The University of Hong Kong
Division of Landscape Architecture
Annual 2016—2017
The Division of Landscape Architecture’s 2016-17 Yearbook, sets out the best of our student work within each of the design studios and technical courses of both the four-year Bachelor of Arts in Landscape Studies (BA(LS)) and the two-year taught postgraduate Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) programs.

The severe environmental and societal challenges in Southeast Asia resulting from rapid urbanization, climate change, cultural shifts and technological advances, provide a vital context which students learn the landscape architectural skills and knowledge that will enable them help society to address these issues.

We address the complexities of built and natural environments, through multidisciplinary approaches and at a range of scales (individual, site, district and territory). Design propositions need to be relevant to both the environment and community within which they are set, and to be justified thorough detailed research. Students engage with these challenges not only in the classroom, but through extensive local and international field trips and encounters. Again this year students travelled to urban and rural areas of Myanmar, as well as to destinations in China and Asia. We have collaborated this year with leading universities, professional practices and NGOs, both regionally and globally.

The Division is part of the Faculty of Architecture’s HKUrbanLab, and landscape colleagues lead research studies on landscape, urban and environmental issues. In addition to the work of the Division’s Virtual Laboratory of Urban Environments & Human Health, colleagues have contributed to the research work of: the Centre of Urban Studies and Urban Planning and their emerging Belt and Road Observatory; the Healthy High Density Cities Lab; the Urban Ecologies Design Lab; and Architecture, Urbanism, and the Humanities Initiative. Examples of current research projects are included at the end of the yearbook.

We continue to be well supported by our growing alumni network, and look forward to celebrating 25 years of landscape architecture at HKU in 2018. Next year will also witness the launch of our new Postgraduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture (PDLA). This bridging qualification will allow students with first degrees in non-design subjects, to enter the MLA program and bring a broader perspective the study of landscape architecture.
The Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) is an advanced degree in landscape architecture that has been offered at The University of Hong Kong since 1993. The two-year curriculum is accredited by the Hong Kong Institute of Landscape Architects. Our program is distinguished by a commitment to teaching landscape architecture as an expanded field in which core practices in the discipline are examined alongside contemporary notions of territory, urbanism, and ecology. By focusing on experience-rich, problem-based approaches to learning, we prepare students with the fundamental design skills and active disciplinary knowledge to engage in the progressive landscape architectural practice needed in the 21st century.

The MLA program emphasizes research and design. Subjects are organized into themed tracks which include design studio, history & theory, technology, and media. Each track moves from fundamental to advanced material, and students can pursue a specialization through a range of electives and extracurricular opportunities across the Faculty. Courses draw on the environmental laboratory that is the greater Pearl River Delta for an understanding of landscape architecture that spans from the urban to the rural; one in which issues of density and development necessitate socially and ecologically sustainable solutions. Advanced digital methods are woven throughout the curriculum, ensuring that our graduates have the up to date skills in both computation and representation. Teaching across the tracks is anchored in contemporary research and most of the program’s instructors are leading or collaborating on projects in a variety of topical clusters that make up HKUrbanLab, the Faculty’s research arm.

Landscape design studios anchor each semester and allow students to work closely with instructors to develop analysis-driven creative solutions to resolve complex problems at multiple scales. Foundation studios explore themes of space and assembly, dynamic processes, and public space. In the first year, MLA students travel overseas to carry out fieldwork and engage with communities in places where landscape issues intersect with development and urbanization. Most recently, the MLA class completed a four-year exercise in Yangon, Myanmar. Second-year studios confront themes of landscape infrastructure, the rural-urban interface, natural systems and ecological planning. At all levels, instructors develop projects based in actual situations and involve key actors such as community leaders, NGO’s, professionals, and government officials. The MLA education culminates in a design research thesis in which students work closely with instructors on a project that articulates their own critical position in the discipline through an independent exploration of site, theory, and methodology.

Ivan Valin
Assistant Professor
MLA Program Director
The Bachelor of Arts in Landscape Studies (BA(LS)) program at the University of Hong Kong equips students with a curriculum that emphasizes design, landscape technology, history and theory, and visual communications. We aim to give students a comprehensive grounding in the knowledge, concepts and skills which landscape architects commonly require to deal with complex community, ecological and developmental issues within diverse urban and natural environments. The BA(LS) program is studio-based, allowing students to work directly with instructors in design projects and guided research studies that integrate both theoretical exploration and practical implementation. Design studio is integrated with concurrent theoretical and technical courses that reinforce the core knowledge of landscape architecture and broaden students’ perspectives across related disciplines.

The program starts with an interdisciplinary view of the built environment training students in critical observation skills and visual communication. In the second year, students experiment with making, scale, experiences, and materials, acquiring a foundational vocabulary in the phenomenological, material, and spatial aspects of landscape. The final two years expand in complexity as students are confronted with ecological, sociological, urban, and infrastructural aspects within the design studio while building theoretical and technical competency to complement studio. Students are exposed to a wide range of environments through site visits and field trips, and the Division actively collaborates with other leading landscape programs overseas to offer opportunities for students to engage their peers from around the world. In addition, our Shanghai Semester gives students the opportunity to live and learn in an international setting and to study the rich landscapes and urban environments in the Yangtze River Delta.

2016-17 has been a productive year in the BA(LS) programme. From the critical replanning of the vacant Shanghai Expo Site to full-scale light installations in West Kowloon Cultural District, students and faculty have fully embraced a spirit of adventure and experimentation, investing in landscapes at home and abroad. The scale and complexity of studio projects that students have tackled this year surpass previous efforts evident in the serious engagement with the open spaces of public housing estates in Hong Kong, reinvigorated analysis and planning for infrastructure across the Thai-Myanmar Borders, and renewed commitment to the communities and ecologies of Hong Kong in various courses throughout the curriculum. Spanning geographies, scales, and disciplines, the BA(LS) program continuously strives to contribute to our environment.

Dorothy Tang
Assistant Professor
BA(LS) Program Director
The MLA Design Thesis is a year-long independent research and design project consisting of Thesis Preparation and the Thesis Studio. The Design Thesis, while understood as the culmination of conceptual, technical, ethical, and professional knowledge and skills gained at HKU, requires the distillation of those skills and knowledge most necessary to communicate and defend the thesis. Students follow research methods, including writing a formal research statement, methodology, case studies, and a literature review that together position their studies within contemporary landscape architecture discourse and related fields. Each year, students align themselves with one of several tracks of landscape research that take cue from current issues and debates, allowing for focused peer and group discussion throughout the development of their work. This year’s sections included urban biodiversity, environmental justice, landscape design implementation, abandoned landscapes, landscape enclaves, border landscapes, the landscapes of Hong Kong’s public housing estates, and regional environmental and development planning. Addressing a wide range of complex issues, at HKU the design thesis’s primary purpose is the advancement of knowledge, methods, and practices in the field. Resistance to common practices and challenging the status quo are encouraged, as are sited and siteless projects, installations, manuals, and other forms of critical output.
An Overview of Ecological Land Zoning in Hong Kong
Identifying Ecological Value in Urban Fabric

Catalogue of Green Belt Characteristics
A Combination of Factors that Determine the Types of Management

1 - 6
Bernice Li Man Hei
(Thesis supervisor - Ashley Scott Kelly)
Evoking Collective Memory
Conservation and revitalization of Hong Kong military relics
Different from the studies, thesis more focus on research. This phase like programming phase in a whole design process. Thesis intends to train student's ability to write down their ideas, and that is why researchers are highlighted in master’s thesis.

In the research process, students are encourage to do the extensive survey in different but related disciplines. The general process is terminating a position, developing a methodology, applying and evaluating, engaging context and evaluating by application design. Meanwhile, diversified inputting ways are encouraged applied in the thesis. Some of them could come from coursework like history and theory, research seminars, technologies and design studies. Personal experiences are also more important, like travel experiences, corrections, observations, and practices. Next but important information is here: There are other students opportunities to know precedents, existing situation, and process in certain fields. Students could go deep into researches in the right direction.

The nature of research in design is often foreign to students, in particular the concept of “design as research”. Students are introduced to the role of research in shaping and informing the design disciplines, and its value to society, together with content that relates to the funding and conduct of academic research.

My research is about what is the current theoretical thinking in this area, what resources is able. Note that need to do research, and how does contemporary design address topics similar to mine.

