an affirmative open systems conception of how to design landscape

Assemblage 2 Case Study 3_ROYAL PARK_part 4
WHAT CAN AN EVENT, LIKE THAT AT ROYAL PARK, TELL US ABOUT HOW WE DEAL WITH EVENTS OF THE LANDSCAPE?

The function of the perplexity of Royal Park for this research was to force the research to go further, to account for such perplexity. Like many landscape events (and no doubt others) there is a strange and rapid combination of the following – some or all:

- **Recognition of the event:** That something has happened. You note that it stops you or that you are newly attentive etc.

- **Conscious perplexity:**
  - You may encapsulate this with simple explanations – such as the ‘vastness of this circle’, “the 180 degree view” etc. One factor often seems enough to satisfy you. Such explanations are probably not wrong.
  - You might just momentarily bask in wonder. “Nature is grand”, etc.
  - You might refuse to analyse, suspecting that either the wonder might be taken away or that analysis will probably not be able to deal with it and you will have reduced the landscape / experience. This is also not wrong.
  - That you recognise that something has happened, has affected you, but that it is beyond your ability to process it. If it is available to us we might consciously think about such notions as the sublime. This is not wrong.
  - That it is just trees, grass etc. Yes, it is nice, but there is no reason for thinking any more about it. It is not a film, a book, art etc. Just a park.

- **Pre-conscious / involuntary fitting it into your life:** it affects you but as their affecting does not fit easily into conscious thoughts it does not stop you for long and you might quickly move on to the next moment or other things…that you are on a certain vector and the event fits into our lives without coming to consciousness….and will probably be part of why you return just because you love Royal Park.

  **Consciously engage with the involuntary/pre-conscious:** You may know that it has to be more than that. This requires some work. And some skills. If you luck upon it / have the ability and or the skills you can go beyond perplexity-simplicity-wonder etc. and start to ask questions / speculate etc. and start to get at what is a pre-conscious / involuntary processing ‘behind’ the event.

THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE EXPERIENTIAL

‘The task is to find the ordinary in the extraordinary’ Deleuze

Royal Park says something about landscape—something about how we engage with landscapes and about the medium of landscape. How to discuss this further? The notion of the beautiful, strangely, might have something to offer.

Melissa McMahon cites Walter Benjamin’s idea that Kant’s conception of the beautiful is ‘too easily reduced to a languid reflection on natural forms’ and cites how Benjamin ‘uses as a model of pre-modern aesthetic contemplation a “man, who, one summer afternoon, abandons himself to following with his gaze the profile of the mountainous horizon or the line of a branch which casts its shadow upon him”’.17

As with others, McMahon notes how unfashionable the beautiful is in comparison to the sublime, which for many feels more relevant to the contemporary world, with its emphasis on transgression.

According to Massumi, ‘Typically, the genesis of the sublime is laid to a sensation of disproportion, as before the immensity of nature. Feeling senses something beyond its ken,

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something so overwhelming it fails, in fact, to feel it, no matter how hard it strives. The sublime is sensation at the point at which it can no longer be felt, and is therefore only capable of being thought: a concept without a sensation. The sublime experience is feeling transgressing its limit. Or as Steven Zagala says, ‘a rupture followed by a higher recuperation’.\textsuperscript{18}

In contrast to the sublime, Zagala says that, ‘McMahon has given an analysis of Kant’s account of the beautiful which brings it close to a Deleuze–Guattarian conception of the aesthetic. As McMahon argues, the ‘play’ of the faculties in relation to the formal qualities of the aesthetic presentation open them both out as a ‘process’ or ‘tendency’, independent of its product or producer, subject or object’.\textsuperscript{19} Beautiful form’ for McMahon approximates a Deleuzian notion of difference because it is endowed with an internal difference.\textsuperscript{20}

As both Shaviro and McMahon argue, Kant’s ‘“Analytic of the Beautiful” is really a theory of singularity’. What this means is that the beautiful is not an object but an event, a singularity. ‘The beautiful obliges us to think (its singularity poses a problem), without there being any concept for thought to settle on.’ As such the beautiful ‘marks a beginning rather than an endpoint’.\textsuperscript{21}

Associated with Kant’s notion of the beautiful is his notion of ‘disinterestedness’, which is often or popularly taken to refer to a spectator removed from the action and a formalism separate from life. McMahon argues, instead, that ‘the ‘interest’ that is lacking in the aesthetic experience is an investment in the object from a moral, utilitarian or theoretical perspective: what the object is, or what it is good for’. Such interests, provide a perspective ‘and allow us to recognize the object, situate it in a world and ourselves in relation to it…. Such interests precede the object and attenuate its contingency by integrating it into a pre-existing material or cultural whole’.\textsuperscript{22} Against the mediating tendency of recognition which Deleuze devotes a great deal of time to, McMahon argues that ‘Kant’s beauty is much better “dramatized” by Deleuze’s (Spinozist) “spiritual automaton”, whose encounter with a chance singularity suspends the world and sets off a chain reaction in which a new power of thought is engendered’.\textsuperscript{23} The singularity of the beautiful suspends existence as it is meant to or presumed to be and the concepts associated with interests (and no doubt also the limitations imposed by what Deleuze refers to as ‘representation’). According to Shaviro, Kant’s disinterest is beyond the everyday interests of the world, through being preoccupied with affect (as tending to be beyond everyday perception), but rooted to the world, in terms of the event. The ‘flat immanence of the beautiful’ contrasts with the ‘residues of transcendence’ that ‘haunt’ the Sublime.\textsuperscript{24}

For McMahon, ‘In the aesthetic experience, I am being obliged to conceptualize and communicate, while the very means to do so are withheld from me.’ The experience ‘is impossible to talk about directly’ but ‘equally impossible not to endeavour to refer to it’. What is communicated of this singular beauty is ‘the presupposition of a sensus communis’.\textsuperscript{25} For McMahon, ‘sensus communis’\textsuperscript{26} would be seen as the cultivation and sharing of the highest possible degree of singularity, rather than as something generalisable into a “community” (as is often thought). This ‘is a new conception of universality’.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{19} Zagala, Aesthetics, 9.
\textsuperscript{20} McMahon, Beauty, 25.
\textsuperscript{21} McMahon, Beauty, 7.
\textsuperscript{22} McMahon, Beauty, 6.
\textsuperscript{23} McMahon, Beauty, 4.
\textsuperscript{25} McMahon, Beauty, 15.
\textsuperscript{26} ‘Kant’s ‘common sense’: here to be understood as, if not positive at least, not negative as per Deleuze’s discussion of ‘good’ and ‘common sense’ in *Difference and Repetition*.
\textsuperscript{27} McMahon, Beauty, 17. From my experience with many landscapes and with many collaborators it would seem that it is not only the singularity of an event that is shareable or that we would want to share but all that is involuntary – affect, repetition, differentiations, problems, sense, newness. It might be that McMahon (Deleuze) would equate these with singularity as they are all singular (?).
Very important here is that this event that marks a beginning happens ‘just anytime’. ‘Its medium is banality.’ It is ‘generated by random encounters between ordinary, unprivileged presentations of the already available’. From the complexity of everyday encounters emerges the new. Beauty is a ‘feeling without a concept’ and ‘what is felt is emergence of the new’ from within the everyday.  

The event of the beautiful promotes a disregard for, or bypasses, interests. This disinterest, according to Massumi, by being connected to the event involves, following Spinoza, what we commonly think of as the subject and the object being only a two sides of a ‘single material process’, two ways of being the same thing, which Deleuze identifies as expression (which this thesis devotes considerable time to). To give expression to this single material process in ‘thought’ is to give expression to the other sense of this single process in affect.

According to McMahon, ‘Against the ‘big picture’, Kant’s beautiful presents the individual as necessarily working from a fragment, a ‘cut’, not exactly removed from the whole, but from which the whole is itself removed. Against the ‘small picture’, the beautiful does not stop but starts with this moment. While it refers to no external goal or concept, neither is it an ‘end in itself ’. It is a vector, a ‘clue’, inseparable from the action it unleashes; a ‘problem’ which lances an imperative to change.’ An openness to singular starting points in the complexity of everyday relations, the ‘flat immanence of beauty’ as Shaviro says, comes with the removal of the expectations of (transcendent or presumed) interests. This is the rhizome, pragmatics, the start of experimentatation. He also points out that ‘modern individuality constructs itself au courant (“on the run”) in a heightened sensibility to the actual that is inseparable from a movement of actualization’. Such a sensibility, which ‘entails assuming a certain attitude of disinterest’, is the sensibility of modernity, which ‘as a manner of being means living in anytime without nostalgia, living the time after destiny and progress’, ‘crisis and paradox’. The effect of this is to ‘affirm contingent encounter’. Contingent is not abstract chance but the chance of just what happens.

Just to clarify this form of the beautiful is not restricted to the small or personal. It is not romantic and nor is it cognitive. It is about encountering events that lead to assemblages. Nor is it to do with art anymore than anything else.

**What does bringing up the topic of the beautiful affirm here?**

That Royal Park might be more valuably considered in terms of an event or an event with various associated events. Royal Park seems to highlight the eventmental nature by extreme restraint with what is expected of a park.

That the beautiful is an event that opens onto affects and assemblages.

That whilst there might be key events associated with visiting Royal Park the experience of visiting Royal Park involves a series of events or singularities. The relevant assemblage being identified seems inseparable from events associated with it.

That such events and assemblages involve the interaction of everyday relationships. That such events emerge, as beautiful, from a background of the everyday.

That the extreme restraint and rigour of the ‘native island’ of Royal Park also touches upon something of landscape affects in relation to other types of affects – that they tend to be less associated with objects and form and more about involuntary movements and dynamisms of the world.

That the ‘native island’ involves an assemblage that is or produces a dynamism of a movement which differentiates the landscape in time and in space and where each part of it functions for the greater dynamism.

The ‘native island’ eventmental nature seems to ‘gel’ with Shaviro’s account of the modern individual’s ‘heightened sensibility to the actual’. McMahon’s emphasis on a ‘new power of
thought’ engendered is obviously seeing thought as per Deleuze, not being restricted to conscious thought but ‘imagination’/ expression and all that is adequate to affect and events. However, it would seem that the beautiful at Royal Park is certainly not restricted to this type of thought (or perception, feeling…). It also engenders actions and movements of the world as much as thought, or more precisely the movements of the world engendered come with thought in the Deleuzian sense. Such movements are not movements of bodies through space, though these correlate. These are movements of the new. Affects.

The attempted description in this example of the event-assemblage of the ‘native island’ touches on two dimensions of landscape that this thesis attempts to draw attention to: first, the process of engagement with landscape—which according to the example (and all landscape examples) and these thinkers would need to be approached in the middle and from the event; second, the unaffirmed nature of the material of landscape.

On a slightly less large note it might be that the notion of the beautiful might be technically a good fit for what is being touched upon here but in terms of Royal Park we might be able to find a better term to describe the same process, one that is more suited to designer’s of the landscape and cities. I would suggest that, in terms of landscape at least, a reclaimed version of ‘the experiential’ might be a better version of the event-orientation of the beautiful. The word seems closer to the beautiful of Royal Park and maybe closer to the movement-of-the-world nature of landscape affects. Engaging with the event/s of the ‘native island’ happens experientially. They function experientially. The mode of engagement is experiential. Just as the ‘object’ of study or the material of design is experience. What is produced is experience. Or it might be, and this might separate the experiential from the beautiful, that the experiential involves being opened up by the event to how things might be functioning and that this openness is never fully closed by coming to rest on what might be functioning.

It is probably over-repeating to mention that Deleuze highlights that it makes ‘sense to translate experience by experience and experiment’ …‘in rendering the two French senses of the term’. By the end of this example it is hoped that something of the experimental nature of the experience of the ‘native island’ can be communicated, for someone examining it (as has happened to me)– and that it or something of it opens the designer onto an experimentation with their practices – and that it touches on something of the experimentation of the experiencer. Something that, in a sense, it shares with Federation Square’s public creativity.

