CITIES IN A CHANGING WORLD: QUESTIONS OF CULTURE, CLIMATE AND DESIGN

Paper / Proposal Title:
Landscape Architecture and the Urban Recovery

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Abstract (300 words):
Post-COVID recovery will largely be an urban phenomenon and, on both sides of the Atlantic, recovery initiatives are underway. Here I consider the potential contribution of landscape architecture to building-back-better cities as part of the urban recovery.

In the US, formulation of the Green New Deal strictly preceded the pandemic but brings-forth a hitherto broadly-conceptual vision of equity and decarbonization that resonates with the post-COVID agenda of greenspace access and carbon-responsibility. In the UK, the Green Industrial Revolution offers a ten-point governmental plan for action. While, in the US, landscape architecture is formulating a recovery-response led by the academy via the Green New Deal Superstudio, in the UK, the clearest rejoinder has been from the Landscape Institute, the profession’s professional body. The Institute’s position-paper extends the landscape-content of the original government plan – such as renewable energy planning and landscape-asset protection – to highlight the recovery-role of urban greenspaces.

In this paper, I take a critical-look at the issues to be addressed by landscape architecture if it is to best-contribute to post-COVID recovery in the US and the UK. The piece touches upon the following three key, and inter-related, themes: democratization and humanization of landscape architectural production across scales; the need for synergy
between critical theory and speculation, and instrumental theory and practice; and the near-historical missteps related to the conception of resilient-design of greenspaces and infrastructure.

- **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

  **Dr. Carl Smith** is a landscape architect, geographer and artist. He is a Professor of Landscape Architecture at the Fay Jones School of Architecture & Design at the University of Arkansas in the US, and a Visiting Professor of Architecture at the University of Sheffield in the UK. His work focuses on the intersection between anthropogenic landscape and urban change, and the values and beliefs of those affected. Ultimately his twin aims are to inculcate and sharpen a sense of place-consciousness within himself and his students, and to understand place-consciousness as it relates to the sustainability and resiliency of landscapes and cities. His teaching has garnered a number of awards, including the 2020 Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture Excellence in Studio Teaching Award. Carl has also served as a critic at several design institutions internationally, while his recent scholarship has received a number of recognitions by, inter-alia, the Dumbarton Oaks Research Center and Library at Harvard University, and the British School at Athens. He is a Fellow of both the Royal Society of Arts and the Royal Geographical Society and, in 2020, he received the Award of Merit from the Arkansas Chapter of the American Society of Architects.