AECSS is a new collaboration system which contains not only resource collaboration but also about behavior collaboration.
In this studio, students explored the core practice of landscape design in the context of high-density, dynamic urban sites in Hong Kong. Focusing on the everyday landscapes such as resting areas and engineered slopes, students discovered the exceptional opportunities for landscape design and social and ecological enrichment of sites throughout the city. The semester was divided into two discrete projects, each taking on sites of edge, gap, and border. In Project 1, “(Inter)position”, students explored the nature of spatial interventions in Hong Kong’s physical structure with a focused study of Sitting Out Areas and Rest Gardens, those unique and ubiquitous expressions of maximizing utility in all of the city’s in-between or left-over spaces. In Project 2, “A Cemetery Park In-Between”, students focused on the ‘in-between’ fields between culturally, topographically, and ecologically distinct development areas in the Happy Valley Cemetery. Taking on notions of expanded roles for infrastructure, students were challenged to consider interventionist strategies that construct habitable ground for both people and ecology. Through multiple exercises, the students explored design methodologies including typological analysis, abstraction, analysis, projection and iteration. Students refined their capabilities in presenting landscape designs in both measured conventional formats, and in inventive, process-driven techniques.
Project 2 - A Cemetery Park In-Between. Conceptual models and perspective rendering by Brian KWONG Yat Fung

Project 2 - A Cemetery Park In-Between. Final review presentation (Photo: Ivan Valin)

Project 2 - A Cemetery Park In-Between. Final review presentation (Photo: Xiaoxuan Lu)
This course introduces students to the fundamental practices of landscape planning and site design in a dynamic urban context. Studio Yangon 2017 was the fourth iteration of the Landscape Division’s multi-year design and research undertaking focusing on Yangon, the commercial capital and largest city in Myanmar (Burma). This year, the studio looked outside the urban core to Dala Township located across Yangon River. Through a series of design and research exercises, the studio aimed to identify and enhance the potential for landscape systems to play an active role in the strategic development of this area and of the city as a whole.

In this course, the second of three studios within the MLA design curriculum, students continued to develop an iterative working process that responds to feedback and criticism. Students expanded their capacity to work simultaneously in a range of scales and to consider landscape beyond form, as processes and performance. Through discussions and precedent analysis, the studio engages in a critical dialogue with contemporary practices of landscape architecture and planning, examining their claims through the lens of a unique urban situation. Ultimately, students were challenged to develop an appreciation for the complex economic, ecological, and social factors that underlie urban environments, and to translate ideas into space, organization, and strategy.
Stills from research narrative films, viewable at https://vimeo.com/album/4451447

HKU MLA Students investigating case study projects in Singapore (Photos: Scott Melbourne)

Students meeting with community leaders in Dala (Photos: Scott Melbourne)
Regional corridors tied to China’s 2013 One Belt One Road strategy are set to connect Eurasian economic centers through some of the last frontiers of Central and South Asia. In efforts to expand China’s overproduction into India’s markets, land routes such as the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) economic corridor and rail via Tibet and Nepal are in various stages of planning and construction. At their seam along the foothills of the Himalayas are critical landscapes long conserved by their relative isolation and distance from the state. However, increased investments in road, rail, and hydropower infrastructure, as well as a profusion of planned Special Economic Zones, are stressing long-held center-periphery binaries between Kathmandu and the far eastern, western and Terai regions of the country. China is now Nepal’s leading source of foreign direct investment, bilateral trade, and, as of the devastating earthquakes of April and May 2015, its greatest single source of humanitarian aid. Given the proliferation of new projects and agendas, this landscape planning studio sought alternative models of infrastructural and environmental management, engineering, and economic and social integration in Nepal’s frontier regions. For the first half of the course, students researched Nepal’s “failed” development and common misconceptions in development approaches, focusing on trends in investment, geophysical processes, and agricultural and forestry land management issues. Students then traveled Nepal’s central north-south corridor from Kathmandu to Chitwan National Park to meet with major international NGOs, including the World Wildlife Fund’s linear infrastructure team and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, local landscape academics and design offices, and community forest user groups. Upon their return, students developed design strategies that included alternative Environmental Impact Assessment scopes, scenario-based approaches to linear infrastructure and wildlife connectivity, and parameterizing landscape technologies in response to geophysical hazards and complex land rights.
Students learned about sustainable development technologies at Godavari Knowledge Park, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Nepal (Photo: Ashley Scott Kelly)

Soil Metrics: Systematizing scopes of infrastructural design and landscape management for Nepal’s Mid-Hills, Alvin Gan Zixua

Designing infrastructural scope: Iterative landscape planning and scope-setting for Nepal’s Trishuli Hydropower projects, Patton Li Zenming

The GLOF Gabion vs. Climate Change: Strategies for road building and ecological connectivity in the Annapurna Conservation Area, Ivanka Ou Kaiyun

Rerouting Conservation: Strategic landscape planning for mitigating human-wildlife conflicts and reconnecting wildlife habitats, Bernice Li Man Hei

Fabricating site: Nuanced scenario modelling and infrastructural strategies for Karnali River floodplain and wildlife corridors, Zhuang Zikai
The Pearl River Delta is historically the manufacturing heartland of China and currently hosts some of the largest electronics manufacturers in the world. The resulting industrial structure, its related networks, and physical space have a great impact on the social, economic, and ecological landscape of the region. The eventual post-industrialization of the PRD—especially in light of the current economic slow-down and efforts to shift to tertiary industries—are particularly challenging and require strategic urban restructuring of the region. However, conventional methods of urban planning often operate at an urban or regional scale, overlooking the importance and agency of the individual in shaping their environments.

This studio investigated the social, economic and environmental impacts caused by the rapid growth of the electronic industry in the PRD. We explored how landscape and urban design can facilitate new regional visions of the ecological and social environment that can be realized at the material scale, working simultaneously at multiple scales. The course unfolded in three stages: first is to understand the working and living status of Foxconn workers and other related population; in the second stage, we conducted semi-structured interviews and fieldwork for a site Qinghu Community which is adjacent to the Foxconn Longhu Industrial Park in ShenZhen; in the third stage, we developed planning and design strategies and techniques to create a more restorative and resilient community environment at the site and material scale.
Sound-Landscape: Re-shape space & bring the nature back, Arian Li Yushan

Meeting with Foxconn workers

Inter-net: A pop-up net plug-in that interconnects social network in real life, SO Kit Wai

Humanity, Ecology, and Revitalization

10’ 35’ and 90’: Time threshold and demands of workers, Susan Si Shanshan

MLA
Hong Kong’s public housing program is a highly successful enterprise that has provided much-needed access to housing for a larger number of the population in a city notorious for exclusionary spatial practices. However, the housing program also represents a lost opportunity. Still ruthlessly driven by concerns of efficiency in construction and management, issues of site, ecology, and how built forms relate to their larger contexts are not always the prime concerns. Many older estates now sit largely in isolation from the dense urban fabric. For those located at the urban fringe and at the foothills of Hong Kong’s forested slopes, they bear little relationship with the rich subtropical ecology.

This studio focused on the urban design and landscape of public housing in Hong Kong, interrogating self-contained housing developments within their current contexts. For the first exercise, students analyzed and documented the public realm of public housing and produced a typological collection of its different phases over the last six decades. They followed a conceptual framework to investigate the spatial, ecological and social relationships experienced in a public housing development in terms of its nested relationships, from the unit to the block, from the blocks to the estate, and from the estates to city. For the final project, students developed urban design strategies to renew one of three public housing estates: Wah Fu, Oi Man and Wan Tsui. They then developed a detailed physical design within these strategic frameworks.
Hong Kong’s Other Half
New Strategies for the Public Space of Public Housing

5
Site design of Oi Man Estate, Leanne MAK Ching Yee

6
View and section of podium deck at Wan Tsui Estate, Vincent CHAN Hin Shing

7
Site design at Wan Tsui, Leo LAI Yat Long

8
View and section of podium deck at Wan Tsui Estate, Vincent CHAN Hin Shing
Landscape Technology I deals with the way landscape architects work with the land itself, shaping expansive landscapes and constricted urban sites.

Lectures are organized around topics including: site analysis and responsive site planning; landform; the design of structural elements such as retaining walls and steps; soils and earthwork; treatment of existing vegetation; storm water infrastructure and management; and site layout and road design.

Assignments and activities include:
- Surveying levels and plotting contours on campus with reference to as-built construction drawings,
- Mapping surveyed information on plan and plotting accurate sections,
- Designing and estimating cut and fill earthworks, and using contours to clearly illustrate designs,
- Using soil components to physically mix fabricated topsoil in accordance with government specifications,
- Plotting the extent of water catchments, and
- Design of paths and steps to resolve access between levels in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Thanks to its dramatic topography, Hong Kong abounds with striking natural landforms, urban development sites that feature extreme level differences, and given the frequently intense summer rains, a highly developed drainage infrastructure. The course also includes several field trips to landscape design projects that incorporate major engineering structures and slope works.
This course sought to enable students to develop an understanding of key ecological principles and to appreciate how these principles underpin successful landscape design and plant selection. The course investigated how the concepts of succession, biodiversity, habitat structure and ecosystem stability contribute to the success (or failure) of urban landscapes and habitat creation and are an essential tool in successful landscape design. The concepts of ecosystems services and their valuation, landscape ecology and habitat mapping were introduced.