For McMahon, the beautiful is posited in contrast to what results from interests. The presumptions produced by interests defers us away from the beautiful just as the beautiful can get us to bypass the way that interests restrict us to our expectations. I will instead make a distinction, using the same characteristics, between the ‘experiential’ and the ‘functional’. These two terms refer to landscapes and modes of designing. Functional approaches to designing tend to produce functional landscapes. Of course, nothing guarantees the production of experiential landscapes or experiences. Functional is not restricted to ‘programme’ but to anything which fits expectations or does not escape them. The functional and experiential are no doubt part of all landscapes. This distinction seems to suit the ‘native island’; it also seems to suit Federation Square. These terms have their limits. I would like to affirm that just as there ‘is a proper way to experience difference’ (Williams’), there is also a ‘proper way to way to engage with the experiential’ and this is via expression and all that follows (event, affect, sense, assemblage, problems, ethics). The experience of the ‘native island’ seems to play between these two tendencies. It may be, following Deleuze and his re-use of Bergson that the functional is the world of habit, the world in terms of how it fits into our use of it, and the experiential, instead, involves an openness to the world to empowerment, to affect, on its own terms, at least to some degree. This openness can be brought to a landscape, or developed. It can also be incited or facilitated by a landscape, an experiential landscape, one that is experiential for certain vectors. Landscape, probably being so all-enveloping in space and time has, unlike a painting, say, a powerful ability to obscure the involuntary, affect, a powerful ability for it to be distanced from consciousness.
FURTHER DETERMINING THE RELEVANT VECTOR

To further clarify the nature of the relevant vectors I have found that ‘doing justice’ to one important or dominant vector – and one assemblage (or one thing that an assemblage does) in an example is the most productive way to engage with the difference of a landscape. There is no summary possible. However, as Deleuze affirms, opening out to the singular opens you up to opening you further to related singularity and, as apprenticeship, to all singularity. After working with Royal Park one vector presented itself as the most productive one to examine further. This example so far has been working toward determining what this vector might be. It is in the events of the landscape that the singular emerges and can be engaged with.

RELEVANT EXPERIENTIALLY RELATED USES

There is a highly restricted range of activities in the ‘circle area’ relative to other large Melbourne inner city parks. To get to something of the singularity of the relevant vectors it is useful to look at how the other major uses or vectors of the ‘circle area’ function. Thinking about how each can be ‘experiential’ and ‘functional’ is also useful. Each of these (some of which I have touched on already) could probably be more or less functional or experiential. It should be noted that these two terms must not be seen, or allowed to become replacements for what is singular about a landscape, as they will tend to do.

MOVING

Organised sport is almost non-existent here. Moving might be said to be the predominant activity. If you like, moving around the circle is the predominant activity in the ‘circle area’. In general, the ways to do this include: walking; walking with a dog; jogging and bike-riding. Moving within the circle is restricted to walking and sitting and walking and playing with / being with / wandering around with / a dog, and not ‘walking them’. These all may obviously be very functional activities. Dogs can be as preoccupying as running, but it might be that the Royal Park may facilitate a zone where dog activities might open to the experiential (?). It would seem that the ‘circle area’ has a strong ability to shift into the experiential from the functional.

SHORT-CUTS.

(refer to sheet titled: ‘Obvious human movements off the formal path…’)

As it is so large, Royal Park comes between people and their destinations and so it becomes a convenient route for a number of short-cuts. These are driven functionally but may obviously move into the experiential. For instance, that moment in the day when you are between work and home crossing Royal Park has experiential potential, differently in the morning than at the end of the day. Such shortcut moments, events or places), occurring as part of a relatively fast functional route tend to be just that, moments, but not necessarily less for that. It is common, not just at Royal Park, for there to be a place on the way to work or home, especially on the way home, where this happens.

Most of the key shortcuts leave traces in the grass as they tend to only half follow paths and cut across where it is more convenient. There are a number of casually formed ‘goat tracks’. Most of these are functionalized shortcuts and most of them head to and meet up with the circle and often depart again from it. A short-cut through the native grass could be ruthlessly functional or easily experiential as being in the grass is so enveloping.

WANDERING

The circle encourages-incites more informal logics as well. Many large parks will have a ‘hierarchy’ of paths (often following the same picturesque logic of variety as already mentioned): some of these more and less direct and other paths that facilitate wandering. The ‘circle area’ does not
have wandering type paths. Paths are instead, unusually and, strongly directed toward the circle-top of the hill. Significant off-path wandering also tends to be limited, partly, as described in some detail previously, the configuration of the ‘native western end’ of the park tends to facilitate significant movement on foot to the circle area via paths. Off-path wandering occurs outside the circle in the ‘circle area’, but there is not a big area to wander as can be surmised by the recording of the more obvious ‘goat-tracks’. Shortcuts are the most significant off-path activity outside of the circle.

SITTING - ON SEATS / ON THE GRASS

In the circle area sitting only really tends to occur in two types of places: Firstly, on one of the three park benches - two are on the circle and one is just inside the circle under one of the few trees (moved there by residents); second, on the ground near the middle of the circle. A small number of people will walk straight into the centre of the circle and sit down for extended periods of time. These seem to be one variant of experience-enthusiasts.

PICNICKING

Picnicking is not that common and is probably restricted to within the circle and near the eastern entrances: the former being more experientially oriented and in doing so sharing the oddity of picnicking here, away from conveniences.

LOOKOUT

There is no obvious place that is a lookout. Even if no lookout is made on highpoints informal lookouts often arise. How the circle is approached and the size of the circle area has contributed to avoiding the tendency to generate an informal lookout point. Points do occur here, but they shift. There are big views of the city from much of the circle and some areas outside of the circle. In terms of viewing, it is a space, a zone, a surface of viewing. It is one vast possible viewing experience, with certain parts of it that you find yourself looking at the city from.

KITE-FLYING

Kite-flying seems to predominantly occur between the existing native-grass section of the circle and the southern-most entry: this may partly be due to favorable air uplifting caused by the shape of the land in this area (?). However, it is also close to the road, which makes carrying Kites and related things easier. There has been at least one kite flying festival at Royal Park and this was located on the south and south-eastern part of the circle. This is close to the two most convenient and direct entrances, off-street parking and the more traditional park amenities and green lawn of the Native Garden. The stalls, stages etc. were located in the Native Garden. From much of this area, with the predominant wind direction from the south-east, the kites would be visible to you in the sky at the same time as being at the lowest part of the circle area, hence the horizon created in the inside of the circle creating a very social kite-flying image and feel of being on or near the top of a windy hill.

STAR-GAZING

Due to the felt ‘vastness’ of the sky, the openness of the space, no competing activities, little local lighting being inside a large park and the city lights on the horizon star-gazing is a popular activity.
Obvious human movements off the formal path ('goat tracks')

What these traces of movements very likely suggest about the movements that make them

- Wandering outside circle
- Exploration of grassed area
- Access across the circle and/or wandering in circle
- Access across grassed area and/or wandering in grassed area
- Access across the circle area
- Exploring for the first time
THIS ACTION OF THE WORLD: MOVING AROUND THE CIRCLE

(refer to plan titled: ‘Residential areas accessible on foot, shortest pedestrian…’)  
The strange destination-event of reaching the circle differentiates what happens on the circle from what happens before it: what happens before sets up the circle for openness, slowness and ease. The novelty of reaching the circle ‘stops you in your tracks’ and draws attention to itself yet straight after the way the circle path is structured promotes an inattention to itself. There is a sort of startling again, but not to a destination, instead, on a movement. What is this circle-movement, this action of the world?

This case study employs the somewhat representative scenario of a walk-release from the workaday and residential-domestic. Such a walk takes some investment of effort and time. No-one just walks in and leaves. It would take approximately 18 minutes at strolling speed to get to the circle and in doing so you have risen 30 metres from down in what is effectively a residential valley below the park. Even if you only did one lap and back home it would take 40 minutes. Each extra lap at a strolling speed adds 15 minutes.

Exercisers certainly do come here but they tend to be open to more than just the exercise. As has been suggested this circle is not good for serious runners, partly as it lacks the sense of achievement that runners would like. The repetitiveness of the smallish circle is also not so good for more than a handful of laps even for walkers. However, this circle easily shifts to being more experiential, especially for walkers. To be here you are already tipped toward the experiential. It incites, opens up or invites a moving away from the workaday and the functional. Within 10km of here there is no other place as elevated and structured for such a movement away from the workaday and the functional. Or those it is convenient to, and who know about it, it is the local high-point, in both senses, of the experiential and draws the relevant vectors to it.

The path is a 2.4 metre wide simple and smooth bitumen path sitting flush with the surrounding surface. The totally predictable and regular circle path alignment radically reduces the need for the short to middle distance attention that is involved in negotiating was is immediately and fairly immediately part of normal walking experience. This comes with a deferral to modes of attention beyond such negotiation and to what is beyond this and further from you. This is a mindless automatistic movement that is open to what is beyond it.

(refer to the diagram titled: ‘Superimposition of all of the ground plain horizons…’)  
(refer to the diagram titled: ‘Topographical crests (dashed) within the circle…’)  
Whilst the vastness of the circle stops you initially your attention during movement around the circle tends to be oriented forward and up ahead along the path. The most obvious relatively close shifts in your attention zone are the series of approaching and passing ground-horizons encountered whilst circumnavigating the circle. These seem to draw in an express the ‘greater’ (beyond circle) relations such that the greater relations are expressed in these horizon-events, which almost seem to be the structure of the experience of moving around the circle. Such is the ability of abstraction-differentiation. The circle sets up an involuntary expectation of the next horizon. Each horizon, has a singular relation to the relations beyond it, and each singularly sets up both the one to follow and the following space between this horizon and the next. The expression by these horizons, imparting a shifting rhythm and strong structure to the walking, is part of the dynamism involved in this walking. This movement is an affectual dynamism. Key shifts in the greater relations tend to become expressed most fully through these horizons: the emergence of the city-object, the busy cars on the road etc.

So, overall, it seems that the mindless movement produced by this path becomes open to, associated with or connected to greater shifts in landscape relations. Not just the shifts in what you can see but the shifts in the bodily relation to the shifting ground surface and all that is around it as inseparable from the unfolding of the visible. Such shifts are not like the relations and forces of a painting, these are spacetime relations of the whole world which you are ‘within’ and part of — a set of relations that have been structured and restructured by this landscape — an affectual dynamism. Such shifts are not movements in space. They are movements of spacetime.
No-one seems to have mentioned that landscape (being the world we exist in) involves the production of our environmental spatial (and temporal) reference. We do not live in an abstract space. Landscape produces the spacetime frame of reference for spacetime shifts to be shifts. Landscape is this shifting affectual envelopment. It is no wonder it gets us to focus on the functional, and that which is easy to process as landscape tends to escape processing, whilst secretly functioning in its own way. This is part of why it naturalises itself as so benign so easily. And being so naturalized has the potential for becoming-imperceptible as Deleuze says (or at least as beautiful or experiential).

Such movements of spacetime are not just the movement of a walker. This is social even if ‘by yourself’. Movement on this circle is the very much the dominant activity on the ‘native island’. Which is peculiar. What each is doing – this circle-movement - is effectively what everyone is doing, all within almost continual view of each other – almost all only on this circle-line. Moving around the circle is usually done alone or in twos. Groups are uncommon. There are usually one or two others on the circle with you. Rarely just yourself. Usually no more than half a dozen. You are conscious of all on the circle. Someone just suddenly appears. Someone else leaves the circle. Each changes the circle. You can make them out almost all the way around, as they tend to be backgrounded by the wall of trees and peripheral vision is good at keeping a track on moving objects. You anticipate that you’ll pass them and when this will be and that maybe you should acknowledge them, especially given that you just know they are likely to be locals. Such a social tipping point and the investment involved can tip you off coming to the circle or can be an inseparable part of why you come again.

Experiencing or sharing the singular and almost-humorous structure of this circle experience, is part of the particular movement of the world of this circle. A sharing that you’ve chosen to abandon yourself to: the rigorous yet open-dynamism of this walking-experience, with the others who have done so also. Sometimes the welcoming or anticipatory social interaction dominates, sometimes the relation to beyond does and sometimes such relations fuse as ‘ours’, if secretly. A smile here might express such an ‘ours’.

That the circle is a circle of a very particular and absorbing orientation of movement also transforms the functioning of the interior of the circle. As a result of this movement, and the size of the circle and unless something warrants your attention the centre of the circle tends to stay just outside this attention zone, or pulls itself away from your attentions. To look at the central area requires stopping or turning your body and or head somewhat. The intense focus of movement and path orientation and the vastness of what is in the circle (to some degree) empties out (or distils something about) the centre, makes it something to move around.

