ONLINE URBAN PARK

An interpretation of visual landscape perception through the lens of Instagram with #Vasaparken

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Nawarat Yangsomran 2017

Thesis Documentary
https://vimeo.com/248319688

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Shot with Nikon D610 & Fuji film XT1
9 mins, English
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ABSTRACT

Urban landscape, especially parks, mainly provide a wide range of disciplines, such as physical recreation, social interaction to urban residents. It has been associated with physical features of environments and nature. Today, urban parks are perceived as far more than just recreation or scenery. Urban park also constitutes social and cultural value at city level. This study seeks to investigate and challenge how to understand landscape perception and dialog between urban park and community through the interpretation of photographic social media (Instagram). The study also draws further discussion on reciprocity between urban landscape and photography as well as environmental psychology, focusing on cognitive map and environmental meaning. It also suggests possible strategies of future urban intervention and policy, in particular, promoting well being and pro-environmental behavior.

KEYWORDS;
Urban park, Visual landscape Perception, Instagram, Photographic social media, Photographic interpretation, Vasaparken, Environmental Psychology, Cognitive Maps, Environmental meaning, Reciprocity
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INTRODUCTION

Urban landscape, especially park, has been subject to a wide range of role, such as recreation, public space, playground, sport field. Although it has been associated with mainly physical features of an environment, the term landscape currently refers to much more than just scenery. Urban Landscape is a complex phenomenon which evolves continuously through time and space. It is a reflection of both natural processes and cultural changes throughout time [1, p. 251]. Function of Urban parks can be a product of either only planner and Landscape designer or public intervention. Urban parks have been perceived as both socially and culturally power and value. In particularly in cities, the interaction and activity of landscape which are influentially forms of social media appears to be intensifying [2, p. 2].

Most of the meaning of landscapes have been modified by human’s activities. Hence, people are embedded with symbolic meanings of our societies’ cultural diversity and identity. Due to the development of smart phones and photographic application such as Instagram offer not only tourists but also residents are increasingly reveal photograph and share aspects of their engagement with landscape. Certain kinds of public park are also increasingly animated by programming promoted, and generating symbolic of social interaction, well-being and raising environmental awareness which delivered through social media [2, p. 2]. On contrary, in landscape planning and evaluation of visual landscape character is often based on assessment of physical characteristics of landscapes and is conducted by experts While public or user preferences are generally neglected. Thus, this study attempts to provide understanding of psychophysical and cognitive dimensions of visual landscape perception from local level for landscape designers and planners [1, p. 253]
AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The study is aimed at drawing inspiration from theories of landscape perception. This study instead of asking “what landscape perception is” asks how it “dialogic urban landscape process between community and landscape” by exploring in questions: how photographic interpretation from Instagram can be indicators for a further study of visual landscape perception?

My primary study draws paradigm shifts of landscape perception. In this sense, evolution of landscape perception, from text to photographic social media (Instagram), becomes clear that their functioning in the first sense is itself mediated that designed landscapes are only socially and culturally effective in interaction with other media forms [2, p. 2] In relation to public parks, the study selected Vasaparken, a local park in Stockholm to be an interpretative experiment. The methodological orientation collected from circulated photography available on Instagram with hashtag #Vasaparken. The collection of photography is traced some of the activities associated or featured with nature or place, as well as identifying the conditions of its interpretation. The conceptual framework that motivates the methodology is adopted from Coeterier (1996) and Ode et.al.(2008). The methodology presents in ways that differential values which are a) Imeagability b) Naturalness c) Historicity d) ephemera e) social platform and well being (both mentality and physicality) and use as an indicator to interpret a set of photography. tation and interview of local people through documentary film.
There is a reciprocal relationship between individual and the surrounding environment. People are intrinsically involved with their living environments to survive. They use and shape the physical environment to meet their physical and social needs. While environments are shaped by people, people are inspired and shaped by their environments as well. Thus, perception of the environment or the landscape has become an area of concern of various disciplines in order to understand and explain this interaction between people and their physical settings [1, p. 251]. Although human receive spatial information through many of our senses (seeing, hearing, smelling and feeling) sight is assumed to be the most valued sense. More than 80% of our sensory input is through sight [1, p. 253] Hence, most of the environmental perception, and likewise the study, focus on shared visual dimension of the perception process from social media platform. Within this context, the criteria for landscape perception studies are mostly scenic appearance or visual preference.

