

N	narrative
P	poetic
I	stimulating
K	conceptional
A	analytic
P	process-oriented/strategic
M	across scales
R	research-by-design

Martina Baum

SuE

Chair of Urban Planning and Design

Cities are the spatial and built-up manifestations of social processes that are subject to constant change and ongoing development. Urban spaces and spatial situations change, because relationships within society change. For these reasons, the city can never be seen as a static entity, but rather, it stands for a continual and dynamic dialogue between users and space. This dialogue is carried out both consciously and unconsciously, and in the process, human beings and spaces have an impact on each other. I see the Chair of Urban Planning and Design as a platform that offers an interdisciplinary space for discussion as to how this dialogue can be conducted in a constructive and stimulating manner in the areas of practice, teaching and research, and also, how the spatial conditions for interaction can be designed.

Thinking about the city in terms of its social and spatial dimensions implies an engagement with complexity. Transformative approaches make it possible for us to get close to a subject area in research and teaching in a manner that is as holistic as possible, to project ideas into a possible future, and to employ designing as a tool in the discourse on space.

The debate over the city, its development and our social coexistence must be carried out with the same level of energy within the context of both the university and the urban society. In so doing, we not only take up the challenges of the moment, but we also seek to bring to the fore issues that we consider to be relevant, future-oriented and worthy of discussion. We see our independence and integrity as a societal mandate, and as a thing of great value that obliges us to make an integrative contribution to a culture of debate, planning, and construction. To that end, we want to establish thinking spaces, as places of exchange and interaction.

The Chair of Urban Planning and Design in the Faculty for Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Stuttgart, views itself as a node in the network of all those who are concerned with social processes of transformation and their spatial impacts. Thus, we actively seek out and foster contact and exchange with partners working in planning practice, in public administration and in the university environment, in order to learn from each other across the borders of nation states and academic disciplines, so that we can, together, contribute to the generation of knowledge.

Städtebau as a basic perspective

In order to describe how needs in spaces are negotiated, translated, and prioritized, we have a perfect term in the German language, which makes it possible to provide a platform for these debates: Städtebau. The idea of this platform constitutes the basic perspective of the Chair and stands for an integrative approach involving urban planning, architecture, and landscape architecture. Städtebau makes it possible to design spaces with qualities that provide a fertile environment for appropriation and interaction, where scales are transcended and the boundaries of academic disciplines are broken open. Thus, our team consists of urban planners, architects, landscape architects, interior designers and craftspeople, in order to be able to deal with this complexity across all scales. The German term „Städtebau“ can not be easily translated. In that sense we critically use the term Urban design, but we intend to understand design as an ongoing process, as a verb and not as the product, the noun.

This stance engages on several levels with Aldo Rossi's reflections on the concept of „type“ and further develops it in the idea of an urban one.¹ The urban designing type is defined by its appearance and its spatial position. It creates spatial situations and thereby makes possible the active experience of spaces. It has a vibrancy, and with it, semantic importance within the structure of the city. In terms of its contribution and added value, the urban designing type is efficacious. It offers a dialogue between the space and the user, and the opportunity to interact. These aspects help us to think about and design spatial situations with a more integrative approach, and to acknowledge the complexity of urban situations. In this sense, Herman Hertzberger defines architecture as the occupation with the situations of daily life.² We would expand this definition from architecture to include urban design as well.

We do not see the individual building as being detached from its context, but rather, as always being connected with it, and involved in relationships with it. Architectural discourse has, in recent years, had too much of a focus on itself. We conceive of buildings as vibrant, incisive, beautiful architectural implementations, which are to be understood as a part of an ensemble, of a neighborhood, of a city: as urban architecture. Urban planning has likewise retreated for far too long back into the organization

¹ vgl. Aldo Rossi, Die Architektur der Stadt: Skizzen zu einer grundlegenden Theorie des Urbanen, Bauwelt Fundamente, Band 41 (2015), Birkhäuser Verlag, Basel

² vgl. Herman Hertzberger, Vom Bauen (1995), Aries Verlag, München, S. 171

of systems and structures, and thus, withdrawn from the engagement with spaces. Städtebau makes it possible to adopt an inviting and integrative perspective on our built environment. It opens up a path for thinking in terms of spatial connections, and less in terms of areas, and it expands the field of vision from quantitative organization to the high-quality design of neighborhoods.