The fascination with the vast centre of the circle does not come with an obvious sense of how to use it or what to ‘do’ there. Whilst it is a large space it is not large enough to wander around aimlessly. It feels like anyone who went in the middle would be very obvious and probably self-conscious as if it was not proper to be there. Fascinating and sort of improper.
Residential areas accessible on foot, shortest pedestrian routes from these areas and time taken from home to Royal Park circle, once around and return home (if strolling at 1.35m/s)

- O Pedestrian crossing (very wide and busy road)
- The most direct routes are shown

- 20 mins
- 30 mins
- 40 mins
- 50 mins
- 60 mins
Superimposition of all of the ground plain horizons experienced whilst walking around the circle.

- Horizons outside of the circle predominantly produced by vegetation masses.
- Horizons within the circle solely produced by the topography.
Topographic crests (dashed) within the circle (experienced as ground plain horizons on foot)
As you reach what was the path horizon, the top of the rise in the path you are starting to now move away from then odd (or it from you). At this point the entry to the Native Garden is to your left and another small garden bed is located inside the circle, again it seems to fit into expectations of what a park might be. Glimpses of a very comfortable, tree-enclosed sheltered, flat and contained 'circle of' park can be seen back down this entry path. There are very likely people sitting on the grass or at a table. It includes avenues, body seats, windy paths, gazebos, green lawns, smaller detail plantings and car park. For those who come here for the circle part of the park the Native Garden mostly seems irrelevant and serves to highlight how different most of the circle part of the park is from a normalised park even though very little separates them. As mentioned, the Native Garden is listed as one of the few 'features' of Royal Park on the council website.
Panorama from location no. 22

looking across

looking back

looking forward
You pass the group of trees to your right and start turning away further from the residential and workaday world of the city. The group of trees on your right seem to mark something of a departure from the urban environment. These planting are more 'woodland-like' here. There is a light sense of enclosure afforded by the trees raised just above you to the left and those on the right. The path disappears behind the grassland fence that meets the edge of the circle. The sound of cars can be made out ahead and the occasional car can be glimpsed moving through gaps in the trees.

As you start to approach the fence the group of trees to your left moves out of the way and your eye and body is drawn around to the left toward the brightness and emerging openness of the top of the hill that emerges further with every step. Beyond the initial bright openness open sky can now be seen touching the open grassy horizon. The emerging width of the view starts to envelop you in the landscape.

They are barely obvious at first but the very tops of a few trees start to appear on this bright and dry horizon (it is summer and the grasses have dried off) and starting to register and express the scale and majesty of the hill which links part of your position, the clearness of the sky the elevation of this landscape in relation to the rest of the world, and a view away to the west and away from the city. It is Not urban, almost rural. Though you don’t consciously see them, the tops of grasses on the horizon that have become visible to you now show you are at the high point of the mound and the 'native island' as a whole. This mound seems to press forward toward you.

This circle-ensemble shifts and buckles as you move around it. It began as a monumentally scaled circular surface-space surrounded and defined by a wall of trees that seemed to monumentalise some mysterious circle functionality. From here, where the grassy centre is more like a dome, the dome or the grassed circle might be considered somewhat monumental in the object sense. Or that there’s a monumentality about both the mound and the great space which come together here. There has been a shift from long distance viewing of a vast enclosed space to a relatively intimate experience of this massive textured mound.

For some, Royal Park is notable for the ambitious local native (or indigenous) grass plantings. These were and are on a scale not previously attempted in an urban setting in Melbourne. As you move around the circle the native grasses increasingly become an important part of the experience. From the north-eastern side of the circle (locations #23-25 especially) the native grassed dome is a striking sight.

The scale of the dome is important. To get at the scale of this dome the cross-section of the horizon that is viewed from location #23.4 is 200m wide and it stands roughly 2 metres above you at the top of the dome. This horizon rises 4 metres from the left hand end of the horizon to the top of the dome and 1 metre from the right hand end of the horizon to the top of the dome. It obscures most of the view. It effectively becomes the horizon, and has completely turned to the right. It also has a similarly scaled sectional profile perpendicular to the horizon profile (i.e. from where you are outwards.)

Of course these extensive measurements only tell part of the story. When the grasses and reality are added 'back in' it all transforms. To begin with, words have to be made to work hard to give some expression to this 'form'. At this point in the circle something like massiveness or 'weight' seems partly relevant to expressing the presence or impact or functioning of the raised area or dome: a combination of soft grass texture with this massiveness. The word 'lame' is sometimes used to describe the hill, yet for our purposes this is too formal and does not get at the natural stuff nature of the dome, monumentality, or textural form, and to the relationship with human movement. It is adorned (often) with light golden red texture and texturally scaled surface or topographic relief that presses against and, usually contrasts with, the sky and it is at its above you.

It also differentiates you and the area within the horizon off from the rest of the circle and beyond. This is a new separate area and separate part of the experience. You transition into and out of it. Differentiated from its neighbours in an ecology of differentiation, where the ecology produces both the differentiations and how they function. Designers would say that, with the trees outside the circle, that creates a space (that’s just by looking nothing better to say). The cross-sections through this form are both gentle and massive.

It slopes orients movement. The bundiness of the slope orients you around it. It attracts you and pushes you away and moves you around it and the circle. This grassy dome directs, orients and facilitates. It also attracts you towards, moves you around, and defers you away from, the middle. So, it is not only that we have to account bodily movement but we have to make the leap to see how functions in a movement of the world (or affect). In this sense vegetation functions, sensuousness, grass heads, shininess, lightness functions equal to anything else heterogeneously.

Hopefully, this example has been able to get at something of the pure functioning of vegetation, earth and all that has tended to be lumped into the picturesque romantic basket.
Panorama from location no. 23.4
looking forward
looking back looking forward
looking across
looking back looking forward
Panorama from location no. 23
DOUBLY UNSPOKEN LANGUAGES OF LANDSCAPE

Elizabeth Meyer’s (1994) notion of ‘unspoken languages’ of landscape is one of the most important concepts in recent landscape architecture: highlighting the inability of our representations (concepts, words, drawings…) to represent key aspects of the landscape.

One of the three components of Meyer’s ‘unspoken languages’ is the ‘figured ground’…being the ‘unspoken language’ of the shape of the ground/earth/land/landform). A second unspoken language, ‘articulated space’ focuses on all manner of spatiality that go beyond a cubic-object-on-a-field or a space defined by surrounding solid cubic masses. Such a language includes the spatialities associated with vegetation.

To really affirm Meyer’s notion it must be brought to life and transformed by connecting to, what is a very differently – and even more unspoken language – the unspoken language of affects. Such a connection will also allow us to move beyond the ambiguities of the common conception that the form of the landscape is separate from use. Landscape is this double unspokenness, this double imperceptibility that we tend not to be strong enough to embrace – and so equally secretly gets us to do things – in the world or as designers.

This double unspokenness is a machinic coupling.

The space of this differentiated space is also more than a separable space. It is a separable spacetime. Or a realm of doing. The doing of the world, even if we like to see it as something that we consciously experience. Differentiation is the differentiation of affects. The conscious experience (may) come after and feeds-off, feeds-back and feeds-forward (to use Massumi’s terms) into the involuntary doing of the world. The joy (and sadness) of landscape (and everything) is that it comes before consciousness.

Landscape produces involuntary orientations, movements that have little to do with conscious judgments and decisions. These pre-conscious movements always come with a pre-conscious sense. This grass mound is both massive and gentle. The grass mound brings together two of Meyer’s unspoken languages with the imperceptibility of affect. It is not just something that you (consciously) experience. It structures experience. It is not just a structure around you, here and now. It also structures the here and now. You may be able to ‘see’ how the landscape you are ‘in’ structures your experience before you are conscious of it – but to do so requires that you also ‘see’ how the inseparably larger landscape spacetime structures that structure. The overall close and far structuring is expressed through the way it structures movements. Movements connect to movements and express this structuration, this sense. The grassy mound is simply part of this structuring, one of the ‘last’ parts, it could be said, of this production.

Aside from any ecological value, it might be said that the way that native grasses tend to be used in the design of landscape, is focused on their visual-sensual-compositional role – whether it be in a ‘revegetation’ or a more ‘designerly’ manner. In comparison to this more-normal use, the grasses are (or grass-mound-surface is) used here at what gets called a ‘landscape’ scale. In this landscape these grasses play a major role in the whole spacetime dynamism of the landscape.

Though all landscape involves whole landscape spacetime relations, at Royal Park the designers have worked hard to emphasise the particular whole spatio-temporal environmental minus what is normally expected – detail, features, display, the easily objectifiable, that which is to be just looked at, simple enclosing enclosure. The movement feels itself, I would suggest, to be the spacetime dynamism itself free of the distractions of what is normally expected.
Reaching the fence corner (the fence which isolates off the establishing native grass plantings) coincides with and is part of a rapid shift in your relation to things. If you turn far enough, and the mound tends to get you to do this, the hospital building starts to come into view on the far left of the horizon.

Moving forward more trees appear on the grass horizon that now appears as a distinct dome. It is windier here and you can hear the sounds of Eucalypt leaves rustling and the field of grasses moving in the wind. You are now also very conscious, visually and acoustically, of a stream cars to your right that seem quite close and near the same level as you, and only partly obscured by the trees and shrubs. There are no obvious destinations ahead. The trees seem to just keep continuing around as an abstract background.

As you move further forward (location #24.5) the tree wall seems to disappear quickly off behind the mound, into the far distance (partly as the trees are smaller here), at the same time as the grass texture of the mound mounds up even higher and more massively and becomes the whole view from left to right. There is the sense that you are close to the top ahead.
As you reach the point where another path enters the circle the trees are larger on the horizon and the hospital is pulling further into your vision and seems larger. You now feel the slope gradually leveling out as though you are distinctly moving onto the top of a very long flat rise. The car (at 3.5km away) seems level with you today and the path feels as though it starts to pull back away from the road and toward the centre.

Closer to the large dark and low mass of vegetation (Sheoaks) ahead you feel as though you are on top of the rise and your attention is more strongly drawn outward across the circle. The hospital is obvious.
You finally reach the mass of Sheoak trees, which register and feel like the top of the rise. They are not much taller than you, a wispy dark mass close and next to you. They produce a relatively intimate space on this section of the path. Most sections of the path do not have vegetation close to the path. The three other places that do only have 2 or 3 large shrubs or trees on the path. The Sheoaks are beside the path for 70m and they move back away from the path as a mass planting for 90m. Their looseness seems to accentuate the feeling of being more elevated or close to the sky.

With the Sheoaks to the right the cars disappear and the combination of the breeze which is blowing in your face here (usually) and the characteristic hissing whistling sound of the Sheoaks in the breeze virtually removes the sound of the cars as well. The Sheoaks are dense but are pushed back away from the path by the wind.

As you arrived here you had started to move away from the busy road, and were assisted out westward away from the city and over the distant trees with a strong sense, even from here, of the land falling away to the west toward the lowlands below.

The city has been emerging in your peripheral vision and with the Sheoaks now beside you, you stop and pan your body towards the south and the whole 180 degree view. The view feels immediately vast, long and wide.

The city as a mass of north-facing shiny and/or light coloured buildings now dominates your attention. To the right of the city and framed by the hospital buildings and to the left is an area where the city is punctuated by the empty view over the Docklands emphasises the beyond and probably for many, the bay (or sea). Where else would you get an inland view with a sense of the bay or coastal flat coastal location in Melbourne? From this sense of being on a high point you get the sense of being able to see beyond this space and around you.

There is a very strong feeling of a long flat view across or over a slightly domed plate-like elevated grassland surface. You get the impression of looking across or down here to these horizons. This is markedly different from the previous views against the trees, where you mostly would have felt you were looking up into the sky (which you were).

As it turns out the actual view of the actual grass surface is as limited as anywhere around the circle. The sense of vastness of the whole view obscures that there is a combination of a close, yet, wide view of the grass surface and a very distant view of the far horizon, with most of everything in between excluded from view. It is vast and intimate.

You are also looking back across the whole route taken to get to this high point destination that you effectively discover (or rediscover) when you get here. There is a feeling that you are above it all. That you have made it.

The feeling of ‘making it’ comes with a sense of detachment from the workaday and for the first time a very strong sense of something both urban, workaday and infinite and beyond this great space complimenting the feeling of vastness of this space and the sky above. Talking to others the drama of this view seems to (often) come with an equally strong sense that ‘all of this is now yours’. The empowerment of this view says that it is not just self-recognition.

