsibility. Decisions must be informed in not just the needs of an ecological community but human communities. We must appeal to commonalities in order to transcend our differences. This requires looking inward towards the self and reflecting. The body and spirit then become our measuring tool for which to understand the nuances of being alive and existing in specific moments in time and space. Before we think we know best, designers have a responsibility to look inward and deeply question and interrogate their own assumptions, biases, and understandings. Figure out what they mean and relate them back to the context of the environment that shaped them.

Since we are all human, there should be universal experiences that underscore these associations.

What associations do we have with certain colors and forms? What aspects of culture or our own lives shaped them? What commonalities may we find with communities we consider ourselves as part of? Do these translate across scales to different cultures or people? How do we feel in certain spaces? Why?

Art is one of the most powerful ways of doing this and reaching self realization. This makes us better designers and facilitators of deep and meaningful experiences.

This allows us to develop our own language shaped by external culture in which we can give form and meaning to the abstract, ephemeral, and ethereal aspects of shared experience. If we are especially attuned, this language transcend ourselves.

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and become receptacles for others as well.

I think designers have a responsibility to really understand and look inward—reflecting on their own relationship and understandings of the environment. This allows us to better understand the world through ourselves in a way that would make us more effective mediators and facilitators.

Different contexts require different approaches. In a system, there will always be a degree of unpredictability. This is essential to creativity; otherwise, you would always know what to do, and there will always be a single “best” solution. Straight to the point and direct. It wouldn’t even have to look nice because then what does “nice” look like? If a project does what it needs to and accomplishes what it should, but people don’t like it, can we really say it is effective or successful? There is more to space than it simply “working”. There is something in us that I believe calls and cries for unity. The self wants to expand out and feel integrated. There is a difference between a practical solution and an artful solution.

Diversity creates resiliency. We know this from ecology and the theory of evolution. It is the reason there are so many different types of living things and why life endures even in mass extinctions.

Why we need a broader definition of Landscape

Fostering Innovation and Creativity across Disciplines

“The arts are encroaching one upon another, and from a proper use of this encroachment will rise the art that is truly monumental.”

- Wassily Kandinsky

I believe landscape has the potential to be this art. What is more all-encompassing than the space all around us and within us? All other arts are ways of understanding and communicating some aspect of space through the creation and manipulation of physical matter. They are a form of landscape architecture.

Painting utilizes the canvas as a site in which to construct spatial relationships involving form, color, and texture. The canvas acts as a portal that we enter through our eyes. Our personal experiences serve as reference points and “data” for us to imbue a work of art with meaning.

One could argue that the canvas is flat and not a landscape, but I challenge that view. The canvas has a physical presence. It has depth and volume. Layers of paint take up space. If you were to lay a painting flat and imagine yourself as an ant or tiny organism moving through, it would not be much different than how we experience the layers of earth beneath our feet.

Photography is also a way of flattening space, forcing relationships between different entities into the composition of the picture frame. It unearthed hidden aspects of the landscape while communicating a specific atmosphere or mood, influencing the way we understand and relate to certain places or shared experiences of place.

The photograph is more of a representation than it is a conventional landscape. However, it is not much different than current modes of practicing that involve rendering, mapping, and drafting. They are all forms of abstraction intended to communicate certain aspects of external reality or projecting possibilities of what a designer envisions. Photography is today a core component to document a “site”. A higher degree of artistry that not only for documents but communicates feeling, mood, and pleasure lends to a deeper appreciation and critical approach to the essence of a place.

Even music has a physical presence. Although we can’t see it we can feel vibrational waves. Familiar sounds like flowing water, birds chirping, and twigs bending with the wind create an atmosphere integral to how we experience the environment. Music can be a way of bringing us closer to our environments. Concerts are a spiritual experience in which the sonic landscape permeates.

When we see something, we don’t need to touch it to know it’s there. What we see in the distance is seen and experienced in relation to all around it. Our vision flattens visual information. Objects and places are placeholders for personal and culturally reinforced ideas, memories, and associations—signalling at what we know of something, allowing us to make decisions about how we proceed or possibly engage with what’s there.

The landscape is in constant flux. Current methods in the current paradigm of practice, such as plans, sections, maps and perspectives attempt to suspend time. Collapsing it into one instance that is not reflective of it across time.
The over-formalization of our work and conventions of professional practice such as licensure, firm structure, and the timeline + scale of projects, I believe are severely limiting to the potential of this field. We are not creators but facilitators of processes and connections within the broader systems we are part of.