Students explored these concepts, introduced in lectures, in site visits illustrating the concepts discussed in class and personal exploration and analysis of landscapes, ecosystems and habitats in Hong Kong. A design project linked to the studio design project allowed students to demonstrate their understanding of these fundamental concepts by applying them to an element of their major design.

2.1.2 detailed description of main plants of Lowland Forest

2.1.2.1 Garcinia obtangifolia
- Native Species
  - Trees or shrubs, 5-15 m tall, to 30 cm in diam.
  - Bark dark gray. Branches usually with interrupted rings.
  - Dense or sparse forests on plains, hills, or in valleys; 200-400 (+1200) m.

2.1.2.2 Garcinia aphylla
- Native Species
  - Shrub, it has slender, oval, green leaves, the tips of which turn scarlet before dropping (a few at a time).
  - It makes a naturally attractive dome shape without the need for pruning.
  - It also bears large (10 cm), white, open-faced flowers with brilliant, golden yellow stamens in the center.

2.1.2.3 Schefflera minutaefolia
- Native Species
  - Trees or shrubs, 2 to 15 meters high, branches.
  - Palmately compound leaves, leaflets 5 to 8, long oval, leathery, dark green, shiny.
Landscape Plants and Ecology II focusses on planting design and horticultural knowledge in the context of various habitat types.

The planting design component introduces the history, basic principles, vocabulary and process of planting design. We examine the aesthetic, functional and ecological characteristics of plants, how they vary over time, and how the designer interacts with these processes.

In terms of horticultural knowledge, students are expected to familiarise themselves with a basic palette of commonly found plant species representing a range of urban and seemingly natural habitats.

Field trips are a mainstay of this course, providing a multitude of real-life situations where the reciprocity between horticultural knowledge and design intent, and the long-term successes and failures of planting designs can be observed and discussed on site.

A plan and sectional drawing assignment requires students to accurately measure, map on plan, and draw scale sections of the trees and other vegetation on wooded parts of the campus. The intensive observation needed to carry out this seemingly simple task is a revelation, and effectively shatters our preconceptions of how trees and other plants respond to their surroundings.

A series of quizzes, the production of a personal plant collection diary and an end-of-term plant identification exam, all associated with the field trips, aim to foster the habits of continuous observation and learning about plants and their interactions with their environments.
Professionalism and ethics underpins the work of landscape architects. We examined the influence of ethics on our practice including professional relationships and the need for professional institutes to govern the work of its members.

The development of a successful landscape practice was considered including forms of practice, marketing, staff, financial and quality management. Students discussed alternative ways of practice with visiting practitioners Morphis and Urbis. Students also had the opportunity to visit the landscape consultancy offices of ACLA to understand key procedures required to manage a design office.

Key elements of the law were examined including contract law underpinning the basis of appointment with clients, employment and construction contracts as well as the landscape architect’s responsibilities under the Law of Tort. Other essential aspects of the law were reviewed including planning and environmental legislation.

Alternative forms of procurement, construction contracts and tendering procedures were reviewed as well the role of landscape architects in construction contract administration. Students visited the Greening Master Plan Contract for the New Territories in Sha Tin to see firsthand the management of an ongoing construction project by ACLA Ltd-Hyder Consulting Ltd Joint Venture. Students also attended a full-day Construction Industry Training Authority approved safety training course.
Landscapes are a composition of layered elements, both living and inert. At the core of our discipline is a drive to shape spaces, to define inhabited outdoor environments within which individuals may work, play, or simply be. This act of making is often—sometimes even primarily—accomplished through the manipulation of landform and massing of vegetation. As critical a role as these essential landscape operations may play, they comprise just some of the available methods in creating our built landscapes. It is the elements of hardscape, the materials of stone, wood, metals and more that can effectively be employed to complement softscape elements, supporting program uses and providing their own distinct impact on the character of these spaces.

This course provides a foundational understanding of landscape material technologies through an in-depth review of the design, durability, sourcing, and sustainability implications of the each given material. Establishing a foundational knowledge of the essential elements of landscape is understood to not just provide a starting point for practical application, but in fact a point of entry for challenging assumptions and innovating on the ways in which materials are produced, used, and related.
Visual communications for landscape architects, as it’s taught and practiced, is often appropriated and derivative from technologies and pedagogies of architecture and planning. However, landscape confronts forms, material conditions, and processes more complex than the other design disciplines. This course offered a landscape-centric approach to digital analysis and representation that highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of a wide array of tools from design and affiliated fields in the representation of terrain, natural form and ecological processes.

Lectures focused on the evolution of terrain- and surface-based representation and technologies from the origins of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in the 1960s, 1990s digital revolution in architecture, and first decade of the 2000s. While these histories form a critical understanding of software as a medium of design, this course also questioned the inherent problems of landscape as a digital and narrative medium. For their term projects, students explored environmental degradation in northern Myanmar’s Chindwin River basin. Transnational alongside informal- and insurgent-controlled mining of gold, copper, and jade and large-scale logging occur in remote forests of high conservation value. Recent plans for development corridors connecting India, China and Thailand through northern Myanmar will pass through and open up these frontiers to economic development. Students applied GIS-based and parametric techniques to construct diagrams and 3D-printed surface models of these extractive systems and their landscape impacts.
Fabrication and Representation II is a shift in approach to medium and digital environments. Moving beyond the acquisition of data and the digital automation of repetitive tasks, this course focused on the manipulation and creation of data, i.e., the “fabrication” of missing information and spatial description across many scales. This required critical and ethical reflection on data organization, spatially explicit methodologies, and the exhibition or reproduction of information in derivative forms. Digital histories of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and more recent 1990s digital revolution in architecture provided context for such critical design decision-making when working with digital landscape media. Weekly lab sessions developed concepts, workflows, and horizontal knowledge in GIS and computational logic—critical base tools for landscape research and design from regional to site-scale works. For their term projects, students represented the limits, from environmental tipping or breaking points to angles of repose and soil thresholds, of key environmental-engineered systems related to their design studio course. These included river channelization and flood capacity impacts from land conversion in Shenzhen, complex site formation engineering in Hong Kong, and geophysical impacts on infrastructural systems in Nepal.
The discipline of landscape architecture has been transformed over the past few decades with the advent of new sets of theories and agendas formulated by landscape theorists and practitioners. Various protagonists have set out to re-conceptualize the roles of landscape architecture and its field of operations. At the same time, a related set of intellectual currents has arisen to challenge our pre-existing ideas of 'landscape,' 'nature,' 'culture,' 'environment' and so forth. Such intellectual transformations lead to the emergence of new design and planning methodologies and subsequent spatial outcomes, which acknowledge and respond to changing ecological, economic, and social conditions.

This course seeks to understand these contemporary positions by tracing their developments from the late 19th to 21st centuries. It posits that history, theory and practice are contingent upon one another and, together, they ground design in the particularities of time and place. The course begins by examining the emergence of modern landscape architecture and design thinking in different contexts as well as the changing relationship between the discipline and other fields over the 20th century. Concurrently, it explores foci on exploring the standard landscape concepts, such as site, form, and ecology, particularly the ever-changing approaches to and definitions of these concepts.
This course undertakes a critical evaluation of global contemporary practice of landscape architecture and planning at the urban and regional scales. Shifts in global economic and geo-political trends have necessitated a repositioning of these practices from an empirical, socially and environmentally-deterministic practice to one that is operative and catalytic, for which strategy and negotiation prevail over traditional top-down planning methods.

This course aims to situate these diverse and often contradictory ideas about shaping of our environment within a historical continuum and the struggle over disciplinary identities, while simultaneously exploring their impact on the evolution of methodology and ethics. The course starts with a brief historical overview of the origins and the social, industrial, and economic contexts of contemporary landscape design and planning at urban and regional scales over the past century. This portion of the class will treat essential contemporary texts that attempt to reposition and expand the landscape discipline for 21st century urban challenges. A rereading of various typologies of “green” modernist urbanism, particularly relevant to contemporary design culture including the mat, field, pattern, and patch will be explored.
This course is designed to provide students with the essential background knowledge required to successfully manage trees in the urban landscape. After taking an initial overview of the physical and commercial contributions that trees make to the overall quality of life in the urban areas we then look at Trees and the Law and the obligations faced by managers who are responsible for trees in facilities under their “duty of care”.

Following an introduction to the drafting of Tree Surveys and how to approach Tree Risk Assessments by using practical examples out in the field, students will be guided through the standard formatting for Tree Surveys with explanations given for each of the component parts of a survey.

An important part of the course will look at how to access and appraise suitable trees for transplanting and under what circumstances they can be transplanted taking into account various site constraints, species limitations, tree ages, etc. using examples in the field.

