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| 14. The Wilderness City: An Essay in Metaphorical Experience | DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.17613/ez71-cb13](http://dx.doi.org/10.17613/ez71-cb13) |
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1. The Aesthetics of the Human Environment


ABSTRACT
The interest in environmental aesthetic that politicians and conservationists have recently been showing seems clear in its intent. It appears to be a belated yet important effort to save the values of our natural world from final exploitation and the irrevocable disfigurement and 1088 that must follow. If it is to result in more than a program for removing billboards and hiding junkyards, this concern with environment should be seen as a cue for the artist and the aesthetician to develop images, concepts, and principles that will articulate and rationalize the convictions that have produced these efforts. It may, however, seem as though to do this requires an act of philosophical creation *ex nihilo*, for philosophers have never devoted much attention to such questions, and with the exception of a few thinkers like Kant, Ruskin, and Santayana, they have indeed ignored the aesthetics of nature altogether. At most, aesthetics has turned to nature for inspiration or as a model for emulation, but never as an occasion for perceptual experience analogous to the experience of art.

2. Aesthetic Engagement and the Human Environment


ABSTRACT
The idea of environment as an all-inclusive context in which humans are wholly interdependent with natural forces and other organic and inorganic objects applies equally to urban environments. Introducing an aesthetic dimension into an ecological model is both illuminating and important, for the ecological concept of an all-inclusive, interdependent environmental system has its experiential analogue in aesthetic engagement. Aesthetic engagement may be exemplified by the perceptual character of the various arts, and it can be the basis for creating an aesthetic ecology. It is a value that can be deliberately incorporated into the design of environmental experience, and it can serve as a guide in reshaping and humanizing the urban landscape.

3. Toward an Aesthetics of Environmental Design


ABSTRACT
It is important to complement the empirical studies that supply specific data for environmental design by articulating the aesthetic ideas that underlie empirical research and practical decision-making. These empirical studies share with philosophical aesthetics a foundation in sense experience. How this experience is to be understood and used is central for environmental design, and aesthetics can make a contribution here by identifying and appraising the different assumptions that guide design concepts. Three distinct postulates will emerge in the following discussion—the contemplative, the active, and the participatory, and each directs different conceptions of environmental design.
4. Judging Architecture

Poreia: A Festschrift for Professor Dionysis A. Zivas (Athens: National Technical University, 2007), pp. 144-151.

ABSTRACT
One of the perennial problems in aesthetics is the justification of normative judgments. How can we support the claim that a painting in a new and unfamiliar style is beautiful rather than bizarre, an action noble rather than base, or a public building that does not honor the classical convention of monumentality or the modern one of individuality nonetheless a great work?

To assess the value of objects or situations that are qualitative and unique seems for many a thoroughly nonrational process. Must such assessments, whether of moral worth or guilt or of aesthetic value rely on an intuitive sense of what is good, right, or beautiful? Must they rest on feeling, which may be the same thing? Principles are necessarily general and cannot respond to the peculiarities of individual circumstances and, when they are imposed on unique conditions, often offend by their hard-hearted indifference to consequences or their expedient disregard of the full range of their effects. And in cases of aesthetic judgment, ideology, whether political, social, or artistic, can do violence to both creativity and originality.

What alternative is left? If we mistrust feeling and intuition as inveterately personal and thus not transferable to others, and principles as impossibly abstract and thus impervious to unique particularities, only a toss-up seems to be left. End of question. End of question?

Not so, for architectural competitions proliferate and decisions have to be made, if not by aesthetic criteria then by political or economic ones, and if not by choice, then by default. If reflect we must, some resolution of this quandary is necessary. How then to proceed?

5. Architecture and the Aesthetics of Continuity


ABSTRACT
The perimeter of architecture has expanded beyond separate buildings to embrace urban groupings, such as the cultural center and the pedestrian mall. And it has enlarged its scope still farther, redeveloping urban zones into "cities" that incorporate apartments, offices, shops, schools, and parks. Moreover, the range of architecture has moved in a contrary direction to accept a structure that was once considered too lowly to be allowed into the elevated domain of grand art--the private dwelling. Domestic architecture has become an important genre, providing an opportunity to display new theories and innovative designs.

Along with expansive forces, integrative ones have been at work. We have become more aware of the physical and social context of a building, of the relation of its height, mass, and facade to nearby structures. Physical connections have begun to appear, too, such as second story walkways that join buildings above the street level and provide enclosed pedestrian pathways, binding separate structures and independent businesses into a network, an urban complex. This is also a sign of the increasing recognition of architecture's social role and function. Could we be moving, in the manner of Soleri's arcologies, toward total, integrated urban structures?
6. Architecture as Environmental Design  

**ABSTRACT**
The perception of the physical environment resembles the experience of landscape painting, although differences appear in its sensory modalities, in the force and directness of what is present to us, in the overtness and movement of engagement. The objects of the ordinary world often impose themselves forcibly on our thoughts and actions, and our involvement with them is likely to be active as well as reciprocal. Environmental perception, moreover, holds implications for action that bridge the traditional gulf between aesthetic pleasure and practical action. As the painting was transformed from an object into a region of active experience, our perception of environment turns us from imaginative participants into real agents whose salient sensory modality is kinesthetic. We become actors in the theater of landscape, to use a metaphor popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We are the performers in the art of environment.