This perspective is revealed, for instance, in the discussion concerning the architectural element „facade.“³ For the facade is not the boundary between the building – putatively, architecture –, and public space – apparently, the city –. Facades are rather elements that connect spaces that have the widest possible range of qualities. In this sense, we conceive of the facade as a space unto itself, which – depending on the point of view – presents opportunities for communication between an inside and an outside, and in so doing allows for both pragmatic uses and representational effects. This space, as a threshold, anchors the building in a physical context, and the users in the social construction of the city, and it functions as a two-way display window. This understanding of the facade thus goes far beyond the act of thinking of the development of a structural necessity for use as an envelope, and also beyond the thought of a spatial element that sets a limit on urban space.

We do our analyzing, thinking, projecting and designing from the inside of a building looking out into the city, and from the city looking into the inside of the building. We think this holistic perspective has been largely neglected, but is all the more deserving of attention in research, teaching, and above all, in the everyday work of professionals.

Comprehending situations and thinking about spaces

In research and teaching, and also in our daily work as architects and urban planners, we are constantly on the lookout for the issues and phenomena that constitute our everyday coexistence. These can be found in the study of the past, in present-day discourses, and also in visions of the future. Most of the time, the catalyst for a project is an intuitive intimation of relevancy. This intuition derives in equal measure from knowledge and years of experience on the one hand, and from the active perception of contemporary events and debates. Society, politics, art, culture, technology -- all of these areas broaden our perspective and

³ vgl. Rem Koolhaas et al., elements of architecture (2018), Taschen Verlag, Köln

respectively offer us specific approaches to a discourse that will be as open as possible. We do not employ these approaches, however, solely in order to describe things, but rather, they always lead us to engage in actions, and to the designing of spatial and temporal strategies. The complementary strategy of research-based design and design-based research, in particular, makes it possible for us to work with and within the complexity of the city, space, and society. I think this is necessary in order to gain insights, and with them, knowledge that will have relevance in the field, and in the active development of the city.

An openness in principle to perceiving situations, actions and appropriation in space, and to consciously discovering them, provides the necessary baseline. The close observation of everyday situations and the decoding of everyday behavior thereby become resources for research and design. We want to allow ourselves to become inspired, and to be influenced. That which is discovered is then described, reflected upon, and brought into connection with other projects, references, art and theory. In this process, our experiences and knowledge are combined with a healthy naïveté as the basis for this openness. In the course of this attentive perceiving, according to Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, a „heuristic hoisting device“ shall emerge, out of verbal speculations, conjunctivistic thought-figures, spatial experiments, and scenarios that have been conceptualized.⁴

In order to take up an issue or phenomenon that has been identified, we first work out an overview of all of the aspects that we consider to be important, interesting, and stimulating. To this end, we have developed a tool that we call a „trendbook.“ The trendbooks contain things we have found, and that have been curated and compiled, as an open work, in order to make it possible to comprehend the phenomenon at hand. The trendbook for the respective topic thus constitutes the fundamental basis for further work on that topic. This tool is based on a conceptional idea. The idea is not to create a finished work, or a manifesto, but rather to provide for the greatest possible transparency as the basis for a discourse. The trendbook is a work tool, a book that is in parts already filled up, and which is meant to be appropriated and updated. Through the design and concept behind the trendbooks, users are called upon to grapple with what they find, to comment on it, to add to it, and to refute it. These reworkings, in turn, flow back into our research process, and provide us with valuable insights regarding the disciplines and research questions that should be included. During this process, the tool itself becomes a method that stands on its own.