Equity and Inclusivity

Welcoming open arms diverse viewpoints & approaches is not only beneficial but necessary for the future of our work. We should not hold on to structures as they are today. The landscape of this field, just as any landscape, is in constant change and evolution. Decisions that shape our shared environment concern everyone, and anyone should feel they have a voice.

The privileging of technical methods over the more freeform creative approaches that the other arts make great use of consolidates power to select groups and comes at a detriment to what our world could be. A broader definition and approach to landscape is a matter of equity. By including more people in the conversation and training them with literacy in systems thinking can help them better communicate their needs and the influence of the environment on their daily lives-turning them into stakeholders and contributors.

Climate Crisis

It will take a lot more than solar panels and green infrastructure to rescue us from the climate crisis. Elizabeth Meyer, in her manifesto “Sustaining Beauty” (2008), argues that true sustainability requires us to make a conscious effort to sustain, respect, and support our environment. We can’t force others to care, but we can help them feel it in themselves. Designers can do so by facilitating experiences and associations that reframe their way of looking at their environment.

The systems we are a part of engage in a reciprocal exchange of energy across scales. For centuries, humanity has hoarded energy that cannot be held on to forever or beyond our limits. It has to go somewhere, and we are about to burst.

Precedents propelled design Forward

The land art movement, I believe, is the closest we’ve come in recent time to reentering the sacred bond between humans and the land. Robert Smithson’s writings are foundational texts of many landscape curriculums. Despite this, his lack of formal education in the field did not grant him the title of landscape architect. The impact he has had on this field through land art cannot be understated though.

The Bauahaus School of Design. Everyone loves to talk about the Bauhaus. Where would we be without them? They are foundational to design as it is today, however I believe we have abandoned a lot of their core values, or at least the pieces of their pedagogy that made them such a force at the avant-garde of art and design and bringing it into our daily lives. They really valued the fine arts and integrated it into their education and pedagogy. Artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, Johannes Itten, and Paul Klee, brought valuable perspectives about ways of understanding the world through art. This led to a very holistic and
transdisciplinary approach to design that focused on theoretical and abstract thinking as opposed to simply practical applications and skills.⁴

There should be a branch of landscape architecture that focuses on inner and metaphysical landscapes. The inner is the other side of the outer. We must understand the duality of being.

Precedent Inspirations:

Although I can’t go into full detail about every single source of inspiration I’ve had, and I’ll likely miss a few ones after publication, I’d like to highlight some of those who came before, as well as the many movements of art that have helped me get to where I am now and I know will continue offering guidance.

Roberto Burle Marx

Landscape Architect and Fine Artist

Marx was a visionary Brazilian landscape architect who viewed space as an artistic medium and landscapes as living compositions that, like other arts, benefitted from attention to color, form, texture and rhythm. His use of painting as a tool challenged many traditional notions of the field and inspired generations of designers, including myself, to persevere and elevate landscape as a true art form.

Lawrence Halprin

Landscape Architect and Fine Artist

The orchestration of experience in space, as written about in RSVP Cycles, with his wife, Avant-Garde dancer, Anna, led to dynamic spaces that invited holistic engagement and sensory attunement to the body in the environment. These innovative ways of understanding and communicating, as well as the remarkable balance between natural and built elements in his urban landscapes, have been very inspirational in helping me develop my own methods.

Wayne Thiebaud

Artist, Painter, Writer, Educator

I have long admired Thiebaud for his ability to capture the essence of his subjects and the heart of a place. His techniques have inspired me, as an artist and designer of the land, to use color and perspective as a way to imbue character and soul in the way I represent.

Judith Belzer

Painter

I encountered Judith Belzer’s work a few years ago had a significant impact on the way I understand landscape and painting as a medium for exploration. Her series on the Anthropocene provokes deep questions about humanity’s changing relationship with the land and the indescribable feelings this may illicit.

Wassily Kandinsky

Artist, Painter, Writer, Educator

Not enough can be said about Kandinsky. Widely recognized as a pioneer of abstract art, his ability to capture the altered forces of life has left a profound impact on me. I find solace in his work, as I develop my own approach to understanding my relationship with the world and strive to create places capable of evoking strong emotion and transcending visual boundaries.

