Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning
2025, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 1-15
https://doi.org/10.11648/j.larp.20251001.11

Research Article

The Collages and Montages of James Corner, Ken Smith, and Adriaan Geuze

Joyce Tong, Nadia Amoroso*

Landscape Architecture, University of Guelph, Guelph, Canada

Abstract

The past three decades have seen a significant evolution in graphic representation within landscape architecture, driven by technological advancements and the complexity of environmental challenges. This paper examines the pioneering visual modes and representational approaches of acclaimed landscape architects, James Corner of Field Operations, Adriaan Geuze of West 8, and Ken Smith of Ken Smith Workshop, highlighting how their graphic innovations have reshaped the aesthetics, communication, and pedagogy of the discipline. Their innovative techniques have enhanced how landscapes are conceptualized, designed, and understood, positioning representation as both a tool for storytelling and critical inquiry. James Corner's early "map-drawings" integrated analytical data with artistic aesthetics, crafting layered spatial narratives. His projects like the High Line in New York City and the Camden High Line in London fuse mapping, abstract collage, and field sketches to envision urban renewal. As digital tools like Photoshop emerged, Ken Smith adapted his montage techniques to the digital realm. His use of layering, masking, and perspective manipulation demonstrates how traditional collage principles can be integrated into contemporary digital workflows. West 8's practice embraces the distortion of reality to provoke thought and engagement. The interplay between digital precision and artistic expression underpins their graphic methodology, resulting in images that are positioned in context and open to interpretation. This is seen in the Schouwburgplein, Rotterdam through its expression of the void. These practitioners emphasize the evolution of representation from a simple means of communication to a critical and expressive medium that shapes how landscapes are designed and perceived today.

Keywords

Visual Communication in Landscape Architecture, Graphic Communication, James Corner, Ken Smith, Adriaan Geuze, Field Operations, West 8, Collage

1. Introduction

Landscape Architecture as a profession is fairly new, since it only dates back to a little over a hundred years ago when a landscape architect position was approved by the Board of Central Park Commission in New York City [1]. Today, the profession has gained more recognition, allowing them to have influence in landscape planning, but also in the social, ecological and mental aspects of the design field. In the field, digital tools have allowed landscape architects to start using new approaches and methods in landscape planning, conservation, renovation and installing issues. Digital tools are quite diverse depending on the project; the complexity can be adjusted quickly. This can be seen through its illustration, virtual

*Corresponding author: nadia.amoroso@uoguelph.ca (Nadia Amoroso)

Received: 24 February 2025; **Accepted:** 5 March 2025; **Published:** 26 March 2025

reality immersions, interaction, intuitive and intensive. Before digital tools, construction plans, models, renderings etc. was done by hand. But with new technologies such as Computer-Aided Design (CAD) allows landscape architects to be more flexible with the design process.

A study was done by Lativa University of Agriculture about digital tools in landscape architecture [1]. They analyzed and compared what the most popular digitals tools are and why specific people chose that specific software. The survey consist of eleven questions, which ranges from education level of the respondents to the use habits of digital tools and to see what preconditions and goals they have. The respondents of the survey done by Lativa University are engaged professionals in the field of landscape architecture and spread across equally through experience range. In total, eighty-one participants are a part of this study [1]. The results of the study show:

(1) 6 responded that they have 15 or more years of experience;
(2) 4 responded with 5-15 years of experience;
(3) 7 responded with 3 years of experience;
(4) 3 responded with 1-3 years of experience;
(5) 16 (80%) of the respondents said that their knowledge is adequate enough for the field; and
(6) 3 (15%) of the respondents said that they are beginners [1]

Through this survey, the university also asked how often the landscape architects in Lativa use digital tools in their everyday practice. In each project, about 85% of professionals use digital tools to help assist them. The most widely used tools to assist landscape architects today are CAD (95%), and 3D modelling (85%), while other tools like GIS (20%) and virtual reality (5%) are used a lot less [1]. This can be explained through the lack of knowledge about virtual reality among landscape architects because of increase development costs in visual materials and the lack of special tools. Looking at the results of the survey shows that the most popular ways of getting the proper visual material, such as plans and sections, are by CAD. There is a difference in what software's that is used depending on if it is a large or small-scale project. For GIS, it is used more for larger scale projects (30%) compared to smaller scale projects (15%). GIS provides large amounts of spatial data, allowing landscape architects to understand the surrounding context better for their designs. With smaller areas, there is going to be less information about the surrounding context. For 3D modelling, there is a smaller difference between larger scale projects (45%) to smaller projects (65%) compared to GIS [2]. The difference is mainly influence by the scale of a project, since larger projects costs more while having a lack of digital data resources. Overall, the professionals that participated in this survey expressed their point of view where with the greater variety of digital tools think that there is more advantages to digital tools than disadvantages. It is quicker and higher quality than sketching everything by hand, while allowing the renderings to be quickly edited. There are only minor cases were sketching out some basic drawings might be more helpful than using the digital tools. This can be initial concept drawings to some quick ideas before diving into the concept and more final designs. Similar to other design professions, digital tools have allowed faster, and more efficient modes and methods of graphic communication.

Cultural landscapes overall have been of great importance, especially in places around Europe. The idea of cultural landscapes is looking at how to assess and categorize different areas into landscape character types so that it can be used for policy and strategic planning. This can be seen especially between the late 1980s and early 1990s when this idea reoccurred since the computer has become more and more popular throughout the industry. The analysis for cultural landscapes took advantage of this "computer analysis, new information and the understanding of landscape history" [3].

Key figures in landscapes architecture, including James Corner, Adriaan Geuze and Ken Smith took advantage of this graphic shift both in technology and visual styles in the 1990 and 2000. Their connection to the academia allows them to test new graphic technology and presentation outcomes in the studio setting, which could later be deployed in their practice. This paper specifically targets some of the representational works from Corner, Smith and Geuze. The evolution of graphic styles and modes of representation in landscape architecture from the early 1990s to today reflects significant shifts in representational techniques, influenced by technological advancements, theoretical discourse, and design pedagogy. In the early 1990s, the experimentation of mixed-media collages were embraced by James Corner, Ken Smith, and Adriaan Geuze. Their collage-based drawings were inspired by post-modern artistic movements, land artists, and the emergence of Photoshop. Collage-technique depictions allowed for layering, and abstraction.

Corner's seminal essay "Representation and Landscape" (1992) discussed that representational techniques should move beyond static site plans, he advocated for a more speculative and interpretive approach to landscape visualization. This allowed the viewer to think more about the space, and the landscape is ever –changing. Drawings should reflect this stance. His map-drawings, that were developed as a collage, in Taking Measures Across the American Landscape (1996), combined aerial photography, hand sketches, and textual annotations to create composite landscapes that reflected temporal and spatial complexities.

Ken Smith's early collage work, specifically in projects like MoMA Roof Garden (1997), encompassed a playful and critical approach to representation. Influenced by pop art, land art and urban iconography, Smith's collages layered photographic elements with bold graphic colors and symbols, discarding the traditional styles of landscape architectural renderings. His visual style echoed with the contemporary discourse of landscape as an urban and cultural construct rejecting a painterly scenery of naturalistic approach to the

landscape.

Adriaan Geuze's firm, West 8, utilized collage with emerging digital 3D modelling and Photoshop, as a conceptual and communicative tool, specifically for his Schouwburgplein project in Rotterdam. West 8's representation techniques combined photomontage, and digital manipulation to illustrate urban transformation processes. Similar to Smith, Geuze embraces the experimental and playful aspects of collaging in his representation at the time. This period saw a distinct emphasis on abstraction and conceptual layering, positioning landscape representation as a tool for thinking and imaginative speculation.