4 Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, *Vermischte Schriften*; nach dessen Tode gesammelt und hrsg. von Ludwig Christian Lichtenberg und Friedrich Kries. Neue vollst. Ausgabe, Band 5, Dieterich Verlag, Göttingen, S. 47

Designing as a core method

By observing, describing and reflecting on that which has been discovered, one can develop ideas for yet another form of working through all of this: designing. We understand this term not only as the projection of a future state, but also as a process of intellectual organization via the creation of relationships and contexts in space, and a process of testing things out in the form of spatial qualities, dimensions and proportions, all of which serves as the basis for interactions, appropriations, and atmospheric effects.

In so doing, urban designing always entails operating in complex situations. It is necessary to balance the needs and desires of both the individual and the society in accordance with the common good, and by means of a design, to transform them into a conceptionally coherent spatial strategy. As the planning theoretician Horst Rittel has very aptly written, this always entails suggestions for the solution of „wicked problems.“⁵ Designing in an urban planning context must be able to deal constructively with precisely these problems in this complexity and remain capable of action. In the process, the need inevitably arises to work out the essentials and specifics in this complexity, to focus, and at the beginning, to block out other further issues. At all times during the search for possible solutions in the designing process, it is necessary to try things out, to test them, and to reject them. For us, designing is a reflexive, non-linear process comprising observation, documentation, analysis, reflection, theoretical embedding, spatial testing-out in sketches and models, contemplation, and writing. Even a failure -- which in our society is otherwise seen as very undesirable -- implies in the designing process an increase in knowledge, if it is followed by a process of reflection, and insights are gained from it.

We conceive of designing as a core method in our work. It requires, in addition to knowledge and experience, courage and the passion for making a contribution to the discourse. In order to engage in the act of designing, one must engage with a place and with the question at hand. This is not an analytic act, but rather an emotional one. We often speak of „falling in love“ in this regard. That may well sound emotional, but we think emotions and empathy are essential if one wants to be a good designer, and we want to make clear that empirical knowledge alone does not suffice. In

5 vgl. Horst Rittel, *Planen Entwerfen Design* (1992), Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, S. 20

order to become so, one needs, in addition to knowledge, the experience of learning by doing things on one's own. What is required is to constantly train one's mind to accept other possible solutions when dealing with complex problems. Designers must learn to accept insecurity. They must fight their way through to the insight that there cannot be only one correct solution. And then they must constructively work their way through this insight in particular. The well-known Dutch urban planner Kees Christiaanse describes the particular situation of the designer by using the image of the simultaneous chess player: He or she must keep a number of perspectives, rules and connections in view at once, and be able to deal with them in a balanced manner.

Designing entails being open to that which cannot be explained, but being able to explain that which has been created. Arno Brandhuber speaks of coming from the object that has been designed to an argument. Unlike in the arts, that which has been designed must provide a basis for a more universal perception and above all, readability. There must be clarity as to what a spatial element, a whole building or a public space stand for, and which opportunities for appropriation and interaction present themselves. In order to generate a place that has its own identity, what is necessary, in addition to the opening up of possibilities, is at the same time a robust spatial intervention, which creates a powerful impact. This is something that the user must, can, and is allowed to grapple with. A good design simply does not leave the user unaffected, but rather invites him or her to engage with it. Whether the reception by the user is positive or negative will be decided upon in this course of this act. In this process, the user himself or herself becomes a producer of places, and not just a consumer of spaces.

The ability to designing is certainly a distinguishing characteristic of the planning disciplines within the overall field of Urban Development. Creating while thinking, and thinking while creating, in the sense of the designing of possible futures, makes use of analogue and digital tools, and is at the same time descriptive and transformative. To this end, intuition that has been nurtured by knowledge, experience, and reflexive openness is employed for its significant potential. By designing one creates specific situations with spatial qualities in the widest possible range of scales as the spatial basis for the everyday life of a society, whether they are meant as a scenario for a discussion process, or as a plan for

actual, built reality. Urban design proposals work through issues, challenges and needs in order to arrive at a possible spatial answer.