Luis Barragan

Architect, Artist

Not only is it rare to know that one of the greatest architects is from Mexico as I am, it’s even rarer to know that the way he explored space, form, and color expanded the boundaries of how we understand design.

Robert Smithson

Land Artist

Smithson’s interdisciplinary artistic work was characterized by layers of thought, research, and the understandings of strong intellectual and conceptual frameworks. He has inspired me to continue digging into my philosophical questions and find ways to embed them into environments that evoke magic, mystery, and awe. I hope for my work to weave exploration into the layers of meaning and order embedded in space across scales.
Cy Twombly
Artist, Painter, Writer, Educator

In his work, Cy Twombly questioned the nature of perception and ways we communicate meaning. His gestural marks and asemic texts were invitations to engage and question what we saw. Inspired by his artistic philosophy and approach, I embrace the ambiguity and open endedness of my work, inviting viewers to question the nuances of their perception and find personal meaning within the layers.

Chip Sullivan
Artist, Landscape Architect, Writer

I would not be where I am today if it weren’t for Chip Sullivan. One of the best teachers I’ve ever had and a great friend. His perspective and approach to landscape is what ignited the fire in me and allowed me to see a place for me and my diverse interests in this field.

Chip is a true artist and embodies what I think this field is and has the potential to be. My deepest gratitude to you Chip!
“You didn’t come into this world. You came out of it, like a wave from the ocean. You are not a stranger here.”

- Alan W. Watts
One day, I picked some flowers.
I stared at them in the little empty soup can I placed them in and I saw them gleam with vibrancy.
They radiated with energy.
Then it occurred to me, I stripped these flowers of life.

On my daily walks throughout the city, I would always stop to smell the lavender.
It wasn’t just lavender I was smelling though, it was “this” lavender. A very specific and unique individual.

Like me.
I am not just human, I am the only one of me in this world.
The plants I see all around me did not choose where they would grow. They had to make the best with what they had.
Life is hardly ever fair, but we adapt and persevere. Hoping to one day bloom—others bearing witness to our fruits.
On the Color Green

What we see is just light reflected. It is actually everything but "Green". That is what "Green" is. We see through its absence. Its like hugging something that had no place. Sitting by the kid who was alone at the cafeteria table. We are receivers of neglected information who color everything with its absence.

Color is the negative of what is perceived. It is like recognizing someone through their silhouette or the space around them. Any two things always share an edge. The space that is not them, but still carries them.

We project all sorts of meanings and associations to the color and concept of "Green". It signals chlorophyll. Plastic plants don't feel quite right, do they? They may deceive some vision and sometimes even touch, but always something uncanny that I can feel. Deeply.

Why do we value Nature so much? What is "Nature" anyways?

Why is it universally represented by Green? Ads and cartoons. "Plant is Green", "Go Green", "The future is Green". The color Green has been given so much value and power simply because of this association, but it is just color. Light reflected.

Green signals chlorophyll. Plastic plants don't feel quite right, do they? They may deceive some vision and sometimes even touch, but always something uncanny that I can feel. Deeply.

Is "Greening" always good? It is shorthand. "Greenwashing" is a term used for when corporations appeal to consumers through the facade of sustainability. It is easy to use "Green" because it signals something specific and familiar with great immediacy. "Green" has been co-opted though by the very systems that have degraded and exploited it.

Even the trojan horse was considered a gift. It was brought to the center of the city, where the people who accepted it were slaughtered as they slept.

Green is a container for our love for life.
Butterfly Flower Sun

Where is this scene taking place? What familiar forms do you see? Can it be anything else than what you may immediately think?

Everything is nature because everything is here and true.

Everything plays a part in the system, including ourselves. Our value judgement is based on a bias for carbon based entities and an imbalance of materials needed to continue supporting healthy life on earth.
In this series, I aim to capture and reimagine the concept of succession in post-industrial sites using Phillipsdale Historic District in East Providence, a place with industrial roots that trace back centuries to the start of the 1st industrial revolution and continues to be degraded decades into the 21st century, as a point of departure.

The compositions I present attempt to re-contextualize and instill life to "artificial" elements by mirroring them with "natural" counterparts through zoomorphism. Through this, I hope to create a dialogue about permanence, time, and the inevitable collapse, and possible resurgence, of once dominant structures.

I envision an alternate future with evolved creatures that have spawned from the rubble and pollution found in abundance through the site. In other images I attempt to convey a story and open up a conversation about Phillipsdale’s present conditions through juxtaposition of found objects with distinct characteristics alongside natural materials or processes.

