

Aarhus Workshop : A summary of ideas

Atmospheres in the
Urban Anthropocene
research network



This document is a collection of key thoughts, ideas and discussions from the Aarhus workshop of the international interdisciplinary network 'Atmospheres of the Urban Anthropocene'.

The network seeks to develop a nuanced understanding of and visionary design strategies for the urban Anthropocene by finding connections between an artistic, a social science and a natural science understanding of atmosphere.

To gather knowledge, the network arranges three workshops in the span of three years taking place in, respectively, Aarhus, Addis Ababa and Anchorage.

The Aarhus workshop took place from 17th –18th December 2018 at the Aarhus School of Architecture.

This was the first workshop arranged by the network. Many of the presentations are introductions to the different approaches and understandings of atmosphere by the members in the network.

The thematic focus of the workshop was Ethics and Entanglement in relation to urban atmospheres in the Anthropocene. This focus is presented in the lecture by Paul Roquet and tinctures all of the discussions.

The experimental site of the workshop was the landscape laboratory Eskelund – an earlier landfill and current urban wasteland. Prior to the workshop, the site was mapped using three different methods, each representing a different understanding of atmosphere. The mappings and site served as a frame of reference for the discussions. During the workshop all participants visited Eskelund on a site visit. After the workshop, participants were asked to make a postcard to Eskelund based on the site-visit and workshop discussions. The postcards can be understood as individual conclusions on the workshop.

In this document, all presentations and discussions from the workshop have been formulated into roughly 400 word abstracts. They are supplemented with a selection of images from the mappings and design approach presentations and photos documenting the workshop activities. All photos are by Rasmus Hjortshøj unless otherwise stated.

The document begins with a documentation of the site visit to Eskelund and concludes with the postcards to Eskelund made by the workshop participants.

During the workshop more questions were asked than answered.

This document is intended as an active archive that can inspire new thoughts and collaborations to address these questions before the next workshop in Addis Ababa in 2019.

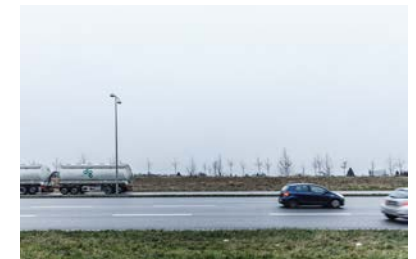
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Site visit



Eskelund Landscape
Laboratory
Eskulund vej,
8620 Viby, Denmark





Reflections

How can we bridge the three approaches? What is the process of bridging? The sites of each workshop are the bridge between our disciplines.

We cannot be pedagogues. We need to be more subtle and trigger imagination rather than dictate where one needs to look and what one needs to see.

What do we want to say with this project? It is important to have a common goal but also to keep an open ended agenda.

This is a hybrid approach and network – we make the Anthropocene explicit using atmospheric approaches.

Hiriya waste mountain (Ariel Sharon Park) in Tel Aviv is an interesting reference project. An old landfill which was left as a monument with a designed oasis/public park on top.

In general it is important to always consider the impact of any intervention on biodiversity and other species. For instance, what effect do clearings and other landscape laboratory installations have on other species.

In general it is important to make entanglements explicit in interventions. To work with the border between the visible and the invisible. But how do we define what is the visible and the invisible? And what are these entanglements? Which ones do we want to make explicit? And are they things?

There is an important ethics aspect – immediacy always has to be mediated. Atmosphere can be used as a tranquilizer and as an empowerment. There is a difference (a political controversy) between the type of atmosphere that the municipalities would like the landscape laboratory to work with, and the type of atmospheres that the landscape laboratory would like to work with.

Approaches

1. Architectural approach:
Stefan Darlan Boris

2. Natural science
approach: Jens-Christian
Svenning, Peder Bøcher

3. Social science approach:
Jean Paul Thibaud, Laurent
Devisme, Suzel Balez

Eskelund is partly a natural landscape and partly an artificial landscape. The natural landscape was formed over millions of years by water and ice. Today, all the surface water goes through Eskelund to the Aarhus valley. The artificial landscape was formed by the landfill which occupied the site until 1970. Since the landfill closed, the area has been left as an urban wasteland and nature has taken over – trees are in bloom on top of the waste hill.

Eskelund can be seen as a strategic zone between the dense urban Aarhus and the sparsely populated Aarhus river. And it can be considered – with reference to Bruno Latour – a critical zone, that is, the zone just above and below the ground and the topsoil layer that is particularly interesting to study to understand the entanglements between human activity and natural processes.

Eskelund will be used for large-scale outdoor (summer) concerts. Currently few people use the space; the Aarhus inhabitants who use the space describe it with a sense of serenity. Also, a lot of people have memories of the space as a landfill. The municipalities plan to use it for concerts to create a new spatial narrative. There is a dissensus between the municipalities' plans to develop it for concerts and the work of the Eskelund landscape laboratory. The plan to use the area for concerts demands developing new infrastructure to get people to the concerts.

The Eskelund landscape laboratory is established to find new strategies for nature management through experiments that bridge the gap between enhancing biodiversity and spatial-sensual (experiential) qualities. One of the main approaches in this work is finding ways to enhance spatial complexity. Spatial complexity creates both a diversity of experiences and enhances biodiversity. This approach is in contrast to current nature management strategies which prioritize function, efficiency and production – e.g. planting an urban forest in a location to protect the groundwater rather than to enhance spatial experience and biodiversity.



Eskelund 1959-66, Aarhus Renholdningsselskab and Eskelund 2018, removal of top soil for experiment, photo Stefan Darlan Boris.

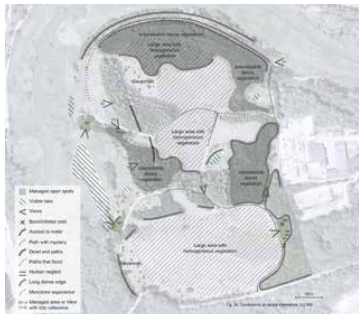
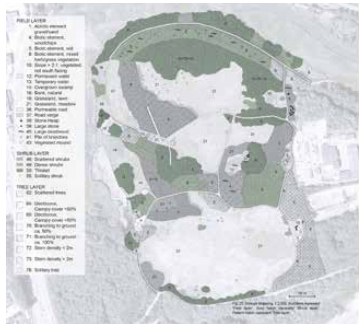
Students involved in the landscape laboratory have developed character plans to find potential areas of interest for experimentation based on descriptions of spatial qualities. The Anthropocene/nature contrast in conditions at Eskelund is not a part of the character plans. However, the transition area between the natural and artificial hills has been identified as an interesting area for experimentation. So there are overlaps between character plan and Anthropocene/nature spatial analysis.

Examples of experiments:

Clearings (the latest experiment) – creating clearings in dense areas of the forest to invite people to walk off the paths and into the forest, and to stimulate forest floor vegetation.

Land transferal – the top soil from Godsbanen (area in central Aarhus) was transported to Eskelund as an experiment to see if vegetation and species could survive the transportation.

Basins – created to stop pollution from underground waste to natural environment.



Eskelund character plans by Cecilie Boje and Mia Nordow 2016 - from top left: biotopes, complexity and spatial conditions; Eskelund design experiments 2018, photo Stefan Darlan Boris.

The biggest difference between the Anthropocene and the Holocene is that people have an effect on the Earth System. Human activity dominates the global eco-system. In the Holocene, the preceding period, people had an effect on nature, but the effect was in balance with other forces and was not on a global system scale.

The great acceleration – which defines the onset of the Anthropocene – is an acceleration of industrial/human activity which coincides with unprecedented changes in nature.

Demise in biodiversity correlates with growth in population size and increased use of technology. Currently, the global biomass consists of 3% wild mammals, 32% humans and 65% domestic animals. We are coming close to mass extinction.

Land use from a non-human perspective is habitat destruction. Currently land use is the biggest source of habitat destruction and cause of loss in biodiversity. This is a relatively new development – in 1860 industrial landscapes were semi-natural. Today, in Denmark, there is a lack of space for leaving some land unused so that habitats and biodiversity can develop.

Europe is currently seeing a rewilding – a comeback of megafauna. This is related to societal changes such as urbanization and legislative changes such as hunting license regulations. In many areas – also outside of Europe – urbanization causes people to migrate to cities leaving rural areas abandoned and unused. The abandoned areas are rewilding. There are also planned rewilding initiatives such as creating heterogeneity in the landscape.