It seems likely that the removal of most of the middle ground has the very strong affect of all the constituent urban, workaday and infinite qualities of this open grassland-Sheoak space. The momentary sense of stationery within this production seems also to be the production of the connection between you and these two components.
Panorama from location no. 26

looking across

looking back

looking forward
As you move past the Sheoaks the sounds of the cars to the right become obvious again. The walk feels flat, the mound is less obvious and the flatness emerges ahead in the distance. The view rapidly orients further forward and also spreads widely out to the right across the surface through a Woodlandish spread of trees and shrubs. The more you keep moving the more you feel that you are entering and moving away from the road and cars. Buildings on the low Plainlands are more apparent, filling up what was the open horizon with buildings, so that the city now spreads out much more widely and becomes central to the across-circle view.
Panorama from location no. 27 looking across looking back looking forward
Passing the corner of the grassland fence you sense yourself moving away from the mound of the hill that flattens out as you move. You are now orienting forward across a plane of continuous flat grass that spreads across both sides of the path. Have your attention draw to the hospital as it moves distinctly into view.

Just before this the path, at the ‘top’ of the rise, the path was effectively flat, as flat as anywhere on the circle. Now, though you cannot see it but you sense yourself starting to orient down a great widening slope. The slope is less than 1%. Over 240m it drops 2m.

The city is now perpendicular to the path and does not require pausing or a significant shift of your upper body or head to see it. It is a significant part of the moving experience. There are medium length views through the woodland and trees and stands of grass in an amorphous vegetative background to your right that frames or ends this continuous plane surface. There has been a significant increase in the amount of surface visible in your attention zone from here. It is greater here than anywhere on the circle. This visible surface is on both sides of the path significantly. The path becomes something on this surface as opposed to being the centre of attention as if you are walking across a surface rather than along a path.

The drama of reaching the ‘top’ of the path is behind you and the city is in front of you. The Docklands have now gone. You orient much more to the city. This section seems obvious and un疑mysterious. On one hand, walking here feels more like something you do to get somewhere. However, it does open up an expectancy for what is beyond here, of something to come or that you want something more.

You are generally walking into a wind here and the view along the path is considerable. The sound of cars from both sides have been usurped by the sound of cars on the distant motorway which seems carried to you from the dominant south-west wind to here; they move in and out of consciousness with the wind. This seems to be apart of the path that, unless the wind dies down, you just want to move through. You start to sense that will soon be returning to where you entered the circle from and what you have already done, and the city will disappear from view again.
Panorama from location no. 28

looking across

looking back

looking forward
Though you are not consciously aware of it, the view ahead shortens quickly whilst simultaneously the view across lengthens and widens radically. It now seems like there is a single vast flat grassy plane and the city has swung into your forward viewing view whilst its horizon has become obscured by the vegetation due to the path. The wall of vegetation around the park seems taller and more like a wall again. This simply adds to orienting your body to the left whilst you walk. There seems a very long view across the grassy surface to the distant horizon across the city. The city seems closer and as big as it has been, it feels exaggerated. At this point then, once you entered the circle, the greatest surface area visible that is not in your moving forward attention zone. There is a strong feeling of looking across and over the mid-ground between you and the city, as if you are on a plateau.
Panorama from location no. 29 looking back, looking across, looking forward.
At this point another group of Sheoaks blocks your view to the east and the city is now almost directly in front of you and receives your full attention. It is however starting to be obscured by the vegetation around the circle. The view ahead is still short and what is visible across the circle expands even further and starts to move over the horizon ahead. Your view is now to the left. You know that the view will be reduced if you continue around further. You have the feeling of moving downhill and that this will increase over. The surface of the circle on your side of circle is as flat as anywhere around the edge of the circle. So well off this and the combination of the city starting to disappear and the circle space now stretching out from you and the lap that you communicate about to end you may not have already done so just before this – stop moving, turn your body and enter the circle. If you do you have tipped over a tipping point. This of course depends on the vector you are on. On a different vector or other factors might keep you going around the circle or leave you although you probably wouldn’t leave it till you reached the low point.
Panorama from location no. 30

looking back

looking across

looking forward
Walking across circle

Longitudinal section through walk and associated temporal and spatial differentiations #2

The longitudinal section follows the path of a person who walks from the hospital corner to the circle and around the circle once. (Refer to plan "Landscape Structure of Royal Park" for plan version of this section.)
WHAT SORT OF DESIRE HAS THE 'NATIVE ISLAND' PRODUCED HERE?

As mentioned already near here you feel as though you have reached the top.

You've already completed the circle and had exercise if that was important.
So, what sort of vector would you need to 'be on' to move into the circle?
What sort of movement is produced?

This stepping off is a kind of a destination. To step off takes no effort –
you become very aware of how easy it is to step off, and hence that it is
something that is not easy. Stepping off seems very important. It is a simple
movement that requires a strange sort of investment. A courage is required
yet there is nothing to lose but the remnants of proper expectations of what
to do just here, or in a park. A sort of gentle private letting go, an opening up
to a different sense of time.

What this stepping off shares with most vectors on the path is an experience-
orientation. The circle path mixes function and experience, probably shifting
back and forward between them. However, what steps off here are only
experience-oriented vectors. Experience minus function. Distinctly just the
experience.
The human ‘cone of vision’ is a binocular in-focus high-attention zone which is approximately 90° wide. Anything outside this cone appears more distorted and not in focus. This less clear zone extends almost 180°.

**Within the ‘cone of vision’ at a centre distance from a standing person ground surfaces shift from being haptic to abstract surfaces.** For roughly mown grass this occurs at approximately 100m.

**Distances from the human body where shifts in vision from ‘haptic’ to ‘abstract’ occur**

- Rough mown grass is viewed haptically up to approximately 40m from sitting body (beyond that the grass becomes ‘abstract’).
- Eucalyptus trees are viewed haptically up to approximately 120m for a standing body (beyond that the trees become ‘abstract’).
- Rough mown grass is viewed haptically up to approximately 100m for a standing body (beyond that the grass becomes ‘abstract’).

**Sections showing abstract and haptic zones, viewing locations, view lines and surface horizons locations**

**Abstract Zone:**
In this zone objects and vegetation are seen haptically (i.e. at least some features, detail, relative position and depth are apparent).

**Haptic Zone:**
In this zone of the vegetation outside of the circle loses its haptic qualities and is viewed as an amorphous and abstract mass. All depth and relative position of individual trees disappears. All vegetation collapses into a single abstract background.

**Horizon Lines:**

- Horizon 1
- Horizon 2
- Horizon 3
- Horizon 4
- Horizon 5
- Horizon 6

**Shaded area shows lower limit of visibility from location #1**

**Close up of section highlighting changes in surface horizons and view lines**

**Superimposition of 3 locations on plan**

**Guide to the following nine pages**
Your whole view ahead feels it is taken up by the view of the circle and what is also or beyond the trees behind it. You find yourself drawn to a part of the horizon between the city and the hospital over the Docklands, where the trees seem to have fallen away and the sky almost touches the grass surface.

You feel and hear the wind, with the help of the Sheoaks. There is a contrast between the vastness and the city-background and the intimacy of the dune grass. There is a very clear grassed horizon (all of its detailed and textured) that slopes across to the right. The city-background is an array of buildings. You feel that you are tip of the world looking over and slightly down to this background or across and out to it.

You step off the path. There are now obviously no paths. You feel yourself flowing down.

Your walking has been very smooth and easy. Your viewing to this point has been outward and more expansive. The first thing you notice here is that the ground is more variable than you would imagine. The surface of this type of clay soil buckles up and down slightly, with surface cracks that add to the texture. You feel your way with your feet as much as see your way. It does give you a few days usually but you become aware at certain times of the year that some of the grass seed plants but tufts of grass in general, as flat ground is easier to stand on than the tufts. You slow right down. You attention is only on the grass, just ahead of you, close to your moving body. You could get anxious about the waved seeds but your awareness provides you with an ability to not get into moving so that it is not an issue. Even if without the grass seeds you slow right down as to be here is significant in itself.

The circle seems to expand in time.

You sense that you are starting to move back down a hill now. One that predominantly feels that it falls toward the city-background, partly due to your attention being drawn to it. But it also falls to the right toward the hospital.

The line of trees gets higher near the edge (and lower in the middle). The trees around the circle have distinctly pulled back and are abstract.

A little further out into the circle your viewing shifts. Your attention owes back and forth between close to you and the ground-surface viewing and off into the distance-viewing. Two demanding types of viewing that require conscious work to move between. You pay very little attention to anything in between. It is only really part before this that the city plays such a significant part in the experience of the trees around the circle. It seems very larger now. Being freed from the edge and with no paths you open up to the great relations of the landscape.

You have a developed sense of the extent of this circle and how self-conscious you would be if you went inside the circle. Inside the circle, however, the ground is more variable and shifty. There is a sense of being consumed by it all here. And of consuming this being consumed. A uselessness being discovered. More intense as there is little or nothing here in a sense. Nothing, so it is not a secret to savour.

On the circle path you sensed how self-conscious you would be if you went inside the circle. However, the circle and being on the circle starts to become irrelevant. On the circle path you regulate the interactions with others. Within the circle there is no such interaction and negotiation.

The movement around the circle emptied out the centre. The speed of the circle path is felt in the downing of the circle center. The circle promotes wandering inside the circle. You can theoretically enter the circle anywhere and people do, but you tend to enter from certain areas, such as from the north-east.

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On the circle path you sensed how self-conscious you would be if you went inside the circle. However, the circle and being on the circle starts to become irrelevant. On the circle path you regulate the interactions with others. Within the circle there is no such interaction and negotiation.
The trees ahead are still low but are increasing in height and are not so much like a wall as they were in places around the circle. They are abstract. All of the trees ahead feel that they are on a plateau and that they are in a valley between you and the city. There is a feeling of being in a deep area and of being surrounded by the trees.

There is a double interest between the city object and the low point, Docklands, and the two parts contrast with each other. There is still a low section of trees where the docklands are. The sky is still much closer than the city. The city is one large dominant object. Mid-ground buildings are clearly visible. Buildings are now visible in the Docklands. The city feels as though it is almost sitting on the grass. There are still 10-20% of the city object in the view. The surface is mostly haptic concrete material and almost indistinctly becomes a tract in the distance. The ground slopes less than it did at the previous location and it slopes evenly from left to right. The focus is still on navigation.
Getting to this point means that you are now far enough out from all parts of the edge of the circle that all of the vegetation is now viewed as abstract.

There is a wall of trees emerging. This emergence has a series of entwined components. The first is that the tree mass is becoming abstract. This involves all of the individual trees and shrubs and groups of vegetation, that are located at various distances outside of the circle, visually collapsing or pulling together as one abstract entity to form an enclosing, dark and even wall mass. This wall seems to form the edge of the circle.

This comes with a shift in the composition of the view. You are now able to see more of the whole height of the trees in your visual attention zone ahead: the visual bulk of the canopies are starting to take over from the more variable and open tops of the canopies. The trees also seem more even in height. Yet, individual trees start to emerge (these are closer trees whose emergence accentuates the emergence of the rest of the wall). There is a very considerable increase in the height and mass of trees visible. The city is still high. The trees make up 50% of the bulk of the tree and city mass above the grass. The trees average approximately 25% of the height of the tallest buildings. Mid-range buildings toward the city are a little more obscure.

The emergence of the wall ahead and the abstraction of the wall around produces a sense of completeness to the wall all around.

The collapsing together comes with your separation from the wall, which is the separation of the centre from the wall and the outside. This makes all that is ‘behind’ the trees more obscure and largely irrelevant. It pushes it away.

This abstraction of the wall intensifies the haptic nature of the grass surface of the centre. The view length to the surface horizon shortens considerably and the horizon now delimits the whole visible surface, which is almost all haptic.

The process of abstraction connects the haptic grass surface that now feels associated with you (or you to it) to whatever is above and beyond the wall of vegetation.

There is now a feeling of a slight dip in front of city. The focus is on navigation and there is very little slope across the surface. It is almost flat. This flatness accentuates the connection to beyond the circle. Cars from Macarthur road are just visible and audible here. Freeway traffic still likely to be audible here.

You now feel out in a middle, separated from the outside of the circle and connected to the wider world, especially out to...
The abstract tree wall ahead is increasing in size. Trees make up 50% of the bulk of the tree-and-city mass above the grass. They average approximately 30% of the height of the tallest buildings. The form of a small number of individual trees becomes apparent. Individual trees play a greater role in obscuring the city. There is not as great an increase in the height and mass of visible trees.