Urban design proposals can define problems and present them in detail, and they can raise people's awareness of new social, economic and ecological challenges and tasks. They can illustrate options and try out solutions. Urban design proposals tell stories about possible futures and they present visions. An important core task of designing is still to translate qualities into urban spatial conditions. Urban design proposals therefore generate added social value, they contribute to the common good, and they yield findings on the spatial implications of societal challenges.

In the Chair's studios, we want to communicate all of these approaches and possible ways of making an impact. Within the academic framework that has been set up, students find their own approach to a place and its challenges. The respective designing evolves through a process of intensive analysis, and it also emerges from the definition of a place's role. At all times, the focus is on the question as to the contribution that can and should be made by designing. In this approach, the design that has been created is never self-referential, but rather, it is always a starting point for appropriation and interaction. The quality of a proposal rests with its potential to generate a spatial and societal impact.

Practiced attitude

The integrated perspective of Städtebau, and the wide range of tasks to be tackled, raise the question as to our role. We have up to this point tried to make clear that through our work, we would like to make a contribution to the public discourse and to the further development of the spaces in which we live. We would like to add here that the personality of the person designing is important: We are projecting spaces with spatial qualities. And through the designing, the person creating it reveals his or her stance with respect to the world.

We consider the development of an attitude of one's own to be absolutely necessary. Conscious thinking about one's own actions leads to the posing of relevant questions: Where am I? What do I want to contribute? What can I contribute? Thoughts pertaining to these questions are registered in one's own practice of designing.

Within one's own attitude, one connects time with place. One positions oneself within the contemporary public arena and

discourse, with knowledge of the past and a view toward future developments. For this purpose, it is necessary both during one's studies and later in everyday working life to widen one's horizons. These acts of establishing one's relationship to the world and to events in it form the necessary foundation for the practice of designing. In this regard, Wilhelm von Humboldt goes even further: „To transform as much of the world as possible into one's own person is, in the higher sense of the word, life.“⁶

Having a stance of one's own means that one believes in what one does, and develops a motivation of one's own, which drives one's actions. I consider idealism, and with it, taking a stand to make the world a better place with the help of the tools of our discipline to be important, in particular in order to be able, via this meta level, to overcome the many obstacles and problems in the working process with a certain facility.

Developing one's own stance entails being demanding, not being satisfied with the first result that emerges, and not allowing oneself be thrown off course by ostensible setbacks. And not reaching an agreement on the lowest common denominator in order to avoid a conflict. It means making clear to oneself what one wants, and what one does not want. And that in turn means finding one's own limits by constantly pushing past one's capabilities.

This leads to the point regarding meaning: Why should we adopt an attitude of our own? Architects and urban planners are not service providers. They are not the agents of developments in the market. Irrespective of the construction and planning tasks they may have, and irrespective of the client or contracting authority, they must always keep in mind the common good. This does not call for working in a thoroughly independent and unreflected manner, but rather, taking a stand, developing one's awareness of processes and the stakeholders involved in them, and also, taking one's own role seriously. In turn, it can be stated that architects and urban planners are not artists. The creative act is obviously a part of our work, and an important one, but we have to make arguments for that which we have created, and pass it on into a negotiation process that will modify what we have put forth and develop it further. In order to confidently advocate as a matter of course for the necessity of spatial qualities and good design in these societal negotiations, one needs a strong stance. Architects and urban planners must once again be taken seriously, and we must make this demand in that we become conscious of our role.