Objects found on site are listed on each image, and those not collected on site remain reflective of current observed conditions and the variety of objects scattered around the site today.
"Left Behind, but I’ll Grow"
Moss, Grass, and Abandoned Puppy

"Left Behind, but I’ll Grow"
Moss, Grass, Abandoned Puppy, and Gas Flag
Lung Cancer and Liver Failure, No Clean Air and No Clean Water
Empty Cigarette Case, Plant Clippings, Bleached Budweiser Can
"Shoot me"
Empty Shotgun Shell, Shoot

"My seeds have grown"
Toy Ball
Pareidolia is the psychological phenomena in which humans recognize meaningful patterns such as faces in objects. 

What it reveals to us is that the human brain has a tendency to use visual features to recognize and categorize. Since humans are social creatures, our ability to recognize and respond to faces is extremely important for social interaction and communication.

I believe this phenomena can be approached much more consciously in design as a way to increase empathy for non-human entities and the environment, by allowing us to project on to them characteristics and emotions similar to our own. Therefore, increasing care and respect.

Pipestone Quarry of Peace

"An ancient catlinite quarry in the southwest corner of Minnesota is the site of a thousand years of sacred pipe carving by the Ojibway, Lakota, Cheyenne and Blackfoot tribes, among others. Both history and legend refer to Pipestone as a holy ground where warring nations would put down their arms and smoke the pipe together, united in reverence for the Great Spirit. Today, Pipestone remains a meeting place revered by many First Nations people, and almost all the pipes used in ceremony by North America’s Native people come from the quarries here, though much of the remaining rock is hidden under ten to thirteen feet of quartzite." ¹


"The Old Man in the Mountain source: New England Yankee magazine

Geologist Brian Fowler's vision of the probable fall of the Old Man
Time
Time

We experience time linearly, however many physicists believe that all of reality is happening at once. We continuously experience single instances and exist to witness a very specific subset of moments. Everything that can happen is happening and accounted for in one of infinite universes.

Essentially, anything is possible because everything is not only possible but true.

Given this, I have concluded that we are most likely to experience ideal circumstances through optimism and perseverance. Optimism then becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Pessimism can do you no good.

The way out of our many messes is knowing that there is a way and not only internalizing that hope, but embodying it to the best of our ability. Whatever happens needed to happen.

Just like anything else
Just like everything else

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Can things exist simultaneously above one another?

Mirrors and reflections often lead me to question some of the assumptions we have about what is “real.”

Do you always have to look at something directly to know what or where it is?

Light shows us that it is a messenger of information, not necessarily proximity.

What new information or insights does the layered reflection offer us? Can it help us understand certain spatial relationships we might’ve not been attuned to before?

Views like this force us to make connections by seeing things together—leading to potentially new insights and an appreciation for the absurdly beautiful nature of perception.

I enjoy taking pictures of reflections at the airport. The layered spaces in this very transitional landscape are appropriately metaphorical. This picture is from September 2020 at LAX. I was ready to embark on a life-changing trip across the country to start my graduate degree. Here the airport represents where I am, the plane where I am going, and me in the center of this gradient.
Life is constantly moving toward its edge
Since the beginning and until the end of time
I am just a passenger.

What does it mean to transfer? To share? To touch and impact profoundly—creating vibrations that ripple through time long after you’re gone?

As human beings, we are vessels for information in its many incarnations. Through direct engagement with our environment and each other, we create links—moments of transfer—that facilitate growth. Over time, these links act as bridges and the metaphysical scaffolding upon which we build our sense of self and propel our society and institutions forward.

These qualities, however, are not unique to us. It is the structure in which all existing things have developed and been made visible—time is the vehicle that makes it possible. Every great painting requires a surface for color to be layered and scenes to be seen. Evolution, knowledge, design, art, language, love, friendship, etc., all rely on connections and the strength of these connections in order to come into existence and blossom.
Snowtown was a majority immigrant and Black neighborhood in Providence during the 1800’s. It was destroyed over time to make room for the construction of the rail station and the Rhode Island statehouse.

This painting collapses the layers of complex histories and the forces that shaped Providence into what it is today.