Overall there is a fairly even emphasis from the left side of the city mass to the hospital. But most particularly toward the Docklands. The overall collection of buildings is wider but there is less emphasis on the big hill of the city. The city seems to move further away. There is a strong sense of looking across a plateau, a surface that is above all else, and a distinct feeling of relating to a wider world all the way from the east to the west, but especially between the west and south, relating to this lowness. There is more mid-ground present between Royal Park and the city.

All of the viewable surface is now haptic and it is very small. The horizon shifts back only a little from the previous location. So, that the view length to horizon shortens considerably again. Whilst the road noise starts to fade: cars from Macarthur Road are just visible and audible here. Freeway traffic might just be heard from here. The wind will tend to be less strong here than in previous areas and from this point onwards. There is still a focus on navigation.

(Refer to sheet titled: 'Factors involved in the production of the 'sweet spot'.')

At this point the path and ground surface outside of the circle are obscured by ground surface horizons between you and the edge - all of the way around the circle. The way that the surface horizons, all the way around you, now cut out any view of the outside path and surface, and tree trunks joining with the surface, will be the abstraction of the tree wall and the haptic surface to interfere with the separation of the visible and haptic ground surface that's close to you from all else — and hence connect it more fully to all beyond it. So that there is a greater sense of separation of the centre from the outside, an increasing sense of the abstraction of the wall, an increasing attention to the close haptic surface, and a beyond which is more intimately expressed in this surface, where you are. You are now in a zone that we termed the 'sweet spot' and this circle is just large enough for the existence of such a zone.

The abstract tree wall ahead is increasing in size. Trees make up 50% of the bulk of the tree-and-city mass above the grass. They average approximately 30% of the height of the tallest buildings. The form of a small number of individual trees becomes apparent. Individual trees play a greater role in obscuring the city. There is not as great an increase in the height and mass of visible trees.

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Factors involved in the production of the 'sweet spot':

winds, traffic noise and visibility, nature and extent of internal views

**Westerlies**

The relative calmness of the southern half of the native circle is related to landmarking and vegetation channelling of the dominant westerly winds.

Factors involving the production of the 'sweet spot':

- **Winds**: Results from the interaction of westerly winds and the landform.
- **Traffic Noise and Visibility**: MacArthur Road traffic is visible and audible; Freeway traffic is audible.
- **Nature and Extent of Internal Views**: Strong winds often consciously experienced here.

**Central Zone:**

- If standing within this area, the path and ground surface outside of the circle are obscured.
- From standing at location #4, ground surfaces outside of the circle are obscured.
- If standing within this area (120m from edge vegetation) then edge vegetation will become 'abstract'.

**Freeway Noise and Royal Park**

City Link Sound Tube is designed to deflect traffic sounds and from the public housing estates. This intensifies the volume of sound directed toward Royal Park. The topography, buildings, vegetation and regulations then focus the sound to the northern part of the circle.

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**Viewing Thresholds**: Areas inside the circle where shifts occur in what you are able to see (or appear to see)

- City Link Freeeway
- Royal Park is visible from the City Link Freeway
- From standing at location #4, ground surfaces outside of the circle are obscured.
- From standing at location #5, ground surfaces outside of the circle are obscured.
- From standing at location #6, ground surfaces outside of the circle are obscured.
- If you are standing in a certain area of the circle (the 'central zone'), the topography removes views to all ground surfaces outside the circle.
Relationship between Royal Park circle and ‘central zone’ to city and low lying areas

Extent of view where distant objects are visible from Royal park circle

44 and 45m contour levels (equivalent to elevation of ground surface in the circle)
It has been about 2.5 metres since location 4 and you are still in the ‘sweet spot’. There is a feeling of looking across (as opposed to looking over). There is a bigger increase in how much of the trees are visible. They make up 75% of bulk of the tree-and-city mass above the grass. The trees average approximately 50% of the height of the tallest buildings. All of the trees are abstract. The tree wall emerges with the city. There is a rapidly reducing width of focused view - it's much more contained and you are now very aware of the haptic zone close to you. It is much smaller than previous haptic zones. A mid-ground horizon is apparent ahead. You are very aware of the texture of grass heads on this horizon. From here you can see across the surface till you get to another horizon which obscures the path and the rest of the surface beyond. You start to orient toward the south, and not to the whole wider world as it seemed before. You start to slow down and you are more attentive, to both the haptic surface-texture near you and to the view across. There is a slight movement of the surface across to the right toward the hospital.

The twin towers of the Bolte Bridge come into view. They register and express the flatness, lowness and the infinity of the surface beyond - which feels like the sea (or the bay), and no doubt the openness of the sky. Cars from Macarthur road are no longer visible or audible here. Freeway traffic is likely not audible here. Macarthur Road and the Freeway become irrelevant from this point onwards.

It has been about 12.5 metres since location 4 and you are still in the ‘sweet spot’. There is a feeling of looking across (as opposed to looking over). There is a bigger increase in how much of the trees are visible. They make up 75% of bulk of the tree-and-city mass above the grass. The trees average approximately 50% of the height of the tallest buildings. All of the trees are abstract. The tree wall emerges with the city. There is a rapidly reducing width of focused view - it's much more contained and you are now very aware of the haptic zone close to you. It is much smaller than previous haptic zones. A mid-ground horizon is apparent ahead. You are very aware of the texture of grass heads on this horizon. From here you can see across the surface till you get to another horizon which obscures the path and the rest of the surface beyond. You start to orient toward the south, and not to the whole wider world as it seemed before. You start to slow down and you are more attentive, to both the haptic surface-texture near you and to the view across. There is a slight movement of the surface across to the right toward the hospital.

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Standing or sitting: what you can see from location #6

If you sit down the wind drops. It is quieter. The temperature is usually warmer closer to the ground. You hear the sounds of the grass in the wind. There is something very real about the ground, its bulk or mass or immensity. Even less of the sky is available. The sense of separation of the middle of the circle from the outside of the circle and the middle ground between here and the city arms even more complete. You attend to an area just around you and this extends out across the haptic surface which has enlarged and is much more undulating - and this intensifies the relation to what is beyond. If the grass is tallest the outside sounds are even more intense; the grass more audible, there are more insects, the attention to detail becomes greater; it is even warmer; the haptic area even larger and the sense of separation from the outside is even more intense etc.
From within the ‘sweet spot’ ground surface horizons obscure the view of the path and the ground surface beyond the path.
What would be visible if the trees were taken away: Google Earth panorama from near where 'View from Central Area' photographic panoramas are taken.
The factors that led to the production of the 'sweet spot' (see sheet titled: Factors involved in the production of the 'sweet spot') produce a sense of the separation of a haptic centre from the path, the surface outside the circle and the abstract wall of trees. This produces an openness to what is beyond the circle, and over the obscured middle ground - to the city, the lowlands of the Docklands and the Bolte Bridge - and infinity. The communication between the haptic and abstract components of the circle then communicate with these distant components such that the city and infinity are felt and expressed in the haptic space of the 'sweet spot'.
It has been about 25 metres since the last location and you are again still in the ‘sweet spot’. The city buildings, strangely, feel bigger again. The trees in the tree wall are fairly even, all of the trees are abstract, but only just. They are starting to shift. There is something very new about this shift. Individual trees can obscure parts of the city. On occasion are taller than the tallest building. Over all the city connects with the emerging wall of trees. A city-wall, which where the tree function as part of the city or makes the building mass function as the emerging city.

You are now on what feels like a ridge, and you cannot see the path. The grass horizon shifts to meet the edge of the circle. This edge is obvious. You are looking at the same horizon as in the previous location, but the horizon is now a surface and is less distinct. There is thus a larger haptic surface, and this surface approaches the edge. The texture of grass heads are very obvious on the horizon. The right side of horizon is relatively flat. The left side slopes up. The view orientation shifts more directly toward the Docklands. You have moved across a subtle ridge and the slope direction is more south now. The lowpoint dips further in front of the Docklands. The Docklands buildings are obscured (see below) as though a view down to the south and the east opens up. The view shifts from even to directed. There is the slightest road noise from Gatehouse Street below.

You very likely want to stop – and to sit-down. This is a destination effectively. You sit down here, and this is a connection between this small haptic space to something beyond. The twin Bolte Bridge towers are clearly visible in the gap between the hospital buildings.

The wind drops when you sit down. It is quieter. The temperature is usually warmer closer to the ground. You hear the sounds of the grass in the wind. There is something very new about the ground, it feels slow. You attend to an area just around you and this extends out across the haptic surface. Individual trees can obscure parts of the city. One or more are taller than the tallest building. The separation from the middle feels somehow complete. If the grass is taller, the outside sounds are even more muffled, the grasses more audible, the attention to detail greater, it is even warmer, the haptic area even larger and the sense of separation from the outside is even more intense.

Till now there was something that led you forward. You now tend to abandon yourself to this intimacy that is connected to something beyond or greater.

Through discussions with others this something beyond or greater seems experienced in a number of ways, something beyond or greater with respects to what might be: personal; worldly; community; urban; career etc. Whatever it is it strongly tends to be positive and stimulating. It seems to open up reflection on ‘something more’, on potentials and possibilities. Such is the event of sitting down here. If you sit with someone else, there is a strong sense of shared and somewhat secret invigoration.

It has been about 25 metres since the last location and you are again still in the ‘sweet spot’. The city buildings, strangely, feel bigger again. The trees in the tree wall are fairly even, all of the trees are abstract, but only just. They are starting to shift. There is something very new about this shift. Individual trees can obscure parts of the city. On occasion are taller than the tallest building. Over all the city connects with the emerging wall of trees. A city-wall, which where the tree function as part of the city or makes the building mass function as the emerging city.

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After you have got to your feet (if you sat down) you start walking again and are drawn downhill toward the city and the dip that is now in front of you. You are no longer in the ‘sweet spot’; everything has shifted rapidly. You now have a feeling of looking down and internally - rather than across to a tree-sky-wall / city-entity. There is a strong sense of losing something centrally significant in moving past where you just were.

The city is now more obscured yet still an entity, but only just. It is more broken up. It is mainly the tops of buildings. The tree wall starts to take over. The tree line in front of you start to become textured. The grass horizon has shifted back. There has been a quick shift between locations 5 and 7, with 6 being the very edge of the shift. The texture of grass heads are very obvious on the horizon and the haptic surface has now reached the edge of the circle which has started to appear. There is a small peripheral zone and a relatively flat downsloping surface. The Bolte Bridge towers have been obscured by trees. The wind will tend to die down even further here. You feel much less ‘above it all’ and connected beyond.

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The single tree inside the circle looms and other clean-trunked eucalypts emerge. The view orients toward the direction of the city, which is largely obscured. There is a strong feeling of the reality of what is now much more a mass of plantings rather than an abstract wall.

Detail beyond the circle is now clearly visible. The texture of grass heads can be seen all the way across the view. The haptic surface meets the haptic trees. Most of ground plane is now haptic, except for the extended view shaft across to the right through the gap and downward along the ridgeline.
The city rapidly disappears. The inside of the circle is now not so relevant. The trees in front of you now feel bigger than the trees to the side. You feel as though you are looking at the trees. All of the ground (up to the trees) is now textured and detailed. Your attention is equally outside as inside. The outside of the circle is as textured as the inside. The view toward the hospital is now clear and across the surface now, not over it. Your attention to the distance narrows. You can just make out one tower of the Bolte Bridge. There is a strong feeling that it has all happened and there is little reason to remain here—and that to some degree you anticipated this when you found yourself sitting down.
Longitudinal section through walk and associated temporal and spatial differentiations #3

The longitudinal section follows the path of a person who walks from the hospital corner to the circle and then wanders into the centre of the circle (and then out).

(refer to plan “Landscape Structure of Royal Park” for plan version of this section)
The longitudinal section follows the path of a person who walks from the hospital corner to the circle and then wanders into the centre of the circle (and then out).

Significant differentiation:

- Before entering park
- Moving into park
- Turning and moving toward circle
- On circle path
- Walking across circle 'sweet spot'
- Leaving

Associated spatial differentiation (affectual areas):

Temporal differentiations (intensive) (Extensive) (longitudinal section)

- Distance walked
- Ascent
- Time taken (non stop) at 1.35m/s and 2,200m distance walked since hospital corner
Landscape “Structure” of Royal Park:
Royal Park internally differentiates itself into areas with certain functionings

Both colours and dashes denote shifts or edges to differently functioning areas. Colours denote a greater distinction of differentiation. These areas, of course, differentiate more finely than what is shown here.
How will the experience of the park change when the native grasses become fully established across the whole circle (as originally envisaged)?