6 Andreas Flintner, Klaus Giel (Hrsg.), Wilhelm von Humboldt, Schriften zur Anthropologie, Werke in fünf Bänden (1960), J.G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, Stuttgart, S. 235

Developing an attitude

Helping students to develop their own attitude is the most important goal in our teaching. I consider the transmission of factual knowledge to be important, but nonetheless of lower priority in relationship to that goal. In the students' process of development, stances that they have adopted and experiences that they have amassed are important sources of inspiration and friction. Only in this process do the difficulties reveal themselves in the moment: Who am I, where do I stand, and where can I find other stances that that I can grapple with and which will help me to grow?

Thanks to the Internet and social media, we have a limitless flood of inspiration. References to typologies, and also, presentation formats from every corner of the world are immediately available. In most cases, one is dealing with only the illustrative, visual effect, not the attitude, nor the conceptual content of a work. The composition of the image is important, but only for a very short half-life period. These sources are suitable only for flat imitation, for making a copy, but not, however, for being worked through, or as something upon which one can take a position. Their omnipresence often leads to paralysis among the students with regard to creating their own designs. The fear of making one's own contribution in the midst of this overwhelming abundance of exemplars, and the question as to the quality and relevance of one's own activity in reflection of what others are doing often leaves the students intimidated.

Moreover, with this flood of images, the question as to the role of the author arises. One is no longer only an architect or an urban planner, one is at the same time an artist, a designer, and a researcher. I am raising the question, with a critical eye, as to whether this diverse set of roles is really manageable. For it places pressure on students. Does one even have the talents and skills needed to be all of those? I do not consider it to be our task to answer these questions at the university, but rather, I would like to pose a counterquestion: Why should one want to be all of those? The awareness of one's own capabilities, but also, one's non-capabilities, helps one to discover where one fits in, and find a position. In order to develop a professional personality, it takes time, and intensive work on oneself. Our teaching can provide a solid basis for this process. That is something that interests and motivates me.

This brings us, however, to another problem. It is not acts of intensively thinking about something, of relating things to each other, of trying out and reflecting on something, that constitute the mode of operation of the present time; rather, there is a focus on speed, a lack of commitment, and on images. This provides an additional impediment to the development of a stance of one's own. It is not the intensive examination of an issue or of a place that is being sought, but rather, a product with a strong impact. Designing, as a process, entails a laborious, intensive confrontation with the task at hand, and with oneself as a designer. As a reflexive process, it is characterized by phases -- phases of analyzing, testing, reflecting, discarding, and success. The design proposal is always subject to attack, and so to speak, vulnerable. It reveals something about the designer, and establishes a connection from both itself and the designer to the professional and public discourse. The greatest thing about our profession is consequently also its greatest challenge.

I think the personal interaction at the university is more important in these times than ever before. The process of getting to know the stances of the instructors, together with the imparting of knowledge through selected references, the reflection on them and the intensive work together on design projects provide a good baseline for the development of a stance of one's own. But students must have the openness, passion, dedication, and the willingness needed to actively engage in this intensive process.

Teaching culture / learning culture

We love what we do! I can make this statement with the deepest conviction on my own behalf, and also on behalf of my colleagues at the Chair. In our work in the field, and in our teaching and research, we have been working for many years in urban development contexts. I think that the interconnection in our work provides a necessary basis for imparting to students the relevance and complexity of the tasks involved in design. Consequently the simultaneous anchoring in the practice in the field is not a sideshow, but essential for nurturing our attitude. The experiences gained in the field are incorporated into our teaching and research, and likewise, the thoughts formed in our work at the university feed into our work in the field. We have the great privilege of designing, planning, building, and reflecting on what has been created and imbedding it in the theoretical discourse.