After reviewing the difficulties associated with, and the techniques developed for, the preservation and protection of trees within construction sites in Hong Kong and how to manage the process from early assessment of the site through to the provision of physical protective measures and management techniques for handling contractors and employers, students will be introduced to the value of using Inventories in the management of the urban woodland.

The course is completed by discussing how trees can best be managed and maintained in the urban forest using references to basic physiological and anatomical principles concluding with examining the merits of the various above and below-ground supporting and securing systems for trees.
One of the major differences between Landscape Architecture and Architecture is an appreciation for, and understanding of, horticulture and arboriculture and their influence on the design process.

This course endeavours to address most of the issues and is geared towards providing the student with the basic knowledge required in order to make informed decisions and produce relevant designs with regard to the horticultural aspects of Landscape Architecture.

The course deals with botanical and horticultural principles and practices in relation to design. It covers the hierarchical nature of the plant kingdom, the physiological relationships between structure and function of plant organs, responses of plants to environmental factors, techniques for plant multiplication, techniques for plant installation, how to manage the planting of interiorscapes, roof structures and green walls, the management of landscaped sites in terms of nutritional requirements and control of pests and diseases and the selection of grass types for a range of uses. The course will then look at the essential Contract Documentation required for the letting and management of landscape and maintenance contracts.

1. Brachychiton acerifolia vies with Hong Kong’s skyscrapers

2. Our urban planting design relies on an understanding of horticultural principles
This research seminar investigated a variety of built and unbuilt transportation infrastructure projects in East and Southeast Asia, with a primary focus on landscapes of aviation and high-speed rail in China. Combining historical and theoretical readings on infrastructure with site-specific research on individual transportation hubs, students collaborated in the production of an Atlas of Asian Infrastructure.

The goals of the seminar were two-fold. First, students investigated the ways in which increasing geographic mobility, both within China and across its national frontiers, is effecting significant spatial and typological changes in the urban and periurban landscapes surrounding Chinese cities. An investigation into the history of these sites and systems helps to both contextualize present conditions and speculate on their future development. Second, through a combination of site visits, archival research, interviews with municipal design institutes and engineering firms, and mapping exercises, participants learned how to research, plan, and design an informative and visually appealing atlas that documents the variety of mobility-driven infrastructural landscapes that have emerged across Asia over the past 30 years.
This course is to introduce a GIS-based spatial analytic tool to landscape architects for research, design and planning to decipher underlying connections between neighborhood spaces, places, structures and people. Step-by-step approach to GIS-based spatial analysis and modelling techniques on raster and vector data are introduced in answering basic planning questions that landscape architects may encounter in normal practice.

First of all, the module aimed to introduce GIS as a method for representation in data analysis. Second, we explore techniques to answer research questions via sequential analytic methods. Besides, the programme demonstrates various potential ways to incorporate spatial data towards testing specific hypothesis. Finally, to understand scale and complexity, we also instill an attitude of appreciation to the significance of mapping and visualization.
Land Art as an art genre emerged in the 1960s, impacting not just the art scene but also the contemporary landscape architectural practice. Environmental issues such as industrial landscapes, waste, energy crisis, food shortages, were common grounds between Land Art and landscape architecture that both disciplines cross-over to seek ways to use art and design to change the World’s perception and approach towards them.

This course aims to introduce to students the fundamentals of Land Art and its impacts to the development of contemporary landscape architectural discourse since the 1960s. Besides reviewing the legacy, this course will also investigate how contemporary Land Art continues to evolve with to respond to the 21st Century understandings of landscape.
Thesis Prep guides students in refining thesis arguments and hypotheses, constructing methodologies, and critically reflecting on disciplinary and trans-disciplinary positions. The design thesis is not intended as a summation of everything learned in the MLA program to date, but instead represents a curated selection of research, knowledge and skills most appropriate for justifying the thesis project. Thesis preparation, as well as production of the thesis design, is largely an independent exercise in defining and executing the research most necessary to your project, and executing design speculations supported by such research.

The first half of the term was spending defining the limits of exploration, with classroom sessions on research methodology, literature reviews, case studies, and analytical techniques. These were supported by the reading of texts that encouraged a critical research position in landscape architecture and related fields. The second half of the term explored context, data collection and management, programme definition, and design speculation.

The final deliverable for the course is a ‘Thesis Proposal’, consisting of a clearly defined argument, critical discussion, context, case studies, and literature review. The thesis proposal served as a foundation and defines the intentions, disciplinary boundaries, preliminary positioning, initial speculation, and methodology for the design thesis to be carried out in the spring semester.

1. Distribution of industrial activities in the brownfield lands in Hong Kong, Date from Liber Research Community (2015), CHEUNG Mei Yan
2. Possible interventions for the post-disaster urbanism in Tohoku, CHEN Xubin
3. Diagram of work flow of the thesis, SHA Ka Lok
4. A Gapped Landscape from visible territory from invisible gap then back to noticeable border, Shenzhen, LI Zengming
5. The imagination of the prototype of the city, GAN Zixuan
This seminar focused on close readings of how concepts of “Ecology” relate to the discipline of Landscape Architecture. Political Ecology theories, in particular the recent development of Urban Political Ecology, are a useful framework to understand the relationship between Ecology and Landscape, Ecology and the Territory, Ecology and the City, and Ecology and People in order to develop a critical reflection on how landscape architecture positions itself within contemporary societal, political, economic, and environmental shifts. Students worked on two projects, the first is a case study of how political ecology is used as a framework to understand the built environment, and the second is an independent project that resulted in an innovative framework for design research.

1. Experiments to represent space and time through sectional drawings, Jack CHANG Leung Kong

2. Timeline of Hong Kong’s Public Housing Estates, SO Wai Kit

3. “Masking Intersection” Studies of the boundaries between culture and ecology, Viola WU Shenyan

4. Urban Agriculture and Ecosystems of the planned Jing-Jin-Ji Megacity, Bernice Li Man Hei
The two-week intensive studio course has been developed to give students an introduction both to the mission and teaching pedagogy of the MLA program and to the landscapes of Hong Kong.

Run as a collaboration with students from the School of Architecture and Applied Arts at the University of Oregon (Eugene), USA, the studio explored different waterfront landscapes around Victoria Harbour (Hong Kong) to understand the nature of the symbiotic relationship between the city and the water. Students were encouraged to develop new ways of representing landscape concepts verbally, textually and graphically, and to think critically in the identification and analysis of issues.

Students worked in mixed groups first to observe and document the physical form, condition, usage, social contexts and environmental condition of a section of the harbourfront. In the second week they created a video narrating a story of the communities that use the waterfront and the values and meanings they give to it.
This "Introduction to landscape studio" focuses on grasping the fundamental design skills.

The philosophy of the content and the flow of this course is based on the premise that all design disciplines require an understanding of the body, movement, site, to generate a design concept and eventually develop it into a detailed space based on those understandings.

Therefore, this is a course that students learn about the universal design approaches. The components of landscape will be discussed and incorporated throughout the exercises, but once students acquire the fundamental design skills in this course, they will be further manifested and elaborated in the rest of the five studio courses ahead in the program.

The focus on this studio will be based on process and compositions.
4 Concept Model, Diana FAN Lixue
5 Final Presentation, Jacky MAK Ka Lun
6 Section, Kerry LEUNG Shui-kay
7 Abstract Drawing, Sylvia CHANG Gengiaqi
8 Abstract Drawings, Nicole LAU Pui Ki
9 Final Model, Yuki TONG Si Yu
10 Section, Sylvia CHANG Gengiaqi
11 Plan drawing, Yuki TONG Si Yu
12 Section Drawing, Yuki TONG Si Yu
In this studio, students worked in between representation and physical interventions, experimenting with an iterative and cyclical process of documentation, projections, and constructing realities. Students used established means of representations—such as plans, sections, projects, and models—to develop composite and complex understanding of the landscape. This understanding then evolved into plans for action and intervention in a given site. In Project 1, Taking Measures, students explored the biophysical processes of two typical landscape elements at multiple scales. The mapping of a tree and modeling of the rock challenged students to work in between digital and analogue media. In Project 2, Sites and Artifacts, students alternated between siting “artifacts” on a “site” and the “site” itself as an artifact. Experimenting with mixed media representations, including drawings, models, and film, students developed a specific reading of their assigned site that informed future interventions. In Project 3, Shifting Projections, students propose and built physical interventions on their respective sites. In addition to drawings and models that were presented on campus, students also set up a projection installation at WKCD Nursery Park, conveying the spatial, textural, and temporal quality of the design, the speculative realities of their sites.
Project 3 - Shifting
Projections. Diagram by CHEANG Brian

Project 3 - Shifting
Projections. Design model by FUNG Yan Angelica, CHEANG Brian, LAM Hoilok Heather, LAU Pui Ki, NG Kwok Jing, WONG Caraccioli Brandon

Project 3 - Shifting
Projections. Drawings by MAK Jacky Ka Lun, LEUNG Kerry Shui-kay, HUI Ling Hang, WONG Yuen Shan, LI Haolin, TONG Siyu

Project 3 - Shifting
Projections. Projection installations set up by students at WKCD Nursery Park
In this studio we explored the physical and biological elements and systems that make up our world, and the forces that shape them. In particular, we sought to understand how they interact and how they change over time. While examining them, we worked out best ways to describe and represent them, graphically. This gave a basis for manipulating them (by design), and understanding the likely consequences of any changes.