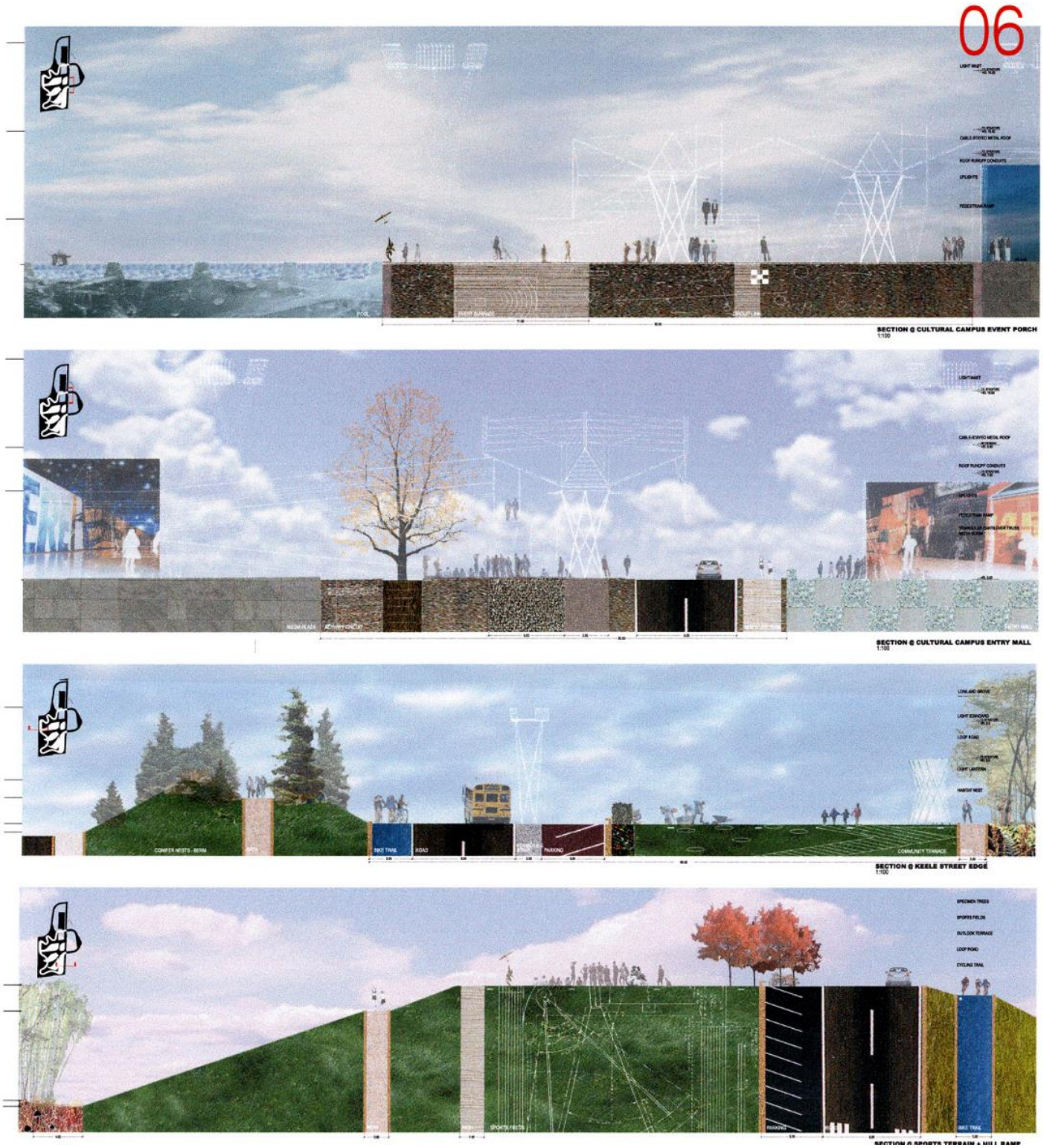

Figure 1. *Downsview Section Cuts. Focusing on the textural and aesthetic qualities of the ground plane and the interaction of the viewer with the space in relation to nearest objects. By James Corner, Stan Allen, and design team for the Downsview Park competition- Emergent Ecologies, 1999.*

In the early 2000s, Corner became Chair of the Landscape Architecture Department at the University of Pennsylvania. He wanted to bring innovation, new technology and theory into the program. He also collaborated with architect Stan Allen of Field Office, a landscape, architectural and urban design practice based in New York and Philadelphia. At the time, Corner is the author of *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape* (Yale, 1996), co-authored with aerial photographer, Alex MacLean, which received the AIA International Book of the Year Award and the ASLA Award of Honor. This book profiled his "map-drawings" which were considered innovative at the time for visual analysis and creative cartography. He also is the editor of *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture* (Princeton, 1999), a book that centred around the revitalization of landscape architecture as a critical cultural practice. Corner at the time also submitted to the Downsview Park competition with Stan Allen. This competition allowed his to test new graphic modes of communication, including the "ecological timeline" graphic that is commonly used now in landscape architecture. In the 'Emergent Ecology' project, Corner provided section-elevations that combined partial pieces of the plan, in order for the view to connect the horizontal ground surface with the vertical profile of the same area (Figure 1).

Similar to Corner, Adriaan Geuze was bringing international attention to landscape architecture in the late'90's and early 2000s. After receiving the prestigious Prix de Rome in 1990, Adriaan Geuze and his firm, West 8, gained international recognition for their innovative approach to planning and designing public spaces. In 1992, Geuze founded the SLA Foundation (Surrealistic Landscape Architecture), further elevating public awareness of the landscape architecture profession. West 8 became renowned for integrating contemporary culture, urban identity, architecture, public space, and engineering into cohesive designs that respect and respond to their contexts [4]. At the time, Geuze was experimenting with new graphic techniques that seemed played and unconventional in the field. He taught and lectured at various universities, including Harvard's Graduate School of Design, where he was recognized as an influential professor in landscape architecture and urban design. He allowed his students to experiment with various graphic techniques. As part of studio, landscape architecture students explored architectural ideas, exploring buildings and not just the landscape.

Ken Smith worked in the office of Peter Walker and Martha Schwartz before he opened his own office in New York City called Ken Smith Workshop in 1992. Smith also educated many students, teaching as an adjunct professor at the City College of New York between 1992 and 1996. He also is a visiting design critic at Harvard Graduate School of Design from 1997 to the present. Smith was also honoured as a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 2012 and the recipient of the 2011 Christian Petersen Design Award, which the Iowa State University College of Design presented to him.

2. Methods

This study employs a qualitative research methodology to analyze the evolution of visual representation in landscape architecture, focusing on the collage and montage techniques used by James Corner, Ken Smith, and Adriaan Geuze. The methods integrate comparative analysis, archival research, and direct engagement with practitioners to examine the impact of their graphic innovations on contemporary landscape architectural discourse.

Selection and Review of Representational Works- A systematic review of visual materials was conducted, selecting key drawings, collages, and montages produced by the three landscape architects from the 1990s to the present. The selection criteria included: 1.1) Historical and Theoretical Significance- these are works that contributed to shifts in representational techniques within the field; 1.2) Project Diversity- this includes a range of project scales and types, from competition entries to built projects; 1.3) Styles and Techniques- this is analysis of digital techniques, including digital collaging, photographic montages, and computational renderings. Some sources used for this study included published works such as *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape* (Corner & MacLean, 1996), Ken Smith's conceptual montages, and West 8's competition renderings. These visuals were examined for their compositional strategies, use of layering, abstraction, and their ability to communicate their concepts in a compelling manner.

Comparative Analysis of Graphic Trends- A comparative framework was developed to identify trends and divergences in the graphic styles of Corner, Smith, and Geuze. This involved: 2.1) Evolution over Time: Changes in stylistic approaches from the early 1990s to the present were explored, identifying shifts influenced by technological advancements (e.g., adoption of Photoshop, Rhino, and digital mapping); 2.2) Pedagogical Influence: The role of these practitioners in academic settings was analyzed to assess how their visual methodologies shaped the next generation of landscape architects. 2.3) Composition: This involved reviewing the overall composition and layers of the elements in the landscape image.

Practitioner Interviews and Correspondence- 3.1) Direct engagement with James Corner, Ken Smith, and Adriaan Geuze. This involved emailing Corner, Smith and Geuze directly, to obtain first-hand insights into their representational approaches. The queries focused on: 3.1) The transition from analogue to digital representation and the role of software in shaping their work. 3.2) The experimental techniques they employed in their academic studios.

For example, Corner highlighted his shift from hand-drawn map-drawings to digital collages, emphasizing the importance of analogue techniques in an increasingly digitized workflow. Smith reflected on his signature use of "cut-and-paste" montage techniques, while Geuze elaborated on the role of ab-

straction and distortion in West 8's graphical approach.