Climate change strongly impacts habitats – a rise of one degree Celsius changes biotypes and causes migration of vegetation and species. In Eskelund this can be seen with the spreading of walnut trees – a vegetation that did not thrive in the Danish climate historically.

Strategies to support biodiversity are either to create heterogeneity by strategically replanting the landscape or wilderness by strategically leaving land without use. It would be interesting to see the effect of the two strategies in combination. In this regard, Eskelund is interesting because, so far, it is a low-intensity-use space – so there is potential to create both wilderness and heterogeneity to see how biodiversity and nature will flourish. The most important question to ask is – what Anthropocene do we want? And how can we work with Eskelund in this direction?

Geographical information techniques allow us to visualize and analyze landscapes. In the remote sensing process, data from satellites of the reflected light from surfaces is processed to create visualizations. For instance, Multispectral images and Lidar data. These images make it possible to visualize and analyze large landscapes, and to do this remotely while still being able to look below the canopy.

The reflected light data is processed into x,y,z and time measurements. This makes it possible to work experimentally with the data by changing parameters and visualizing what effect this change has for the landscape's development. For instance, experimenting with how a rise in water (because water has a specific reflection measurement) will impact the landscape.



Eskelund, photos Rasmus Hjørtshøj

It is important to understand not only climate change itself, but also the experience of climate change in everyday life. People are the experts in deciphering knowledge from their environment based on sensory perception. It is important not to ask 'What do you think of climate change, but instead, through dialogue, to focus on background feelings, affective tonalities, tacit knowledge and collective memories. Based on this it is possible to understand how people talk about their experiences.

One method for this is commented photographic drifting: a guided tour by inhabitants and subsequent collective photo reactivation. During the guided tour and photo reactivation process the research focus is on informal dialogue and observations, unplanned encounters and following traces.

An ambient ethnography study was made in Gavres – a peninsula in France that will soon be submerged or become an island due to climate change. This study showed that inhabitants talk about the elements water, wind and sand; about how each element allows various modes of existence; and they talk with a rhetoric of either vulnerability and control or acceptance and letting go. An interesting finding was that inhabitants felt that the elements were always changing – that is, continuously changing due to daily changes of wind, rain, etc. Thus, they did not differ between changes caused by weather and climate.

These findings point to 1) the importance of studying the elemental as the background of experience (and theoretically following, among others, Emmanuel Levinas) and 2) working with 'the climatic' instead of climate, because in people's experience climate and weather are not separated.



Climate change in Gavres, photos Jean-Paul Thibaud



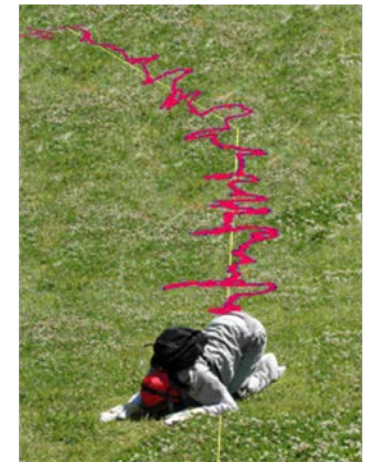
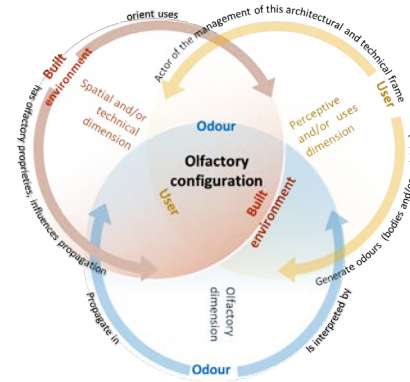


Charleroi, photos Laurent Devisme

Another approach to doing an ambient ethnography study is to take a picture of a site and write a short phenomenological description. This approach is especially interesting to get an understanding of the experience of a place rather than of its representation. It has been applied in the 'backside' of Europe – for instance, in Charleroi, the 'ugliest' city of Europe and in low-cost budget airports (see pictures above). Other photographic one city-one week investigations have been made in the French cities Mournex, Saint nazaire, Lourdes and Nevers

A third approach is to focus on the sensory experience in the commented walks method. This approach leads to the questions of what is an observable experience and how to account for the architectural and urban frameworks of this experience? For the commented walks method, the methodological hypotheses are: 1) the primacy of the perceived phenomenon, 2) the necessity of a transversal approach and 3) the importance of contextual data. The goal of a commented walk is to obtain perception reports in motion, combining all sensory perceptions. Passers-by (regular or non-regular users) are asked to describe as precisely as possible what they perceive and feel as they walk. These comments are recorded and specified by brief semi-directive interviews. They are then analyzed, to identify phenomena that are part of a shared experience. It allows to go from the ordinary user experience to the actual "sensory configurations" of the studied site.

The walks can be focused on one of the senses, for example on smell. Smell is a great emotion trigger that may enhance the overall experience of places. It has spatial aspects (it is a stereo sense), but it is difficult to consider because odors are not directly recordable and because the interindividual differences are high. Although smell apprehension is not a new question in architecture, it is often limited to source (emission) inventories. Smell walks can, therefore, be a way to comprehend olfactory phenomena.



Path of a human following a scent trail of chocolate essential oil through a field (scent trail in yellow, human's path in red)." (Porter, 2007, p.27)

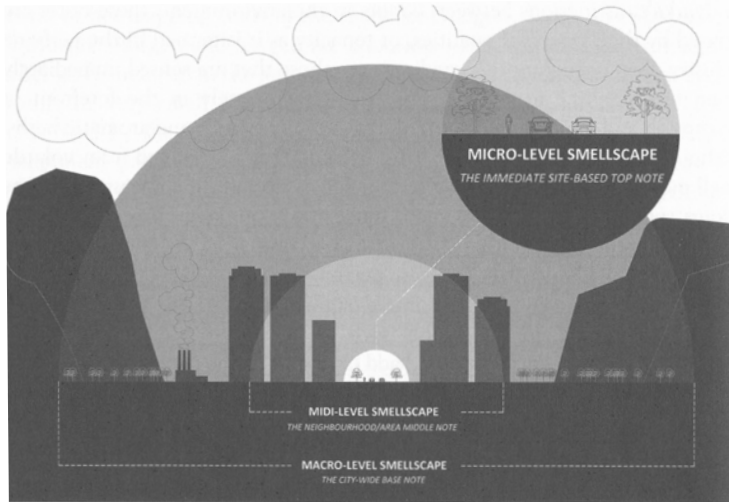


Figure 9.1 The smellscape as a composition of different notes (image drawn by Nabil Awad)

To analyze odor situations described by participants in smell walks, the participants' accounts of their smell sensations can be paired with olfactory and space data, using a conceptual tool named "olfactory effect". Far from a cause-to-effect approach but rather as an interaction between the physio-chemical olfactory environment, a socio-cultural community's olfactory milieu and each individual's frame of references. Thus, each olfactory effect allows the researcher to gather and confront the perceptual, physiological, physical, cultural, etc. phenomena, through its contextual and event character. The actual 45 olfactory effects are classified in two big categories. The first category is that of predominantly dynamic effects that are related to space and time circumstances of the act of smelling and to the interpretation of the odor through its forms of appearance, maintenance and disappearance. The second category corresponds to predominantly static effects - the interpretation of odor as the manifestation of a real fact and as a set of signs.

The analysis of the olfactory effect of a site leads to "olfactory configurations". An olfactory configuration is the description of the interactions between the built environment (technical and/or architectural devices), smells (nature of the odoriferous sources and their physico-chemical properties) and users' sensations (perceptual and/or users' interpretations).