When the grasses eventually grow across the whole surface of the circle a number of things will likely follow:

- You will obviously need to walk through the grasses if you go into the circle.
- A number of direct route short-cuts will exist.
- If you are on one of those paths the temperature will increase, the wind will be moderated a little, and it will be quieter. The outside will become even more removed from the inside. The connection to the sky will be greater. The connection to the city and the low areas and beyond may be more intense.
- If you find a place to sit down a little way away from the edge, the wind will be minimal, you will only hear close sounds, there will be lots of insects, it will be very warm - snakes will then become less relevant and the sense of removal - and connection beyond (I imagine) could be very intense.
- It is likely there will be various sized open patches in the grass made by those who want to experience and picnic etc. You will probably only ever experience a small part of the grassed area when the grass is long.
- The circle will require an uncommon investment to wander into - and produce an uncommon experience within.
Why use the Royal Park case study?

This case study attempted to communicate what one existing landscape ‘does’ (its affect, affects or affectuality) and the process that produces what it ‘does’ (the assemblage).

It also aimed to embrace and communicate certain aspects of the landscape that are important in the workings of landscape assemblages and the production of landscape affects, which have been glossed over, ignored or pushed aside in the recent discourse.

Affect and Assemblages ( & landscape affects and landscape assemblages)

The most central and most perplexing aspects of the landscape that recent approaches tend to defer away from are affects and assemblages of the landscape themselves. Affects are produced by organism-world combinations. They are organism-world combinations. Human related landscape affects are the result of human-landscape combinations, human-landscape assemblages. Affects are what happens when humans, in a sense, ‘come together’ with landscapes (that they are part of). This can be seen as a combination or assemblage (not just of two ‘things’) that produces an empowerment of the landscape that involves ‘both’ - and yet which is autonomous and not reducible to ‘either’, even if it will tend to be consciously experienced (when we think about it) as a quality of the landscape or something ‘in our mind’.

Such an empowerment, involving humans, is autonomous and involuntary. It is an affect. It is not something we consciously feel. It is what the landscape ‘does’. We can feel this doing if we develop the abilities that we already have, but which strongly tend to be submerged, to perceive affect. It is about consciously getting to what we experience before consciousness, unconsciously.

All of this is just another way of saying, as it will be argued in Assemblage 4, that landscape affects and assemblages have barely been embraced in recent open systems-oriented approaches to landscape, and that the Royal Park case study aims to embraced these as-yet-unembraced entities, these productions of Nature.

It should always be acknowledged that open-system-oriented approaches to the design of landscape (and any approaches and instances) will always be engaging with the power of the landscape to lesser or greater degrees, sometimes powerfully. Just being part of the world, of the open system of the world, of Nature, gives you powers.

However, this thesis argues that where such engagement does occur it will tend to occur despite explicit open-systems understandings and despite the design assemblages explicitly constructed to engage with the open systems functioning of landscape and the power of the landscape. i.e. their theoretical understandings and associated design assemblages and preoccupations will tend to defer from such power – and that less explicit means for engaging with the power of the landscape will then be in operation. It might be, simply, that ‘intuition’ and experience with landscapes and designing landscapes are the main existing ‘methods’ for engaging with the power of landscape and landscape assemblages in recent design assemblages (and past ones). ‘Intuition’ and ‘experience’ tend not to be embraced or affirmed in the recent discourse. I would suggest that intuition and experience will tend to occur ‘haphazardly’ if affect and assemblage are not affirmed and conceptualised. It may be that ‘intuition’ is a ‘saving grace’ of recent approaches, even if to mention that ‘it’ is important is to be largely improper.

This case study is also aimed at communicating certain related notions – some Deleuze-Guattarian and some that have been developed by this researcher – that are important for engaging with the landscape assemblages and affects. These include: (Deleuze-Guattari) sense, expression, intensity, extensity, heterogeneity, sensation, singularity, an aesthetics of affects - (Connolly), differentiation, affectual dynamisms, affectual ecologies, abstraction etc.
Human involvement in the open systems functioning of the landscape

First up: theoretical preconceptions (and inattention to examples) and associated of recent design preoccupations have strongly tended to defer away from embracing the human involvement in how landscapes function (by being focused on non-human and non-human-related ‘systems’ that have an indirect relationship to the powers of the landscape of direct relevance to humans. Human-landscape powers produced by human-landscape assemblages.

Whilst Deleuze and Guattari do discuss and take seriously becomings that do not involve organisms their discussion of assemblages almost always assumes the involvement of an organism. Their end-pre-occupation with assemblages is certainly fairly and squarely on organisms and definitely squarely on human-involved assemblages. Much of their discussion of assemblages would not be relevant to non-organismic becomings. Manuel Delanda’s assemblage theory, which is of much less interest here, seems incapable of engaging in human-related assemblages and veers away from this. I think it can be said that Delanda’s notion of Deleuze and Guattari’s ideas of assemblages is wildly misleading in this regard.

Delanda’s version of assemblages does not determine recent approaches but it has been very influential and has contributed to confusing the nature of human involvement with lack of attention to affects and an aesthetics of affects, not being scientifically objective enough or too human dependent for him.

I would suggest that the foreignness and closeness (too close) of affects (foreign because affects do not fit our conscious conceptions and closeness because they are…or tend to be imperceptibly and…prevalently part of our lives) are themselves partly to ‘blame’ for why there is a deferral from ‘them’.

Open systems seems to offer so much to the practice of the design of landscape, yet it seems that without a strong conception of expression and affect – and hence assemblage (as you need the first two to get to the third) that the discourse falls back on very common sense, and fairly universally understood ideas of what open systems entail. For instance, ‘open systems’ gets taken to mean ‘systems’ as organizations that are constantly changing or indeterminate. ‘Indeterminate’ gets taken to mean that which is not static or cannot be restricted to one thing etc. Multiplicity gets taken to mean many things. An event is something that extensively happens. ‘Forces’ remains vaguely related to such things as bodily movement, extensive flows etc. Process can get taken to mean anything that is in movement.

The human involvement in assemblages and affects simply does not fit into such (extensively-oriented and spatialising) understandings. It would seem, and this will be followed up in the conclusion, that the excitement and promise of open systems, has for whatever historical reasons has inspired a whole related range of practices and understandings that have become associated with open systems. Such assemblages have come to define how we understand what open systems and what landscapes are and how they function, as well as what is worth being preoccupied with and proper to discuss. In the name of open systems such assemblages have produced understandings of the workings of landscapes that have come to determine or delimit how landscape open systems are understood as functioning and produce operativities with design preoccupations very different from affects and assemblages. Not only are they different but they push or pull you away from affects and assemblages. They create expectations about open systems that ‘get you’ to overlook the very hear-and-nowness of affects and assemblages.

The human involvement in assemblages is one very important casualty of the recent assemblages. Design of the landscape and cities certainly involves designing ‘systems’, for instance, however it seems that in not being able to embrace the human components of the open systems of the landscape that ‘systems’ (in the closed or relatively closed, technical,
functional or even narrowly ecological senses\textsuperscript{34}, for instance, get taken for to be what the landscape is or is composed of. The same could be said of ‘indeterminacy’, ‘process’, etc. The limited understanding, because it has no perspective on itself or distance from itself, becomes the understanding. The human involvement in open systems becomes effectively unimportant – and tends to be left in the design process to final ‘overview viewing’ of form evaluation at whatever scale the designs are represented at.\textsuperscript{35} The human involvement in open systems is betrayed at the same time as the champions of such assemblages champion their ability to liberate human life.

The preconceptions and preoccupations of the discourse, have it will be argued, tended to, on one hand defer from human-related empowerments (affects) and defer to non-human oriented systems or organizations.

**How space works for humans**

Directly related to this is that the recent open-system-oriented approaches to the design of landscape have deferred away from the ‘human landscape’. Not only have the way that organisms and humans in particular function in open systems been deferred from but that the design problems and the landscapes being designed tend to be the design of systems and organizations which might be relevant to humans but the internal operation of the system is the preoccupation and the relevance to humans tends to be much more suggestive or traditionally understood. This is not to deny the very importance of the design of such systems and organizations for human life. Some of the great contributions of recent open-systems-oriented approaches have been in the design of systems and organizations.

It is telling to note that very often open and complex systems get mentioned, and how important they are for human life is stated or inferred and the discussion almost immediately shifts into assuming ‘systems’ and ‘organizations’. It is not just that it is fashionable to have systems and organisations ‘in our heads’: there also seems\textsuperscript{36} a lack of critical distinction between organism/human-involved assemblages and ‘systems’ and organizations: in terms of humans, ‘open’ versus (relatively) ‘closed’ systems, I would suggest. One gets taken for the other. The most precise way to understand the difference is that the organism-involved open system is an assemblage producing human-related affects and the (relatively) closed system or organization is not understood or evaluated on the basis of affects but some predetermined criteria (performance criteria of some type or that it is constantly changing) or metric measure.\textsuperscript{37} However, without a strong conception of affects it is no wonder that systems get taken for, or in place of, or in the name of, (human-involved) open systems.

What is meant by the ‘human landscape’ is the landscape in terms of humans and human life, how space works for humans, how it functions as part of human life in terms of human life.\textsuperscript{38,39}

\textsuperscript{34}Ecologies are always part of Nature and always doing much more than ‘ecological services’.

\textsuperscript{35}It is common for students to note that designs that say they are dealing with open or complex systems do not tend to involve people. Why is it that open / complex systems designing involves people ‘less’ than more ‘traditional’ types of designing? It seems that when ‘open or complex systems’ are mentioned that certain preoccupations almost immediately, and unquestionably, come into play. One Architecture Association Landscape Urbanism student, on their ‘projects’ page spent a few pages describing in great detail the complex processes involved in the generation of the particular urban system and finally reflected, in much plainer language, that this sort of designing however pays no attention to experience. This page disappeared before I could record the URL.

\textsuperscript{36}There is no sign of this at all!

\textsuperscript{37}This is aside from the common way that representations and designs get ‘evaluated’ in the discourse – which probably tends to be how they tend to fit into fairly received images of what is interesting. This thesis is certainly interested in shared preconceptions of the discourse (fashion etc.) but it must attend to what gets taken seriously by the discourse.

\textsuperscript{38}Whilst such a term as ‘human’ does not sit well with the notion of assemblages, being focused beyond known identities and categories, some assemblages are directly relevant to ‘humans’ and ‘human life’ and others are not. An ant-colony-ant-mound-and-associated-areas-assemblage is, unless you accidentally kick it, relevant firstly to an ‘ant’, ‘ants’ and the ‘ant colony’. We might live assemblages but we can’t talk in terms of them all of them time. They are too shifty and singular. Words like ‘human’ are wildly reductive, practical and powerful in this sense.
In this sense ‘landscape’ is an abstraction if seen as separate from ‘humans’. Landscape might even be best understood as this assemblage, and that it is not landscape if it is not connected to the power of such assemblages. (This will never happen.)

This thesis will argue elsewhere, that the preoccupations of contemporary open systems oriented design practices – indeterminacy, change, flows etc. – can in themselves only ever be indirectly related to human-landscape empowerment. This example will attempt to embrace both the ‘human landscape’ – through the notion of landscape assemblages - and the human involvement in such assemblages. Though it might seem wrong, an examination of the literature, as per Assemblage 4, shows that urban landscapes might involve many (relatively closed) systems and that these certainly warrant attention but there has been a very limited embrace of urban open systems involving humans in the discourse and practice of open systems oriented landscape design.

The heterogeneity of landscape assemblages

To defer from human-landscape-affects is to defer from human-landscape-assemblages. Central to such affects and assemblages is the ‘heterogenous’ nature of such assemblages. When Deleuze and Guattari say that ‘What we term machinic is precisely the synthesis of heterogeneities as such…Quiet heterogeneous’, they are serious. From my case studies it quickly becomes obvious that it cannot be assumed what is involved in an assemblage of the landscape (or any assemblages). However, as I will argue in Assemblage 4 that there seems fairly limited preconceptions, in recent design approaches, about what is involved in the assemblages of the landscape (or processes if the notion of assemblages is not referred to). The inattention to examples simply rigidifies how limited such preconceptions are. By simply trying to do justice to what is involved in how the particular assemblage associated with Royal Park functions this case study will engage with such heterogeneity. Nature uses whatever it wants in whatever way it wants for whatever purpose. Engaging in landscape involves being open to what Nature uses and how it does so.