3. Individual Contribution and Case Study Projects

The following investigates James Corner's theoretical contributions and the kinds of graphic styles his firm utilizes. James Corner is known for his works such as the High line in New York City and the Camden Highline in London. Corner in the last three decades has advanced the landscape architecture field and urbanism through integrating analytical data together with artistic aesthetics. His impact on the profession started in the early 1990's where he wrote two seminal essays in the *Landscape Journal: Discourse on Theory I: Sounding the Depths – Origins, Theory and Representation*, which provided a historical context on philosophy of science to contextualize landscape architecture own narratives. While the *Discourse on Theory: Three Tyrannies of Contemporary Theory and the Alternatives of Hermeneutics* talks about how landscape architecture is influenced by hermeneutics, which is the study on textual interpretation [5].

Throughout the field of landscape architecture, there are many perspectives and methodologies from the vast amount of people throughout the field. For example, George Seddon advocated for an approach rooted in natural science, emphasizing ecological and biophysical characteristics over subjective design intuition. Seddon, an Australian academic, sought to foster a landscape methodology that embraced multiple viewpoints, his emphasis on empirical methods often marginalized the designer's creative agency. George Seddon wanted to "guide the mass production of landscape architecture with a method based on natural science" [5]. Corner not only acknowledges this thought process but also promotes it in the design process. That idea eventually died down in the 1980s since "it is too simplistic to polarize positivism and hermeneutics" [5]. Landscape Architecture as whole has been influenced by natural science and the environmental field that by the 1990s, it generally seen to be as both cognitively and artistically simplistic. As early as 1991, Corner mentions that that landscape architecture has been "placed in space-time and tradition and is equally about resurgence or renewal as it is about invention" [5]. It is the thought of taking tradition and the contemporary to see what new things that can be made. In Corners point of view, he "believes in a culture that values meaning over materialism" [5].

3.1. High Line, New York City

The High Line is a 2.4-kilometer-long elevated rail line that was repurposed into an urban park that opened to the public in 2009. It has become one of New York City's most popular public spaces, attracting both locals and millions of tourists. The design incorporates sustainable practices, including the use of sustainable materials, native planting strategies and community-based stewardship [6]. For this project, Corner collaborated with the architectural firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro and planting designer Piet Oudolf. The graphic representations created for the High Line fusing diagrammatic overlays with vibrant, photo-collaging renderings, demonstrating both technical precision and artistic expression. Corner's background in photography strongly influences his visual approach. In his early conceptual design process for the High Line, he produced a collage titled "View of the Grasslands" (Figure 2). This composition emphasizes texture and colour, attracting the viewer into the scene and fostering an immersive understanding of the project. This collage presents a human-scaled perspective. The vivid red and orange hues in the planting and the warm yellow-orange tones of the tall grasses create a striking visual contrast, while the lush green of the billboard serves as a complementary backdrop, reinforcing the prominence of the landscape elements.

Figure 2. *View of the Grasslands, High Line Digital Rendering, Field Operations.*

3.2. Camden Highline, London UK

Camden Highline will be one of London's newest projects, where it reimagines a 1.2 km disused railway into a "garden in the sky", where it connects Camden Gardens in the west to York Way in the east. This is a new elevated park and walking route, developing a green space and more opportunities for cultural programming. There are plans on building an open bridge space that overlooks garden spaces and nature gardens, event spaces and spaces to play. This project has received approval to move forward in January of 2023 and phase 1 will open in 2025 or 2026.

As seen in Figure 3, there is an obvious difference in style between this project and the New York High Line. When looking at the collage, the viewer looks at every direction, not just horizontally. Even though both projects have a lot of attention to detail, there is a lot more to look at, such as the birch trees having their bark being pulled back to the variety of flowers and fruit. Somehow, the manageable chaos that is this collage works and draws the viewer in. Even though the balconies are similar to the New York High line collage, it is still used well in this context. Similar to some of Corners, older visual expressions, this image combines the vegetation and paths with these elements poking out of the picture plane, or frame.

Figure 3. *Digital Collage- Towards growing Camden's New Green High Line competition drawing, by James Corner: Field Operations, 2021.*

3.3. Fresh Kills, New York City

James Corner's work has elevated the profession of landscape architecture greatly thorough his designs, contemporary ideas and academic speaking engagements. Corner thinks that landscape architects have the skills that allow them to be prepared to tackle the many, complex, large-scale, environmentally damaged sites. This changed many of the public's perspectives on how a site can look. The massive landfill on Staten Island called Fresh Kills (Figure 4) is a prime example. The idea he developed is that this site is to grow the park like a 'cell'. He wanted the site to be self-sustaining ecosystem. The problem with the site is not the size, which is nearly three times as large as Central Park, it is that 45% of the site is trash while the rest is mostly wetland. The decay of trash is an extremely slow process and no amount of funding would speed up this process. What Corner was able to do with the site is that "it's not an exercise of trying to design a fantastic park; it's an exercise of trying to design a method to get from what it is now to something that is green, public and safe" [7]. Landscape architect Laurie Olin, also Corner's Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, saw these ideas as more of a scheme at first, but seeing it come together in a coherent way where it was economically and politically viable was good to see. Corner has a different way of thinking compared to other landscape architects.