(Text by Suzel Balez)

Mappings

1. Commented walks:
Polina Chebotareva

2. Socio-material
drawings:

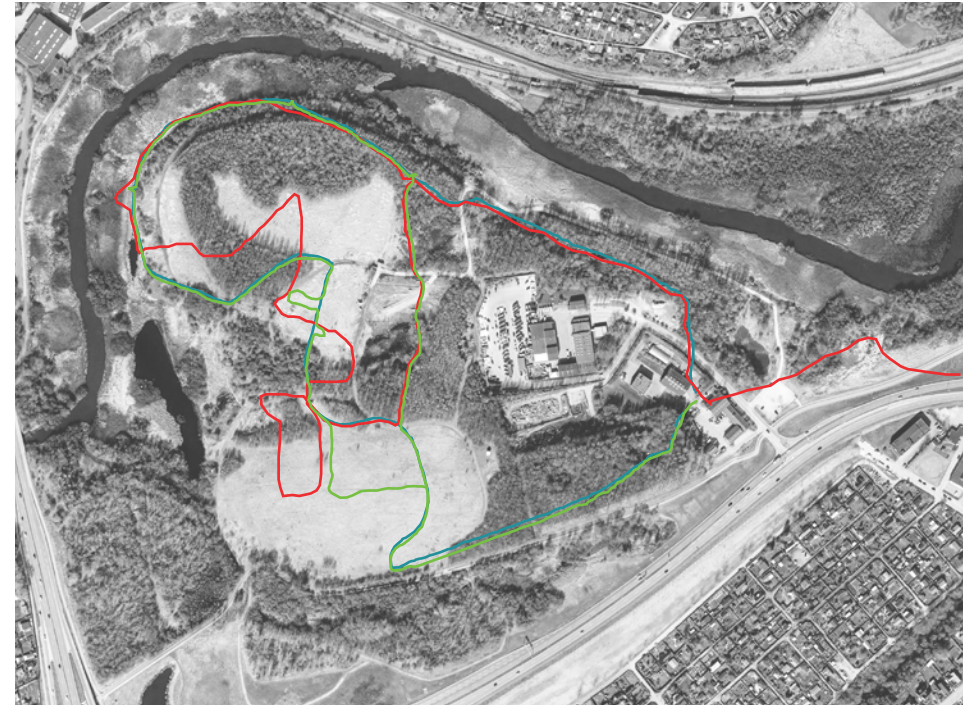
Asbjørn Jessen

3. Photographic
registration:

Rasmus Hjortshøj

The mapping aimed to reveal the perceived atmosphere(s) of Eskelund. The mapping followed the method 'Commented city walks' developed by Jean-Paul Thibaud (2012), however, there were adjustments due to time restraints. The area is not frequented by many people and it was therefore not possible to do the walks with everyday passers-bys, furthermore there was only time to make a maximum of three walks, and there was no time to compare the polygot compilation of perceived atmospheres with quantitative measurements of the atmosphere. Thus, for this mapping there were conducted two walks with professionals who had been to and worked with Eskelund before – a biologist and an architect. The third walk was done on my own to make an auto-ethnographic recording. Before the walk, the architect and ethnographer were asked to give me a tour of Eskelund (choosing the route by themselves) and along the way tell me everything they sensed and felt.

The three walks revealed differences in the perceived atmosphere and the choice of route (illustrated on first map). But they also revealed a similar mood that was mentioned on all three walks – that feeling of something unknown or hidden (as illustrated in the quotes). The autoethnographic walk allowed to explore more in-depth the sensory and affective perceptions, since the interviews could not be so detailed. The walks also allowed to identify locations with a particularly strong sensory and affective impact – locations where the walks were stopped to talk about the atmosphere (illustrated on second map). In these locations there was often either a transition between two different atmospheres or particularly strong sensory stimuli. These locations could be sites for future design interventions.



Walk with architect (green line) - summary:

Attracted by views and human traces. Focus on difference between human traces (and comfort) and technological traces (and discomfort) The difference between known narrative and unknown narrative. Quality of the nature being untrimmed. Quality of different experiences. Nice that there is a deer. But does not focus on sounds of birds, wind, etc.

Walk with biologist (yellow line) - summary:

Attracted by difference between man-made nature (trash mountain) and 'real' nature (former settlement). Images of old settlement. Nice that nature can grow even on a trash mountain. Argues that it is possible to disregard the sounds. Expectation of a nature close to the city - does not expect the same experience. Feeling of nature and something wild connected to possibility to get lost. Getting lost as a quality.

Walk alone (red line)

Quotes from walk with architect:

But I combine my perception with my knowledge that we are walking on a trash deposit. I know that there are reports and stuff... but there... a worry about pollution around us.

(...)

It gives contrasts.

Not like in nature next to my summerhouse.

(...)

Here something is telling a story that I don't have full control over.

Quotes from walk with biologist:

'You can get lost here. That gives it a feel of nature and wilderness. (...) Here you can hear the city but you cannot see it. That is unique'

(...)

'It is an unknown space. The back-garden of the city. There is nothing on show here. (...) And before it was literally the back-garden where trash was dumped'

(...)

I don't have a big problem to abstract from the sounds of cars. I know that this is close to the city, and I don't expect the same nature experience.

Quotes from walk alone:

Here it doesn't feel like nature. But every time I take a photo it looks like nature. That is the weird thing.

(...)

A well that is broken – this contributes even more to the feeling of this deserted place, somehow that you are not really supposed to be here.

(...)

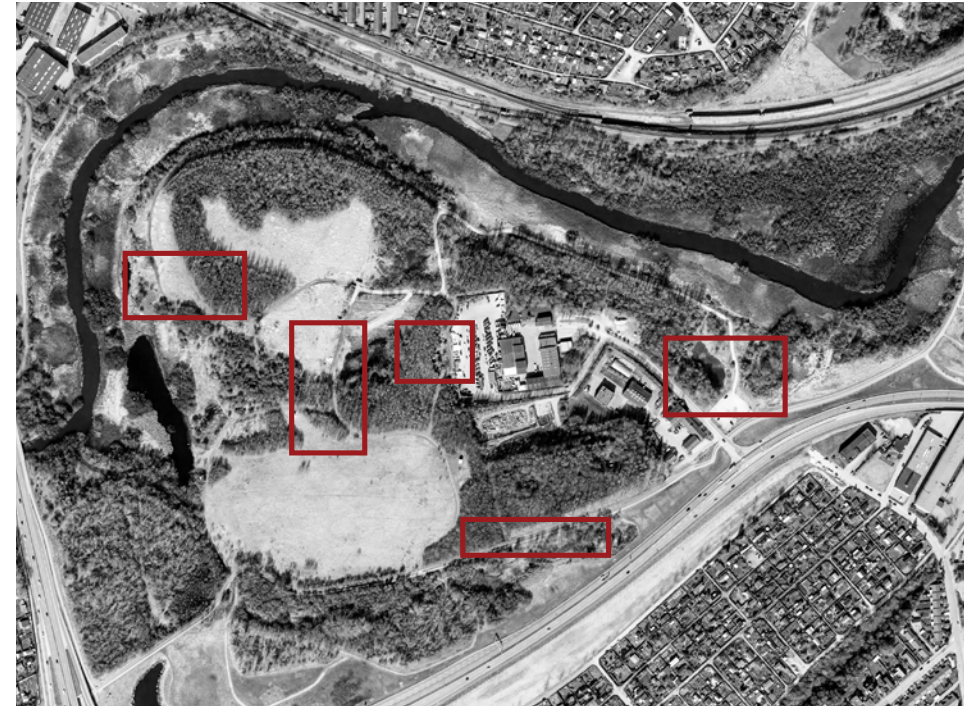
The feeling of something underground. That you are walking on something unknown.

(...)

The sound is still here but the feeling has changed. The feeling of walking slow.

Conclusion all walks:

Nice to see 'nature' - traces of animal habitats. Feeling of something unknown underground. Feeling of man-made and manipulated that is different from natural settlement. Feeling of possibility to get lost. Feeling of walking slower. Views of vastness. Attracted to different things. Different response to architectural intervention/human traces. Different response to sensory stimulations (sounds, smells, etc).



Conclusion based on walks: Sites of perceptual interest

From right to left:

A. Sound to no sound, Fast to slow walk. B. From nature to civilization, end of Eskelund.

C. Dramatic, human traces.

D. Between man made and 'real' nature. E. Plastic coming from ground, unknown story beneath ground.

Reflections on method:

Helps to define perceived transitions between ambiance/atmosphere - these are sites where there is a potential to sensitize people through design. Difficult to get interviewees to talk about ambiance/atmosphere - reminds of walk-and-talk/go-along interview more than registration of atmosphere.

Can better results be achieved by spending more time on site?

Through blind walking?



A. Landfill and remediation well on old riverbed

The mapping aimed to reveal unseen aspects of the physical/material landscape in Eskelund. The Eskelund landscape was mapped in a two-part process using drawing production as the investigative tool focusing on the landscape below ground and its constituting processes and actors.

