B o o k R e v i e w

Basics landscape architecture: Urban design

Urban design is generally seen as a discipline in between architecture and planning that deals with the design of 3-dimensional public spaces. However, this book argues the "Urban Design" as a way of landscape architecture, explains the parallels between these notions, and discusses the techniques and context that are important for both disciplines. The book gains meaning as it discusses the practice and the theory concurrently.

The book, which would be seen as a handbook for students, intends to execute the relationship and parallels between Urban Design and Landscape architecture through 6 chapters by analyzing the techniques and practices in the disciplines.

Starting from the definition of the urban design, the book gives extensive information on urban design theories and the historical development of the practice. First chapter titled "What is urban design?" briefly discusses the fundamental elements that shape our vision of urban design.

The second part -focuses on the context and the scope of the practice- aims to provide a background for understanding the debates on design and planning of cities. The chapter tries to draw the borders of urban design practice as well as the historical evaluation and the context of the notion. It also discusses the techniques of landscape architecture which are instrumental in urban design practice.

The third chapter called "Measure" reviews the scale and the measurement which is critical to understand in urban design practice in order to design and redesign of urban spaces. The section shows how important to evaluate micro and macro scales at one and the same time to see the inter-relations between them.

As the previous part does, the chapter titled "Movement" discusses the transportation systems from micro scale to macro scale. The transportation as it shapes and organizes the cities, is crucial for a healthy urban life and operating land use in each human settlement. The chapter which intends to highlight the development of movement systems in urban centers comprises a series of projects basically related with urban management to show the reader various solutions for different urban problems.

In the following chapter titled "Community and culture" which are crucial in urban design in creating meaningful places for communities, the relations between culture and place are discussed prosperously. The writers discuss the cultural, political, economic and societal context of the cities through ghettos, slums, new master plan proposals, place making implementations, safety and human necessities on various examples.

The book provides a comprehensive vision for readers about the life in the cities and design practices with the diligently selected urban design projects through the world. It also delicately combines the several examples of urban design and landscape architecture, and gives a chance to the reader to have well rounded information on urban design process, landscape architecture, and the parallels between two practices considering the social, environmental and economic consequences.

Pelin Öztürk