The importance of integration of parks is further highlighted by Pincettl and Gearin: “The difficulties regarding a paradigm shift from thinking of a park as a place for urban recreation to the notion of parks and open spaces as part and parcel of the urban fabric, are multiple. With regards to social factors, everyday life is reflected in leisure time, recreation, as well as the aesthetic values of the nature experience that can produce positive psychological side-effects to people such as stress relieve and also due to heightened environmental consciousness and lobbying for better environment quality and maintenance of ecological systems and social sustainability in cities [7].
02.1 VISUAL LANDSCAPE PERCEPTION

The European Landscape Convention (2000) defines ‘landscape’ as an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. Any discipline concerning landscapes is therefore inevitably bound to acknowledge the importance of public perception and integrate it in their actions [4, p. 27]. Perception through physically experience can be more clearly linked to an understanding of landscape as an area of activity, in contrast to an understanding as picture or scenery [5, p. 340] According to Bell (1996) perception refers to “the activity carried out by the brain by which we interpret what the senses receive [6, p. 22]

Values of urban park and its general perception
Urban park plays a significant role in the planning process in Swedish culture. In generally, people have a physical and psychological need for green space, allowing not only for outdoor activities but also for spontaneous public contact. Sweden green spaces are generally the most popular places of social contact, casual encounters and meetings. Parks and green areas have a wide range of both social and environmental functions and thus form an integral part of the urban landscape [7]. According to Andersson (1991) names five conventional functions of parks 1) contact with nature, 2) possibility for physical recreation, 3) educational and cultural functions, 4) possibility for personal contacts, and 5) establishing meaningfulness to greenery through a ‘mental map’. Integrating these functions in one space makes for a well-used park. [8]

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02.2 PARADIGM SHIFTS OF “VISUAL LANDSCAPE PERCEPTION”

“From artist to local
From piece of art to photo sharing”

Landscape perception has significantly changed over time. Since the 16th century, the view of the term’s aesthetic use has appeared and always been shaped by technologically enabled and culturally specific processes of visual mediation. It can occur through communication media such as texts, paintings, photographs, films, or through direct physical experience on place [9]. There are paradigm shifts in the visual perception of landscape in particular periods as follows.

1. Renaissance (16th century): drawing and painting
Artists were main influencers of expression landscape perception through their personal moods. Visual perception was deduced from the artists’ eyes. The artists’ representation has a great part in creating the image of a place [10, pp. 2-4].

2. 19th century: Photography
Technology of photography enables capturing of perception landscape in its reality. Photographing transferring have an increasingly important role in the development of the idea of landscape. Some experts described that photography has played a special role in elaborating and securing landscape’s secret powers, since it was invented just as the landscape “way of seeing” was becoming naturalized [10, pp. 2-4].

3. 20th century: Movies or Documentary
In the cinema landscape can be appreciated in the reality of movement, adding to its telling the visual experience, that is typical of the direct perception of various type of landscape. The movies can add to the visual perception, experience, emotional connection, pushing the spectators towards different and new feelings [10, pp. 2-4] the visual perception, experience, emotional connection, pushing the spectators towards different and new feelings [10, pp. 2-4]
4) 21st century: Photographic social media.
there is probably a fifth revolution, driven by the digital tools. The perception of places changes again, by the using of personal devices and the new sharing photo systems such as Instagram. Sharing photo on social media was the first great revolution in the appreciation of the nature, the rising of a conscious contemplation, probably the birth of aesthetic as well: literal descriptions are the instruments of the “evoking” phase of landscape’s perception. [10, pp. 2-4]Space not only moves by the time lapsing but also can recede in a fluctuate state of continuous activities. The position of the transparent figures has equivocal meaning as one sees each figure now as the past, the present, and the future ones.
The new media times is involving daily life, accordingly, trying to guide our users to learn about that is also our urgent priority. Base on expert’s observation, camera phones make more convenient to share them [11] The massive and widespread uptake of digital and networked photographies has produced new, still emergent modes of photographic engagement. Not only are people taking and sharing more photos, more often, they are engaging in expressive and communicative as well as commemorative modes of photographic practice [12]. This has given rise to new fields of aesthetic value as well as new forms of community that sustain them