The section view here is used to represent the metaphorical layers of time. It is communicating different information about the land than simply physical. It attempts to capture fleeting information whose traces are the petrified foundation in which we build.
Top row: Source: Alex Gonzalez, San Joaquin River Delta source: Bill Dally via iStock, Delta Water source: Wayne Thiebaud


Bottom: Neurons Source: are.na/unknown, simulation of universe, Source: Illustris Collaboration, Mandelbrot set Source: original source unknown
Individual Unit

Comprised of smaller units

Every individual is a system made up of individual localized units

This plays out in space at varying degrees of visibility

People organize themselves into groups based on proximity, culture, familial ties, etc.

At this scale there is a lot of overlap since people are unique and complex social creatures with various interests and identities

In many ways, these groups become their own units and higher scale organisms themselves

This begs the question, are we part of a larger organism? What kind of forces are we consciously or more likely unconsciously contributing to and allowing to thrive?

We are not much different than the cells that make us up. Every member of a group, whether it be a family neighborhood, town, city, state, etc, each has a unique function in the system.

We should strive for peace and love by feeding and nurturing those forces of care and respect. We do this through greater attention and attuneness to life around us.
The painting on the left was a very free flowing sketch. My classmate Carl pointed out that it looked like the Iberian peninsula (right).

Wow, I thought, that’s interesting.

How do ‘color’ and ‘form’ inform each other? If I were to overlay this with the map of the peninsula, would it overlap with certain areas of interest or data?

Makes one wonder...

Source: Patterns in nature: why the natural world looks the way it does
Look at how the leaves line up so nicely along the grid—shining and illuminating the streets.
Xochimilco, Mexico.
The land of flowers.
Home of my ancestors.

I was walking around the Fox Point neighborhood of Providence, and noticed this paving on the driveway of a home.

Like little islands. I wish I were a tiny person walking through this landscape—hugging and climbing the little shoots of moss.
Weaving I did in early 2022 exploring the textures and colors of seascapes. The dreamy and beautiful interface between land and water. Oceans of flowers and green above the water.

Weaving is in many ways like printing images and is actually a precursor to computers. Every line here is like a row of pixels. In fact, many weavers work out their designs on graph paper.
Every Si(gh)t(e)

Designing through Moments

a Painting
Foundations of Design: Crash Course

- **Itten 12 part color wheel and complementary color schemes**


- **Core Elements of spatial construction.**

Source: Francis K. Ching, Architecture: Form, Space, & Order

- **A POINT** as line prime generator of form indications a position in space.

  **LINE**
  - length
  - direction
  - position

- **PLANE**
  - length & width
  - shape
  - surface
  - orientation
  - position

- **VOLUME**
  - length, width, & depth
  - form/space
  - surface
  - orientation
  - position

Simple diagram showing how complex forms arise through arrangement of fundamental elements in architectural representation.
Painting with Space

Photography was an initial great way for me to break out of severe artist blocks I was having.

It was actually, when I really think about it, the way I started along this journey that I’m writing this book about.

It felt like I was painting with space. Degrees of editing helped me bring out the underlying ethereal qualities and magic of a place.

Photographs themselves never really reflected how it felt to be somewhere. So much that gets lost or can never be fully translated. Playing around with color helped me find it.

“Ah. There it is. That’s it.”
Fundamentally, everything is just color and form in which we project meaning.
At what point is something no longer what it was representing?

“This is not a pipe.” Source: The Treachery of Images, 1928-29
René Magritte
Every Si(gh)t(e) a Painting

Removing Art from the context of the museum and gallery and back into the everyday. There is beauty and art all around us. It’s a matter of perspective and attention.

The urban environment, as it exists today, does not need to undergo radical and rapid transformation. What we have now can exist as the scaffolding in which to connect currently disparate units and integrate them more consciously and effectively into a larger network of moments (balanced arrangements) that are experienced as serendipitous encounters with higher order.
Low density approach to landscape design

Current paradigm and approaches to landscape design that focus on large scale works and masterplanning. This is often a very long term process that takes years for a project to be realized.

By reframing our scope of work to include an artful approach to the design of moments in the built environment, we can design our cities as one large composition of diverse and well balanced elements.

High density approach to landscape design
Notice how different elements in the picture line up and overlap with one another. The photograph forces these relationships by flattening the view into a composition.
This image could be completely dark and it would not successfully communicate anything. It is the subtle light, where it's being emitted, and what it illuminates, that start a conversation. In front of the light, the darkness communicates the presence of trees and foliage.
These are two separate images, but don’t they flow into each other so well?