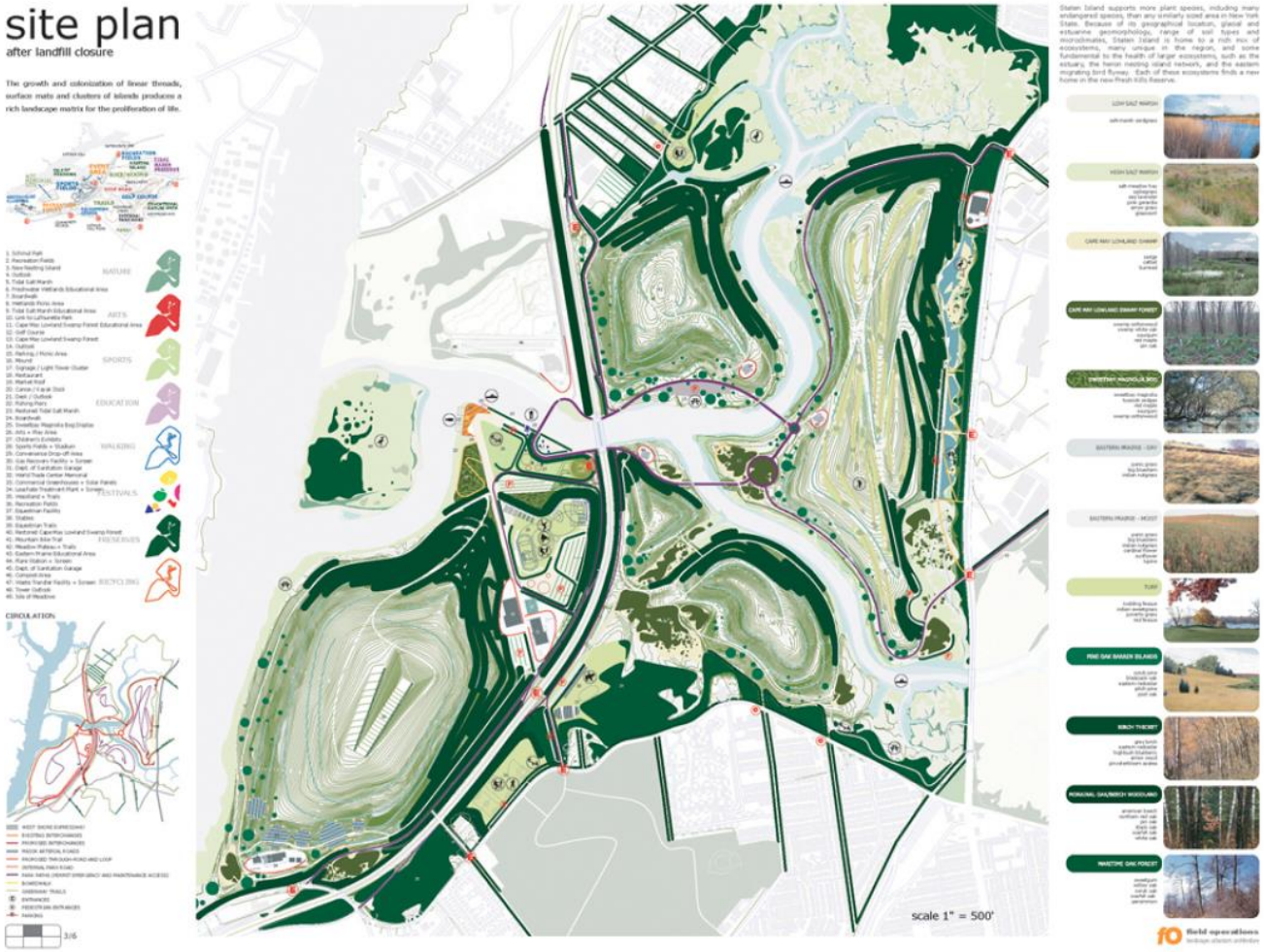

Figure 4. *Diagrammatic Plan, Fresh Kills, 2007, Field Operations.*

3.4. Taking Measures Across the American Landscape

Figure 5. *"Fire Field" Photo. Corner and MacLean.*

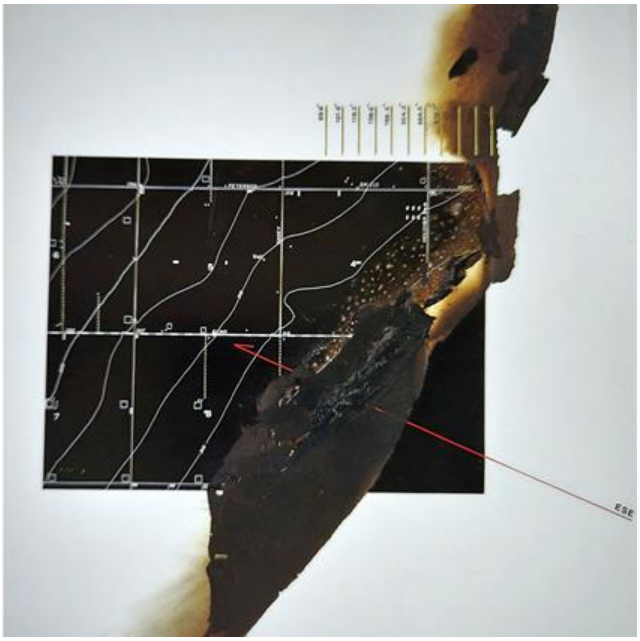

Figure 6. *"Burnings" Map-drawing "12 X 16", Corner and MacLean.*

The book, *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape*, was composed by the aerial photographer Alex MacLean and James Corner. The maps throughout the book were their attempt on surveying the American landscape as fully as they could. This is to have a better understanding of what they are seeing throughout the landscape. What resulted is of these two collaborating is maps that hopefully allows the viewer to understand human activity and how they shape the natural environment. In his book, Corner accompany the stunning aerial photos with his "map-drawing" as a cartographic expression of the seen and unseen elements of the site. The *Field Fire* photo (Figure 5) taken by MacLean of the controlled foiled burning in South Carolina is visually interpreted by Corner in the Burnings Collage (Figure 6), indicating the contour and survey measures, along with the scale of the burning [8]. These map-drawings can be seen as works of art in a gallery.

A big part of landscape architecture is measuring the land. It enables one to do the spacing, marking, delineation and occupation of the given terrain. The American landscape as a whole as a variety of landscapes has presented challenges to the many during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Many maps has been made over the years has been created and marked over the centuries that as a result, the Land Ordinance Act was created in 1785. Together with the National Land Acts, the United States has been transformed greatly. Today, the American landscape not only has its beautiful sceneries, but its roads, farms, canals, natural landforms, is also what we think of the United States today. Cartographic tools function as both analytical and representational devices, capturing the shifting contours of terrain and human impact. The *Burning Map-Drawing* image reflects this approach, illustrating the dynamic and fragile interactions between human activity and ecological systems. Its powerful depiction of landscapes marked by fire, transformation, and territorial redefinition challenges traditional and static notions of mapping. Corner's *Taking Measures Across the American Landscape* project influenced his work and visual communication for the Emergent Ecologies' Downsview Park competition.

The following examines Ken Smith's unique aesthetic approaches and the graphic methods that he uses to communicate complex landscape designs. Ken Smith over the years was able to adapt his montage techniques into the digital world. The prevalence of the adobe products in landscape architecture has only grown over the years, therefore, many landscape architects must adapt to ever changing landscape that is the digital world. Regarding Smith's work today, his communication style is rooted in his early interest in photography and modern art. With his exposure to Modernism, Constructivism, and Earthwork art during his academic years let him to have a preference in using photographic images and mixed-media methods over hand drawing graphics [9]. His pre-digital work involved experimental montages created with pencil, ink, and materials like 'Letraset' and 'Zip-A-Tone', resulting in layered compositions that were both precise and abstract. Smith's montages, influenced by Robert Smithson's notion of Non-Sites, aim to represent concepts metaphorically rather than realistically, blending grounded and synthetic elements to communicate ideas visually [9]. Smith's skills in layering, masking, and perspective manipulation in his mixed-media work demonstrates how the traditional collage principles can be integrated into contemporary digital workflow. The shift to tools like Photoshop was seamless, since it further expanded his collage techniques. His

work reflects the experimental flare of the 1980s and 1990s, incorporating influences from post-structuralism, appropriation art, and cultural critique. Today, Smith's image-based montages continue to inspire landscape architecture education and practice, emphasizing the importance of visual narratives and conceptual development in conveying complex design ideas in a digital age.

3.5. Brooklyn Bridge Garden Mount, New York

In the 1990s and early 2000s, many digital technologies have emerged, which has changed the profession of landscape architecture greatly. If firms want to be successful, embracing these tools are critical. Adobe Photoshop came naturally to Smith, since it takes similar tools to darkroom manipulation where it uses tools like masking, perspective plane shift and multiple exposures. Looking at the image of Brooklyn Bridge Garden Mount, (Figure 7), is an early example of Smith's work where it shows a possible approach to make Brooklyn be more connected with ramps. This proposal uses the concept of a 'garden mount'. With Smith's background in photography, "the garden mount graphic is an original pencil-on-vellum drawing reproduced as a high-contrast black and white silver gelatine photo contact print" [9].

