



x-LArch 2018
Park Politics
—International Conference,
June 7 – 9, 2018
Vienna

Vienna May 8th 2018 **Pressinfo: Save the Date!**

x-LArch 2018 International Conference PARK POLITICS

**Revealing the political framework behind
design and program of public open spaces.**

On June 7-9 the international conference **PARK POLITICS** will be the fifth event of the X-Larch-series on landscape architecture in Vienna. The conferences are hosted by ILA, Institute of Landscape Architecture, BOKU Vienna headed by Lilli Lička. **PARK POLITICS** is taking the discourse on landscape ideas from former conferences further to where decisive agendas—be they hidden or apparent—are formed. The conference will bring together internationally renowned speakers and contributors from research and practice representing not only landscape architecture but various disciplines like graphic design, urbanism, political sciences and sociology. **35 speakers and presenters among others Ruedi Baur, Naama Meishar, Isolde Rajek, Emily Eliza Scott und Alan Tate take part in three days of exchange of ideas on design, use and management of urban parks. x-LArch 2018 is a collaboration between ILA and Az W, Vienna's architecture museum. A garden-party and fieldtrips are completing the program.**

Urban landscapes are political spaces that mirror the dynamic histories of planning approaches, design attitudes and through these—worldviews. Administrative and economic prerequisites change as well as concepts for public good and use. How have public spaces been designed and who determines the conditions today—in an era of post-politics? In the international conference x—LArch 2018 Park Politics the ILA Institute of Landscape Architecture wants to engage with and unpack the political frameworks underlying the design and programme of public open spaces, taking parks as an example for urban open spaces. This conference enhances theoretical, methodological and empirical exchange from a multidisciplinary perspective.

The ideological backgrounds of urban open spaces

Every designed space reflects the period of political, technological and social conditions within which it was conceived while simultaneously reflecting later societal transformations. The changes reveal an ongoing and dynamic process of professional questioning and criticism, based as much on experiences of success and failure as on the ebb and flow of ideas and ideals. These reflections and ideals that influence our conceptions of urban landscapes are never neutral, but are determinate by relations, practices and interactions embedded in structures of power positions, social orders and hierarchy. The processes of shaping, managing, and using urban open space thus must be understood to have a direct relationship with the political, economic and cultural

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conditions of cities. Doreen Massey (2005) has argued that space “poses the political question of how we are going to live together”. Ideas and concepts of how society would work best are not only the content of political manifestos, but are also—if more subtly—expressed in specific aesthetic approaches shaping our environment as constitutive models, policies or principles. Although these models are often framed as technological necessities or neutral aesthetic developments, ex post investigations have enabled the identification of their ideological backgrounds their effects on the design and programme and the actual appearance of urban open spaces.

An amalgam of influences

In an era of post-politics, unpacking and surfacing and engaging with the political frameworks underlying the design and programme of contemporary urban open spaces contributes to discourses on the—obvious and not so overt—negotiation processes between diverse actors who shape our collective environment. We take issue with the a-political understanding of planning and design, linked either to technical and objective expertise or to artistic licence. As such, we see urban open spaces to be not the domain of planning and design professionals only, but both a medium and outcome of an amalgam of influences, be they economic, cultural, social or political. Therefore, we recognise the investigation of the built environment and why it looks as it does as an intrinsically multi-disciplinary undertaking. We argue that this discourse must take place among and between the diverse players engaged in the politics of urban landscapes, to include designers, planners, politicians, and community advocates.

35 Lectures, discussions, garden-party and fieldtrips

This conference presents theoretical, methodological and empirical insights from various disciplines. Contributors explore the spatial, social, cultural and political causes, dimensions, implications and consequences of design. Public afternoon lectures at the Az W, Austrian museum of architecture open up the field from different professional and scholarly perspectives of graphic design, urban geography, landscape architecture and art. At the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences BOKU Vienna scholarly sessions are grouped along the topics of management, use and design and mirrored in reports by renowned practitioners. Field trips offer explanations of actual examples to further discourse and exchange.

Conference-Website & Tickets: <https://x-larch.at/>

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PROGRAMM

THURSDAY, June 7th, 4 p.m.-8 p.m. Az W (free Entrance)

4 Lectures with **Ruedi Baur**, graphic designer & **Vera Baur**, sociologist, cultural scientist, Zurich/Paris; **Bernd Belina**, Geographer at Goethe University Frankfurt; **Johanna Gibbons**, **Neil Davidson**, landscape architects, J&L Gibbons, London; **Emily Eliza Scott**, artist and art historian, ETH Zurich; reception with drinks & snacks.

FRIDAY, June 8th, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. BOKU (tickets available: <http://x-arch.at/2018/tickets/>)

2 practitioners reflections with **Martí Franch Batllori**, landscape architect, EMF, Girona; **Isolde Rajek**, landscape architect, rajek barosch, Vienna; 6 parallel sessions with 22 lectures concerning 'Urban Green Negotiated', 'High Expectations', 'Decisive Programs', 'Travelling Ideas', 'Park Dilemmas', 'Park Design Narratives'.

20:00 Garden-Party at Palais Schönborn

SATURDAY, June 9th 9 a.m.-2 p.m BOKU

Leonard Grosch, landscape architect, Atelier Loidl, Berlin; **Alan Tate**, urbanist, landscape architect, university of Manitoba/Canada; 2 sessions, 7 lectures concerning 'Park History' and 'Collective Efforts'

2.30 p.m. 6 p.m. 2 fieldtrips: Danube Landscapes/To the end of a workers' district
Programm schedule: <http://x-larch.at/2018/program/>

VENUES

Architecture Museum Vienna, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Vienna

University of Natural Resource and Life Sciences Vienna, Schwackhöfer-Haus, Peter-Jordan-Straße 82, 1190 Vienna

Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art, Palais Schönborn, Laudongasse 15-19, 1080 Vienna

HOST

ILA Institute of Landscape Architecture, BOKU Vienna

Cooperation partner

Architecture Museum Vienna

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Prof. DI Lilli Lička, DI Dr. Ulrike Krippner,, DI Dr. Roland Tusch, ILA/BOKU

Scientific Advisor

Prof. Dr. Thaisa Way, University of Washington Seattle/USA

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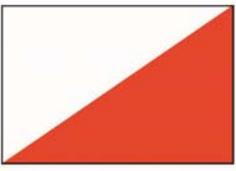
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x-LArch PARTNER

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ILA, Institute of Landscape Architecture, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences BOKU Vienna was founded in 2004 and has since been headed by Lilli Lička. Currently about 800 future landscape architects and landscape planners are studying at BOKU. ILA focusses on the context, history, effect and underpinnings of the design of public open spaces in the face of social, economic, cultural, and climatic changes. As economy has become the main and most accepted actor in the production of open spaces landscape architecture has to pose fundamental questions and develop new concepts. ILA has been hosting the triennial international x-LArch – conference since 2003 and the annual lectures series LX since 2007. In 2005 ILA started the online-collection nextland.at together with ÖGLA. LArchiv, the first and only Archive of Austrian Landscape Architecture was founded and established as a university archive at BOKU Vienna in 2018.