A collage like this challenges our understanding of moments as separate or isolated. By showing how different scenes fit together, we can start exploring their potential as elements of a diverse whole.
CH 3 Embodiment: Finding Perspective through Art

Understanding and relaying the universal through the self
We form “sense of self” through continued engagement in space and time—our movement and presence repeatedly affirming our existence.

As external forces push towards us we push outwards. This act forms our physical boundaries and shapes our identity.
We experience temporal reality “linearly” through unique instances of moments suspended to be experienced. The chain that binds them become the evolving totality of ‘the self’.

In the world of quantum physics and the many worlds interpretation, everything is possible and accounted for in one of infinite alternate universes. We exist to affirm and witness a very unique set of possibilities. As we move through time, we bind the fleeting and the present (etherial & concrete) into a thread that differentiates our life from infinite possible outcomes.
External forces cast their imprint - physically on the body and meta-physically in the psyche and consciousness. This is an act of ‘molding’.

This is happening to everyone and everything around us.
We influence and are influenced by one another and the environment through shared external reality.

The 3 circles represent different people experiencing the world and forming their identities through degrees of “imprinting”. 
People become containers for unique combinations of truth. Just as color can be applied an infinite number of ways on canvas from 3 primaries, there are aspects to being human that are archetypal. We each paint a picture of our lives from common source material.

Still there is this gap in being able to communicate the internal externally. There are degrees of filtration and transformation, and so much gets lost in translation when there are no existing vessels for communicating the most visceral and embodied aspects of our lived experience.
Art is an ordered release. The Artist acts as a filter that digs through the layers that unites us, and through the symbols of human experience and culture, speaks to the collective.

This is a powerful force that channels and directs energy. Through this, a society unifies and collective consciousness is realized.

So much is left unsaid when it is unspeakable. It takes a great deal of practice and attunement to inner and outer forces to be able to effectively communicate in ways that not only feel true for us but, when externalized, binds to that same desire in others for being understood—something that once might’ve felt unattainable.

This “release” and “binding” is catharsis.
The man who said of painting that it arouses feelings that words can express only vaguely, knew that this magic power resided largely in color; unlike the line, the forms, the subject-matter, all of which, as we have seen, appeal primarily to the intellect, color has no significance for the mind, but speaks eloquently to the sensibility. With color it is impossible to compensate for a deficiency in feeling through some intellectual device: color can only be felt. Therefore it is the favorite messenger of the artist’s soul, an arrow with brilliant feathers darting directly to the viewer’s heart and implanting itself in it.”

To the intellect, every object is neutral; it merely corresponds to its intelligible definition. To the sensibility, however, every object is “qualified,” endowed with a force that attracts or repels, with a unique flavor which sensibility alone can identify, and which arouses associations with everything that seems to possess a similar flavor.

Each thing remains linked with the sensation that it provoked and that is preserved in memory; as a result it becomes expressive.

In this way a bond is formed between the external world, the objective realm of things, and the inner world, the subjective realm of sensations and feelings; the two...
My dive into abstraction first started as an exploration of basic forms and shapes. I wouldn’t know what the final product would be, but I would attempt to balance the whole as best as I could. I loved being able to find new things every time I looked at my drawings. New scenes and faces seemed to appear to me all the time. Slowly I would start pushing this further and create degrees of spatial dimensions that began to inform the way I looked at my landscapes and how I approached that work.

My interests were very disparate at this time. I had my illustrations, my design work, and my abstractions. There was a real deep desire in me to find the place where they intersected in me.
Our minds are cages

The Dream World is corrupted by subconscious thought

Freedom

Nowhere to be found

Summer of 2018, I had an existential awakening that brought about many significant transitions and epiphanies. Certain discoveries about myself made me question how much control over my life I really had if I am just a product of external forces and genetics. I was having intrusive thoughts and felt like a prisoner to my own mind.

Creating this landscape allowed me to better understand myself and my fears. I wanted to communicate how the mind and the imagination are often a safe space and an escape. When I dream though, there is very little degree of lucidity and control.

Both my inner and outer world I did not create. I inherited them.

Shrouded in mystery.

