

# New Frontiers in Aesthetic Education: A Feasibility Study on the Role of Public Landscapes

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**Abstract:** With the expansion of aesthetic education's application and development, the traditional aesthetic education model is confronted with challenges of venue confinement and content canonization. On the other hand, public landscapes, owing to their relative ease of access, show a growing potential for the aesthetic education of citizens. Within the context of civic aesthetic education, public landscapes provide a series of specific benefits, which allow for more expansive, immersive, interactive, and deep aesthetic education. This is a crucial aspect of responding to the growing needs of aesthetic education in the new era, and it is of great importance. The current key tasks are to make the most of the special advantages of public landscapes, optimize the communication of public aesthetic education, and achieve an organic integration of public landscapes with aesthetic education. Only in this way can we expand the ways of achieving civic aesthetic education in the new era and enhance the positive role of public landscapes in aesthetic education.

**Keywords:** Public landscape; Aesthetic education; Public space

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## 1. Brief discussion on public image and aesthetic education

### 1.1. Public landscape

There is now a common agreement in the academic discourse that a public landscape is a spatial area that any member of society can access and which serves civil uses and aesthetic values. The concept of a common landscape could be interpreted in most situations in four main characteristics: openness to the people, embodiment in space, aesthetic expression, and practical utility. Its social nature consists in the fact that the value it generates and the operations it performs are not possessed by certain groups but shared by everyone. Its spatial nature means that it cannot be only represented visually over a flat surface; it is a three-dimensional space that can be entered by people, travelled through, and experienced by them first-hand <sup>[1]</sup>.

Its aesthetic component cannot be limited to visual appeal by itself, as a shared landscape is also supposed to convey a particular cultural spirit or symbolic meaning. Its practical aspect is embodied in its ability to serve the daily activities like rest, social interaction, and transmission of cultures, thereby providing direct and universal advantages to the people. Since the flourishing of modern landscape painting, the model landscapes of people have been more open, to the eye, differentiated in form, and widely spread in space.

Meanwhile, an increasing number of scholars recognize that the scope of environmental values should be included in aesthetic education, body and environment, the aesthetics of community, environmental creativity, and sacred aesthetic environments <sup>[2]</sup>. One should not think that public landscapes are exactly the same as general public spaces. These two are highly related but not entirely substitutable. Public landscape is definitely based on open public space as its material, though it primarily focuses on the spatial and aesthetic qualities created by the layout arrangement of a landscape. In this respect, not only is it a physical place of public art and public activity, but also a transformation of natural landscape expansion and restructuring as part of the overall urbanization process. Research indicates that certain landscapes ultimately result in the shaping of a unique type of cultural landscape, presenting the coexistence of political landscapes that hold ideals and vernacular landscapes that carry life <sup>[3]</sup>.

## **1.2. Aesthetic education**

Education cannot exist without aesthetic education. It may not be scaled down to technical training in such art forms as painting or music. Essentially, it is an all-encompassing educational process that seeks to develop the ability to perceive beauty, appreciate beauty, and create beauty, and in turn, helps to develop personality and, to some degree, enriches spiritual life. Strictly speaking, aesthetic education frequently designs such arts education performed by means of literature, music, painting, dancing, and so forth, where the temperament and sensibility of the learners are cultivated over time. However, with the development of the idea of aesthetic education, the aspect has been extended beyond the classrooms and other traditional places of education. Extended in a wider content to nature, to society, and everyday life, it now further molds a permanent equilibrium between sensibility and reason, and it fosters the fuller and freer growth of the individual.

Within the workplace, aesthetic education can be actualized in at least three ways, all of which are related to one another. First, it operates on an emotional level and develops, polishes, and cleanses feelings. By means of interaction with the best works of art and closeness to nature, people can find resonance in their emotions, enhance their affective consciousness, and build a healthier and fuller inner world. Second, it enhances the aesthetic skill. Developing discernment and creating superior aesthetic taste is more possible by learning to discriminate between beauty and ugliness, and exposure to aesthetic traditions in various cultural settings. Third, aesthetic education is a valuable source of creativity. In appreciation, and in art as an activity, it prompts people to leave behind the habitual mode of perception and to learn to perceive and imagine more sharply and creatively. More to the point, aesthetic education is finally connected to the development of character. It will aid in bringing people nearer to a more integrated quest of “truth, goodness, and beauty” <sup>[4]</sup> by internalizing the principles of beauty as a constituent of inner order, and enable the building of a world of spirituality characterized by purity, elegance, and poetic richness.

Combined, aesthetic education is important to the person, inasmuch as it helps to make life better, to enrich the spirit, but also to society, as a source of culture and civilization. Its worth has been made even

more noticeable in an era of increasing material abundance. It provides not merely the capacity to live but also the possibility to find beauty and act upon it sensitively and, thus, endows life itself with humanity, seriousness, and poetry.