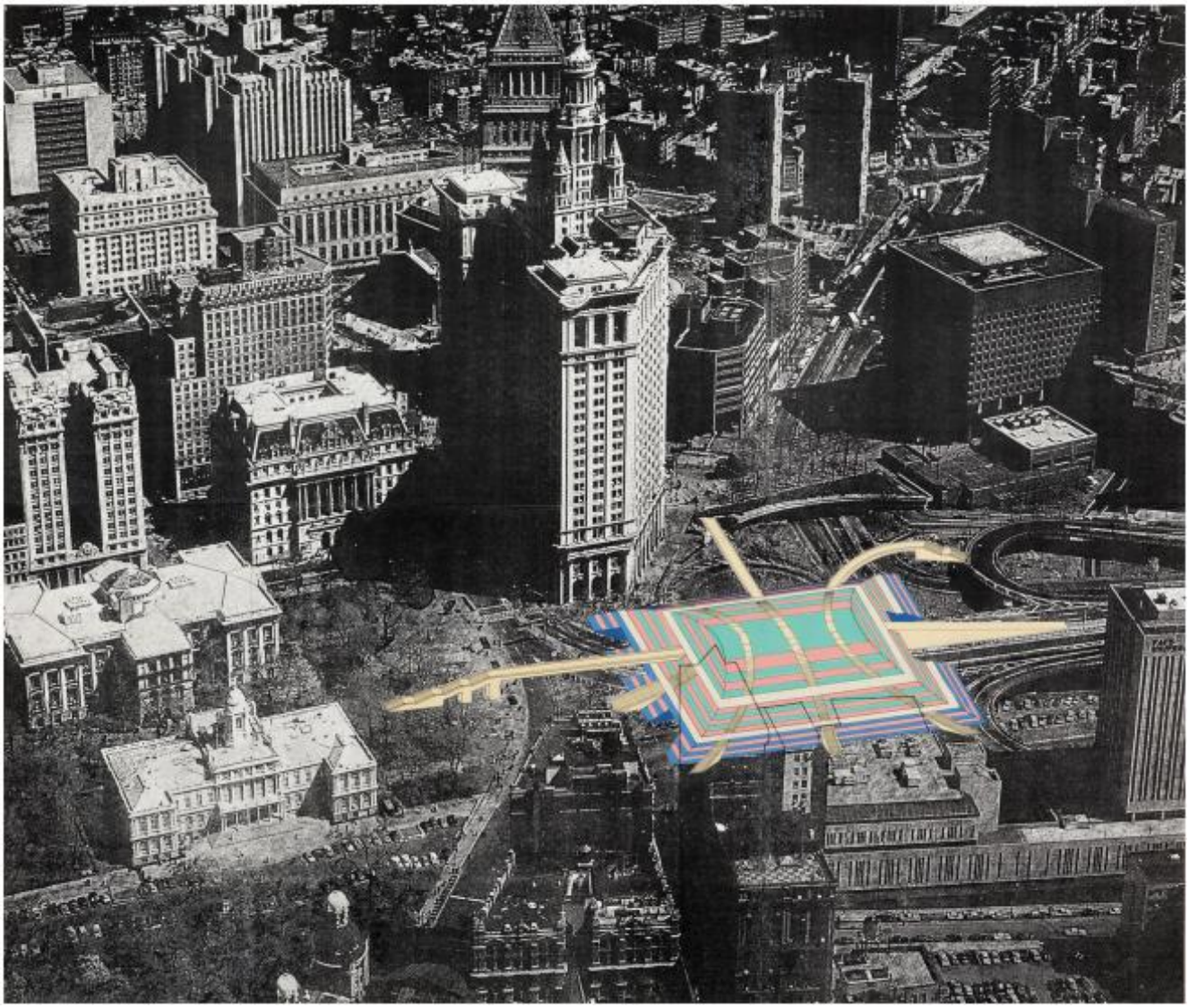

Figure 7. *Montage of Brooklyn Bridge Garden Mount, Ken Smith Workshop.*

3.6. Third Street Light Rail, San Francisco

In 1998, Ken Smith Workshop designed a series of concepts for a public art commission along a six-mile corridor south of downtown San Francisco. The set that is shown in Figure 8 is a combination of ink drawings, photographs and many other types of graphical art styles put into one. The montages shown are *Topiary Billboards*, *Thought Bubble Lights*, *Mission Creek Channel Gateway*, and distinctive

Trackway Paving, which were presented to San Francisco Art Commission and MUNI Municipal Railway.

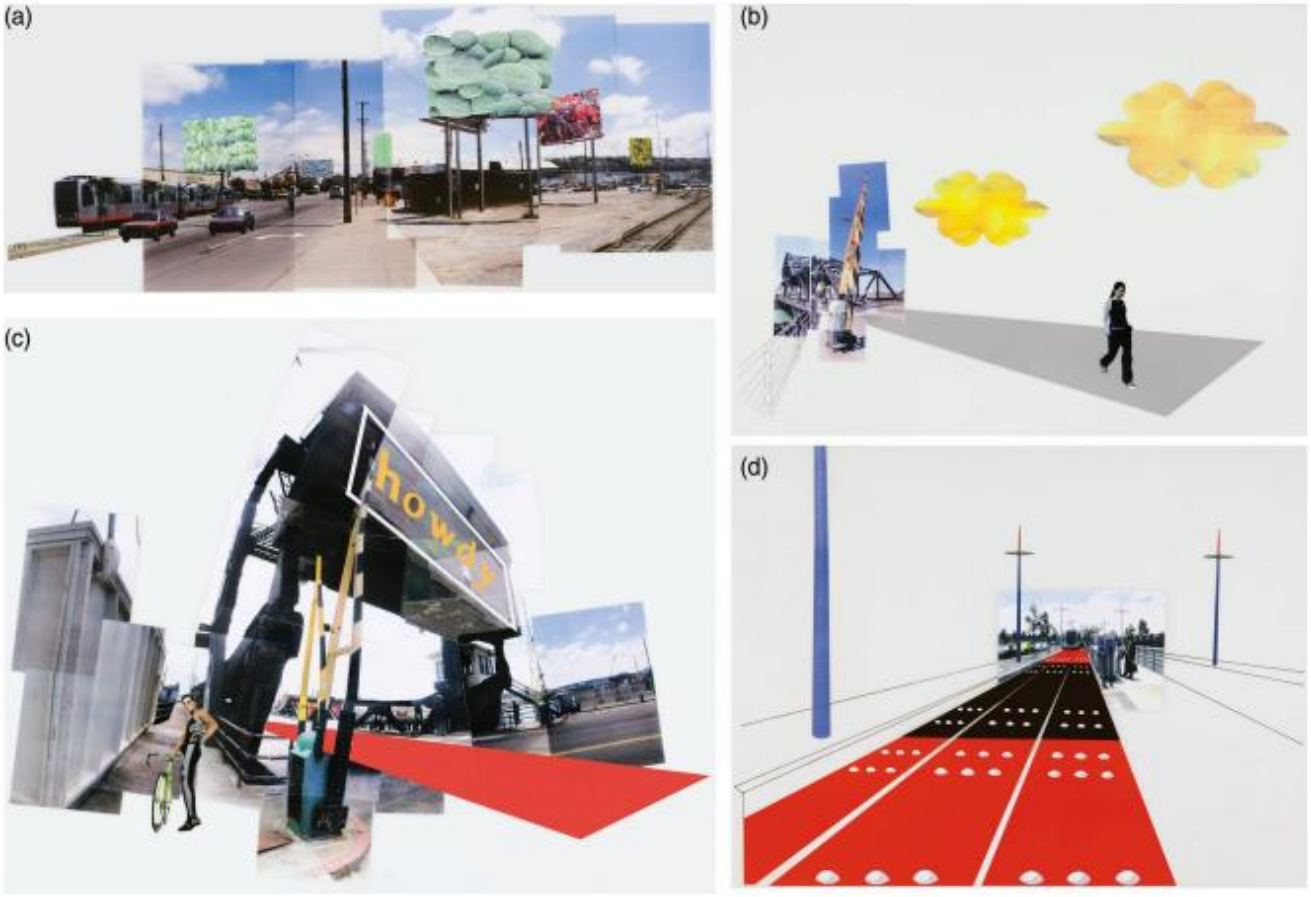

Figure 8. *Collages of the Topiary Billboards, Thought Bubble Lights, Mission Creek Channel Gateway, and distinctive Trackway Paving, Ken Smith Workshop.*

3.7. Museum of Modern Art Roof

One of Ken Smith's earliest project is the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) rooftop garden. Smith was commissioned so that he can provide a decorative rooftop to the Museum's Taniguchi wing. There were also limiting constraints to the design as well. The original design of the rooftop was a simple pattern of black and white gravel stripes, but MoMA's director and curators wanted a design where it can function as a viewing garden from the other buildings and an art installation. The roof structure and waterproofing has already been constructed, and the surface of the rooftop can only have a landscape load of twenty-five pounds per square foot. The garden also required to have minimal maintenance and no irrigation, with also the discouragement of living plant material. Since the museum at the time has already purchased black and white gravel, the design was encouraged to use this material. With this amount of restrictions, it proposed many constraints for the design.

The design that Smith came up with can be described as "military camouflage", trying to disguise itself among the more normal looking buildings while also trying to make it as visible as possible (Figure 9). There are four major methods of camouflage: 1) Imitation; 2) Deception; 3) Decoy; and 4) Confusion. [10]

Smith was able to use these four stratifies to develop initial designs for the rooftop garden. Eventually, the "deception" scheme was selected to be the main concept of the design. Camouflage has been a part of landscape architecture for years, such as Central Park. Central Park is a staple of New York City, but once one goes into the park, it feels like one is a nature site separated from the city. When viewing the MoMA roof garden now. The public is not aware of this garden since it is tucked away on a roof of the city and some people can view it from the tops of neighbouring buildings (Figure 10). The design is also drawing inspiration from Japanese dry Zen gardens that is relatively flat with white gravel, recycled black rubber, crushed glass, sculpted stones and artificial boxwoods plants.