To do this we investigated two environments: one mostly natural (Pokfulam Valley) and one largely man-made (Queens Road, HK). We studied the nature of the elements and processes within each, and the commonalities and differences between them. In each place students proposed an intervention. In the natural environment they looked to modify it to allow for human occupation, in the man-made environment they look to re-introduce natural elements and make occupation by humans easier. Through these interventions they were able to understand the fundamental relationship between nature and man.

Some of the models and design from the final assignment were exhibited as part of the ‘Liveability of Design’ Exhibition held at HKSAR Central Government Offices in September 2017.
Intervention in Queen’s Road Central, SUN Jingyu
WONG Yin Wah

Exploded maps and sections, ZOU Wenyao
NWE Saw Yu
The studio examines the relationships between people and the built environment in the public realm. Though there are a number of types and forms of open space within the city (from those that are formalized and legible to those that are ambiguous and contested; those that have been planned and those that have not) that together construct the public realm. We primarily focused on the ‘everyday’ spaces within this assembly: the PR spaces of a dense and dynamic urban fabric, and the PR spaces of a primarily residential development. Students learned to identify, analyze, and document the key aspects (physical, ecological, economic and social) that shape an urban context; built a vocabulary that communicates process, and proposed appropriate ways to intervene in this context. In Project 1: The Street, students mapped and documented changes in a very dynamic area of Yau Ma Tei and proposed an urban intervention. In Project 2, The Estate: People and Place, students developed urban strategies to renew one of two public housing estates: Choi Hung Estate and Oi Man Estate. They then developed a detailed physical design within these strategic frameworks.

1. CHAN Lok Tim, NWE Saw Yu

2. Project 2: Site design in Choi Hung Estate, WONG Ying Yu

3. Sectional model, LILIAN CHUNG Kwan Yu
Project 2: New public site design in Choi Hung Estate, Lilian CHUNG Kwan Yu
Project 1: Bridge proposal on watch 100 store, Yaumatei CHAN LOK Tim, NWE Saw Yu
Project 2: Site design at Oi Man Estate, Ying Monica CHONG
Project 2: Site design at Oi Man Estate, Heather WONG Yin Wah
The Shanghai Expo was touted by the Chinese government as yet another first-rate global scale event, similar in significance to the Beijing Olympics, which would symbolize the economic and political rise of China in the 21st century. The event would demonstrate to both the Chinese populace and foreign nations the enormous progress of China’s urban development in the heart of the nation’s economic hub of Shanghai. The event received extensive media coverage in the Chinese media both in the lead up and during the World Expo. According to China analyst Tom Doctoroff, “In terms of what the city was able to achieve, the Chinese were impressed. Shanghai stepped up a level in internationalization.

Project 1: Urban strategy practice – site record, interpretation, and research
By finding their significant elements in urban developments, in time scales, and translate the findings in well formatted collage map(s) and sections. Photos and critical mapping will be crucial for the students to understand man-made infrastructure and natural system.

Students will continue their exploration of issues derived from the theme of their interests in a focused area. A suggested site will be provided for further study. Analysis of the research area at a neighborhood-scale will build upon the research from the large scale networks.

Project 2: Site Design
Students will engage with the design and planning of an urban regeneration strategy based on the research and analysis from project 1. Presentation strategy for large scale project will be one of the training focuses, and be studied and developed before the final review.
Large-scale regional planning and infrastructure development is often implemented with a virtual absence of people on the ground, creating conflicts in land tenure, economic livelihood, and environmental resource use and conservation. “Design on the Road to Burma” takes students’ learning to the frontier landscapes of transnational development along the Thai-Myanmar border, reinforcing the importance of fieldwork in reconciling abstract geographical data and real site conditions. Recently revived investment in the 250-square-kilometer industrial port of Dawei, Myanmar’s first Special Economic Zone (SEZ), and a 212-kilometer cross-border road link is prompting large-scale land use change and urban development. Students spent the first six weeks producing a 120-page research report that combined detailed timelines on regional development and environmental conservation, international case studies, and site-specific studies on landscape processes from mining extraction and afforestation to wildlife movement. The studio then travelled overland from Thailand to Myanmar, visiting large industrial estates along Thailand’s Eastern Seaboard, including Map Ta Phut and Laem Chabang, Dawei’s resettlement housing and community forest programmes, and meeting several of Myanmar’s civil society organizations and international environmental NGOs. Proximity to Thailand and recent “opening up” of the region to transnational forces makes this both an important case study and viable site for designers to provide alternative development strategies to a complex set of actors. For the second half of the course, students developed design proposals that engaged development projects, including resettlement, community forestry, corporate social responsibility programmes, ecotourism, and “green” capacity building programmes.
Max-capacity Landscapes: Village intensification, integration, and capacity-building for returning refugees on the Thai-Myanmar border, Theodora HO Pik Lam

Programming the Forest: Non-zoned approaches to customary rights in Tanintharyi Nature Reserve, Natalie KHOO Ting Fung

Amplified Industrial Terrain: Micro-scale and anticipatory approaches to incremental planning of Dawei SEZ, Daisy NG Lai Ching

SEZ Occupied: Landscapes, compensation, and anticipating development through Village Priority Action Areas, David WANG Junwen
As with any art or science, the successful practice of landscape architecture is dependent on a comprehensive knowledge of materials and their related technologies. In landscape we can choose from a very broad spectrum of materials from the natural to the artificial, from the inert to the organic, and deploy them over a wide range of physical scales. This landscape technologies course explored components of the natural landscape, how we can manipulate them to form new landscapes and experiences, and how these processes can be used as a methodology for design.

The course covered eight interrelated topics, which built on each other to develop a broad understanding of basic landscape elements of the landscape and how they fit together: Drawing the ground – Playing with contours – Manipulating Slopes – Draining surfaces – Making roads – Paths and ramps – Challenge of steps – Changing levels. Traditionally technology has been viewed as a dry subject, so the instructional design sought to maximize student engagement (and enjoyment), and using peer-to-peer learning as a core feature to ensure students supported each other through the more technical aspects. The interactive workshop format engaged students in continuous in-class activities, including technical drawing exercises, group surveys, problem solving challenges, practical demonstrations, case study research and presentations etc.

Instructor: Mathew Pryor

ARCH3102 Technology in Landscape Architecture
Plants and Planting Design I approaches the role of planting in landscape design from two main areas of study, namely planting design and horticultural knowledge in the context of various habitat types.

The planting design component introduces the history, basic principles, vocabulary and process of planting design. We examine the aesthetic, functional and ecological characteristics of plants, how they vary over time, and how the designer interacts with these processes.

Students are expected to familiarise themselves with a basic palette of commonly found plant species, representing a wide range of urban and seemingly natural habitats in Hong Kong. The course provides an introduction to plant anatomy and physiology, the interaction between plants and their surroundings, nursery production, planting specification and maintenance.

Field trips are a mainstay of this course, providing a multitude of real-life situations where the reciprocity between horticultural knowledge and design intent, and the long-term successes and failures of planting designs can be observed and discussed on site. The field trips are arranged so as to introduce the major habitat types and their associated plant communities. A series of quizzes associated with the field trips aim to foster the habits of continuous observation and learning about plants, followed by an end-of-term plant identification exam.

The course hopes to encourage life-long investigation of plant species and their application in any given environment. To this end, the main assignment of the semester is the production of a personal plant collection booklet or diary.
Providing a structure for the students to be able to think in a creative, critical and structured manner about plants, planting and plant design role in urban, rural and natural landscapes. Party taught at the Shanghai Study Centre and party in a small village at the base of Qingliangfeng nature reserve on the Anhui Zhejiang border.

The course not only hopes to develop students understanding of using plants in their landscape design but also in the context in urban, rural and natural landscapes. The students will get involved in designing and also helping layout and build micro landscapes, a nature trail and a masterplan concept for an experimental zone of the nature reserve. This should give them a good understanding of rural life, community and the associated design issues and opportunities.
The course seeks to develop an understanding of key ecological principles and the concept of sustainability in students, and to encourage them to appreciate the manner in which these principles underpin successful landscape design. The course investigates how the concepts of succession, biodiversity, habitat structure and ecosystem stability contribute to the success (or failure) of urban landscapes, habitat creation projects and restoration of degraded landscapes and how these concepts are an essential tool in both successful landscape design and long term landscape management.