7. From Environmental Aesthetics to Urban Aesthetics  

**ABSTRACT**

8. An Aesthetics of Urbanism  
Presented at the Conference "Ecological Aesthetics and Environmental Aesthetics in Global Perspective," Shandong University, (Jinan, China, 2009).

**ABSTRACT**
The idea of ecology embraces more than the biological world; it extends to the cultural world as well, including the built environment. At the same time our understanding of environment has changed to include the human participants and not just their external surroundings. Furthermore, humans engage their environment perceptually and this introduces the aesthetic dimension. Shaping the urban landscape requires both an ecological and an aesthetic understanding, and an aesthetic ecological model based on artistic-aesthetic engagement offers a guiding vision for constructing and living in an urbanized environment.

9. Urban Aesthetics, Ethics and Urban Environment  
(Urbanistiniius Pokyčius Padiktuos Neišvengiamybė)  

An English translation of an interview of Arnold Berleant by Almantas Samalavičius (published in Polish). They discuss the connection between environment and aesthetics, the human environment, urbanism, and architecture.
10. Aesthetic Participation and the Urban Environment  

ABSTRACT  
While the environment has become a popular topic in many circles--conservation, legislative, community, and international, to name a few, it has not often been the subject of a broadly reflective inquiry into its philosophical meaning and significance. Indeed, in the flurry of attention toward the environment, one crucial aspect of the subject has often been either disregarded, circumscribed, or trivialized: the aesthetic. Aesthetic experience here is more than the appreciation of beautiful gardens, parks, or urban vistas. It is more than neighborhood cleanup campaigns and the removal or masking of junkyards. It has to do with the very form and quality of human experience in general. And the environment can be seen as the larger setting in which all such experience occurs, the setting in which the aesthetic becomes the qualitative center of our daily lives. I should like to consider such ideas as these here.

11. Cultivating an Urban Aesthetic  

ABSTRACT  
The agricultural metaphor of my title is deliberate. It suggests the need for cultivating the urban environment, including the aesthetic dimension that is part of every place, so that it offers the conditions under which people will develop and flourish. Humane environments require time to grow and should emerge out of local needs, conditions, and traditions. What was once spontaneous urban growth of a proportion and scale to match the human body and activities that completed it must now be deliberately chosen and quickly accomplished. But the same organic principles apply. Planning under these conditions demands a gardener who is talented and sensitive, one who understands that the balance of differences among the components of an environment must be nurtured by being responsive to the distinctive qualities of each, to the interrelations among them, and to the unpredictabilities inherent in a complex and temporal process. This is the essential reciprocity of people and place, and the aesthetics of environment rests on a perceptual engagement between them. The capacity to cultivate the functional and the aesthetic as inseparable aspects of the same urban growth is what makes planning an art and the planner an artist. Can there be any act more profound or scope more significant? It must now be deliberately chosen and quickly addressed.

12. Urban Form as Object and Sensibility  

ABSTRACT  
What I have tried to do here is to clarify and redefine the idea of environment in a way that recognizes its contextual character and includes humans, and so cannot be objectified. Similarly, environmental forms must not be understood as objects of experience but as constituents in an experiential, aesthetic field. We may even consider the urban environment the primum exemplum, the primary instance, of the social character of environmental experience and recognize that it directly reflects the consequences of political decisions.
13. Distant Cities: Thoughts on an Aesthetics of Urbanism  DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17613/wgjp-dy93

**ABSTRACT**

The city does not exist. The city is a fiction, an abstraction rooted in history and mythology. For how can we identify it? However it is identified or defined, the city is an environment of experience before it is anything else. Urban experience, in fact, is perhaps one of the most important and powerful of the complex dimensions that constitute the city, whatever it may be.

I call this talk "Distant Cities" because I want to inquire into urban experience from a different, perhaps unfamiliar direction, urban experience as encountered from the outside, from a distance, as it were. How is the city seen and understood not by its inhabitants but by an outsider who may occasionally enter into the urban sphere for visits of limited duration?

From this uncommon external perspective on urban experience, I want to consider what it can tell us about the possibilities of an aesthetic of urbanism. In particular, I want to recover the humane and civilizing possibilities of the city. This leads me finally to an unabashed sketch of how a responsible environment might be now understood.


**ABSTRACT**

This inquiry into the aesthetic of the city has two objectives. One is to explore the dimension of urban life suggested by the metaphor, "wilderness," hoping to discover what distinctive vision of urban life the "wilderness city" can provide. The other is to use this investigation to uncover something about the meaning and function of metaphor--more exactly, of metaphorical experience.

15. Aesthetic Paradigms for an Urban Ecology  DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17613/xd0e-ah57

*Diogenes*, l03 (Fall 1978), l-28.

**ABSTRACT**

Environmental aesthetics has become a matter of concern to many different groups in recent years--to conservationists, to legislators, reluctantly to industrialists, and indeed to the public at large. This interest seems to have a clear purpose. It is regarded as an effort, belated and desperate, to save the resources and beauties of our natural world from the possibility of complete and irrecoverable exploitation, and from the disfigurement and loss that must follow. It is an attempt to change the atmosphere from a toxic medium that is often impossible to escape back to one that is fresh and invigorating. It is a proposal to rebuild our cities before they become unredeemable wastelands of physical and social decay.