1. The Landscape Below Ground

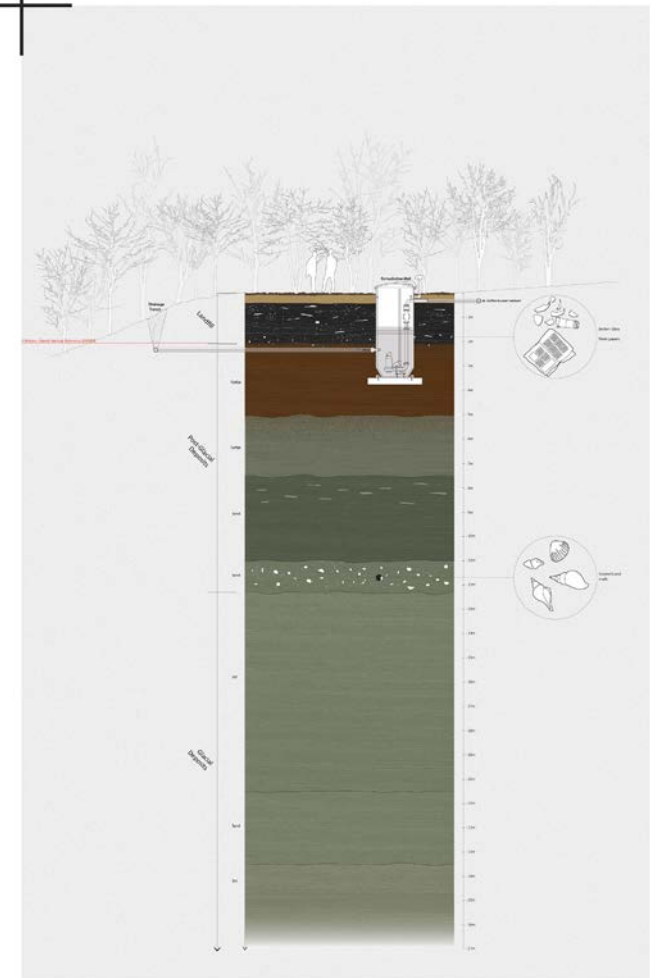
The first part of the mapping was concerned with establishing an understanding of the landscape in its vertical depth. Relying on archival borehole data and historic technical drawings, three sections plotted across the Eskelund landscape were developed. The three sections points to the mutual entanglements and disturbances between layers of natural origin (post-glacial and glacial deposits) and layers of human origin (landfill deposits). These entanglements and disturbances appear among others as polluted landfill leachate leaking into the post-glacial layers, remediation infrastructures like pumping stations placed in the landscape to prevent polluted landfill leachate from entering the adjacent Aarhus Stream and self-sown trees growing in the landfill soil.

2. Making the Eskelund Landfill 1957-78

The second part of the mapping traced and unfolded the making of the most recent human-made layer through looking at humans as a geological force in the case of Eskelund. The mapping takes its start in the Post-World War II economic boom and the emergence of mass consumerism leading to an increased amount of household garbage in the post-war years. The advent of new efficient garbage handling technologies including garbage bins and hand trucks, Bedford garbage trucks and the so called DANO Grinder in the Eskelund garbage facility made a highly able system which at great speed processed and deposited the garbage of Aarhus into the landscape of Eskelund on top of the natural post-glacial and glacial deposits.

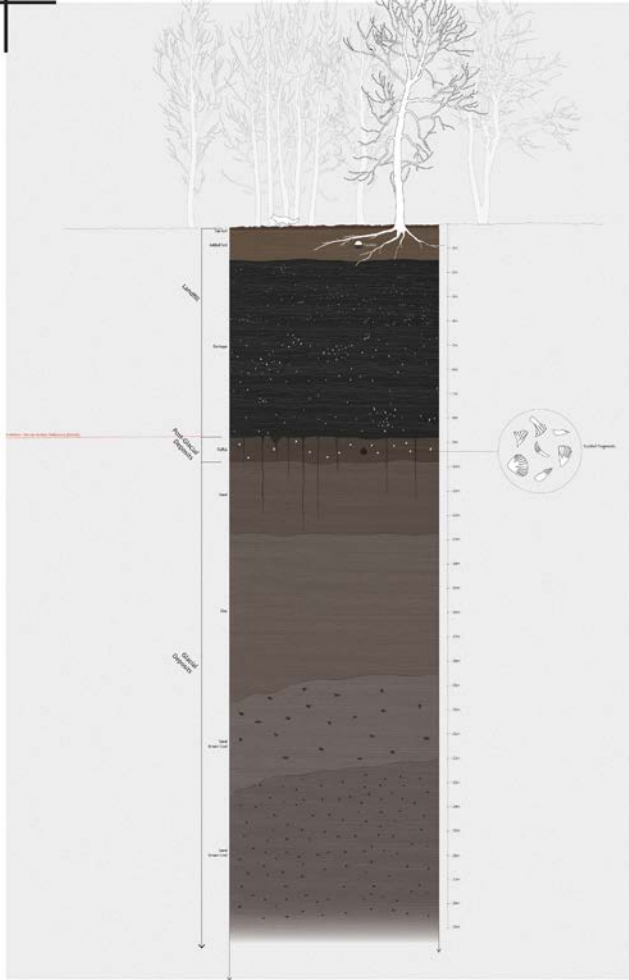
The mapping revealed the Eskelund landscape as a complex socio-material assemblage and the unseen landscape as a result of both mass consumption, new technologies and glacial and post-glacial forces.

(text by Asbjørn Jessen)

