

Cyprus Architecture Lectures: ARCH - UCy

LOST LANDSCAPES:
New Romanticism
in Dutch Landscape
Architecture
ERIC-JAN
PLEIJSTER



University
of Cyprus

on **6th November 2014** at **7+30pm** at the **Department of Architecture**,
on the **Ground Floor**, **University of Cyprus**, Nicosia (at the end of Ledras street)

Lost Landscapes: New Romanticism in Dutch landscape architecture

Lost Landscapes is LOLA's take on landscape, nature and leisure activities. It's a journey that starts in the city. The successful culmination of line and place has produced many iconic landscape projects over the course of time: the linear park is the life line for the metropolises of the 21st century. The combination of infrastructure with green and water along old cultural lines such as dikes, canals and railways creates the new icons of the city, all over the world. Trees, roof gardens and plants on façades lend colour to the city and transform the skyline. City governments the world over no longer focus on iconic buildings but on the space between the buildings. From New York to Paris, from Shanghai to São Paulo, green edges and lines are the places where city life is lived, in a successful cocktail of structure and place. As if in passing, issues such as biodiversity, urban heat, flooding, cables and lines, bicycle paths and sewer systems are resolved.

Once off the beaten path, one searches through the great unknown: therefore, the chance of finding new tasks, new insights and new perspectives is greatest there. In the second chapter the authors leave the built-up area and embark on the Long Tail of Leisure. While the economy as a whole becomes increasingly unpredictable, the leisure economy is steadily growing, as we have more and more spare time. Today's leisure landscape has something to offer to everyone. By analogy with Chris Anderson's Long Tail Marketing, local recreational areas are increasingly competing with holiday destinations and their user generated content of activities and reviews, which is something these areas are (not yet) fitted out for. In developing recreational spaces there are two possibilities: to expand, or to stay small. LOLA believes that small-scale leisure activities can be as economically valuable as large-scale recreation.

Out of a longing for wilderness, the Netherlands, as the first nation on Earth, has upgraded the domain of nature preservation to that of progressive nature development. The results are now becoming visible. The systematic approach of nature development does however have its limits and there is an urgent need for a more design-oriented approach to nature. We need to throw off the heavy burden of our image of nature in order to create room for new experiments. LOLA questions the traditional meagre nature image of our landscapes, which is dominated by a technocratic approach taken

by farmers, city and country people alike. Applying cosmopolitan flora and fauna allows for a more beautiful landscape that is not only experienced by looking at it but also by feeling, smelling and hearing it.

LOLA Landscape Architects

LOLA Landscape Architects focuses on progressive landscape architecture, with a particular interest in designing and exploring landscapes that have been forgotten or neglected or that are facing change. LOLA's (Lost Landscapes) work is characterized by a continuous interaction between spatial investigation and design, by the practice's optimistic and conceptual approach and by a fascination with new spatial phenomena.

LOLA Landscape Architects was founded by Eric-Jan Pleijster, Cees van der Veen and Peter Veenstra in 2006. The practice is based in Rotterdam and has fifteen employees, including landscape architects and architects. LOLA has won several design awards, including European Portugal in 2006, and the Delta Water Award 2009. In 2013 LOLA was awarded the Rotterdam Maaskant Prize for Young Architects, and in 2014 they received the TOPOS Landscape Award. Their book, Lost Landscapes, won the DAM Architectural Book Award 2014.

Eric-Jan Pleijster (1977) graduated cum laude in landscape architecture from Wageningen University. Together with LOLA, he has made designs for the natural recovery and recreational use of the Netherlands' south-west delta area, including the Grevelingen, the Volkerak and the Haringvliet. His specialism is in the landscape structures of Dutch water management. He recently wrote the manuscript for the international book Dutch Dikes and coordinated its full research and production. Eric-Jan teaches at universities and academies, and lectures worldwide.

'LOLA are up there with the most prominent international landscape architects and they have a very bright future ahead of them' – Piet Oudolf

<http://lolaweb.nl>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/LOLA-landscape-architects/174793579223355>

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