This relationship is in part what has enabled particular aesthetic values and sensibilities to appear self-evident in certain contexts, which in turn has facilitated a range of political projects dependent on the covert shaping of visibility for example, through the design of landscapes that shape views and stage social relations in ways that are disguised and/or naturalized [13], or through representations and interpretations of land that elevate particular qualities and effects as a means to sustain or elevate a particular social order [14].
FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGIES

The study of landscape perception in urban park now has been expanded to cover a much wider aspect, ranging from visual landscape to the biodiversity. Consequently, the focus of landscaping has extended from nature, space, and climate, to the incorporation of various people’s daily activities. Though it is promoted as photographic social media, in which the social and the aesthetic are effortlessly blended, is the way the uploading of photographs permits the correlation of location data and social data, the role of such photography in the medium production of urban visibilities and visual perception of designed landscape.

To draw out and visualize linkages among understandings and engagements of landscape perception in urban park, I approached using two sets of qualitative methods, as individual connections to nature are often not readily expressed with numerical value, which are 1) photographic interpretation from Instagram and interviews on site. I chose Vasaparken, local public park in Stockholm as the interpretative experiment.
#VASAPARKEN

Urban park and Playground

In 1842 compulsory school attendance was introduced in Sweden. Soon after, schoolteachers and sports associations started to argue that school pupils needed physical education, otherwise they would overwork themselves at school and become tired [7]. Therefore, playgrounds and sports grounds for children ought to be integrated into parks. In 1900, Vasaparken primarily planned as a playground and sports ground for children living or going to school in the neighbourhood. In 2005, was established an artificial turf pitch for football field, and became Vasaparken’s identity. In 2006, inaugurated the new playground which has become a visual hallmark of the park with its orange-red hills of rubber asphalt [15].

Vasaparken is composed of a series of sport field, open spaces that slope downhill and designed playground. There is modern architecture that is located within the park, Sven-Harrys konstmuseum. The park is surrounded by building of 18th century. The vegetation is to a large extent clustered around the perimeter of these spaces, allowing the park to open on an attractively framed view of soccer field from multiple locations. This quality of the landscape is especially significant in Stockholm, where public spaces have tended to host gatherings of all ages people as well as a range of seasonal activities. Thus, in photographs of Vasaparken that appear in various online media, it is very common to see a view of soccer field and great lawn. The park’s openness is also conducive to other types of viewing, depicted only indirectly in photographs. No matter where you are in the park, you can see across it.
03.1 COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIAL DATA FROM INSTAGRAM

In this context, what the photographs themselves are or do is not theorized, and not even clearly stated. Thus, this ambiguity corresponds only visual that display in each photograph and their interpretation. As of 2010 to 2017, Instagram returned 9,930 photographs and videos associated with the hashtag #vasaparken. In order to gain a way of working with these photographs, I compiled a collection of photographs by identify them involed in hashtag-based searches for one year, June 2016 to June 2017 with provide 1322 photographs with hashtag #vasaparken and those photos featured or appeared space or nature. My propose tracing data for 1 year which means to collect the changing of space and time throughout 4 seasons.

#vasaparken on the basis of my own experiments, I identify some constraints on the possibilities in this regard. This significance is specified in the use of hashtags with a codified, as opposed to narrative, contextual significance. Hashtag has an implication of invisibilities, not only allow follower to see them but also allows everyone to perceive. This makes the shared photographs more comparable to speech than the kind of artistic or commemorative acts on which interpretation was premised in the past. At the same time, the simultaneous insertion of photographs into collective archives produces new traces of the socio-cultural processes attending practices of looking [2].

To begin with, I adopted the framework from Coeterier (1996) and Ode et.al.(2008) and has identified factors describing landscape character based on aesthetic theoretical research in relation to visual I indicators of a landscape and perception [16]. The first experiment. I attempt to reconstruct and identify a set of photographs that picture were presented all those life styles, self portraits, activities, physical elements that featured associate with natures and places and depicts meaning of urban landscape in particular public park. which are a)meagabilityb)naturalness c)historicity d) ephemera e)health and well being both mentality and physicality [16].
INLÄGGSTOPPEN
03.2 INTERVIEW PROCESS

Studies ask about the what, why of capturing and sharing photo on Instagram, using more intensive response method of interview in the Vasa parken. I chose to interview Swedish or Local people, in 3 generations: young, Teenagers and elderly to facilitate a conversation. The interview was on site and was filmed and recorded in part of thesis documentary.
The interpretation read though visual element and appearance, not only how it looks, but what of interest is there, and its importance in relation to other elements and place. Not only are people taking and sharing more photos, more often, they are engaging in expressive and communicative as well as commemorative modes of photographic practice [12]. This has given rise to new fields of aesthetic value as well as new forms of community that sustain them [17]. For purposes, one of the principal constraint of this broadened definition is its displacement of emphasis from intentional use to the effects of media. Thus, the interpretation enables to avoid resorting to concepts of “why” people take a photo such as self-expression or representation of actual well-being but focus on how specific photography displays.