## **2. An analysis of the relationship between public landscape and aesthetic education**

### **2.1. Spatial openness creates an inclusive arena for aesthetic education**

Since the landscape of the public is available, open, and of a nature that allows access by most members of society, it facilitates a mode of collective use, not bound by rigid edges, boundaries, or social exclusion. In parks and plazas in the hearts of the cities, and in small green patches in residential areas, people can easily access and experience such spaces. Such receptiveness renders the open landscape an especially reverberating location of aesthetic training in modern society. In this use, aesthetic cultivation is no longer tied to specialized institutions like museums or concert halls, or limited to people who have time, resources, or cultural capital to access them. Rather, it has become a part of daily life as a widely available cultural commodity. By doing so, public landscape both expands the domain of aesthetic education to broader and more socially varied populations, and relocates it outside of the confines of teaching spaces like classrooms. Children can be shown the beauty of nature when they play on a lawn, older people can enjoy calm and shade when resting under trees, and young people can discover the beauty of form in space when meeting friends in open squares. Such moments of common yet significant experience ensure that the inclusiveness of aesthetic education is more fully achieved.

### **2.2. Multisensory participation cultivates acute aesthetic perception**

One of the most pronounced characteristics of a public landscape is its three-dimensional and inhabitable nature. It is not merely to be viewed like a picture, but a spatial area which may be entered, passed by, and touched with the body. That is why the out-of-the-ground landscape appeals to a variety of senses simultaneously. Form, color, and alternating forms of light and shadow and the wind, flowing water, and song of birds come under the notice of the visual sense; wind, flowing water, and the scent of grass, grass, earth, rough and smooth, cool under heat, all to the sense of touch; the slope, rhythm, density, and space-openness respond to bodily movement. Especially the sensory experience brought about by the natural components of public landscapes was relatively positive <sup>[5]</sup>. These experiences transform the masses out of the position of passive observers to active observers. Aesthetic perception is thus refined progressively by practice: the eye becomes more attentive to fine differences of tone, the ear more attentive to the rhythm of natural sound, the physical being more conscious of spatial magnitude, and the atmosphere. Aesthetic experience of this continuous multisensory process is not a temporary one. It is polished by experience and ultimately reposes into a more lasting kind of aesthetic sensitivity. It is precisely this cultivated sensitivity that enables meaningful engagements with and production of aesthetic texts—engagements that, in turn, promote critical thinking, foster empathetic thinking, and aid historical analysis <sup>[6]</sup>.

### **2.3. Everyday immersion facilitates the internalization of aesthetic literacy**

It is the recurring moments of stimulation, not the isolated moments, that make aesthetic education the most effective. It lies in its long-run growth, in gradual education of perception, both by actual exposure and by long disposition. This is absolutely handy regarding the actual landscape as it belongs to the world of

everyday. It is encountered on the way to work, during an evening walk, during a holiday, in interminable daily routines. It is not a short-term educational activity but a part of lifelong learning in daily life. At the same time, it is not always completely still: there are spring flowers, summer shadows, autumn and winter snow that have a range of different visual and emotional tastes as the seasons change. The fact that, like people, it simply trails them everywhere and, at least, evolves, is precisely the thing that makes public landscape provide the experience of aesthetic form and stimulation that may be continuous, but never tiresome. It is in this perpetual submersion that the aesthetic response gradually ascends out of the plane of conscious impression and enters that of embodied disposition. What begins as a sporadic feeling can, over time, become a permanent aesthetic ability and eventually be constitutive of character itself.

#### **2.4. Cultural embeddedness elevates aesthetic experience into identity formation**

Public landscape is not just a physical structuration of space but also a manifestation and exchange of meanings. It can save remnants of the local past and reveal the cultural symbols through sculptures, patterns of the pavement, architecture, vegetation, and space organization. It can also provide certain meanings of ecology, society, and allure in its design concepts and elegant language. When individuals are engaging with a landscape, they do not simply observe its appearance, but also experience values, memories, and cultural narratives that are inscribed within it. This is why the pedagogical value of the public landscape is not only in sensual delight. When cultural knowledge is added to aesthetic experience, this experience can extend to identification and belonging. When individuals learn to value the terrains they see, they might have an increased sense of place, a deeper sense of cultural legacy, and a more appreciative sense of communal values. In this meaning, one can refer to the fact that through the aid of public landscape, the aesthetic experience could be displaced in focus past perception into identity, thereby bolstering the aesthetic appreciation toward a wider cultural sense of self-understanding.

