

Introduction

About this book

Landscape architecture involves the spatial organisation of outdoor places to meet human needs and desires while protecting or enhancing natural environments and processes. Landscapes usually need to function in diverse ways for different people. The designer aims to create places that meet social, environmental, cultural, aesthetic and practical requirements.

This book is intended both as an introduction to the discipline of landscape architecture and also a source of continuing interest for more experienced environmental designers.

A morphological approach to design

While landscapes are living, dynamic, 'bio-cultural' systems, they can also be thought of as complex, spatial 'structures'. The aim of this book is to promote the development of a three-dimensional design sensibility by exploring and defining the physical form of landscape as 'material' for design. 'Fabric' refers to the integrated spatial structure of whole landscapes (as well as the context for design), while 'form' refers to the components or parts that make up this fabric. Together form

and fabric create a morphology of landscape that is useful for visual-spatial design thinking and awareness.

The morphology is organised into seven parts. The first of these parts, landscape fabric, considers landscapes as integrated wholes and defines qualities considered desirable in design. The next five parts illustrate spaces, paths, edges, foci and thresholds. These five parts have been conceived by identifying forms in landscapes that are used and experienced by people in distinct ways and for particular purposes and therefore require specific consideration by designers. The final part, detail, refers to 'close up', sensory and tactile landscape components. Although divided into these sections, this is essentially a book about relationships, wholes and the integration of these parts.

An experiential approach to design

The book proposes an 'experiential' approach to design. This means that human experience of landscape helps to shape both the concepts in the book and an understanding of design. It also means that annotated images communicate not only landscape morphology but also the experience of this morphology. The intention is to