In a series of lectures and site visits the students are introduced to the fundamental principles of ecology and sustainability. They are required to analyze ecological and sustainable aspects of existing landscapes, explore how the landscapes can be improved by application of these principles and also undertake a personal research project on a subject linked to their Final Design Project to examine a particular aspect of ecology and/or sustainability in more detail.
What are the extents and limits of architects and planners’ power to affect environmental and social change? How do they work with different communities and stakeholders to bring about betterment in people’s lives? What are the paradoxes in today’s design practice with the advent of neoliberal urbanization and concomitant crisis in housing, environmental protection and infrastructure provisions? What kinds of assumptions do different professionals of the built environment hold about the merits of their work and to what extent can these be seen as extensions of their ideologies? What reflexive knowledge do designers, policy makers and community members need to acquire in order to address the multifaceted problems we are facing in a globalizing world?

This seminar provides an introduction to the intertwined concepts of environment, community, and design and explores the contexts that shape their relationships in diverse localities. In contrast to conventional taught courses, significant emphasis of the seminar is placed on student-led activities designed to facilitate active learning through rigorous participation. Weekly seminar topics are structured to provide a systematic introduction to key debates over the ethics and social roles of design practice and explore the nature of emergent “design activism” in recent years. It also introduces students to different methods of studying the built environment and communities.

Throughout the semester, focus is placed on connecting theoretical concepts with actual practices via close examination of international and local case studies. The ultimate purpose is to help students develop a critical lens for deciphering the complex forces that shape the built environment and the ethical challenges facing today’s design practitioners.
The urban population of China has risen from 26% in 1990 to approximately 50% in 2010. This rapid rate of urbanization has greatly influenced the development of landscapes in contemporary China, resulting in an explosion of designed landscapes emerging in urban and rural China. Within these landscapes, whether public parks, shopping streets, tourist attractions, or infrastructure, all embody cultural values of the modern China, but more importantly it plays an active role in forming social and political conditions. The course frames pertinent issues that challenge contemporary landscape architectural practice in China in order to familiarize students with the unique landscape conditions in China. Students worked on reading the landscapes of Shanghai in the context of these issues, and frame independent case study projects that elaborate on the nuanced social, political, economic, and environmental shifts present in everyday life.
What is landscape? How might it be interpreted, engaged, represented, described, classified, shaped? This course explores landscape as both a medium and idea. As an introduction to the topic, students are challenged to think critically about landscape in ways that shape an expanded understanding of the subject. This expanded understanding is further developed through the actions of looking at, interpreting, reading about, discussing and ultimately representing landscape. Each of these activities can help reveal the layered conditions, relationships, and processes embedded in any landscape. The sequence of lectures is topically structured with each week focused on a particular framing or expression of landscape. Guest lectures are integrated into the sequence to highlight special issues and expose students to the range of research initiatives being carried out by scholars within the discipline. This is a reading and discussion intensive course. Students are expected to arrive at each session having critically reviewed that week's readings, identifying topics and questions for discussion.
Deliberately non-technical, this course is designed like a journey where students discover a wide range of techniques and media in order to encourage them to adopt some of them in the future. In line with the mechanism of landscape perception, this course aims at equipping students with observation and analytical skills rather than technical ones. It is not about drawing well, it is about looking and understanding drawings, or other media, in terms of their effectiveness in achieving a certain goal. On top of exploring media and techniques, every assignment is designed to help students progress simultaneously in two directions. First, representing the same subject several times through the lens or filter of variable parameters allows them to achieve and master different levels of abstraction. Second, the exploration of different types of projections, visual effects and communication techniques engages them with the multiplicity of spatial and chronological dimensions. Overall, the course aims at teaching how to think about representing, which is inherent to the practice of design, rather than learning how to represent.
As designers of the built environment, landscape architects are expected to provide creative and innovative design solutions within specific contexts. As challenging as coming up with great ideas can be, these skills quickly fall short unless communicated correctly through visually compelling and informative drawings. Therefore, Representing Landscapes II: Surfaces and Materials provides the opportunity to develop and test digital representation strategies for effective design communication.

As a pre-requisite to this course, students have already explored and tested a wide range of techniques and media for drawing landscape elements through Representing Landscapes I: forms and methods in which they have acquired observation skills for both the environment and its various representations. Thought as a continuum, this course is organised around the production of a book as a representation design project. Focusing on the ground as a point of anchorage of the human condition, the book entitled “Over/underground”, investigates both the subjective experiential qualities of a given landscape as well as the technical properties of the constructed ground on which it stands. Through the manipulation of a series of photomontage, panoramas, axonometrics and construction details, students will develop strategies to achieve different goals prescribed in each chapter. Thought as a non-technical course, emphasis will be given to research quality and strategic methodology while assessment will be based on the effectiveness of the book in communicating pre-determined performance objectives.
Visual Communication for Landscape Architects offers a landscape-centric approach to digital media. While sharing histories and methods with architecture and planning, digital landscape representation, given its engagement with natural processes and ecologies, requires greater control over complex forms and materials. This course establishes foundational knowledge in computer science and geographic information systems (GIS), reviewing their innovations, vocabularies, and impacts on design and project delivery since the 1960s. Students manipulated geospatial data from remotely-sensed and open-source datasets to build a generalist’s understanding of digital media for the range of scales landscape architects confront and in which they collaborate. Automation and iterative, procedural workflows were stressed as part of an efficient design process and problem solving toolset. For their term projects, students applied GIS and parametric modelling tools to narrate interdependencies between environmental and engineered systems in Hong Kong country parks, which conserve vast areas of the territory for water resources, biodiversity, and recreation. In tandem with their design studio course, students created visual catalogs that included simulating afforestation processes, vegetation richness, canopy density, and reservoir flood regulation and siltation systems.
Landscape constantly changes over time, and the media of landscape design (may it be the materials, forms, and textures) constantly aims to interact with this dynamic characteristic of landscape, hoping to reveal how spaces can be created and articulated with forces of nature.

With advanced technology, not only can we analyze how it happens, we can also model to speculate how different factors would affect its happening. This course aims to introduce advanced technological tools for students to, first, visualize how landscape phenomena happen, then, analyze how different parameters contribute differently to phenomena, and lastly, speculate and manipulate how a landscape design can work with landscape phenomena.

The goal of the course not only aims to teach students the technical skills of using some of the contemporary landscape digital tools, the more important goal is to get students learn how these advanced tools are critical and applicable to the practice of contemporary landscape design.
The class is an introduction to urban farming and addressed the general issue of urban agriculture, its history, its principles and techniques, in relation with landscape design and urban planning.

The course started by an illustrated approach of urban agriculture history and typology. The students investigated and presented case studies of urban agriculture worldwide and identified its general benefits and techniques. Then, the class focused on the specificities of Shanghai Urban Agriculture with site visits. The first trip was organized at the Ecoland farm, a community garden in Shanghai Fengxian District, where the students were welcomed by its owner, specialist in Environmental Planning and Management of sustainable communities. The second filed trip took us to the Pu She Hu farm on Chongming Island, where the farmers introduced the students with techniques of permaculture and sustainable production in a periurban environment.

During the mid semester, in order to develop a research and design project, the students individually chose a theme relevant to Shanghai’s urban farming. During the course, a wide range of research has been led by the students: aquaponics and innovative techniques, carbon footprints, Shanghai urban farming history, Hong Kong and Shanghai comparative studies, modular urban farming devices and techniques. Some students decided to be directly involved in urban farming work in the city or farmland land art. Sharing their weekly research under supervision of the instructor, the class of 2017 has been very enthusiastic and gradually built a solid understanding of Urban farming as it is applied to landscape architecture.

At the end part of the promotion exhibited their land art work at the HKU center in Shanghai as well as at Hong Kong University.
This course incorporates supervised studies on special approved topics in landscape studies by individuals or small groups. Students must obtain approval from the Programme Director and the work must be supervised by a teacher in the programme. Oral presentation and special study reports/papers or other learning activities are required.
This course is intended to inspire thinking about the way we should construct our living environments in future, in order to find a sustainable balance. It examines a broad range of sustainability issues including: population; resources – water; energy; and food; and human systems – transportation; technology and communicational health and environment; and community and governance.

The scale and complex interdependency of issues involved in constructing a sustainable future makes them very difficult to access and understand. It is a major challenge for us to engage with and comprehend the concept of sustainable development, let alone seek credible and reasoned solutions based on it. The course examines a range of sustainable development issues, at global, territorial and personal scales, with a view to developing skills in critical thinking, argumentation and advocacy.

In 2016-17 the course became the first Common Core course to be offered as a flipped classroom, with all the course content presented in (23) prepared videos that the students watched and respond to before class. Class time was devoted to developing an understanding the issues and interactions between them, and learning how to make an argument in written, graphic (diagram), audio and video formats. More than 20 different types of in-class activity were used to engage and stimulate students and to encourage them to interact and learn from sharing with each other.

