In the Urban Intervention Studio, a master’s course on landscape architecture, we explore methods of teaching and learning architectural practices by setting up studio spaces away from the university. The focus is on urban areas in transition such as former industrial sites, challenged public or semi-public domains and other landscapes that hold potentials and that can provide students with contexts and complexities to explore. The students design and construct small-scale interventions while being immersed in the site and collaborating with local stakeholders and communities. At the same time, the students critically reflect on their projects in relation to broader strategies and visions for the subject area. The multiscale approach forms an important spectrum for how urban sites can be understood and responded to. The reflections and outcome simultaneously feeds into our research on sites in transition as valuable readings and specific spatial interpretations.

This paper reflects on the learning objectives in relation to the contextual setting. The setting provides rich possibilities in terms of exploratory approaches that are important for a reflective design practice; however, it can also create challenges from a pedagogical view, due to the occasionally precarious conditions. While live build projects are established formats in teaching within architecture, design and landscape, we find it
important to continuously unfold the embedded potentials as well as critical aspects related to the didactic objectives. This contribution discusses learning points in the studio, focusing on the competences gained from interacting with the dynamics and frictions of transitional sites. We unfold the context-based learning spectrum through evaluations and discussion of formulated learning outcomes from the course description and curriculum. We describe contextual learning situations in order to illustrate transformative dynamics, practices and interactions. We will also exemplify how the outcome contribute to our field of research.

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Anne Margrethe Wagner is an assistant professor at the Section for Landscape Architecture and Planning, Copenhagen University (UCPH). Anne M. Wagner trained as an architect at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture, Copenhagen and the Academy of Fine Art, Vienna and holds a PhD in Landscape Architecture and Planning from The University of Copenhagen. Her scholarly work focuses on urban transformation processes and public outdoor space within contemporary urban planning and design practice. In particular, it considers understandings and implementations of temporary, alternative and experimental transformations of urban spaces and landscapes, informal space creation, as well as emerging performative properties of public and semi-public space. Her research seeks to examine and develop design and planning methods related to urban prototyping and co-design within participatory urban practice. Anne works with practice-led research in close collaboration with citizens, planning agencies and experts across fields such as design, arts & technology and natural science. Anne teaches and coordinates several courses at Master and Bachelor levels, such as the first year studio ‘Plan & Design’, the Master course ‘Urban Intervention Studio’, performs individual supervision and is a frequent lecturer and examiner at UCPH and other institutions.

Bettina Lamm, Landscape architect and Associate Professor at the Division of Landscape Architecture and Planning, University of Copenhagen. She holds a landscape architecture degree and a Ph.D. from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Art, School of Architecture. Lamm’s research addresses the interaction between the urban environment and the lived life in the public realm. She studies through practice and theory how temporary interventions, play design and art installations can facilitate spatial practices and social interaction in public space and how art strategies can contribute to a reprogramming of the interim landscape. Lamm has counselled numerous architectural projects focusing on design for play and engagement in public space. In 2012 she co-curated the exhibition Urban Play where artists and architects created works that responded to Køge’s industrial harbourscape and in the EU research project SEEDS 2012-2015 she led the UoC group that explored temporary use as tool for reprogramming derelict urban spaces. Since 2012 Bettina has
taught the master course Urban Intervention Studio where students design and build site specific urban interventions into transforming landscapes. Lamm is currently project manager of the practice-based research project Move the Neighborhood that explores co-design processes of urban environments with children.