Drawing on a variety of sources to contextualize the production and circulation of content, I trace a trajectory of its critical potential indicator, attempting to understand what the photographs present by classify them as following indicators, and to make certain socio-technical relations of production and circulation appear.
[A]

INDICATORS OF IMAGEABILITY
252 POSTS

Key component
Soccer field, Stepped seat, Open lawn

Figure 1-9: Sample photos of imageability
THEORY
Naturalness links directly to the biophilia hypothesis of Wilson (1984), which states that people naturally need to connect with nature. Here the natural state of the environment will be assessed. Perception of naturalness as Biophilic design is the use of nature to create places that are imbued with positive emotional experiences. They contain the essentials of human attachment to and caring for a place: enjoyment, pleasure, interest, fascination, and wonder [16].

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION
Those photographs depicted clearly image of nature such as flowers, tree truck, sky. Green and Colorful nature are a main attractive attribute. However, their bright colour and their distribution throughout the landscape, as opposed to being contained within one portion of it, introduces a more explicitly aesthetic dimension and photogenic. The park provides opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds to come together for mutual enjoyment and also public spaces can carry positive communal meaning.
INDICATORS OF EPHEMERA
144 POSTS

Key component
Space or Element in Winter and Autumn, Snow and Colorful leaves

Figure 28-36: Sample photos of ephemera
THEORY
Ephemera refers to Kaplan & Kaplan (1989). The changes related to the season or weather, especially, grass and leave. Photo circulated reproduce in activities in winter and Autumn. This phenomenon becomes a characteristic of the place [16].

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION
The ephemeral feature or activities became a characteristic of the park. At least, successful in term of motivate people go out to do activities during extreme climate. Noticeably, those photographs were captured almost at the same view as was presented in category of Imageability but mainly focused on dimension of temporary activities.
INDICATOR AS HISTORICITY
102 POSTS

Key component
Architectures, Exterior and facade, Sculptures

Figure 19-27: Sample photos of historicity
THEORY
Historical continuity and historical richness are presented in this indicator. Historical continuity focusses on the visual presence of different time layers in the landscape, while historical richness focuses on the amount and diversity of cultural elements [16].

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION
The presence of a coherent mix between past and present through combination of nature and buildings both located with the park and periphery of the land use. The one of architecture is located within the park, Sven-Harrys konstmuseum, it presents modern and minimal looks while buildings in late 18th century surrounded the park. the existence displays a significant amount of visible time layers providing evidence of time depth. People tend to perceive coherent mix between past and present of the territory.
INDICATOR AS NATURALNESS
130 POSTS

Key component
Trees, part of trees such as branches, roots, Flowers, Sky, Natural Phenomenon (rainbow)

Figure 10-18: Sample photos of naturalness
THEORY
Naturalness links directly to the biophilia hypothesis of Wilson (1984), which states that people naturally need to connect with nature. Here the natural state of the environment will be assessed. Perception of naturalness as Biophilic design is the use of nature to create places that are imbued with positive emotional experiences. They contain the essentials of human attachment to and caring for a place: enjoyment, pleasure, interest, fascination, and wonder [16].

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION
Those photographs depicted clearly image of nature such as flowers, tree truck, sky. Green and Colorful nature are a main attractive attribute. However, their bright colour and their distribution throughout the landscape, as opposed to being contained within one portion of it, introduces a more explicitly aesthetic dimension and photogenic. In addition, the perception and meaning of a green place can encourage individuals to actively protect and engage in pro-environmental behavior. An individual's attachment to a green place increases in proportion to its proximity to one's home and frequency of use.
INDICATOR OF SOCIAL PLATFORM AND WELL-BEING
694 POSTS

Key component
Self-portrait, Group photos, Picnicking, Active exercise, Passive exercise (yoga, dancing), kids and family, Food, Art, Animal