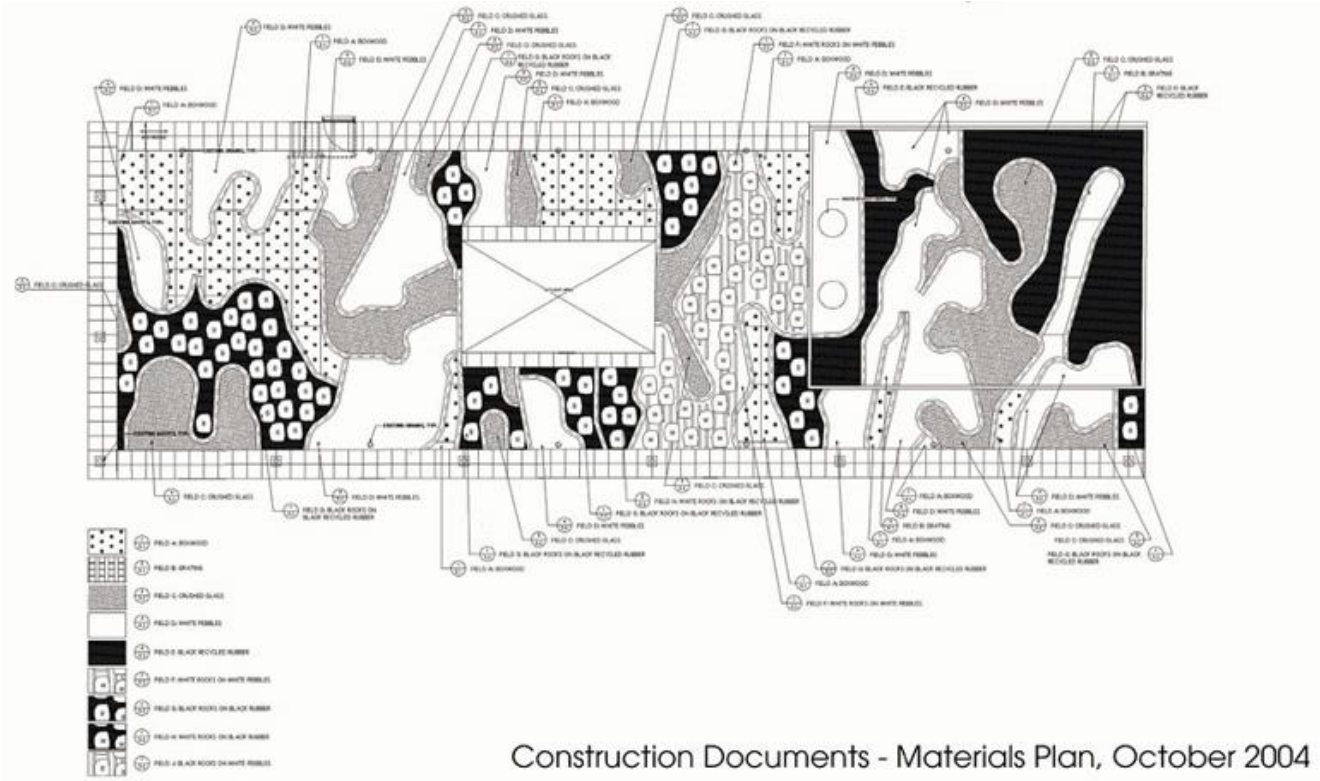

Figure 9. *Construction Plan of MoMA Rooftop Garden, Ken Smith Workshop.*

Figure 10. *Aerial Photo of the MoMA Rooftop Garden. Photo by Peter Mauss, Esto, 2005.*

The following section examines a few of Geuze's work and how his graphic styles have evolved to represent innovative landscape concepts. Adriaan Geuze is the founder of West 8, which is one of the leading urban design and landscape architecture practices in Europe. West 8 over the years was able to develop a technique where it relates contemporary culture, urban identity, architecture, public space and engineering within a single design, while always making sure that context is always taken into account. In the late eighties, Geuze stated a goal of his is to "develop a new language for landscape design based on functionality" [11]. Eventually, in 1996, he interoperated this goal as follows:

"It used to be that one used the stones and vegetation that surrounded people. Today we are surrounded by metal, asphalt, guiderails, bicycle paths, and cement. So we should use these things. In Holland the woods is usually a forest of poplars, a plantation forest laid out in a grid-like planting. Holland has deep-black basalt dikes on granite-like earth, which is almost white, and when water washes over it, the granite becomes green. So a black-green-white pattern results. Take a look, it's art, and it's beautiful." [11]

Eventually, West 8's practice embraces the distortion of reality to provoke thought and engagement. The interplay between digital precision and artistic expression underpins their graphic methodology, resulting in images that are positioned in context and open to interpretation. Much of Geuze's influence is stemmed from his programmatic approach, which can be seen through some of his early projects that stuck to a singular concept instead of sticking to previous ideas of post

structuralist methods and philosophy of postmodernism and deconstruction. This is seen in the Schouwburgplein, Rotterdam through its expression of the void.

3.8. Schouwburgplein, Rotterdam

Schouwburgplein, also known as the "Theatre Square" (Figure 11 and Figure 12), is located in the centre of the city of Rotterdam with the surrounding areas having the municipal theatre, concert hall, restaurants and cafes.

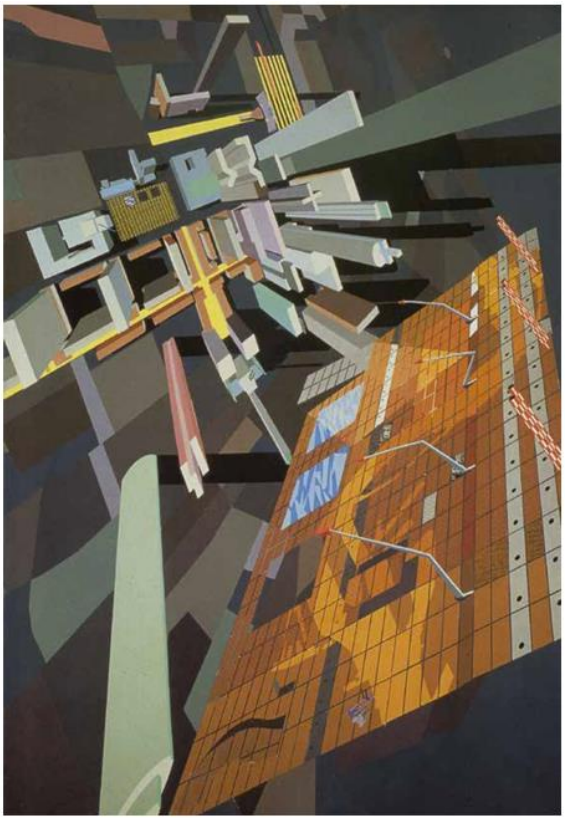

Figure 11. *Exploded 3D Digital Rendering of Schouwburgplein, West 8 initial design 1991-1996.*

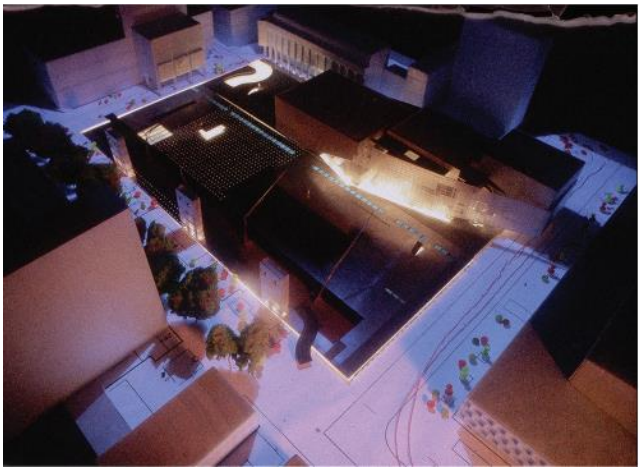

Figure 12. *Schouwburgplein Top View, Physical Model, West 8.*

West 8 wanted to retain the void that World War II did to the urban fabric of Rotterdam to Schouwburgplein. This can be shown through the layout of the square is based on the angles of the sun and the expected use of the square depending on the hours during the day or night. This is shown through the implementation of different materials throughout the site, such as the epoxy floor and the long bench on the eastern side of the square that is surrounded by large rubber ground surface that receives sunlight the longest. The most prominent feature of the square are the three ventilation towers for the underground parking and the four crane-like hydraulic lighting fixtures, which can be manipulated when the public inserts coins into the machine. In 1996, Geuze did an interview about his thoughts about his impact on the square:

> *"We are not using apple trees, roses, and the like, but the things that surround people. At night the metal surfaces reflect all the lights of the city. A horizontal Milky Way will result. It will be unbelievable! I like the idea that the steel plates will rust. It will create an area coloured in glowing orange with a worn pathway of gleaming metal. It will be exceptionally beautiful." [11].*

Figure 11 is an early digital 3D model, 'exploding' the surrounding elements around the square. The plaza is 'skewed' with the context juxtaposed to it.