### **3. Application strategies for public landscape in aesthetic education**

#### **3.1. Spatial design: Constructing immersive aesthetic settings**

Because it is a large part of urban public space, public landscape can provide aesthetic education above all, through the modeling of immersive spatial environments. Conventional approaches to aesthetic education typically rely on specialized educational institutions like a gallery, a museum, or a concert hall. Public landscape, on the other hand, introduces aesthetic experience to the mundane cycles of everyday living. By so doing, it displaces the aesthetic educational paradigm of periodic, ritualized exposure to on-the-fly exposure. This change is significant since the more profound purposes of aesthetic education cannot be depleted by the transitory pleasure. Further, aesthetic education aims to develop delicacy, perception, and a sense of space. Every good public landscape may train such abilities rather silently, by simply walking into it: proportion, color, material, enclosure, openness, rhythm are all experienced immediately, and not as elements of thought. Designing landscape spaces that engage the senses of touch, hearing, and smell is crucial for researching how public landscapes can achieve “immersive” and “interactive” aesthetic education <sup>[7]</sup>. The mind acquires visual, auditory, and kinesthetic knowledge by seeing, hearing, and moving respectively. By so doing, the spatial design does not merely beautify a space, it transforms that space into an educational environment wherein the experience of aesthetics is enhanced through habitual body interaction <sup>[8]</sup>. That is why the

development of immersive aesthetic environments should be considered one of the primary mechanisms by which public landscape can help to achieve everyday implementation of aesthetic education.

### **3.2. Interactive design: Enhancing participatory aesthetic experience**

A second crucial approach is the adoption of interactive design that promotes participatory aesthetics. The communication between the creator, the artwork, and the viewer is mostly one-way, in most traditional conceptions of aesthetic education: the work is given, and the viewer taken. Public landscape provides the opportunity to escape this framework by involving the masses in a more active community. Instead of being mere spectators, individuals may be participants who develop an aesthetic sense by direct interaction<sup>[9]</sup>.

This can be facilitated in a number of ways. Bodily interaction is one dimension. Landscapes' public spaces may contain item(s) that may be touched, entered, traversed, climbed, or played with, including tactile artworks, accessible lawns, varying landforms, and interactive water features. In behaving in the relationship to such things, people are not just occupying space, but are experiencing form, texture, motion, and feel in action. The second dimension is creative involvement. By incorporating the principles of participatory art, installations or open spaces in open landscapes could facilitate contribution and co-creation. Such engagement can not only further aesthetic agency, but also imagination and expressive agency. A third aspect is technological participation. The digital media, including augmented reality, interactive projection, and responsive sensing devices, have the potential to add additional dimensions of experience where physical and virtual space merge. Properly implemented, these technologies can add variety to the human-space interface and make the aesthetic experience richer and more varied. All these interactive strategies ensure that public landscapes become more active as an educative medium, wherein aesthetic learning occurs in the process of doing rather than seeing alone.

### **3.3. Narrative strategies: Strengthening collective aesthetic identity**

The third way is the approach to cultural narrative to develop place-based aesthetic identity. Aesthetic education in this form is not restricted to the polishing of personal taste or perception, nor is it attached to the development of wider social and cultural identification. The point is that a general practice of location in the physical world is not only physical but also has symbolic and narrative space. It is capable of storing memory, passing values, and expressing cultural continuity in a manner that is capable of defining how individuals interpret place and themselves.

Narrative strategies need to work on various levels to achieve such a role. First, the local context must be thoroughly researched and brought to the landscape language. Each place is unique with the characteristics of geography, historical background, and human experience. Good landscape design in the community ought to be an exploitation of those local resources and to provide them a palpable expression, such that the landscape is readable as well as visible. In their day-to-day encounters, people may encounter stories that directly relate to the locality in which they are residing. Second, it is through public landscapes that collective memory may be reactivated and reorganized. As certain forms of social memory dissolve, in the wake of modernization, landscape could be utilized as material reinforcement, such as in developing memorial zones, theme plazas, community memory boards, and other space apparatuses that bring the non-material visible and shareable. Such locations can also provide a platform for interaction among various social and cultural subsets. Third, the importance of narrative depth is enhanced, especially through public art. Sculptures, murals, and

installations with a large amount of cultural content can also serve as a visual focal point and as a node of interpretation in a larger landscape narrative. In this way, they provoke contemplation, debate, and more active reflection by people on the meaning inherent in space<sup>[10]</sup>. Public landscape, through these narrative techniques, is able to create more than aesthetic appreciation, but also a deeper and more sustainable sense of cultural identity.

## 4. Conclusion

The landscapes of the present day are more diversified, higher in composition, and more practical in their role in the education of the aesthetic senses than they were in earlier times. Simultaneously, the requirements of aesthetic education in modern society are evolving as well. A premium today is placed more on higher-quality aesthetic value, wider social accessibility, and forms of education that can operate indirectly through everyday life and not by single instruction. The realization of aesthetic education in practice in this case is offered, in particular, by high-quality public landscapes.

In the future, it is necessary not only to utilize better the inherent capabilities of the public landscape, its transparency, continuity, space, and cultural expressiveness, but also to deal with the issues that currently ruin its effectiveness, i.e., the inequality of aesthetic quality and improper management in certain situations. Careful design, thoughtful use, and thoughtful stewardship of the public landscape is the only way to provide a more extensive, of greater quality, and greater approachability of aesthetic education to the people of the United States. In this regard, the future of the governance of the public scene is bound tightly to the overall project of bringing aesthetic care to the daily routine.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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