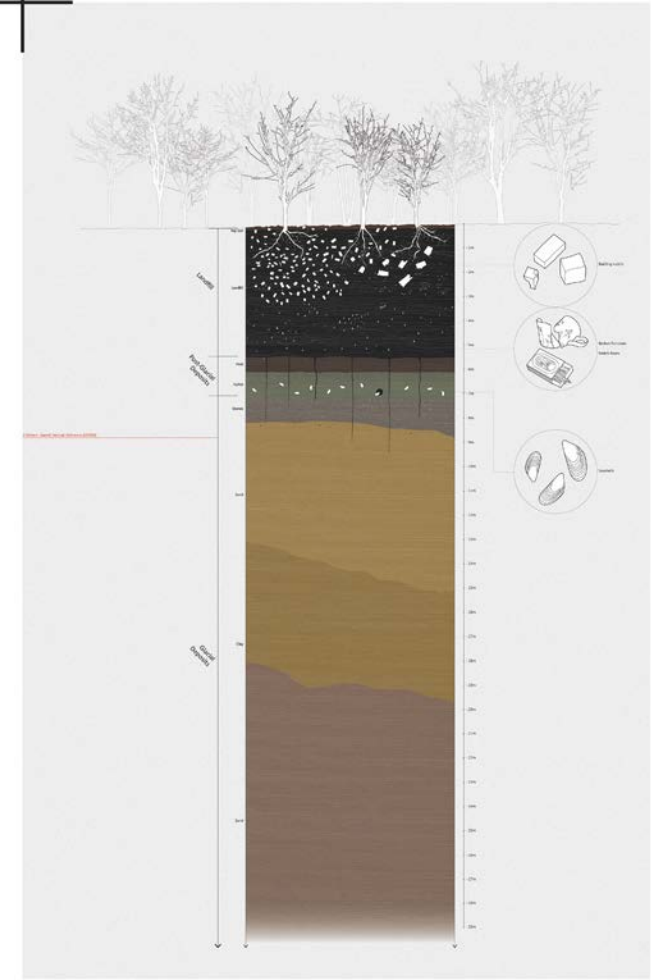




B. Added topsoil on landfill, minor post-glacial and major glacial deposits

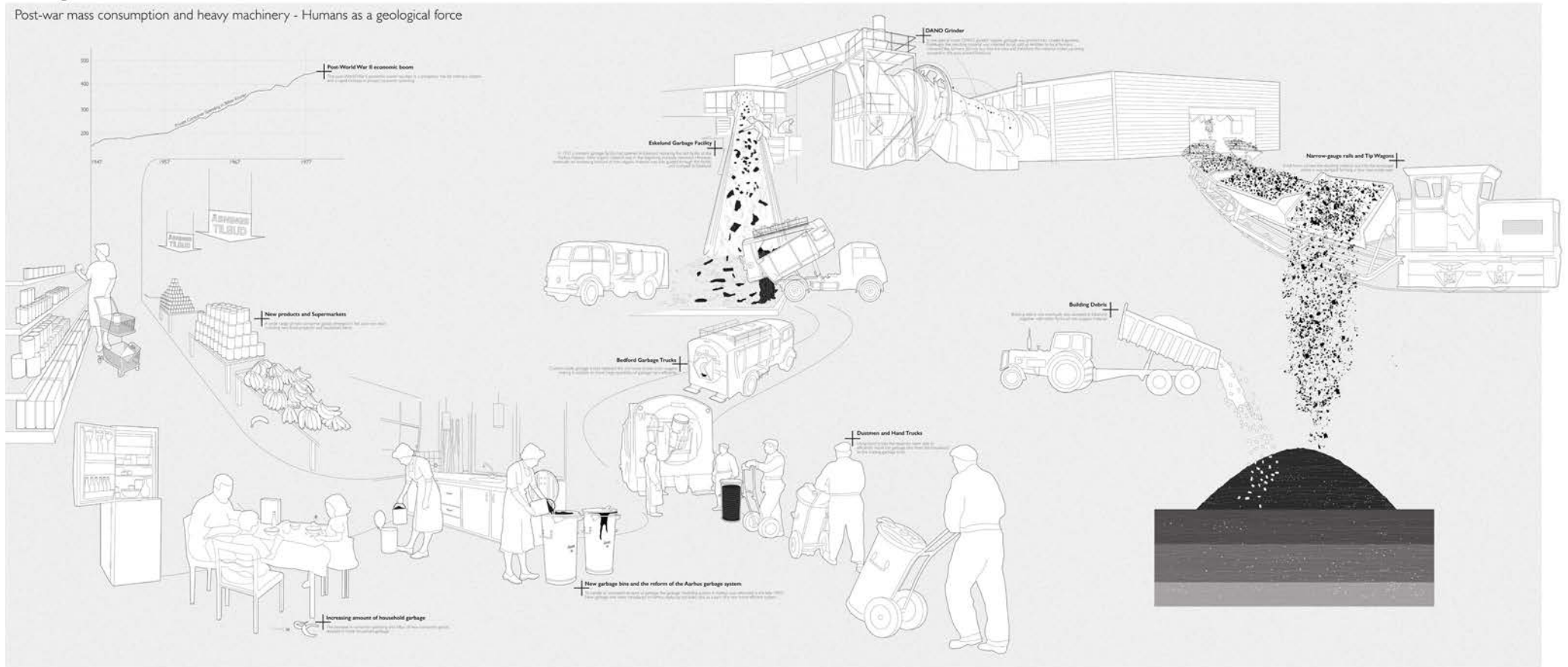


C. Landfill on minor post-glacial and major glacial deposits



Making the Eskelund Landfill 1957-78

Post-war mass consumption and heavy machinery - Humans as a geological force



The mapping aimed to reveal the entangled landscape by making a photographic section through the landscape. The section is first photographed by a drone and then by a handheld camera while walking the length of the section. The two different photographic techniques complement each other by showing the top down overview perspective, and the first-person eye-level perspective. The drone images can make visible the Anthropocene entanglements in the landscape that would otherwise escape our attention and which are often not visible on ground level. On the other hand, the hand-held camera photos can capture the atmosphere and feeling of the Anthropocene entanglements in the section, that are absent in the drone images. Together, the two photographic techniques reveals the atmosphere of the Anthropocene entanglements in a section of a landscape.





Discussion I

Moderated by
Niels Albertsen and
Tom Nielsen

There is a conflict between visibility and invisibility. There is a need to visualize climate change and draw attention to Eskelund. However, if Eskelund becomes more visible and gets used more – is that good for biodiversity? Furthermore, currently people like Eskelund because it feels like 'nature' – but the more it gets used, the less it feels like 'nature'.

How can one get 'off the map' or see beyond what is mapped with the visualizations? It is important to understand the limitations of mapping.

There is a change in scales when visualizing climate change – both in scales of time and space. It is also important to address and understand the role of the scale-less and atmospheric in representations.

There is a great value in combining science and arts. As Alexander Von Humboldt said – one cannot do geography without consulting painters and photographers. The scientific discipline of geography needs artists.

The mappings presented in our network are all expressions and not representations. A photography is a representation but also an expression. In the commented walks there is a lot of expression, but also representation.

In all cases, the researcher makes the selection of what to look at and discuss. The geographic information visualisations are purely representational – how could we link them to the more expressive types of mappings?

There is an overlap between the different mappings/representations, but neither one can be reduced to another. They each give different information. And different focus points for future interventions.

An important question is how to link the different information to get a holistic understanding of Eskelund that can inform a design approach. For instance, if one chooses to work with enhancing biodiversity as a main focus, then it is important not to forget the knowledge gained from the atmospheric mappings of Eskelund.

And although Eskelund might not be interesting for its biodiversity, it is a very interesting site for understanding what happens when humans interact with the Earth systems. Eskelund is a good pointer to what the Anthropocene is all about.

It is important to use all the different approaches to create a framing of the problem that will give rise to one, common, interdisciplinary goal for the design interventions.



Focus

Lecture by
Paul Roquet

In the Anthropocene, atmospheres are produced by humans. Before, atmospheres were only related to weather and climate, today they are anthropospheres. Technology is used for atmosphere creation and mood regulation. This is the subjective side of the great acceleration.

In this age of mediated atmospheres, it is important to be critical of atmospheric agency – who gets to design and control atmospheres. In the created atmosphere there is always an implied subject, an implied outsider, and different degrees of openness to challenging the atmosphere. It is therefore important to talk about atmospheric accountability.

In Japan, an atmosphere is never understood as something apolitical. Atmospheric insensitivity is seen as a personal inability. It is more accepted to go along with the air instead of noticing how the atmosphere is shaped and/or challenging the atmosphere. In order to address atmospheric accountability and challenge anthropospheres, it might be beneficial to separate the understandings of atmosphere as climate and atmosphere as affect. Without this separation focus is taken away from human agency. More broadly, we might need a new vocabulary to articulate and remind us of the entanglement and connections between the climatic and political in atmospheres.

It is important to note that the neutral (barely noticeable) atmosphere only appears as neutral but it is just as strong and effective for mood regulation.

Normative atmospheres become integrated into and reinforced by architecture, technology and media. A good atmosphere (good atmospheric design) is understood as immune to outside interference, that is, it is difficult to challenge. The more automated the atmosphere, the less opportunities there are to push against it. This diminishes opportunities for resisting and challenging the atmospheric influence on one's mood and behavior.

A killjoy is someone or some action that disrupts the atmosphere and shared mood.

It is important to understand the atmosphere in order to find its specific killjoy. The environment can be a killjoy, or the environment can make it possible for users to be a killjoy.

Immediacy and immersion are always mediated. Mediation can happen both through technology and human activity. And it is important to explore what immediacies are mediated by which technologies.

An example of anthropospheric technology is the walkman (and headphones in general) which allow the subject to detach and desensitize to the surrounding shared atmosphere and instead immerse in a personal atmosphere and project it onto the surrounding atmosphere.



KY

空気が読めない
Kūki ga Yomenai
[cannot read the air]

迷惑

meiwaku

a trouble, a bother, an annoyance



From individualized atmospheres to personalized space to individualized space with generic atmosphere: walkman (personalized soundscape), one-room apartment to gain full control of interior atmosphere, to pod hotels with generic interior but individual space and to individual interactions with supermarket computer based on generic algorithm.

Discussion II

Moderated by
Niels Albersen and
Tom Nielsen

It is important to consider which conditions should be treated from an Anthropocene point of view, from an atmospheric point of view and from an urban point of view.

From the atmosphere perspective: Eskelund is important because it is possible to sensitize people to the Anthropocene conditions.

Anthropocene perspective: Although Eskelund is not so important because it is such a small site that it does not have a significant global impact, it is representative of the entanglement between human activity and natural processes.