Figure 13. *Soundscape/Lincoln Park, Miami Florida, West 8.*

3.9. Soundscape / Lincoln Park, Miami Florida

In 2009, the design of Soundscape /Lincoln Park was a winning design of West 8 and was selected by Miami Beach Commission. The park is a part of the New World Symphony Campus where many young talents come to study and perform. It is West 8's first American built project when it opened in January of 2011. West 8 main mission with this project was to create a green park and not a plaza. Lincoln Park also "reflects the spirit and vitality or Miami Beach and will support a multitude of day and night uses, either under the shade of the trees or a starlit sky" [12]. This can be seen

through the park's edges, where the shape is inspired by puffy cumulous clouds due to South Florida's tropical climate. One aspect of what makes this park so special is how the sculptures scattered throughout the park uses the "sound as the material" [13]. The drawings expressed the topical climate and mood in the vibrant pastel colours both with the perspective images (Figure 13) and with plan image (Figure 14). The bright colours reflected the style and playful of West 8's mission.

Figure 14. *Lincoln Park Site Plan, West 8.*

4. Results

Corner's work emphasizes layered complexity and analytical rigor, particularly in mapping when designing his work. Throughout his career, he has prioritized in integrating ecological, social, and economic considerations into urban design. Often it is transforming neglected post-industrial spaces into a space where many people will enjoy. He brings up in an interview saying that "we design fields of texture and effect as opposed to objects. We have to operate in particular contexts as opposed to simply imposing forms; and we work with time and temporal processes as much as with spatial geometrics and figures" [14]. Smith is known for his playful, conceptual, and visually striking presentations. His relationship with photography, art and the environment helps his designs of the landscapes and public spaces so that there is an improvement in the quality of urban life. Geuze combines minimalist abstraction with a focus on public engagement and cultural narratives. His work is integrated into West 8, where their style is different from the next. In an interview with *CLADmag*, he answered a question where he would describe the style. Geuze brings up how "we change our approach according to the context of each project, so West 8's style isn't easy to recognize. We like to include humour and irony. Our work should not be predictable" [14]. These distinctions from each are what made these landscape architects stand out from the many. Their each individual unique styles allows them to thrive in such a competitive industry.

In examining some of Corner, Smith, and Geuze's drawings, several common trends emerge:

1. The use of diagrams to communicate systems-based thinking.
2. Integration of ecological and cultural data into visually compelling graphics.
3. Drawing inspiration from land-artists, allowing the drawing to have level of branding, and artistic flare.
4. Blending technical accuracy with artistic creativity to engage diverse audiences.
5. Cut and Paste technique, including layering of landscape elements and highlighting elements of importance.
6. Abstraction- The collages do not need to be photorealistic; there is room for interpretation. Allowing elements to 'pierce' out of the frame—breaking free of the boundary—demonstrates the abstraction of the collage and encourages the viewer to think about space.

Each of these landscape architects do have their own styles in presenting their designs. Some of the common ideas that seem to be brought up throughout the projects are wanting to retain an idea of something significant. This can be through idea of taking trash and turning it something new as seen by Corner, trying to camouflage something while making it stand out with Smith and retaining the void made by World War II with Geuze.

5. Discussion: Connecting with Corner, Smith and Geuze

Part of this research included reaching out to Corner, Smith and Geuze, inquiring their evolution of graphic styles and techniques in landscape architecture, particularly those stemming from the '90s and early 2000s, and how their styles and techniques have shaped visual communication and the graphic design process in today's studios. The discussion additionally centred around exposing any experimental graphic techniques, model-making design processes, and other innovative approaches Corner, Smith and Geuze implemented in their design studio at the time.

Corner states that "When I began teaching in 1989, my two classes were Drawing I and Drawing II (the first related to observation drawing, hand-eye coordination, and media, and the second related to technical projection and measured drawing) … I later began an advanced media course on collage/montage and the whole practice of using imaging to help generate and advance spatial ideas… The only computation at the time was GIS based mapping work." [15]

The discussion continued around his transition in graphic development using Photoshop and Illustrator in the '90's. Corner stated that: "At some point in the early '90's, imaging software's like Photoshop and Illustrator became prevalent, and certainly sped up the imaging process. Soon thereafter, say the mid-90's, we started to teach more using these and other imaging softwares, and also auto-CAD… Transferring AutoCAD dimensional and tectonic precision and layers to Illustrator allowed for rich illustrative work (plans and sec-

tions) and Photoshop advanced 3D imaging and 'mood' illustration." [15]

The importance of design competitions as a means for visual experimentation became evident in Corner's supporting statement. Also, the use of new 3D software such as Rhino3D at the time, allowed for creative formal-expression. It allowed for the juxtaposition of 3D form for collaging techniques.

Corner stated that: "A design competition entry by me for Greenport Harbor (which won first prize) in 1998 was all hand-drawn, ink on mylar. Downsview in 1999 was AutoCAD/Illustrator plan and sections, with hand-made collage images; the physical model was digitally routed from a Rhino model. Same with Fresh Kills in 2000. And by the time we get to 2004, the High Line competition was all digital."[15]

Ken Smith still uses the 'Cut and Paste' collage techniques. Smith provided these three images studies (Figure 15, Figure 16 and Figure 17) that he created using 'cut and paste' and 'montaging' in Photoshop to test a sea wall railing that Smith has designed for a waterfront site [16].

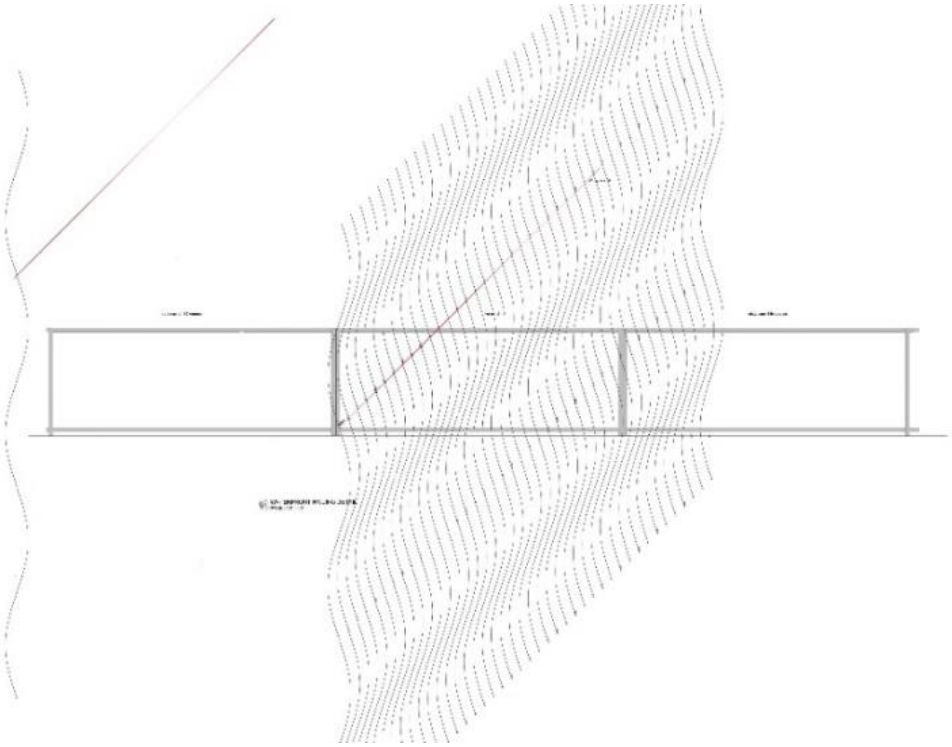

Figure 15. *Sine Wave Parapet Railing Study, Ken Smith Workshop.*

Figure 16. *Waterfront Railing Elevation, Ken Smith Workshop.*

Figure 17. *Waterfront Railing Elevation, Ken Smith Workshop.*

Smith states that: "When I opened my own office in the early 1990s, most graphic production was still pre-digital. My graphic representation practice at that time was mixed-media, combining traditional pencil and ink drafting with paste-up

illustration materials such as Letraset, Chartpak graphic tape, and 'Zip-A-Tone' film, in combination with photo prints, photocopies, colour laser prints, and magazine and other clip art materials. It was a very fluid way of working that allowed for experimentation and often resulted in interesting juxtapositions of material and content" [9].