A full description of the course can be found in the Blended Learning section of the HKU Interactive Online Learning website https://learning.hku.hk/catalog/course/cchu9001-designs-on-the-future-sustainability-of-the-built-environment/
Through the history of our civilization, humankind has been working with the environment both as a means for survival and as expressions of culture. It has always been a two-way relationship in harmony. However, recently, such balance was tilted by our unsustainable way of living, and our current landscape reflects humankind’s abuse and mis-management of the environment.

This course aims at exploring how different groups of people respond to such imbalance, and what they do to restore a healthy reciprocal relationship between human beings and nature. Topics like the Garden City Movement in the late 19th century, and the emergence of the protection movement of “Cultural Landscapes” initiated by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 1992, will be discussed through lectures and seminars. Land art – an artistic expression of human culture and how we sculpt the land – will be explored as a more contemporary approach to restoring the balance between humans and nature. Initiated by some leading artists in the creative art industry as a response to such issues, land art helps to manifest the reciprocal relationship between human culture and the environment, and hence to re-align people’s attitude, perception, and interpretation towards nature.

Besides lectures and seminars, the topic of land art will also be explored in the form of “Land Art Workshop + Exhibition”, in which students can learn how to express their environmental opinions through the creative process of making their own land art. The “Land Art Workshop” will be conducted on a selected site in the Hong Kong landscape. It will start with field study to explore how civilization integrates or challenges the relationship with the landscape of the selected site. Then, based on their findings, students will use creative medium to explore their environmental critique to the site. After the workshop, students will prepare a Land Art Exhibition to communicate their creative works to the public, and present their works during the Opening of this exhibition.
What is a city? Through what processes is our built environment constituted? How do we dwell in our cities and how do different kinds of urban space shape our sense of place and community belonging? This course will explore practices of urbanism across a range of contexts from antiquity to the present day. By doing so it will allow students to develop insights into the social relations and human struggles that have been produced by, and continue to produce, particular types of built forms in different places over time. In the broadest sense, the course will use urbanism as a lens to understand the relationship between urban forms and the complex, multiple processes that constitute cities and their urban milieus.

The course content is organized around sets of case studies, with each focusing on a specific theme that indicates particular continuities and congruencies between cities of different locations and time periods. The discussion throughout the course will engage with questions related to contemporary urbanization and consider how historical knowledge may impart a better understanding of challenges we are facing in the global present.
This Common Core Course focuses on our human relationship with nature as manifested in the fabric of the city around us.

There are three main sections each with a corresponding assignment:

Human Relationship with Nature (Observation):
We examine the history of this relationship, the spectrum between ‘artificial’ and ‘natural’, and natural laws such as interconnectivity. How do our cultural preconceptions, urban infrastructure, lifestyle and economics, compliment or flout those laws? Students produce short videos observing a particular aspect of nature in the city, and highlighting the sometimes hilarious contradictions in our relationship with nature. The whole class reviews the videos at a video screening event.

How that Relationship is expressed in the Design of the City (Interpretation):
We embark on a critical review of the manifestations of nature in the city, asking why the relationship is the way it is. We review how we attempt to fulfill our aspirations by design or by inaction. The assignment is a written opinion piece articulating the contradictions related to a particular aspect, and then advocating a position or course of action.

Metaphor (Extrapolation):
The students contextualize the insights gained from the previous sections into their own discipline, using metaphor. Each student is tasked with producing a poster featuring ‘The Tree of Something in The City of Something’ where the tree represents a topic of the student’s choice, and the city represents the context for that topic. The whole class reviews the posters at a gallery-style event.
Since 2010, HKU Faculty of Architecture has been organizing ‘Career Discovery in Landscape Architecture’ (CDLA) – an exploration program for high school students who are interested in bringing a more sustainable living environment to our city. CDLA offers a 3-week program each summer to young people to experience what it is like to be involved in the profession of landscape architecture.

Led and guided by tutors and student teaching assistants at the Division of Landscape Architecture, in 2016 CDLA created the “Climate Jungle Grid” installation aims to fabricate microclimates originating from a variety of climate zones, displaying appreciation for harmony between human activities and nature.

Created with climbers, succulents and moss, the unique growth patterns of each plant type interweave with grid-like structures that consist of modular blocks, representing different microclimates through unified forms and atmosphere at various spots of Chi Wah Commons. In respect to the bookstore next to the installation, the form of these ‘plant grids’ also mimic that of bookshelves, suggesting the students’ intention to store and breed the knowledge of nature, as much as how books show the aggregation of our knowledge on all things. In a broader sense, the project is an extension to promote greenery and sustainability at HKU – what landscape architecture has been always doing.

Vincci Mak
Senior Lecturer
Summer Program Coordinator
### DLA Current Research Initiatives

#### Urban Ecology & Green Infrastructure in High Density Cities

**Urban Ecology & Green Infrastructure in High Density Cities**

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<td>Mapping the potential for urban rooftop farming in Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Productive City: analysis of different urban farming practices</td>
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<td>New pedagogical approaches to education in landscape architecture</td>
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#### Landscape Planning for Economic, Humanitarian, and Rural Development

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<td>Development and conservation awareness online platform, piloted in Myanmar and Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Ecological conservation on the Silk Road</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commodification of agriculture in contemporary China</td>
<td>Dorothy Tang</td>
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<td>Design manual for sustainable infrastructure planning in southern Myanmar</td>
<td>Dorothy Tang &amp; Ashley Scott Kelly</td>
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<td>Environmental strategies for China’s coastal reclamation</td>
<td>Lu Xiaoxuan</td>
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<td>From Miniature to Synchroniser: An ontology of small urban spaces in Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Water and population politics in China’s northwestern frontier</td>
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<td>China-Kazakhstan large-scale energy infrastructure projects</td>
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<td>Transboundary land-use practices between China and Laos, Myanmar, Thailand</td>
<td>Lu Xiaoxuan</td>
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#### Postindustrial and Remedial Landscapes

**Postindustrial and Remedial Landscapes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Principal Investigator(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Post-gold landscapes of Johannesburg</td>
<td>Dorothy Tang</td>
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#### Computation, Geographic Information Systems, and Digital Innovation in Landscape Architecture

**Computation, Geographic Information Systems, and Digital Innovation in Landscape Architecture**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Multispecies predictive modeling of wildlife movement corridors for infrastructure development</td>
<td>Ashley Scott Kelly</td>
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<td>Automated modelling of infrastructure design and planning scenarios in data-poor regions</td>
<td>Ashley Scott Kelly &amp; Dorothy Tang</td>
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<td>Frameworks for the manipulation of discontinuous spatial data</td>
<td>Ashley Scott Kelly</td>
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The goal of the DLA Research Seminar Series is to create a platform to discuss scholarly research on the built environment that is interdisciplinary in nature. The series also aims to identify common research threads from landscape architecture, architecture, planning and urban design, and by doing so instigates critical reflections on the different approaches to the study of buildings, landscapes and cities.

### Seminar snapshots

1. Eco-urbanism vs. Climate Technologies, by Shih-Yang Kao, 17 March 2017
2. The Accidental Playground, by Daniel Campo, 24 March 2017
3. From Village-in-the-city to Villagized City, by Tim Oakes, 21 April 2017
4. Gold Reef City and Shareworld, by Dorothy Tang, 28 April 2017