Figure 37-45: Sample photos of health and well-being
I adopted this indicator from naturalness. Looking at this collection (of approximately 1322 photographs) made new observations possible most notably, the fact that over a third of them (694 posts) featured symbolic of health and well-being or good life. People expressed themselves together with nature or at least, they do this more and more duplicated as images of the general context such as laying down on the lawn, proliferate in various activities such as picnicking or exercise, and different part of body from face to feet as well as food on grass. Base on observation and interview, people do believe that contacting with nature represents good life as well as well-being at the moment of time. People need to appreciate it more than once and want to keep the moment for long lasting, at least in their private galleries on Instagram. While some of those photos are implied to commercially promote programming which related to health.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION

The majority of these photographs (208 posts) depict either group of family, or their own kids enjoying social activities or playground in the park. More convincingly perhaps than park administrators, such photographs show the park’s active activities such as soccer, training, running relevance in 104 posts, often to thousands of people at a time treating open green grass as a backdrop to a range of social and cultural activities. Perhaps most importantly, the quantity and circumstances of their production, and their presentation in a continuously updated stream, suggest a relational or contextual significance that exceeds the boundaries of the photograph itself [17]. and to emphasis that the park or green space is becoming powerful platform for maintaining culturally and socially well-being not only for individual but it become a cultural or trend via online platform. In addition, the perception and meaning of a green place can encourage individuals to actively protect and engage in pro-environmental behavior and frequency of use at the green spaces.
CONCLUSION

The purpose of designed landscape, especially urban park, has also been broadened to provide a sensible place appropriate for activities, to strengthen community, to contact nature, to remind historical fragment, or simply to tell a story.

In this study, I am particularly interested in those networked photographs from social media collaborate with landscape perception. Based on my observation, photography on Instagram, an online platform, is easily captured and shared landscape perception in the real time and within place-based. Thus, networked photography is a great evolution of landscape perception which has been developed since renaissance period.

My hypothesis is that, thanks to Coeterier and Ode et.al., and the consequent theory of landscape perception, it is possible to naturalize landscape by introducing ideas from the scientific domain into a body of literature that has, for decades, remained exclusively cultural perception. Human beings are an active part of the process of co-creating landscape, both from a cultural and an ecological point of view. Thus, the study presents development of perception indicators predominant threads on landscape according to five categories a) Imeagability which represent characteristic of place b) Naturalness which provide sense of biophilic c) Historicity which displays coherence of mixed past and present d) Ephemera which attract people’s arousement though changing of space and time e) social platform and well being depict preference of park as social platform, landscape scene is influence sense of environmental awareness since it alter resident’s perception and experience of, as well as pro-environmental behavior.

I consider in the possibility that photographic social media may contribute to dialog between urban park and community or inhabitant in terms of potential for unintentional urban platform. I conducted the research by approach two methods in a larger process of photographic interpretation and interview on site. Exploring within each method in different
approach, I attempt to seek the correlation implied in the production of specific urban visibilities appear. These shared photographs would seem to interpret what appears a supportive role for photographic social media which is increasingly deployed as a key component in promoting cultural programming for urban public places since collection of photograph shows the park is becoming a powerful platform as cultural and social exchanges in the form of living. Moreover, the possibility of reciprocity of landscape and networked photography may contribute to urban intervention, urban strategy and environmental psychology of subjective in both individual and city level, in particular, wellbeing and pro-environmental behavior. Further, given the park programming and singularity of their activities such as yoga, soccer or training, the active activities automatically situate the content of the photographs in which they appear within the park. This is really, instead of indoor activities people arrange and powerful of outdoor activities with nature which relate to Billophic theories. As evident, life and perception cannot be detached from landscape. Their mental and physical health depends and relies on it. This agential dimension of the notion of procession landscape, provides the missing connection with health and well-being.

In addition, photographs have been taken and circulated in social media has influent to sense of cognitive and environmental images and meaning, consequently, they effects to design and programming in future shaping of urban place-based visibilities. However, there is a limitation of available data, basic understanding of landscape perception and experience, and how to successfully implement this into practice.