I would encounter forces, residing here long before me.
Lost
Digital Painting, Summer 2020

Expresses my feeling and desire for wanting to feel lost and immersed in a mysterious and isolated landscape like this. Makes me wonder why this type of scene brings up those associations.
Why do I want to be somewhere like this so much.
Why are the beach and the cliffs both so comfortable, but mysterious?
The two paths, what do they each represent?
Then there are multiple thresholds
This sculpture is the result of a very intuitive and cathartic process. I had a scarp piece of wood I was holding on to. It was splintered along one of its faces and I didn’t know what to do with it. One day I set out to use it and got to work in the woodshop. I split it in two and started putting it through some intense abuse. I say abuse because it’s difficult to detach myself from what I was doing. Wood is so ubiquitous in our daily lives as this inert material that we often don’t think twice about where it came from and the life it had. This scrap had become a canvas in which to project the energy and frustration I had held inside.

I cut, sanded, and carved into its flesh with knives and chisels. I glued the two halves together and drilled holes into its body so I could insert the metal into its body that would help it stand.

This was a very cathartic and visceral experience that resulted in something with a sense of self and life. To me, it appeared like it was crying for all that it was put through. Standing tall despite it all, saying “I am still here.”

Untitled, scrap wood, steel wire, red ink, 2023
Months later, I was looking at this and realized it’s a map of the lost city of Atlantis.

Pink is a very interesting color. It is often seen as very innocent and feminine. While I understand why it has these associations, I find these associations very limiting to its true power and presence. I think it expresses something so raw and visceral, especially when paired with certain forms. Pink here has a very dominant and airy presence as a field permeating and piercing landscapes of green and blue. The pink in my work attempts to challenge and push certain conventions of pink.
Isn't it interesting how this can appear to look like a structure? How much of these assumptions do we fill in ourselves and what do they say about how we understand form through color relationships?

Is this a landscape?
The answer for me is always yes.
It may challenge conventions of how we understand landscapes, but there is a very clear spatial dynamic here.
The concept of “floating” I find so interesting. It implies a refusal to be pushed down by the weight of the substance grounding everything else. To swim instead of sink.

These ‘floating’ islands could be floating in the sky or in water. Is there really a difference? What do these substances and environments share? That’s the question I’d like to ask.
This painting started off as a portrait of someone. There was something about representing them though that challenged me, so I felt I needed to hide them in it. Then I thought about our relationship as friends and this scene came out of it.

A lot of my work hints at space and landscapes in many ways through the composition of elements and color. There is a clear horizon line and split that creates a ground and a sky. The figures—with no defined scale—look like beings or structures. The ground also alludes to some form of logic that facilitates movement and flow of water or potentially people.

Plaine, Gouache, 2022

ALPs, Gouache, 2023
Balancing a lot of tension here. It’s screaming and reaching out, but still trying to contain itself.
Deconstructed wetlands

The interface between land and water always captivates me. I find it so beautiful. The edge where life came out from the oceans and into the groundedness of earth. How can I capture the ethereal beauty of these landscapes? Many of my paintings explore this, and I think this one starts getting at some of those qualities and relationships. With no defined scale, it leaves one to project many different ways of seeing.

Celebration of Life

There’s something really celebratory about this one. The sharpness here emits an energy of excitement. Fields of grass or mountains. I see people dancing.
This was a memory map I made after my first trip to Olneyville, the site of our 2nd year fall studio.

When I look at this, it takes me back to the nuances of that day and the journey there with my friend and classmate Lei. It captures the complexity and layers of interactions and sightings throughout those 3 hours we spent walking and exploring this neighborhood. The top left corner is an experiential map I made of how it felt walking from my house on the East side and through all the many thresholds—ultimately culminating in Olneyville square.

Flowers growing through the cracked pavement. Hives of bees buzzing through the green.

Nearby flea market
Gridded systems.
Like a spontaneous city.

I got a bear book end. The guy said there was another one somewhere in his mess of stuff he had for sale. If he ever found it he would save it for me he said. I went back a few times after and no luck.

It’s been almost 2 years. I wonder if it’s been sold to someone else.
This drawing was done in March 2020, at the beginning of the covid pandemic and lockdowns. As most people, I was feeling very anxious and nervous about the future.
Collapsing Time and Experience in the Landscape
Initial Goal:

Understand how the complex and tangled web of feelings and experiences in the environment (the objective experienced subjectively) through time are abstracted, captured, and given form via the creative act through color, shape, space, pattern, composition etc.

Although we are each unique individuals, how can we begin to understand each other’s feelings in order to empathize and connect with each other in a deeper way? Are there universal associations that we have with feelings and experiences out in the world (environmentally and socially) that are communicated through visual and sensory archetypes, metaphors, or symbols? How can these forms, once understood, begin to inform design in a way that comes from a more ‘pure’ or ‘unfiltered’ understanding?

