

The meteorological turn in design

Atmospheres for living and sensing



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Atmosphere is the space one inhabits and breathes. Interior or exterior, this space is made out of air with mechanical, chemical and biological properties that affects people's health and wellbeing. While in science, air is a matter of study with precise properties and behaviours, in design it is still titled the "void." This designation not only reduces the characteristics contained in air but also undermines the potentials of air as space to be crafted and designed. This devaluing is particularly relevant for the discipline of landscape architecture, vulgarly titled the discipline of the "void," the in-between space of the built environment. How can one re-frame the importance of air and atmosphere as matter in the discipline of landscape architecture in relation to both the discipline's history with the forming of microclimates and future demands for sustainable environments? Inversely to the implications of the word landscape (a focus on land), the relationship between landscape architecture and atmosphere is significant. One might claim that instances of scientific development and heightened environmental awareness towards air and atmosphere were paired with moments of disciplinary innovation in both landscape architecture and urbanism. It is the purpose of this presentation to set forth this claim while foregrounding case studies that craft atmosphere as design medium for sensory and physiological well-being.