The everyday

The deferral from affects and real examples comes, almost inexorably, also with a deferral from everyday landscapes and the power they produce and how to engage with them. The recent discourse, through the types of compelling, often digital, imagery usually associated with open-systems-oriented designing overall seems to create an image of ‘newness’ that defers attention away from everyday landscapes and gets you to look – and to contribute to how the discourse looks - straight past affects. This case study embraces a very everyday landscape and how it functions.

Those things that are popularly considered ‘just subjective’

For various historical reasons the discourse of open systems oriented landscape design has unfolded (including a certain understanding of open systems theory and of Deleuze and

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39 The term ‘human landscape’ is used here to make a point. Landscape assemblages might be more precise, but is more foreign. This simply highlights the limitations of our available language. Deleuze/Deleuze and Guattari’s work might be seen as trying to produce a way of thinking and talking that bypasses the impasses of our existing language. Of course, foreignness and obscurity seem to be one unfortunate side-effect of such a challenge.

40 To repeat, I use the term ‘open systems oriented’ partly as, based on my field studies, it is not clear that the explicit preoccupations of such practices does significantly engage in what landscape open systems actually do (which I argue seems best understood as landscape affects and landscape assemblages that produce them).

Guattari’s ideas in particular, and an inattention to real landscapes) 42 with a particular range of preconceptions.

One of the most pernicious and limiting of these is that anything that is not able to be represented extensively (as fact, data, form, notation etc.) or that seems to require words, ‘subjectivity’, ‘intuition’ or human ‘interpretation’, will tend to be seen as ‘just subjective’. In the process, affect, assemblage and all that is mentioned above tends to be lumped into this ‘just subjective’ category. What landscape ‘does’ or can do becomes understood in such ‘non’-subjective ways – or more precisely limited to such ways. In terms of recent open systems oriented approaches to the design of landscape such things as ‘human experience’ tend to be relegated to this category. This case study, instead, embraces human experience. For many even attempting this would be seen as improper.

There are certainly good reasons to be attentive to and foreground ‘quantities’ in design, as Rem Koolhaas has. There is much important and common contemporary design wisdom bound up with ‘quantities’. Quantities and measures (of various sorts…capital, mass, volume, output, flow-rate etc.) may allow designers to connect to activities of the landscape that can drive a project. As Koolhaas says there is a ‘deep programmatic pressure’ in the world. To see the world in terms of programme can be pragmatically empowering for a designer. To reduce the landscape to programme is another thing. 43 There is a whole pragmatics and strategy of ‘going with the flow’, ‘following the quantities’, ‘strategically acting’ etc. Functional, technological or political-economic power is central to the potential of design. However, such things should not be confused with affects and assemblages. The relationship of such things to affects and assemblages is not clarified. There is not critical distinction made between very different things. Intensive quantities are not of the same order as metric / technical / functional / extensive / monetary etc. quantitites. What is the machinic relation between such extensive quantities and intensive quantities is the important question or possibility.

As mentioned above ‘intuition’ (a stand-in word), might actually be much more important to recent assemblages than is recognized or that designers would be willing to admit. Designing for human life cannot be based on the non-subjective alone. Shane Murray 44 has demonstrated how recent architectural practitioners might champion how they are utilizing data, quantities and less subjective measures to generate their design but on closer examination there is a rich evaluative process which goes way beyond what they explicitly claim—almost certainly because it has to, because it is central to designing.

There is very good reason to be suspicious of interpretations, evaluations and understandings being ‘subjective’. ‘Within’ the range of what might be considered ‘subjectivity’ or ‘the subjective’ there might be, following Spinoza who worked hard to understand the power of ‘thought’ and distinguish types of thought that are powerful from those that are not, and this is particularly apt being a distinction in terms of affects and expression. For Spinoza, as has been discussed already he identified three kinds or levels of knowledge, the lowest being ‘imagination’ (The First Kind of Knowledge) which is ‘constituted by all inadequate ideas and passive affections in their concatenation’. This is knowledge of effects and is conscious knowledge. Such knowledge is via ‘vague experience’ and relates to the random character of encounters. Such a form of knowledge, that we strongly tend toward, can certainly be considered ‘just subjective’. However, Spinoza saw two ‘higher’ forms of knowledge beyond this, ‘common notions’ and ‘Beatitude’, forms which we should develop ourselves for as they connect us to our power of thought and hence to the power of Nature. The theological wording of the latter obscures that it is an immanent form of knowledge only available in the here and now and to ‘us’, if we practice in a ‘strong’ enough way, and more likely if we ‘apprentice’ ourselves to the world. T common notion is already non-subjective in that it affirms what is ‘common’ (in Spinoza’s sense) between things combined. ‘Common’ here being what is newly created between two or more seemingly independent entities. Beatitude no longer recognizes anything but the power resulting from what we, in our common sense

42 And something to do with the movement of architectural discourse and understandings of Rem Koolhaas’ ideas etc.
43 One of the issues with programme as I discuss in Assemblage 4 is that it means a range of things. The slipperiness of programme is the problem.
44 Williams, Raymond, The Country and the City (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973)
way, see as mixes of the world. Beatitude is objectivity in this sense. Beatitude is not subjective at all. It is ‘more precise than science’, as Deleuze says. Beatitude also allows us to ‘go back’ and make relations to that which is more subjective. It might be said that *A Thousand Plateaus* aims for an even more beatific practice. More because it is about practice itself. A pragmatic beatitude. ‘Intuition in action’ as Deleuze and Guattari say. In this sense an assemblage in *A Thousand Plateaus*, when we are capable of constructing it, is more beatific than Beatitude. Following Spinoza, the word ‘intuition’ can have a strong sense. A strong sense of intuition. To affirm such intuition, design intuition, landscape design intuition, is also. I have no hesitation in claiming, to affirm strong design knowledge. Data, extensive quantities etc., will only ever be a small part, even now, of design knowledge or ‘design intelligence’.45 Just saying this does not make design strong however. ‘Sometimes, sometimes sometimes...’ as Deleuze and Guattari would say, requiring ‘hard’ ‘slow’ work and an ‘apprenticeship’ to the landscape and design. To affirm the affectuality of landscape requires an affirmation of expression. Assemblages are no less expressive than common notions. Rhizomes are expression in action. Expression is part of doing or expressive-doing.

The contemporary discourse tends to regard ‘intuition’ as somewhat improper and shunned. And to put it even more strongly the recent discourse does not affirm in any way what might be lumped under the label of the intuitive or the subjective. From the perspective of what is required to ‘do justice’ to real examples of landscapes such an idea is wholly moral in Spinoza’s and Deleuze’s sense. Highly presumptive and restricted to the extensive, the actual and common and good sense.

**An aesthetics of affects (an expressionist aesthetics)**

Equally, aesthetics has become a dirty word. In contrast, this thesis, following Deleuze and Guattari and Spinoza (and the results of many case studies), that when it comes to affects (including landscape affects) an aesthetics of affects is the ‘only form of knowledge capable’ (Spinoza) of engaging with them. It is extraordinary how this has been glossed over. This has something to with a lack of embrace of affects and something to do with how Deleuze’s (or Spinoza’s) notion of expression has not been understood or embraced in the discourse. It has everything to do with a disregard of engaging with real examples of landscape. Without a strong conception and practice of expression the idea of embracing affect tends to remain foreign. Such an aesthetics is not restricted to a landscape like Royal Park. There is no reason why an aesthetics of affect is not equally relevant to any landscape or urban assemblage. It would be easy to dismiss this example in a thesis with ambitions for being relevant to a landscape architectural urbanism because it is a park, and that ‘more urban’ entities are not the realm of aesthetics. Just as Nature makes no distinction, there is, in relation to how open systems function, no distinction methodologically as well.

**Particular ways that landscape assemblages function**

Just as painting, cinema, writing, mountain-bike riding, research, needlework, political activism, joke-telling, love and entertaining at home involve their own realms of affects, so to does landscape. Experience with landscape assemblages has involved, for this researcher, discovering a range of processes that are important to how landscape assemblages function. Due to the limitations of recent approaches – largely relating to an inattention to landscape – they remain relatively oblivious of, and incapable of engaging with, such landscape specific processes (as with the other things discussed above). This example will provide the opportunity to engage with some of these.

**Realms of relations: the middle, the unfolding relations between middles and the sense-making ability of assemblages**

45 It is interesting to note that the term ‘design intelligence’ (Speaks), which is an important notion, has been from the beginning associated with certain approaches to designing and conceptions – approaches closely associated with what I am critical of in this thesis.
With the emphasis of recent open-systems-oriented approaches on the design of systems and organizations there is a deferral away from relevant relationships in time and space that go beyond what is visible in a single representation or within the system or organization. Certain realms of relations are centrally important to the workings of landscape assemblages that tend to be glossed over with recent approaches.

One way to think about this – to make it more spacetime extended, more ‘landscape’, than, say, Brian Massumi’s thinking, is join Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of ‘the middle’ and ‘territory’ with something of Massumi’s discussion of the body and Deleuze’s discussion of Memory.

Deleuze’s Cinema books and Massumi’s writings pay attention to the sensing corporeal body (as part of assemblages). A Thousand Plateaus shifts the emphasis or viewpoint onto assemblages (which involve bodies). ‘The middle’ is the realm of sensing relevant to an assemblage. The middle is all that is involved in an assemblage. It is the assemblage. The middle perpetually moves forward, perpetually unfolding. Considering assemblages and middles allows us to see sensing in a more extended manner, and as such it more suited to landscape.

The middle
Firstly, Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of the middle might be seen as the immediate portion of the world sensed by an organism as it functions as part of a landscape assemblage: so, this effectively means as spatially far as an organism can sense in a way relevant to the action at hand in whatever sensory modalities and mix of modalities that they possess and with whatever powers that might be relevant. This extends as far as the organism can see, hear, feel and involuntarily ‘remember’ and anticipate. The horizon often practically defines the extensive extent of the middle. Such a middle effectively moves with the organism. It is, of course only a middle intensively and affectually. The empowerment that results from the organism-environment relations involves and comes with the production of a middle. The middle is part of the assemblage and all of the parts of the middle, in the way they are relevant, play their role in the power of the assemblage. It is variously connected to the body and sensed and made sense of. The body is really only the body through such connections, really only empowered through them. Stan Allen’s notion that open systems function through ‘local connections’ borrows directly from Deleuze and Guattari, however local connections are not just what is next to something, and involves anything in the middle. It seems that recent approaches give very little attention to the sorts of extension involved in the middle.

The relation of middles (or the unfolding of the middle)
Second, it is, however, an abstraction to isolate out the middle from the movement of the middle in time. It starts to come to life as a middle, starts to be a middle, through being empowered from what it just unfolded from and where it is about to unfold towards. An unfolding infinite system of befores and afters. Or before-middles and after-middles. The movement of the middle in time is inseparably a movement of the middle in space – spacetime. It seems interesting how in the way that open systems have ‘reintroduce time back in to things’ that space has been relegated, and this has certainly been the case in recent open systems landscape design practices. If we focus on middles, and how a middle transforms over time, and try to think about how you would event start to describe the various relations of relations involved in such a shift you almost immediately balk. A transforming middle is a transforming set of relations of relations that does not privilege time. Contrary to very popular belief ‘introducing’ time does not relegate space, it brings it to life, spiritualises it. Time is expressed as affect, sense and events.

The complexity (too weak a word, too extensive sounding) of the relations integrated in space at one time are enfolding and perpetually ‘all’ transforming into the relations of a later time. In an open system time is not the enemy of space or takes over from it – it instead brings to life the dynamics and force of space, the true functioning of space, which can only be seen as spacetime. Spacetime is the affectual and intensive unfolding of relations of relations. The spacetime of an organism or rather of an assemblage is intensive and affectual. How is it that
designers of space have let space be so disempowered? Such a disempowerment disempowers designers, though this does not seem to be recognised.

*The sense-making ability of assemblages*

Third, there is what Deleuze refers to as Memory, which has little to do with our common sense idea of memory, conscious re-collection or memory ‘triggers’. In the discussion in this thesis in the Memory section there is an example of an animal prowling, where any passive or involuntary action becomes an involuntary action in relation to a background of experiences of variations of the intensities of many things. Memory is not of things but the involuntary meeting of all relevant past experiences of the variations of intensities with the unfolding intensities experienced and anticipated. The involuntarily experienced variations are then determined by such a Memory. Memory allows such experience, such empowerment to occur.