The study also draws further discussion on 1) reciprocity between urban landscape and photography as well as 2) environmental psychology which focusing on cognitive map and environmental meaning. This is to suggest possible strategies of future urban intervention and policy, in particular, promoting well-being and pro-environmental behavior.
DISCUSSIONS

05.1 RECIPROCITY BETWEEN LANDSCAPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Vasaparken’s administrator has used of networked photography to engage public movement through social media. It has been the focus of valuable cultural programming to entice people into the the park, and its administrators have cultivated a comprehensive and strongly visual social media presence. As can be seen from official Instagram of Vasaparken, which are frequently featured in official photographs, commentary on the park and in its promotional materials (https://www.instagram.com/vasaparken/?hl=en) So far, the strategies employed at Vasaparken seem to be perceived as successful. In mainstream, Instagram users would appear to be doing the park administrators’ work for them, since many of their photographs can be seen as promotional of park programming. Especially while the park is promoting new programing or event, these developments draw for a mode of conceptualizing and interpreting social media photographs of shaping landscape perception. At the same time, people tend to share their stories of past or just happened now, to tell the others everything regarding this context. The material could be collected by smart citizens as photographs through the, to spread and update daily [2].

From this perspective, reciprocity between landscape and photography can be seen as a process of cultural exchange within place-based. People can be very creative in changing the meaning of urban landscape. At the same time, they can be viewer to appreciate a landscape atmosphere. Consequently, people’s perception also affects to landscape design and park’s programming. Thus, landscape and photograph are collaborative platform of an interactive Instagram.
Cognition and environmental meaning in the park emerge from a variety of experiences and interaction, and are often related to environment green spaces, and natural areas and activities. Cognitive maps involve perception though social media may lead to a heightened sense of environmental responsibility and encourage individuals to actively protect and engage in pro-environmental behavior using appeals to individuals' self-identity and dependence. People who experience an emotional affinity with nature and perceive natural environments as restorative are more likely to protect natural spaces and engage in pro-environment activities [20].

As evident of 252 posts on Instagram, those photographs display provides a means of bringing the park’s visual characteristic which is scenery of soccer field and its openness. Certain kind of perception often becomes mixed with the sense of cultural identity for certain groups, but may simply be an individual’s appreciation of certain aspects of a place. In this sense, environment means affectively bond between people and place or setting that evolve through emotional connection, meaning, and understandings of a specific place and/or features of a place. Construction of place is dynamic and influenced by human perception, cognition, self-concept, social dynamics, economies, cultures, and histories. Space is transformed into place when humans give it bounds and believe it has value. Place is constructed and reconstructed over time by different groups of people [21]. Perceptions of place are ever-changing by constructing and reconstructing, depending on social interactions, context, and time. In cities, for example, changing patterns of social communication can make and unmake places, elevating or diminishing the appeal of a site [22]. Definable sense of urban park can and become places we want to return to, time and again [23]. Thus, cognition can be developed as second-hand experiences and may not even need to see some places first-hand to feel connection or perception. This development can occur frequently through sharing photography.
05.3 LIMITATIONS

The results of this approach represent only a snapshot of a dynamic relationship between community and landscape. This relationship is especially dynamic because it concerns a generally ephemeral community. This inquiry and its results are relative to this generally ephemeral community. Furthermore, these results are derived from qualitative data collected over only 1 year – June 2016 to June 2017. The timeframe and scope of this research limited the number of interviews and, thus, limited the amount and diversity of landscape understandings. Lastly, this inquiry is necessarily limited to a single and particular type of landscape. As an inquiry of an urban park, the results must necessarily be contextualized and are, therefore, not fully generalizable. However, there is a limitation of research of landscape perception and photographs, and how to successfully implement this into practice.
REFERENCES

(Music) 
Rolled out of bed on a Sunday morning  
Went to the park to clear my head  
I saw sun goddess bathing in beauty...

Author
01 Introduction

As a landscape architect I have been wondering how people perceive landscapes especially urban parks. I believe our life and perception cannot be detached from landscape. But instead of focusing on what is landscape perception is? I am interested in how does exactly people perceive visual landscape and then embed it into their memories. I laid down on the grass at vasaparken where is located in the city center of Stockholm. Look around the park, there are many things happening within this area, picnicking under the trees, playing soccer, climbing on rock mountain. Look at those seats, flower, architecture playground or kid ran around. What makes people take a photo while enjoys life in the park? 

So I began the study with this question.

Selma Engström

For the first picture is the park is right here so Here you can see a soccer field where you like basically they play soccer. Over here is just like the view of the apartment and some of bars. then pictures of the grass. Well it’s really pretty that I saw green and it’s so I really like that.