### DLA Current Research Initiatives

- Urban History, Development and Landscape Practice
  - Post-war infrastructure landscapes in Hong Kong, Cecilia Chu & Dorothy Tang
  - Land development and environmental conservation trends in Hong Kong, Ashley Scott Kelly
  - Public housing and the emergence of landscape architecture in Hong Kong, Ivan Valin, Natalia Echeverri
  - Dialogues about infrastructure and sustainability in Hong Kong, Dorothy Tang & Vincci Mak
  - Hong Kong’s nature: a cultural history of environmental transformations and landscape discourses from British colonization to the ecological crisis (PhD dissertation), Maxime Decaudin
  - Hong Kong’s nature: environmental activism since the handover (CEFC), Maxime Decaudin
  - Modernist planning and housing practices in early Hong Kong, Cecilia Chu
  - Heritage and urban regeneration in the Asia-Pacific Region, Cecilia Chu
  - A survey and analysis of design strategies utilized in “low-carbon” cities, Ivan Valin
  - Modernist recreational landscapes of Asia, Cecilia Chu & Dorothy Tang
  - Peter Walker: Refining Nature, Scott Jennings, Melbourne
  - Emerging roles of landscape design in the planning of Chinese Cities, 1914-1949, Cecilia Chu
Many dwellers in high density cities have a strong desire to grow their own vegetables and contribute to a more sustainable urban lifestyle, but lack the space to do so. Over the past ten years a growing number of individuals and community groups in different cities across the world have begun to activate unutilized grey building roof spaces in the city to create and run sustainable productive gardens. These initiatives are unplanned and spontaneous, but collectively offer a significant prospect of a new type of urban landscape which embodies not only green elements, but also very strong social, recreational and public health aspects. Conditions on a roof are different from those encountered at ground level. This research initiative addresses the unique environmental, technical and operational issues involved in productive farming on building structures, with a view to establishing best practice, and to identifying the potential benefits to the built environment and urban. The outcome of the studies will help to inform the current discussion on the legitimacy of rooftop farming as green building coverage, and help to define potential for food sufficiency within urban areas. The outputs of these studies are directly relevant to any high density city in a tropical or sub-tropical climate.
The Witwatersrand Gold Rush of 1886 led to the establishment of Johannesburg and set in motion a series of large-scale alterations to the geology, hydrology, and ecology of the region. Gold mining across an 80-km strip traversing the heart of Johannesburg and its neighboring municipalities became a conduit for regional infrastructure and shaped the contested social landscape of the region. With soaring gold prices, the gold mining belt is currently going through another iteration of environmental change as mining companies are now scavenging for remnant gold in historic tailings — or mine dumps. This flurry of gold recovery is reshaping the topography of the city and releasing potential land for future urban development literally in the center of the city, and removing physical barriers between the rich north and poor south. However, the environmental consequences of unchecked mining for over a century are now coming into effect. Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) — polluted water with high acidic levels and heavy metals — is now threatening to decant at an unprecedented scale, endangering the freshwater resources and ecological viability of two major continental watersheds.

This project moves beyond simplistic descriptions of singular aspects of this complex city and seeks to document the past and current mining landscapes through a series of visual narratives to compose an atlas for the region. The atlas analyzes the ecological, political, and economic forces of the Johannesburg region through “Operative Maps”, “Spatial Narratives”, and “Time Charts”. Information is collected through extensive fieldwork, interviews, and archival research. The intertwined relationship between constructed ground and the natural landscape demonstrated in Johannesburg resists singular perspectives and demands complexity. This work acknowledges the non-linear logics and hypercomplexities of the region and seeks to represent relationships, operations, and change. Ultimately, this project aims to provide an alternative perspective on environmental change in Johannesburg by giving voice to previously invisible actors.

Atlas of Gold: Landscape Transformation of Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand Range

**Principal Investigator:**
Dorothy Tang

This paper investigates the emergence of the professional landscape architect in Hong Kong from 1973 to 1988 and the discipline’s uneven assimilation into existing urban development practices. The period marks a shift from an ad-hoc, borrowed forms practice, to more standardized norms that were ultimately calcified in the disciplinary regulations and bureaucratic structures that exist today. Of specific interest is how the epistemologies of these new landscape architects engaged the knowledge networks of established colonial technocrats: a heterogeneous cast of disciplines at various stages of their own localization trajectory. More generally, the paper will show how a discipline that had matured in the empire was translated in the colony.

The professional landscape architect only appears in Hong Kong in the mid-1970’s, largely in response to a capacity vacuum generated by the 1972 Ten-year Housing Programme. First in private practice, and later in specialized landscape architecture units within the Housing Authority and other government departments, trained landscape architects worked in large, multidisciplinary project teams. Although the discipline’s influence—in terms of manpower and budget—was marginal in these engineering-led projects, this first generation of practitioners contributed a number of sensitively-designed public spaces to the expanding city. The legacy of the profession during this period—the products of these internal and external struggles—complicate existing planning and architecture-oriented narratives of development in Hong Kong. This paper revisits this short but productive period as a “space of hope” in the construction of the city and a model for contemporary interdisciplinary spatial practices.

A Landscape Typological Study of Public Housing in Hong Kong

**Principal Investigator:**
Ivan Valin

**Spatial practices, 1972 Ten-year Housing Programme**
Multiple measures are used in UEHH to examine the influence of built environments on human health and wellbeing. The mission of the Virtual Laboratory of Urban Environments & Human Health (UEHH) is to understand how and to what extent urban environments, especially urban green spaces, influence human health and wellbeing. Researchers in the lab are concerned with understanding and measuring the influence through multiple approaches including psychological, physiological, and hormonal measures of human health.

The lab uses two types of experimental sites for research: Virtual urban environments and real urban environments. Researchers will use the immersive virtual environments as surrogates of real urban environments. In a controlled lab setting, researchers will expose participants to a variety of stimuli while recording participants’ responses through a variety of physiological devices or psychological instruments. Researchers then can gauge and compare impacts of different environment features or conditions. Researchers will also conduct experimental research in the real urban environments by using mobile devices or instruments. The research will contribute to the body of knowledge on how to create appropriate urban environments to promote human health and wellbeing.

"The Road to Dawei" is an advocacy campaign that addresses infrastructure and related development impacts via environmental policy, scenario-building, ecological modelling, and landscape and infrastructure design. The planned Dawei-Kanchanaburi Road Link will connect Dawei, Myanmar to Bangkok across critical forest habitat and a culturally rich landscape just emerging from ethnic civil war into transnational industrial development. Weak environmental and development regulation requires multi-pronged approaches. The campaign, running from 2015-2017, combines a wide range of research projects and outputs, led by landscape designers at HKU, including:

- A site-specific Design manual synthesizing sustainable road construction technologies and wildlife mitigation measures;
- Multispecies predictive modelling of wildlife movement corridors and crossing selection optimization;
- Stakeholder presentation models, automatically generated from low-resolution data, showing a range of potential development scenarios; and
- A Public interactive online map consolidating development and conservation programmes impacting the region.

This work has supported diverse stakeholder engagement efforts, including civil society and regional government capacity building workshops, and presentation to the Thai road and SEZ developer, 7 national departments and 13 regional offices in Myanmar to support infrastructure impact assessment and management plans, and 7 international agencies, including JICA (Japan), NEDA (Thailand), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) at its international forum on sustainable infrastructure.

The Road to Dawei:
Environmental governance and advocacy planning in southern Myanmar

The Road to Dawei: Environmental governance and advocacy planning in southern Myanmar

Principal Investigators:
Ashley Scott Kelly, Dorothy Tang; World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
### Full-time Staff

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Qualifications / Affiliations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Division and Associate Professor (Teaching)</td>
<td>PRYOR, Mathew</td>
<td>BA(Hons) Heriot-Watt; CMLI; RLA; FHKILA; CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>TANG, Dorothy S.W.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>VALIN, Ivan</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>CHU, Cecilia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>JIANG, Bin</td>
<td>BEngUP Hunan; MLA Peking; PhD Illinois; ASLA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>KELLY, Ashley Scott</td>
<td>BScArch Michigan; March Harvard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>MELBOURNE, Scott Jennings</td>
<td>BLA Washington; MLA Harvard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>SARKAR, Chinnoy</td>
<td>BSc; MSc BHU; PhDICPLANI Condiff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>COATES, Gavin S.</td>
<td>BLA, DipLA Leeds; DipPCDI; CMLI (UK); MSc (UK); FHKILA; RLA; CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>MAX, Vinci W. S.</td>
<td>BArch USC; MLA Harvard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>LU, Xiaoxuan</td>
<td>BArch Sci-Arc; MLA Harvard; PhD Peking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visiting Lecturer</td>
<td>DECAUDIN, Maxime C.</td>
<td>Dip ESA; HMONP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Fellow</td>
<td>YUAN, Lin</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-doctoral Fellow</td>
<td>LIANG, Calvin Z.</td>
<td>BArch SJTU; MSc, PhD HK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>CHO, Julian C. M.</td>
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<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>WOO, Bryan S. H.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>XIAO, Pat H.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>ZHANG, Viola Y.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
<td>WANG, Huating</td>
<td>BEng Shenyang; MSc Peking</td>
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### Part-time Staff

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>ECHEVERRI, Natalia</td>
<td>BA Washington; MCP, March UC Berkeley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>HIRSH, Max</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>KOKORA, Michael E</td>
<td>BA Minnesota; March Yale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>LEVEN, Elizabeth P</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>NG, Otto C L</td>
<td>BAAS(S) HK; March MIT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>ROBINSON, Ian J</td>
<td>MArch; HND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>TRUMPF, Susanne</td>
<td>BAarch TU Berlin; MArchTU Deilt; RA(NL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>WANG, Casey H. N.</td>
<td>BSc Cheng Kung; MAUD Harvard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor</td>
<td>TENNANT, Rachel</td>
<td>DipLA; CMLI</td>
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### Shanghai Study Centre teachers

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honorary Lecturer</td>
<td>LIN, Tiger Y</td>
<td>BArch Tamkang; MLA Harvard; CHSIA; IFLA; ASLA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honorary Lecturer</td>
<td>JENCKS, Justin A</td>
<td>BA Durham</td>
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<tr>
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<td>ESAJ</td>
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