Or, every time we cross the road the potential (empowerment) of the individual situation involved is involuntarily determined in relation to all past relevant empowerments (not just crossing roads) through the sensation and anticipated sensation. There is a power in the situation, in the stepping, in the piece of ground being stepped on, depending on which way you want to look at it. We perpetually and involuntarily feel our own changing empowerment. The sensation of empowerment or affect. The feeling of a feeling. The very concreteness of the bodily empowerment is abstractly made sense of, is evaluated, made significant, produced, through reference to all past related empowerments. ‘Force on force’ as Foucault and Deleuze say. The feeling of a feeling made sense of in relation to all past and anticipated feelings of feelings. This is not semiotic or phenomenological meaning. It is the sense of force. Force in relation to forces. The ‘quality’ and singularity of force determined in relation to other forces. This sense involves the whole relevant part of the unfolding environment. The significance of any part of the environment in an assemblage is connected to all past and anticipated significances of the parts of the environment. We can just tell which street is not safe or how far we can walk down it safely, and not because we remember being mugged. We can tell which parts offer us the potential to escape. We are continually making sense of evaluating and these processes are continually feeding into future instances of these. And we have ‘antennae’ for how to gain the most empowerment from a situation. Antennae for difference. Antennae for that part of the environment that offers the most potential for the vector we are on. This potential is what the bit of landscape offers that it can do. A sign of what the landscape can do. We just know. We just know, pre-consciously, what a space or a piece of ground, a differentiation in space, has to offer us, what potential. A sense of its power. The potential is a sense of its power. This is its affect. Power with a sense. Power with its own significance. Affect-sense might be a better way to consider it, even if Deleuze does not say this.

These three artificially separated realms and the relation between them tend to be beyond the ability of most contemporary approaches to the landscape to be able to engage with – and yet, I would argue, and the Royal Park example should demonstrate, to the best of its ability, such realms are central to the open system functioning of a landscape of whatever type.

To put this in another way - if we take Spinoza’s notion that you need infinity to get the power that Nature employs then a landscape affect is infinitely connected in space and time, in spacetime, to be able for it to be affect. Even when contemporary design approaches engage with very large scale study areas or sites – with the ambition of connecting more widely to what might be involved in an open system - they will, I would tend to argue, based on the examples examined, only tend to be engaging with this infinity very tentatively. Seeing a wider expanse of the landscape from higher up has only a slim and variable relationship to the middle and what enlivens the middle – to how landscapes function. Sense, the virtual, assemblages, affects, events, problems all rely on such an openness, and only function in the middle. Openness does. The question of what openness does is very weakly engaged with.

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46 This is discussed in the appendices in the section on Deleuze’s Difference and Repetition.
These are here characterized as they tend to be deferred from in recent design approaches and each open up particular representational challenges that are embraced in the Royal park example.

**The functioning of important landscape components in landscape assemblages:**

Assemblage 4 argues that some of the very important and prevalent components of the landscape, such as spatiality, vegetation, landform tend to not be embraced as playing an active role in how open systems function. Just as with the other things or realms, discussed above, that tend to be disregarded in recent practices, Royal Park aims to act as a limit case, being chosen partly as it should highlight something of the limits of what recent practices are able to engage with respects to the functioning of open systems. The power of Royal Park can only be affirmed by embracing how vegetation, paths, grass surfaces, walking, spatiality, views and experience actually function. The effort in walking up hill, the ability of trees to visually become ‘abstract’, the ability of wind to move you on, the warmth of grass when you sit down, the sounds of traffic, the islandness of Royal Park, the shininess of the path against the sky, the infinity of a circle etc. are part of the assemblage. However, to even concentrate on Royal Park will strike many as odd.

**The visual**

Popular oppositions, in the discourse, such as between ‘performance’ and ‘appearance’ are stunning in their one-dimensionality and de-privileging of the visual. To embrace the visual it has to be seen as a component of assemblages. I would suggest that the Royal Park case study demonstrates some ways that the visual functions and that visual affects function in landscape. The visual is affectual itself and part of a greater machinery of affect.

**Movements of the world**

It should be said that from my whole series of case studies it would seem that one of the characteristic aspects about landscape as a medium are what I consider ‘movements or actions of the world’, affectual movements that ‘you’ are part of. Only dance (it seems) explores affectual movements you are part of so directly (but not so commonly with much success ‘outside of doors’ in the openeness of the world). Landscape movements of the world are movements of, what I consider, ‘openness’. In openness the whole world is infolded in affect, or the whole (environmental) middle (a middle is only a middle in relation to its own unfolding from the past and to the anticipated future). Movements of the world are inseparable from extensive/bodily movements yet are ‘of another order’ as Deleuze, after Spinoza, says. Deleuze’s typology of affects: of vibrations, resonances and forced movements is a simple and useful way to think about how affect functions. In this sense ‘old school’ formal analysis was engaging with affect but only that ‘easily’ engaged with part of – resonances, harmonies, communication between parts etc. Seldom would such formalism ‘get to’ a movement of the world. Probably such formalism is too obsessional, too conscious, only visual, only looking at what is out in front of you. With respect to Deleuze’s typology, a movement of the openness of the world is a species of ‘forced movement’ that we are caught up in bodily. *A Thousand Plateaus* gives lots of emphasis to forced environmental movements – smooth space, the nomad, the Stagemaker etc. There are all manner of affects in the landscape. It seems that such movements tend to integrate lesser affects into ‘them’. Such an integration, such a movement, possibly being the great expression of what happens when an organism and the environment join together in movement. As Deleuze and Guattari say, ‘why is it “I think therefore I am? Why isn’t it I walk therefore I am?” Such movements can be artificially isolated from other movements. However they are always part of ecologies and greater integrations. Such movements function in rhythms and dynamisms. Cinema functions through dynamisms – involving build-ups, releases, flattenings, resolutions etc. The dynamism of landscape, however, is produced through openness. Seeing landscape in terms of dynamism privileges time. Dynamisms importantly produce whole spatialities and ecologies.
Bodies in openness produce space or what space does. Producing space is producing what space does. The production of space and what space does are the same thing. The series of shifts that occur moving through Federation Square correspond to and produce the abilities of each of the ‘spaces’ or (area) differentiations, which can each artificially and practically be separated out.

Such movements are mentioned here just after visual affects in that visual affectuality and such movements interact machinically and wildly at Royal Park. Landscape visual affectuality functions in an all-enveloping richly and variably deep manner. Such affects are also inseparable from other types of affects: aural, tactile, olfactory, proprioreceptive etc., each of which is important at Royal Park.

The machinic relationship between the extensive and the intensive/affectual and all that flows from it

What have been discussed above are realms that tend to be weakly or not embraced by the recent open systems-oriented discourse of the design of landscape. These realms were to a lesser degree examined in the smaller Federation Square example.

One of the key differences of the Royal Park example from the Federation Square example is that there is a very concerted effort to cross reference the various unfolding dimensions of the assemblage at Royal Park to each other and a concerted effort to reference the intensive and affectual dimensions to the extensive in whatever way that seems most suitable.

The Federation Square case study was designed as a ‘powerpoint’ lecture. It largely (though there are contextual maps and some small location plans used) relies upon referencing conscious and involuntary perceptions and actions to the space and time referencing abilities of a series of photographs that allow you to see something of what one photograph is showing in the preceding and next photograph.

In the Royal Park case study, and this is the biggest difference methodologically, there is a serious attempt to relate the unfolding conscious, intensive and affectual actions of the example to graphic representations that are (temporally and spatially) extensively referenceable. The reference-ability of the extensive is taken much more seriously in Royal Park. This brings out and attempts to affirm a key part of the power of the extensive. It is important for two initial reasons. First, and to put it simply this effort aims to bring such extensive representations (drawings etc.) to life.

One way to understand this is to consider affects as simply as possible: as has been discussed already, as the concrete interaction of relations in space and time, which have been integrated by an organism, produce affects. Conscious examination of landscape necessarily tends to work ‘through’ the extensive (‘space’ loosely) ‘to’ the intensive and affectual if it is able to. In the Royal Park investigation the workings of the intensive and affectual are related to the extensive, so that variations and changes in the extensive can be understood as variations of the intensive and affectual.

The same is the case for extensive representations. A certain relationship might be identified as intensively important. This might be able to be represented extensively. If constructed with the relevant care (which might only be a sketch section on a note book or even ‘in your head’) it can draw a relationship between a certain relation in the extensive (the drawing) to a certain part of the process (a certain relation) of an assemblage that produces an affect.

This has a number of immediate consequences.

The ability to connect to an existing spacetime variability

First, with landscape and urban situations ‘a design’ is always the alteration of an existing spacetime variability – despite what is suggested in some recent designing and images – where the design is presented as effectively autonomous (such designs are often presented
in a manner where the only way to ‘understand’ them is as an (almost) autonomous system or organization. So, there is an investigative / analytical component to a project involved in connecting with and opening up this existing spacetime variability. In relation to, say, some intensive discovery, an extensive representation then is able to machinically open up or propel the investigation, further opening up a greater and ongoing movement and development of representational ‘dimensions’ suited to the emerging understanding, and central to the construction of a design assemblage.

The ability to bring the extensive to life

Second, drawing the extensive works the other way as well. In drawing the relevant extensive relations, in relation to the intensive and affectual, such extensive relations are brought to life, literally. The bringing to life of one dimension of extensive relations cannot help but bring to life others, and each one brought to life further determines the previous ones, with the aim of producing a practical and effective repertoire of representations (images and words) that allows the designer the ability to engage in a design situation.

The ability to evaluate how a design act alters what an assemblage (landscape) does

Third, to gain an understanding or connection to how such extensive relations vary with variations in affect will provide something of the means to evaluate and connect to how the alteration of relations (a design act) alters the affectuality of the assemblage (alters what a landscape does) i.e. how a drawing change what the ‘real’ landscape might do.

Opening up the transformability of assemblages

Fourth, the extensive is nothing without the intensive. However, upon becoming intensive itself it opens up the true power of the extensive in design. If constructed in the right manner it will: firstly, as said, connect to the variability of the intensive/affectual and; second, be transformable of this intensivity/affectivity, by allowing designers the ability to transform transformable relations of the assemblage. Transformability of the intensive and the affectual is a key power of the extensive.

The ability to construct a material to work with / An immanent ability to evaluate what you are doing

Fifth, in this sense, via this cross-referentiality between the intensive/affectual and the extensive, we both construct a ‘material’ to work with (extensive, intensive and affectual) and are able to evaluate what we are doing. The material contains its own evaluation. It is not a material unless it does. This is the practical sense of what Deleuze terms ‘immanence’.

The ability to connect to problems

However, such material is not material really without relation to problems. There are always situations, predicaments, motivations, problems. As Guattari said a perception has two components: sensory affect and problematic affect. There is always problem (motivation, predilection, preoccupation, orientation…) in a project, in a drawing, in a perception, in a sensation. Sensory affect (or just affect) continually communicates with the motivation-situation, continually making sense of what is emerging. The design assemblage becomes a design assemblage through the interplay between problem and affect. Allows it to make a difference if it can.

Making sense of the functional/technical/organizational…
Of course there are realms of designing that have dominated recent designing which are centrally important – the functional, programmatic, organisational, systemic, technical, service-ecological etc., which tend to be better served within the extensive alone. This has been given enough attention (most of the attention) elsewhere. These are essential to design projects and what drives what the landscape does but it is – despite the confusion about this - not what the landscape does. It is in the service of something ‘higher, ‘more’ and makes no sense itself. The intensive-affectual-problematic is why there is organisation-system etc. The latter is nothing, is not significant, without being brought to life by the intensive-affectual-problematic.

The ability to produce an expressive repertoire of design representations

The entwinement of the extensive and intensive-affectual involves what has so far been a foreign (Deleuze-Spinozist) idea: that representation is not about representing something but that representation is about expressing something and that, especially for design representations, this implies an extensively referenced transformable and expressive repertoire of representations.

The ability to know when you are deferring away from the potential of the landscape

All examples are made sense of in some way. However, sense requires criticality. At one end of the spectrum cliché, fashion, and what is considered proper, worthy and interesting by a discourse also all make sense of what emerges. Immanence, open systems themselves, affects provide the only means to escape being judged by preconceptions. Evaluation in open systems is very poorly understood theoretically and confused in practice.
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End