Hanna Asarnoj

I like picture is taken outside like nature pics. So I think even nice when a person is in picture. It likes combination between person. I like nature with the sky, the green grasses, Trees. I think it’s very nice.

Josefina Agrest

I think in Stockholm as well I really like to take picture of the building in and the city but here you get a spread from it. I really like kind of nice environment.

Eva Merig

Today I have taken one.

Interviewer

Nice, What kind of photo did you take?

Eva Merig

Umm very close to the grass. Just to show how green it is. Because usually in August, it seems dry.

Author
02 Background

In general, urban park has been seen as a decorative open lawn with many trees. The fact is that urban park can do more than just provide a space for recreation or contact with nature. Urban park is a complex phenomenon which evolves continuously through space and time. To understand the general perception is not only how it looks, but what of interest is there.

Author
03 Analysis

These days, there are more than endless amount of pictures displaying park scenery. They are reproducing and circulating on Instagram every second. To begin with this study, I asked the questions: how can we decipher visual landscape perception from photos posted on the popular social media platform Instagram? I did an experiment by collecting more than thousand photos through the use of hashtag #vasaparken.
About one-fourth of analysis photos have displayed a strong characteristic of the park which is composed of football field, open lawn and people whereas photos of buildings about 8% presented diversity of cultural elements as same as photos of activities during winter are a reflection of both natural process and cultural changes throughout space and time.

The majority of analysis photos (50%) featured people expressed themselves together with nature in various lifestyles.

The meaning of park has been modified by people’s perception and embed with symbolic of health and well-being.

In this sense, photographs on Instagram are deployed as a key component for both expert and local residents to promote park programmes, raise environmental awareness or simply keep it as memory.

Yes, memory. And also it’s very nice environment. It like green and before it get winter dark and cold and can’t sit outside.

I think either because just to show that you like to enjoys life. I don’t know but some just having fun.

it is already on Instagram. I wrote the comment that it was so unlikely that it’s so green in August.

oh wow, So you see this surprise to you?

Yes, definitely. It could look like this in June perhaps but during the winter it is dry

Vasaparken has a strong characteristic which provides attractive programmes for people then the park is becoming a cultural and social space via online platform. People can develop their cognition and perception of cultural value through reproduction of photographs.

To understand how people perceive vasaparken, then I ask another question what is characteristic of the park?

I think it’s local but it’s not too local and they are not too many people hanging out here but It’s mix people like old one younger one.

Yes, everyone

Yes, it like during the winter you can also go ice skating so it’s very nice and yeah I don’t know.

I think it’s like diverse and since we have class so we have been here quite often and do different like running lab around playing there or something. You can do a lot of stuffs here.
Eva Merig: I think it seems to be meeting for people in all ages from very young children to adult, old people and they amuse themselves and they sit and talk just relax.

Author 05 Conclusion: Space within the park is not just open green lawn. But it can be transformed into “place” when humans give it bounds and believe it has value. Today, Urban park performs as a green infrastructure and a cultural-exchanged platform.

In this sense, networked photography can shape people’s perception on what to talk about, interact with. This also increases value to the park.

While environments are shaped by people, people are inspired and shaped by their environment as well. That really creates dialogue and collaboration between people’s perception and urban park. And this is landscape’s secret powers that could create sustainability in the future.

Eva Merig: Maybe the thing play with children

Hanna Asarnoj: Maybe like here it’s not typical just not typical like football field where everyone can know that is Vasaparken. I think I would like more to be here I don’t know just not that a typical picture you think.

Josefina Agrest: Yes it’s very nice in the evening time there is sunset behind you so just nice scene I think.

Selma Engström: Sometime I take picture another thing like basically like trees or something like that and yeah so....
APPENDIX

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM INSTAGRAM
A) INDICATOR OF IMAGEABILITY & D) INDICATOR OF EPHEMERA
PHOTOGRAPHS FROM INSTAGRAM

B) INDICATOR OF NATURALNESS
PHOTOGRAPHS FROM INSTAGRAM
C) INDICATOR OF HISTORICITY
PHOTOGRAPHS FROM INSTAGRAM

E) INDICATOR OF SOCIAL PLATFORM AND WELL-BEING

*Note: Regarding to personal identity protection, images featuring an identifiable person are not permitted to publish