

this increased complexity clearly demands new and expanded professional alliances.

Once we accept cities as complex, multigenerational and never-finished artifacts, we are forced to confront our limitations as urban designers. Experience is teaching that prescriptive templates do not hold up well when market forces, changing programs, and new needs come into play. What are needed instead are flexible frameworks that allow for innovation, hybridization, organic growth, change, and surprise. While this shift is challenging to planning that aspires to an illusionary end-state predictability, its inherent pragmatism has the potential to liberate design and harness many kinds of creativity coming from others. Urban design becomes more like improvisational jazz. In Stuart Brand's terminology, we are learning "how cities learn." Rather than producing finite products, urban design is increasingly about the anticipation and guidance of long-term transformations without fixed destinations, mediating between values, goals, and actual outcomes.

The true test for urban design then becomes to achieve coherence and build relationships but at the same time leave ample room for the emergence of new ideas, market and social innovations, and an expanded creative space for the handoff to the whole array of design disciplines (including architecture, landscape, industrial design, graphic design, and lighting design) that will help materialize the plan.

By its very nature, successful urban design for complex and evolving environments cannot be the hegemony of a single profession. The preoccupation of the Harvard University Graduate School of Design's (GSD's) First Urban Design Conference with the integration of the work of architects, planners, and landscape architects has effectively been subsumed within a much larger dynamic enterprise with fluid boundaries and the sharing of leadership. Necessity has created new alliances with colleagues in engineering, economics, environmental sciences, and the arts, among others. This broad fusion of expertise and knowledge is not compromising—it enables richer and better outcomes.

The nature of such teamwork demands an extended dialogue in real time. Methodologies and working styles are emerging that are much less hierarchical, supported by an explosion in communications technology that permits and facilitates rapid information sharing and the layering in of many complex variables. And in a North American and European context this work must increasingly be done