Some tentative problem framings at Eskelund:

1. A landscape laboratory will be made in Eskelund.
2. Biodiversity needs to be addressed in Eskelund.
3. Eskelund will be used for large-scale concerts during the summer.
4. There is a connection between the past of Eskelund as a landfill and the current function of the reuse station.
5. There is an atmospheric connection to Aarhus, but there lacks an infrastructure connection.
6. There is a connection to the Aarhus river – you cannot see it, but you can feel it. It is an atmosphere of temporal absence, you can see the water because you see that there was flooding.
7. Sound is an important quality of Eskelund – you can hear that the city is nearby. And there is a feeling of being on an island because one is surrounded by sound from all sides.
8. There is a potential in Eskelund to sensitize people to some perceptions that they might overlook and, through this, to the conditions of the Anthropocene.

What are the connections between the two functions of Eskelund as concert space and landscape laboratory? Could they be explored together? The landscape lab could be the connection between the different functions. For instance, the landscape laboratory could explore the sudden influxes of people in relation to concerts as a geological force like weather, and try to understand the effect that people (as a geological force) have on the landscape. An ethical-political research could investigate the difference between the atmosphere desired by the municipalities for the concert guest and the atmosphere of the

landscape laboratory. In both cases one can ask who is the subject that is implied by the atmosphere?

If the landscape laboratory works with Eskelund as a site to sensitize people to the Anthropocene conditions then the landscape laboratory pushes the definition of a critical zone concept. It becomes a critical zone observatory and makes people notice the critical zone. It also forms an argument that a critical zone can be a space for developing atmospheric sensibility. An atmospheric laboratory of the critical zone.

It can make the Anthropocene explicit through atmospheric approaches.

The landscape laboratory could have a strategy of removing what is already there (and/or enhancing what is already there) instead of adding new things – a strategy that is in contrast to other landscape laboratories. This would make the Eskelund landscape laboratory unique. This strategy would mean focusing on undiscovered potentials rather than focusing on existing or added value.

The experiments of the landscape laboratory can be enhanced so they become visible. In this way the experiments become the experience of Eskelund.

Currently the 'natural' landscape of Eskelund is experienced as man-made/ curated, while the trash mountain is experienced as 'real' nature because it looks less curated. It would be interesting to address this distinction and possibly work with 'curating' the trash mountain to make it feel more man-made. A 'care for your monster' approach.

Some tentative design and research questions:

What kind of landscape lab is Eskelund?

What kind of garbage reuse station is and could be in Eskelund?

What controversies exist in Eskelund?

Should weather be part of the discussion and observations?

How is social diversity related to biodiversity?

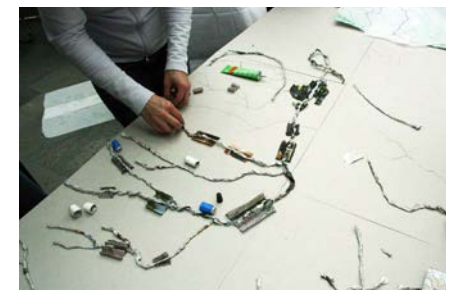
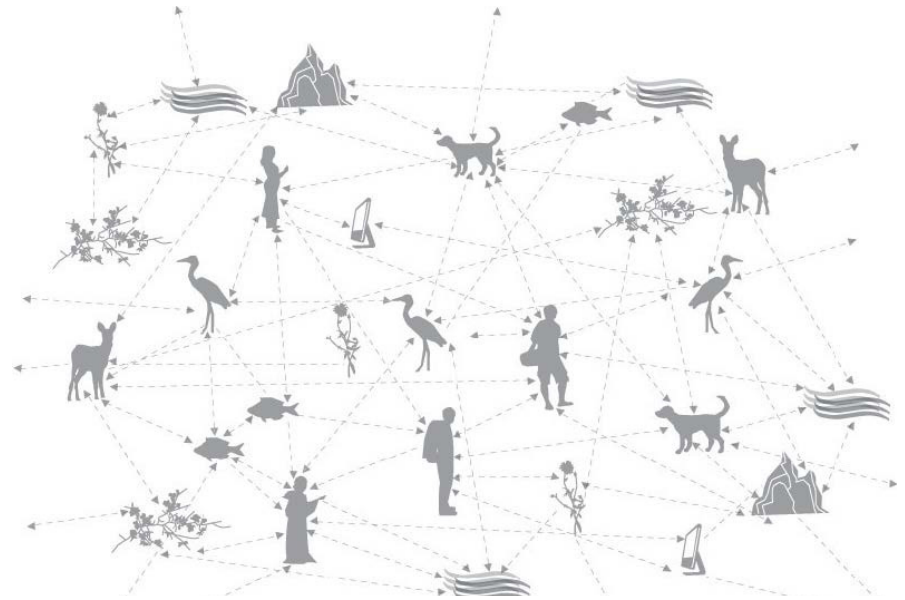
How can we work with openness – a designed object is often fixed, how is it possible to keep it open to new interpretations?

Specific short suggestions:

- Working with a virtual lab to measure the effect of the festival as a geological force over time.
- Identify areas that should be reserved for supporting biodiversity – in these areas human activity should be minimized.
- Focus on wildness to support biodiversity, that is, create areas without human control.
- Working with smell can break the horizontal/vertical boundary creating an immersive holistic installation – for instance, the smell of balsamic poplars by the river.
- An app that would forecast sound in Eskelund – a forecasting of something ambient instead of purely climatic and, thus, integrating the different aspects of atmosphere.
- Not only working with the surface but also with the depth of the soil. Making some underground paths so that people feel the many layers of the earth and the trash that has become part of the soil.
- Emphasize the topography of the two hills to enhance the experience of something very similar with the only difference that one is natural and the other is man-made.
- Emphasize the feeling of an island by creating islands of experience – both spatially and emotionally.
- Create clearings in the forest where there is plastic sticking up from the ground to draw attention to the Anthropocene entanglement. In general, think more critically about where to lead people's attention and guide off the path.
- Dissolve the borders to the reuse station.
- Create strategic spotlights using a strong light/lamp to guide people off-path. Observe what this does to biodiversity.

Design approaches

Architectural design:
Martin Prominski
Artistic design:
Christina Werner



The presentation began with two research projects by the Studio Urban Landscapes, an interdisciplinary platform for research, teaching and practice, where the author as a member has been involved. Both investigated the urban and the Anthropocene with attention to affective and sensory issues.

In the project “Günne dragnet investigation” (Rasterfahndung Günne), 15 members from the Studio Urban Landscapes experimented with various design strategies in order to explore space on a regional scale and interpret it graphically in a joint illustration. This project included narrative approaches in the shape of discussions with local people during the research process, long and strenuous landscape walks, narratives about spatial experience in the design team as well as a poetic interpretation of space.

The symposium “Let’s walk urban landscapes” included six different approaches to get affectively and sensory involved in Hannover’s urban landscapes: Walking, Playing, Storytelling, Setting Out, Navigating and Moving. Each of the 160 participants applied one of these approaches during a six hour walk through one of Hannover’s urban landscapes and transferred the experiences to a design afterwards.

The second part of the presentation introduced Kinji Imanishi’s unitary concept of nature which challenges the dominating Western notion of a dichotomy between nature and human culture. Imanishi offers a perspective for designing urban landscapes in the Anthropocene by proposing intensive entanglements between humans and non-humans (“sociality between all living things is the structuring principle of the world). This theoretical perspective was illustrated with three landscape architectural „entanglement strategies“: Entangling non-humans (Case study Buchholz Arc in Hannover), Entangling Humans (Case study Gleisdreieck Park in Berlin) and Entangling Time (Case study River Aire in Geneva).

(text by Martin Prominski)





To describe the artistic approach in words is sometimes less effective than to let the images speak for themselves. The selected artworks all address the Anthropocene – and they address it from a specific, articulated perspective. The artists have an opinion that they communicate through the artwork atmospherically. However, although the artworks are often strong statements with a strong atmospheric presence, they do not prescribe any pre-determined way of interacting or reaction. Rather, they invite to engage with the issue in a critical and affective manner. Could this approach inspire architectural and landscape architectural design?



