

THEMEDA

Re-framing contemporary
use of indigenous plantings

Lower Pool Studio Sem 2 2015

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Re-framing contemporary use of indigenous plantings

RMIT Lower Pool Design Studio
Alistair Kirkpatrick + Anthony Sharples

Site: TBC

Method / Approach

This studio invites the students to explore contemporary Australia's relationships with indigenous plants through a thorough examination of the following; the Nativist garden movement, spatial and compositional qualities of bush land and the ideologies attached to current public plantings of indigenous plants.

The studio has the possibility of taking three different trajectories;

1. The design and build of a private project

A private client in which the studio manages and constructs a garden.
The learning outcomes from this process would be, quoting, responding to a brief, plant sourcing, geological investigation, soil science, documentation and design adaptability on site using an indigenous plant framework.

2. A temporary garden in a public space negotiated with a council.

The learning outcomes from this process would be, understanding legal limitations, community consultation, community activation and the learning outcomes from the first trajectory

3. A Hypothetical public space.

The learning outcomes from this process would be an investigation of how an indigenous plants negotiate edge conditions, exploring the notion of artifice, exploring ways to generate form from indigenous geology and surrounding landscape features and to use indigenous plants in an atypical way.

The studio is going to have a strong theoretical framework which asks the students to explore the ethno-botanical implications of using indigenous plants in an urban context and the design opportunities that come from using a planning palette that is not currently common in non re-vegetation projects.

The techniques which will engender new ways of seeing / designing are;

1. Using hand drawing techniques to create a rigorous analysis of the spatial and compositional qualities of remnant bush land. A comparative analysis to be done

in a Nativist park/garden.

2. Section plan and render to a professional level. How do we use these design techniques in a professional context?

3. Colour studies – The subtle colour variations of indigenous plants is a powerful design tool, these are to be explored through an abstraction process

4. Rapid Drawing – A fast brain storming design technique to allow for multiple iterations in a non precious manner.

5. Sectional studies and photo analysis of the chosen site.

Broader Issue

Finding design solutions to introduce indigenous plants into the current landscape architecture lexicon

Theoretical Position

A disregard of indigenous plants was heavily prevalent until the late 20th century, an investigation into any public space including streetscapes shows this phenomenon. Politically, native plants have had a huge spike in popularity but indigenous plantings are still largely restricted to re vegetation in the urban context. The studio's theoretical position is to open a line of enquiry to investigate the causal root of this situation. Key readings

1. Envisoning Landscapes, Dan Hicks.

2. A new nature, Tim Low

3. Rethinking the National in national parks .Marilyn-Omerovi

Tools

1. Hand Drawing merged with digital as a drawing method.

2. Emphasis and interrogation of the section

3. (Perceptive Analysis) through Photo Mapping

4. 'Throw away drawing'

Assignments

Assignment 1: (Task 1, 2, 3)

Task 1:

Analysis of remnant bush land,

a) Broad investigation of spatial qualities / functions.

b) Hand drawing study of bush land

c) Colour analysis of bush land

d) Species identification techniques

e) What type of vegetation communities are growing within the site?

Is there repetition, massing of vegetation? Is it mainly lineal or lateral in form?

1 x A1 Panel

Task 2:

Analysis of Nativist garden or park ,

a) Broad investigation of spatial qualities / functions.

b) Hand drawing study of bush land

c) Colour analysis of bush land

d) Species identification techniques

e) What type of vegetation communities are growing within the site?

Is there repetition, massing of vegetation? Is it mainly lineal or lateral in form?

1 x A1 Panel

Task 3:

Will be determined by which trajectory the studio takes.

Assignment 2

Will be determined by which trajectory the studio takes.

Outcomes

1. 3 x A1 Panels (Mid Sem) Assignment 1 (Task 1, 2, 3)

2. 2 x A0 Panels minimum (End Sem) Assignment 2

3. A5 Portfolio which includes an 800 word written citation which clarifies the students position which also emphasizes their precedent research.