

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO  
PHD AT UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND**

**Title:**

**THE WILL OF LANDSCAPE:**

**Studies into the nature of form, process, flexibility in landscape architecture**

**Applicant:**

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**Short Abstract:**

This doctoral study will investigate the relationship between landscape processes, comprising the natural, the social and the cultural, and design form & practice in Landscape Architecture, through examining the basis of the discipline in the arts and sciences. It will establish a series of paradigms and schools of thought through investigation of 20<sup>th</sup> century literature and projects in landscape architecture, from France, Netherlands, US and Australia, that have investigated the use of process based outcomes in a dynamic landscape practice. It will finally propose a new paradigm for a more powerful landscape architectural practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Brief Description:**

- Landscape architecture is a unique design discipline, a hybrid of the natural sciences and architecture (the liberal arts)
- This allows it to engage with space and form in a manner similar to architecture, but differently
- Difference may reside in time and other relationships to a broad surface with diverse occupations & formal configurations – the social, the political.
- This is a different conjunction of science / arts dialectic, that is still formal & “aesthetic”,
- LA regards form in a different sense – choreography.

This doctorate will:

- Be a landscape architecture thesis relating directly to the canon
- Develop a new operative definition of landscape architecture,
- Comprise a deconstructive consideration of the root of the discipline, most notably its relation to the natural science and architecture.
- Consider this definition in relation to other disciplines in a way to expand this definition into a new methodology & model of LA practice

- Be argued through a formal critique of the work of a range of LA schools;  
(eg Polders, McHargians, Hargreaves, Behaviouralists, Versailles, Bush Regeneration)  
as well as through the discussion of other hybrid disciplines;  
(eg Psychiatry, Social Work, Project Management)
- Finally propose a possible method of testing and implementation for this new model.

## **Preliminary Chapter Plan, with indicative sources**

### **1. Intro 1 - Parterres and Polders: (Infra)Structure and Ornament in LA**

Definition of infrastructure for LA, in order to establish an organising paradigm, formally and conceptually, for the studies that follow, by:

- Examining the historic argument from architecture about the relationship between structure and ornament, to ascertain its relevance to LA as a design discipline (Banham, Rykwert);
- From the Baroque (Le Notre), examine structuring devices of axes and parterres, and their ability to curate conceptually discrete containers (structure and infill) (Venturi and Rowe);
- The conceptual role of the diagram as a means of simultaneously considering space and conceptual hierarchy (Stan Allen, Mario Gandelsonas, Corner);
- The notion of infrastructure as a formal and organisational system for understanding the relationship of design and the landscape (Eduard Bru; Kathy Poole).

### **2. Intro 2 - The Landscape Cyborg: Forms and Processes for Landscape Design**

- Aspects of the culture / nature;
- Art / science split (Bronowski), and disciplinary definitions;
- Conventional practice paradigm established, environmental determinism (Olmsted & Anne Whiston Spirn);
- Bio-engineering, notion of the Cyborg (Donna Harraway);
- Expansion to that of the landscape cyborg (Beth Meyer),
- Critique of Kathy Poole discussion of Back Bay Fen's (Olmsted) and Jardin Bambus (Chemetoff);
- Modernism in the landscape and ecological functionalism (Deep Ecology & custodianship)

### **3. Part A - The Landscapist - The Will of Landscape**

- Symbiosis and planetary medicine (Gaia);
- Environmentalism and landscape architecture (Meyer) & permaculture;
- Notion of the Will of Things and inherent trajectory (Nietzsche, Heidegger);
- Analysis and design as the resultant (McHarg);
- The Netherlands as a case study in working at a remove (Nico de Jonge; HNS; Vista);

### **4. Part B – The Gardener - Discursive, Vernacular Landscape Practices and Techniques**

- Cause and effect and learning;
- Regimes of care (van Schaik)
- The notion of the garden enthusiast as nurse;
- The gardener as a mode of practice and collection of techniques;

- Vernacular cultural production (J.B Jackson) and post-modern design practice (Venturi)
- Conventionality and typology in landscape (Sylvia Lavin & Quatremere de Quincy)
- French landscape architecture and the perpetuity of tradition (Corajoud, Bernard Lassus; Girot; Bruel & Delmar; Pascal Cribier)

5. **Part C – The Choreographer - Landscape architecture is social project management**
  - Notions of social space (Lefebvre);
  - Habermass; Situationists;
  - Emergence & Complexity;
  - Social processes; Alexander; Halprin; Hood;
  - Performance art; Ben Ackerman; Jo Scicluna
  
6. **Part D – The Raconteur – Interpretation Machines and Colonial Processes of Territoriality & Knowing**
  - Catastrophe Theory;
  - Deleuze; Rabinow; de Soja;
  - Allistair Knox; Paul Carter; Myles Dunphy; Edna Walling's Australian Roadside;
  - Bruce Mackenzie's Botany Bay; (Room 413?);
  - simultaneous analysis and proposition;
  - symbiosis / parasitism;
  
7. **Conclusion - Speculations on a 21<sup>st</sup> Century dynamic Landscape Practice**