Postcards

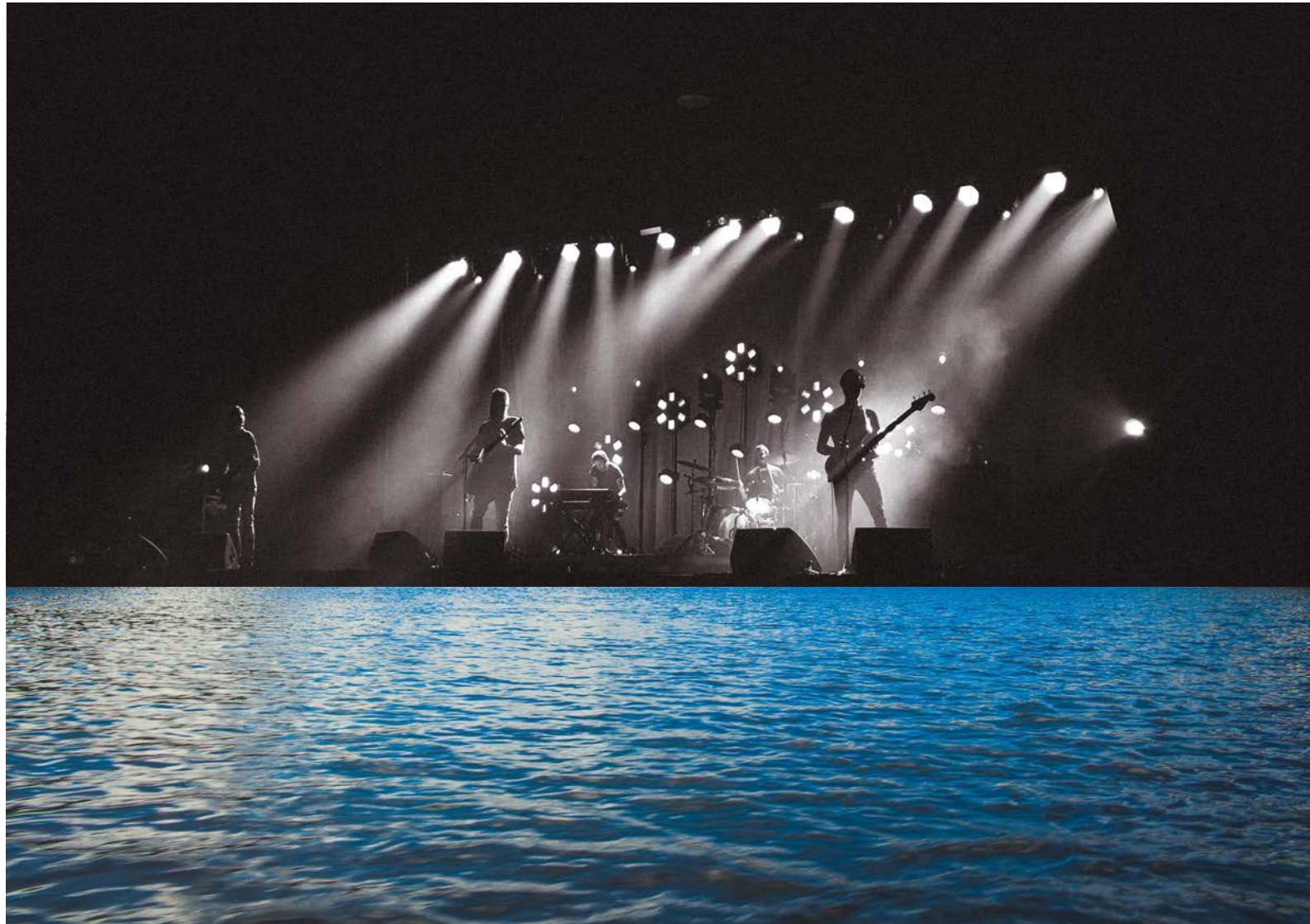
By

Paul Roquet, Tom Nilesen,
Elias Melvin Christiansen,
Thomas Juel Clemmensen,
Laurent Devisme, Martin
Prominski, Jens-Christian
Svenning, Jean-Paul
Thibaud, Suzel Balez,
Polina Chebotareva
and Rasmus Hjortshøj.

To conclude this report, all workshop participants were asked to make an A5 postcard with an accompanying short text describing their main workshop conclusion.

The received postcards (from many, but not all participants) illustrate a diversity of take-away points. Some of the key common threads are the entanglement of materials and contexts, complexity of use and time, biodiversity, attunement and perception.

The postcards are intended to be used as a reminder or for inspiration or maybe as a postcard sent to someone/somewhere. The postcards are not numbered, and can be re-arranged in any way. They all include the author's name.



At some point during the workshop someone imagined
'a lake that is also a stage,'

noting how one of the areas of Eskelund likely to be used in the future as a performance site was in the past a body of water

I still recall this odd phrase as it captured the most interesting and difficult question posed by the workshop for me:

how to imagine the place as simultaneously a leftover landscape of refuse fading into the ground, an ongoing experimental architecture laboratory, and
an occasional concert venue for tens of thousands of people

Each of these "naural" layers take their place at different temporal and social scales, yet the challenge is to somehow keep them all in mind at once, to
distill an 'atmosphere' that registers each yet refuses to give one dominance over the others

Paul Roquet



When equipped with the concepts of ATMOSPHERE and ANTHROPOGENIC as mental maps to guide the experience of Eskelund many places and experiences stand out of the entangled urban/landscape situation. For instance the clash between processes and interests at the edge of the basins freshly cleared of vegetation to make space for the festival. The image shows a part of Eskelund stripped and revealed, but also a surviving tree adding new landscape qualities and a concrete experience of time and thickness.

Tom Nielsen



Shakkei, is a traditional Japanese garden design concept usually translated as 'Borrowed Scenery'. The concept describes a principle of incorporating the background, the landscape, or distant views into the composition, which then becomes a part of the spatial experience of the garden. The concept teaches us to look beyond the space itself to understand it. And, it teaches us that natural and cultural landscapes are experienced in continuity.

Trying to grasp the atmospheres at Eskelund, thus also means to look beyond the landfill itself, to where it is situated in the wider landscape.

Elias Melvin Christiansen



An island of waste material – sand, gravel, fragments of bricks, blocks of asphalt, amorph lumps of concrete - being colonized by the surrounding vegetation and shaped by water and wind erosion. Like a miniature version of Eskelund emerging from the deposits of a retreating glacier thousands of years ago. A modest reminder of the continued material flux we participate in.

Thomas Juel Clemmensen



Greetings from Eskelund (Aarhus-DK)

From the city-center to secondary homes on the edge of the city, from fossils to contemporary leisure uses, from flatlands to artificial hills,... It is above all about vulnerability, an opportunity rather than a threat. How to make sensitive what is usually a blinded externality? This flash study-trip of a new kind is also about devices: how to make visible, tangible, how to make things explicit? We could think about the resources of breaching experiment by the ethno-methodologist Harold Garfinkel: what could they be in the frame of our experimental urban studies investigations?

Laurent Devisme

Eskelund - which atmosphere should we design for?



Pleasure?



Subtlety?



Trouble?

The atmosphere of Eskelund left me largely puzzled. The anthropogenic garbage history of this urban landscape is mostly hidden, I hardly felt the trouble. Instead, it often seemed as a pleasure ground, for humans and non-humans. Is this okay? Which atmosphere of the Anthropocene should we design for? An atmosphere of delight, or an atmosphere of awareness-raising? Maybe both, and more... The most striking atmosphere of Eskelund for me was in a woodland with a straight line of trees amidst randomly standing trees. What is the reason for the straight line? They didn't look as if they were planted – maybe spontaneous growth due to man-made soil conditions? The mysterious entanglement of human and non-human forces created an atmosphere of great subtlety...