• Could this process reveal or allow us to better understand the ephemeral and ethereal forces that not just shape our experience out in the world but also with each other and that altogether make up our lives and sense of self?

• How could this process help us better understand our relationship and associations with a given site or community?

• Can painting be employed as a visceral communication tool to reach people and instill empathy?

• Paintings in a way are already collapsed time, however—can specific feelings and experiences be extracted from the abstraction? What is gained, what is lost?

This line of question arose from a personal interest in abstract painting and how I felt I was using it to process and give form to feeling—something that is physically formless. I felt I intuitively understood what I was doing, but again it was more of a feeling. I knew that what I was making was directly influenced by my experiences and interactions in the environment, but I wanted to better understand how and what some of my art, motifs, color palettes, and patterns meant as well as how I could use it to inform my practice as an Artist Designer who still quite hasn’t found their place.

In the following paintings, the accompanying bar of color represents the color breakdown in percentage, all adding up to 100%.

“I don’t care if Monday’s
Tuesday’s and Wednesday too
Thursday I don’t care about you
It’s Friday, I’m in ♥️”

- Friday I’m in Love, The Cure
I tracked the paints and colors I used for each painting and throughout the two weeks this is how many times I used a color.

The color squares for each of the paintings were scaled to take up their proportional amount in percentage as they did on the painting. Then I brought all of them together and organized them into one long band (top). Below I took those same colors and organized them by hue to see which colors I tended to lean towards.
Concluding Thoughts and Reflection
Thank you for reading, or perhaps just skipping to the end to read my final remarks. I hope my work can serve as an introduction, a discussion, and the exploration of the new world we find ourselves living in, but I am by no means saying that my work is the end. I believe there is a "better" way we need to consider the vast majority of people for whom this system is not only not working, it is not even working against them. Our systems rely on the narratives of the powerful, the exploitation of the earth in order to function. We ourselves are not exempt from enabling this order, or from this. We often forget that even simply having food at home and roof over our heads is something that not everyone makes us of the luckiest people in the world. The privileged class, which we are all part of to some degree, live in bubbles of their own making that perpetuate the existing power structures and subvert societal issues. The issues are structural in nature, and that is where we should focus our attention. These problems do not solve for any single person. Who would even know where to start? Most just drown out the painful truth, thinking, "Well that's just the way things are". That is how they are but not how they have to be.

Empathy is generally understood as the ability to understand and share the feelings as if they were your own. Fostering empathy in the arts is a good start and may help with this thesis and beyond. A philosophy grounded in the concept of empathy is really helpful in helping us get there. By embracing the multi-cultural universe, I believe we can create a world where everyone can develop and appreciate for the diversity of human experience. We need to stop telling ourselves we are not in the same boat. Struggles or privileges individuals face are often grounded in the situation of their race, class, or character. Somewhere out there, we are in that exact position. An understanding like that encourages people to suspend judgment and consider the facts that shape everyone's unique journey on this earth. We are all navigating our own path in a complex reality where fortune and misfortune can fall on any of us.

There must be a way out of this cycle. There is a way out of this cycle. There is always a way.

This is why I have become so fascinated by quantum physics. It offers some perspectives that are of tremendous value, like quantum field theory, that tell us we are all connected, self- encompassing field of energy. This blues the traditional lines between in and out, our not other, all are a singular entity in space; everything is a projection of ourselves on one another. The multiverse theory is also profoundly exciting and I think has something to offer in terms of a connection we each possess to the larger world that we call the world we share; or the world we share in. That is the world we are collectively a part of, and from that, we can start forming a sense of place and an identity that was before unrealized. When we consider these Arts, forms as ways of knowing and understanding our shared reality, we also acknowledge their ability to inspire, inform, and influence the design process of new visionary places. This is why I think we need to embrace art as a form of exploration and not just as a form of escapism. The transformative power of the arts, in this context, is generally understood as the true artistic medium it is and something different. It is the most exciting vehicle we have.

While it does excite me to know I may be introducing someone to cool ideas, at certain times it is also disheartening to know others may not be thinking about the world the same way. I do not think there is a single solution to the world's problems as I am. Maybe part of my role is to be someone that illuminates, and the issues I encounter are just not as big and as bad as I had thought. That is how they are but not how they have to be.

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