6. Conclusion

Digital tools collectively as impacted landscape architecture greatly. It has allowed the profession flourish where it allowed many landscape architects to express their designs in many different ways. James Corner, Ken Smith, and Adriaan Geuze are some of the many landscape architects that impacted the field through their designs and graphic work. Corner collage work allows the viewer to interact and interpret it through trying to find what details he has placed throughout his work. Smith's background in photography and art allowed him to improve his skills in the digital realm, allowing feature landscape architects to see that design does not have to be so one dimensional, but it can be intriguing while drawing the viewer into the scene. Geuze futuristic thinking allows him to make his projects to look more different from other projects, pushing the field more forward.

In addition to the above discussion, the inquiry about whether their techniques and experimental practices is used in their work today was posed to Corner, Smith and Geuze.

Corner provided this response: "Today, of course, in the office, everything is digital. We especially like REVIT for dimensional to-scale drawings, as it is always in 3D, and the modelling is super-precise and easily correlated to construction. Rhino, Lumion and D5 lend themselves perfectly to life-like rendering. And now there are some AI models we are looking at. But we still force people to hand-sketch (especially useful for quick rapid-fire thinking) and to view collage as sometimes hand-based and not always subsumed by Photoshop… nowadays is first how use digital media more creatively to actually THINK with as opposed to simply imaging and producing (because it is so fast it becomes habitual as opposed to the "slower" gestation of a drawing; not to mention to overwhelming saturation and easy availability of imagery online); and the second is how to distinguish the graphic representation from everybody else, seeing as everybody else now use the same software's, are quick to copy new trends, and clients seek the "professionalization" of their imagery…" [15].

Corner describes the power of digital tools in contemporary landscape architecture, emphasizing the precision and efficiency of software like REVIT, Rhino, Lumion, and emerging AI models. However, he highlights the continued importance of hand-sketching in the profession for quick concept development and the use of collage as a medium of artistic expression, not phot-realism. He identifies two key challenges, of one of which is the over use of digital media not just for quick production but also used as a tool for 'creative thinking'. Secondly, the 'sameness' in graphic style and graphic representation It's more difficult to distinguish the branding and graphic style from influential landscape architects as it was over ten to thirty years ago.

Ken Smith's early montages create a balance between precision and abstraction, blending the real with the synthetic, and is grounded with the conceptual. His montages are not intended as finished, realistic, or exact three-dimensional representations. Instead, they function as pictorial, deliberately imperfect visualizations—artistic expressions designed to convey an idea and a unique sensibility. Each montage serves as a visual concept statement, capturing the essence of a design vision rather than a photo-realistic vision. His work was influenced by land artists like Robert Smithson. Corner and Geuze were also influenced by this iconic land artist. Each of these landscape architects used competitions as a means to experiment with creative graphic styles and techniques to elevate their design concepts, and they continue to do so in their dynamic practice. As digital tools like Photoshop emerged, Ken Smith adapted his montage techniques to the digital realm. His use of layering, masking, and perspective manipulation demonstrates how traditional collage principles can be integrated into contemporary digital workflows.

Autonomous submissions for design competitions could often allow professionals to correctly guess which firms submitted which projects just by analyzing the graphic style and techniques. Now, the "sameness" in graphic styles is often presented, making it difficult to come up with a valid guess. Corner, Smith and Geuze present a unique sense of graphic style still holding to the collage and montage techniques.

Contemporary landscape representation has shifted towards realistic digital renderings, made more readily available using real-time rendering software. The use of collage with its juxtaposition of elements, layering compositions and hybrid drawing techniques is highly welcomed, as it breaks free from the sameness and ubiquitous graphics. The popularity of photorealistic renderings, often produced with Lumion, V-Ray, and post-production in Photoshop, has led to a 'homogenization of graphic styles', removing itself from the unique visual style and languages often seen in the landscape architectural renderings in the 1990s. Some contemporary practitioners continue to investigate and test alternative representational techniques, integrating digital collage, data visualization, and AI-generated imagery to push the boundaries of landscape communication [17].

Practitioners like Corner, Smith, and Geuze emphasize the evolution of representation from a simple means of communication to a critical and expressive medium that shapes how landscapes are designed and perceived today. The transition of representational techniques over the past thirty years, particularly through the use of digital tools influenced by these figures. It will analyze key projects that showcase unique techniques and styles in their drawings, followed by a comparative analysis of these visuals and their impact on the field.

Abbreviations

3D	Three Dimensional
CAD	Computer Aided Design
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
MoMA	Museum of Modern Art

Author Contributions

Joyce Tong: Resources, Writing – original draft

Nadia Amoroso: Conceptualization, Funding acquisition, Methodology, Resources, Supervision, Writing – review & editing

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

[1] N. Nitavska and A. Mengots, "Digital Tools in Landscape Architecture," Landscape Architecture and Art, vol. 11, no. 11, pp. 42–50, Feb. 25, 2018. Accessed: May 20, 2019. https://doi.org/10.22616/j.landarchart.2017.11.05

[2] E. Meyer, "January 2007 – Landscape Theory," Landscape Theory, 2007. Available: https://landscapetheory1.wordpress.com/2007/01/ Accessed: Jan. 23, 2025.

[3] S. Bell, Landscape Pattern, Perception and Process, 2nd ed. Routledge, 2012.

[4] "Adriaan Geuze | ReSITE." *ReSITE*, 2024, www.resite.org/speakers/adriaan-geuze Accessed 23 Jan. 2025.

[5] R. Weller, "Between hermeneutics and datascapes: A critical appreciation of emergent landscape design theory and praxis through the writings of James Corner 1990-2000 (Part one)," Landscape Review. Available: https://doi.org/10.34900/lr.v7i1.92

[6] A. Blum, "The Long View: James Corner & Landscape's Post-industrial Potential," Metropolis, Aug. 11, 2021. Available: https://metropolismag.com/projects/the-long-view-james-corner-landscape-postindustrial-potential/ Accessed: Jan. 23, 2025.

[7] J. Czerniak, Large Parks. New York, NY, USA: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

[8] A. MacLean and J. Corner, Taking Measures across America. New Haven, Connecticut, USA: Yale University Press, 1996.

[9] K. Smith, "Non-sites and Simulacra," in Representing Landscapes: One Hundred Years of Visual Communication, N. Amoroso and M. Holland, Eds. 2022, pp. 170–176.

[10] American Society of Landscape Architects, "ASLA 2009 Professional Design Award – The Museum of Modern Art Roof Garden," ASLA, 2009. [Online]. Available: https://www.asla.org/2009awards/050.html [Accessed: 21-Feb-2025].

[11] A. Freytag, "Back to form: Landscape architecture and representation in Europe after the sixties," in Composite Landscapes: Photomontage and Landscape Architecture, C. Waldheim and A. Hansen, Eds. 2014. [Online]. Available: https://www.academia.edu/38129498/Back_to_Form_Landscape_Architecture_and_Representation_in_Europe_after_the_Sixties [Accessed: Jan. 23, 2025].

[12] I. Lomholt, "Lincoln Park Miami Beach: Florida landscape - e-architect," e-architect, Apr. 27, 2020. Available: https://www.e-architect.com/miami/lincoln-park-miami-beach

[13] H. Stoilas, "Artist interview: Bill Fontana: Miami Sound Machine," The Art Newspaper - International Art News and Events, Sep. 28, 2021. Available: https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2018/12/09/bill-fontana-miami-sound-machine

[14] A. Geuze, "Landscape designer Adriaan Geuze on the healing power of nature," CLADmag, 2017. [Online]. Available: https://www.cladglobal.com/architecture-design-features?codeid=32487 [Accessed: 21-Feb-2025].

[15] J. Corner, "Discussion with James Corner," Email, Jan. 2025.

[16] K. Smith, "Discussion with Ken Smith,' Email, Jan, 2025.

[17] Cantrell, B., & Mekies, A. (Eds.). (2018). Codify: Parametric and Computational Design in Landscape Architecture. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315647791