Martin Prominski

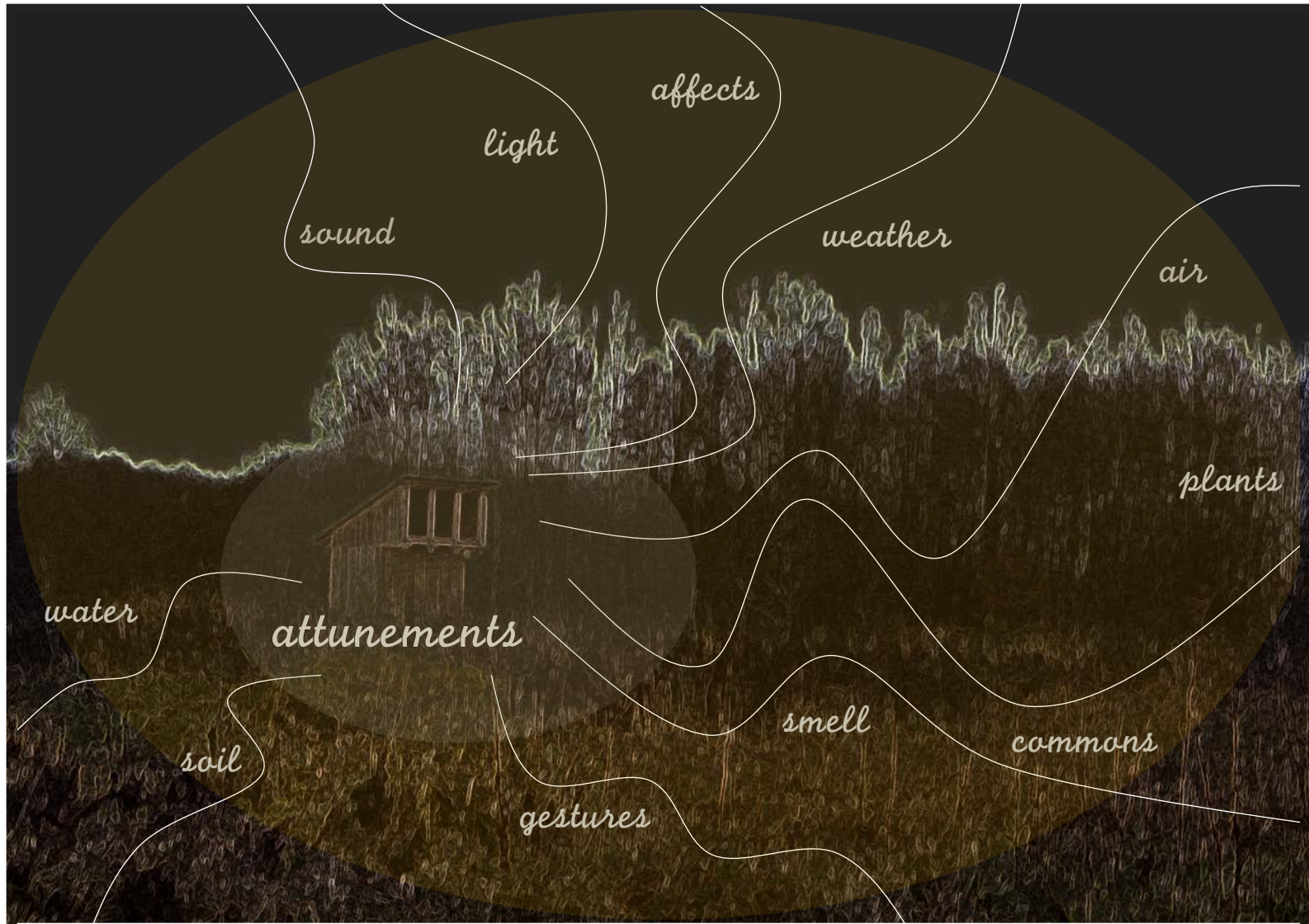


self-sown holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), these are common in the central-southern part of Eskelund; for me, it illustrates how spontaneous processes are building up biodiversity, habitats & beauty at the site.

I've also uploaded it to Instagram under the #eskelundlandlab tag, which might be a fun place to also have some of the other postcards? (on under #eskelund which is the more public tag for the area - but not so unique)

Happy holidays!

Jens-Christian



Attuning to the Anthropocene

« In the struggle between yourself and the world, second the world. » Franz Kafka

Approaching Eskelund as an atmospheric island open to the phenomenon of the Anthropocene?

An urban heterotopy which enables to explore various modes of attunement.

One could accentuate or neutralize, transform or extend, defamiliarize or go along with our common sense of being immersed in a specific milieu.

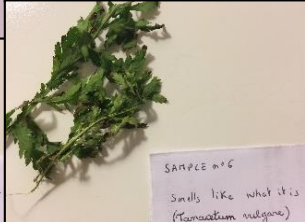
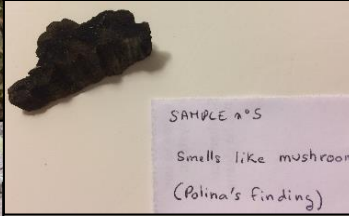
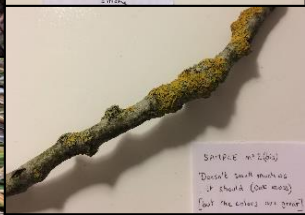
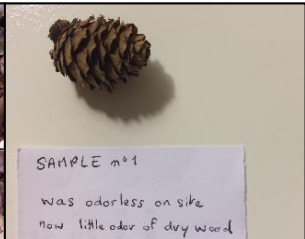
This ambient experiment could lead towards a rhetoric of attunements. Atmospheres in the Urban Anthropocene would bring infra-sensory experience, molecular forces and diffused ambiances into the foreground. Three main terms would intertwine : attunement, embodiment, entanglement.

How to attune various forms of urban life to the Anthropocene ?

Jean-Paul Thibaud



Eskelund traces and tracks



Suzel Balez

¹Glenn Albrecht, "'Solastalgia'. A New Concept in Health and Identity," *PAN: Philosophy Activism Nature*, no. 3 (2005): 41.

²Baptiste Morizot, "Nouvelles Alliances Avec La Terre. Une Cohabitation Diplomatique Avec Le Vivant," *Tracés*, no. 33 (September 26, 2017): 73-96, <https://doi.org/10.4000/traces.7001>.

December 17th, 2018

Ambiances of Eschelund: a gray-milky shy and dull colors, a continuous background sound of circulating cars (no "natural" sound)-

A few pungent elements of Eschelund sensory experience for me: cold, bright colors of apples and mushrooms, prickly scent of stony and devastated forest-

A place that must had been more alive in other times (the past and may be in other seasons)-

Of this place before human beings (or just before the capitalocene) ...
Conscience of the vulnerability of this place (who is the stranger? the place or me?)

From melancholy, nostalgia and even solastalgia¹ toward an exploration/negotiation² of affect³

Suzel Balez

We (humans) thought we knew the past, were able to predict future and that the present was simple to frame and understand. Michel Lussault⁴ ... and now Nature is taking forms that escape us...

"Expropriated from our culture, stripped of the values we loved - purity of air and water, graces of nature, diversity of animal and plant species - , all Indian now, we are making ourselves even what we have made of them." Claude Lévi Strauss³

The diplomats⁵: the new design strategies have to be thought as negotiations with others ... a need to have a systemic thinking of places⁵ leaning on an inside exploration to gather knowledge

Negotiate with the unknown it is also negotiate with different systems, at different scales (bacteria, mammals, climate...)

Design today: has to invent forms of hospitality for the place itself (its ecosystemic relationships) to accommodate changes

³Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Saudades do Brasil* (Paris: Plon, 2009), 19; translated by me (« Expropriés de notre culture, dépouillés des valeurs dont nous étions épris - pureté de l'air et de l'eau, grâces de la nature, diversité des espèces animales et végétales-, tous indiens désormais, nous sommes en train de faire de nous-mêmes ce que nous avons faits d'eux. ») (English ed : Claude Lévi-Strauss and Sylvia Modelski, *Saudades Do Brasil: A Photographic Memoir* [Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995]).

⁴Michel Lussault, lecture, *La nuit des idées*, January 31st 19 (<https://www.sondeka.com/user/event/groups/133/event/replay>)

⁵A diplomatic cohabitation, like the one Richard White described for very early American colons with Amerindians, but this time with the non-human (as Bruno Latour call it)

Suzel Balez

STICK A FINGER INTO THE GROUND...



Eskelund, Denmark. 2018. A former landfill, a future festival location. The Anthropocene is below ground.

Postcard collage by Polina Chebotareva based on photo by Rasmus Hjprishoj and illustration by Mikkel.

...IT WILL BLOW YOUR MIND.

The phrase 'to stick a finger into the soil' ['at stikke en finger i jorden] is an old Danish saying that means 'to attempt to get a realistic impression of the prevailing perception or mood in a specific place before taking action (definition from www.sproget.dk). I find this proverb to be especially relevant in Eskelund. Below the surface of the recreational park (and soon to be festival venue) one will find layers of trash from the former landfill. Here, the prevailing mood (atmosphere) and the traces of the Anthropocene can be found by literally sticking one's finger into the soil.

Polina Chebotareva



Greetings
FROM

TRASHER ISLAND

AN ANTROPOCENTRIC HAVEN FOR NON-HUMANS