Digital visualization has the power to elevate landscape architecture and inform design, as well as mislead and misrepresent design through the use of creative graphic imagery. In this session academics and practitioners will debate the value of digital landscape representation and visualization from research and presentation to built works.

Learning Objectives:

1) To understand, through lively debate and viewing of reference examples, what constitutes design and what is simply graphic artistry.

2) To gain knowledge of cutting edge digital landscape representation and visualization, and to bridge the gap between traditional landscape graphic representation and the new digital world.

3) To gain knowledge of how digital design is able to inform research and planning.

4) An understanding of what students and young professionals contribute to this ever-evolving area of our profession.
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Is the use of digital imagery masking actual design at both the student and professional level?

• Are we preparing students for the real world?

• Are we focusing on the creation of mood and image rather than the creation of genuine ecologies and potentially built environments?

• Are experimental forms of imagery legitimate design representation?
Where is the Real- Have we lost touch with reality?

Some points of discussion:

• Student must start from the basics.
• Have a deep understanding of measurement, scale and spatial feeling.
• Should have hand-graphic skills- take the time to “draw” out landscapes, and understand scale and relationship between object, spaces and people.
• Physically make markings on a paper prior to diving into the computer

- In studio and visual communication classes:
• start with a analogue spatial modeling project, visiting site and measuring elements and re-tracing and scaling base maps
• measure and note elements within spaces
• same site photograph and hand- sketch perspectives of the space.
• Carefully drawing exercise using graphite and pen and ink- student taking time and pride to hand draw.
Where is the Real—Have we lost touch with reality?

Some points of discussion, continued:

- Recreate scene using collaged elements
- Often the scaling of people and furniture and some object, out of scale.
- Understanding mood creative licence vs unreal images of the landscapes
- Fancy graphics to cover up bad design
- Un-real ideas expressed in graphics

- The professionals:
  - Rough color copy, creative collage by Yves Brunier
  - Surrealistic imagery to set the mood of the space by GrossMax
  - Pastoral and movie like imagery by Friese Brothers
  - Landscape digital design complexity by MetaGradens

- Studio design professional representation —beyond school
What role does the digital landscape play in research and analysis? In both academia and professional practice?

• What are the tools for spatial and site analysis, mapping and data visualization?

• Are there practical applications for digital representation in informing design decisions?

• Are we able to marry analog and digital to create new innovative spatial arrangements and landscape methodologies?
How do current representation pedagogies extend traditions of analog representation?

Based on known analog paradigms

- Development of simulated analog practices
- Retranslation of analog methods, color, texture, depth, etc

Iterations of current professional practices

- CAD
- Vector and Raster Illustration
- Layout
- Model Construction, Digital and Analog
- Abundance of analog products

What are the gaps that exist in current pedagogies?

- Clear workflows that are evolutions of analog media
- Needs deeper attachments to the built environment
- Focus on heuristic quality of digital tools

Future trajectories

- Simulation
- Realtime
- Responsive technologies
In which direction is the digital landscape heading, and is its evolution contributing to the promotion of landscape architecture as a leading design profession?

- Is the technology suited to landscape forms, materials and the built landscape?

- How do firms transition from manual graphic techniques to the digital, and why?

- If we train our young professionals as graphic artists how do design skills and landscape methods transfer generationally?
Landscape Representation and Design Process ---
design communication, design exploration, design criticism

Early r(late 80's early 90's) representation images/techniques from working for a "landscape graphics" firm while in college -- lessons learned-- for good or bad -- from the "smoke and mirrors" philosophy of landscape representation

1. Proportional representational strategies --- Balancing the resolution of the design with the resolution of the representation. Brooklyn Bridge Park renderings story? -- Cad wire frame -- to loose photoshop -- to hybrid analog/digital compositions -- to black and white -- to color -- to finished photo quality landscape renderings

2. Its always about design-- maintaining focus on representational work as a medium of design exploration that should happens throughout the design process--- especially at the very beginning stages. -- physical model hybrids -- simultaneous methods of digital and analogue modes of design inquiry -- where representation and problem solving are interdependent
3. Who does it matters -- and the advantages of keeping this work in house.
-- although sometimes unavoidable -- lost learning opportunities when representational work is outsourced --- be it model or drawings

4. Keep it real--- if its not accurate, it may be hurting more than helping. the importance, and techniques, for maintaining accuracy in constructed perspectives, digital and physical modeling.

when -- and WHY did landscape get cool?

the critical role of representation in continuing to advance the profession-- both critically and expanded potency of future contributions to the built environment. ie -- the current unprecedented visibility and interest in landscape architecture and -- and its relationship to the relatively recent jump in our tools of representation -- in particular photopshop/ adobe suite used together with digital modeling