As our starting position, we have Städtebau as an integrative perspective. In order to transfer this perspective into our teaching and research, we find the word „and“ to be very helpful. The integrative aspect that is inherent in the word, that which does not exclude or polarize -- which occurs all too often with respect to stances, approaches and also projects -- is something that I consider to be a great opportunity:

global	and	local
digital	and	analogue
descriptive	and	transformative
thinking	and	doing
research	and	teaching
practice	and	theory

We need the maximum openness that has already been mentioned several times, in order to be able to crack open again and again our routines of everyday life and thought, and call them into question. Keeping „and“ in mind implies a constant reconsideration of one's own thinking and actions with respect to this integrative perspective.

In order to do this, one needs a wide variety of competencies that constitute the riches of our disciplines. Craft and artistic skills are needed as much as basic theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge gained through experience. Along these lines, the Chair's team consists of trained architects, urban planners, landscape architects, and craftspeople. We seek this diversity and want to make productive use of it in an agile team, in order to think and work together in the openness and with the integrative approach described above.

We understand the university as a place of thinking and debate, and not as a training institute. Our obligation is not to the consumption of educational content in the sense of a training program, but rather, to working together as a teaching and learning community. In the Humboldtian sense, we thus connect research, teaching and the fostering of discussion. Learning with and from one another is something that I see as a great privilege, and an opportunity for lifelong learning.

We do not follow any recipes in research and teaching, but rather, we create them, or better yet, we have the courage to test out various recipes. In our teaching and research we develop our own formats and in order to do so, we use a very wide variety of tools and methods that have been revealed to us in our work in the

inter-discipline called Städtebau. For here, also, we are open, we have no fears regarding contact with other disciplines, and we take inspiration from them. Formats are tested, evaluated and refined, or possibly abandoned. In this process, feedback from the students is important; in a constructive dialogue it allows for suggestions regarding needs on the one hand, and the impact of formats on the other hand.

We do not issue manifestos; we develop concepts. In the process, our teaching and research always constitutes an open discursive space, and along these lines, we invite people to reflect on our thoughts and engage with them in a discussion. Debate in particular helps us to depart from our ingrained patterns of thought and remain open to other approaches to the complexity of our daily lives and the productive work with this complexity.

We would like to whet people's appetites for engaging in a discourse focusing on our spatial environment and our coexistence in it. We would like to share with our students the passion that we bring to our work, and the curiosity that we have. The Chair and the formats we offer are meant to provide space for the personal development of both students and instructors. By the same token, development entails the openness to actively entering into the process. Here, failure is always an option, but as long as it is experienced in a productive manner, and followed by reflection, it presents a great opportunity. We create the conditions for this freedom that can be the catalyst for developing a stance of one's own. In order for this to happen, the student must have a high level of commitment and the courage to approach this freedom productively and with respect.

In our teaching, we have developed a studio culture that aims to take precisely these aspects into account in our daily activities. We start out by defining a topic for the semester that we consider to have relevance. There is no prefabricated program that is to be worked through, but rather, this thematic framework that is to be filled in. In this way, over the course of the semester, an intensive discussion takes shape. Descriptive, analytic, theoretical and design-related approaches emerge parallel to each other, and a process of cross-fertilization ensues. In order for this to happen, the studio must function as a community. The idea of learning together from and with each other forms the basis of our cooperation with each other. I consider competition with respect to originality and authorship of ideas to have a paralyzing effect, whereas I see active, respectful cooperation as stimulating and enriching.

The studio space is the spatial basis for the studio community, and as a physical location for cooperation, it is of essential importance for our kind of teaching. Informal, casual encounters are only possible when one is physically present in this place, and in continuous contact. People become aware of each other through their physical presence, they perceive the moods and needs of others, and find partners with whom they can exchange. In turn, thoughts and ideas can be compiled here as „moodboards“ and therewith, they are visually present for everyone, throughout the whole process. The spatial manifestation of ideas in the form of models in the widest variety of scales and detailing is an expression of this process. For this purpose, also, as a usable space resource, the studio space is the point of departure.

The members of the teaching team see themselves as guides in the students' learning and development process. The framework, the freedom provided and the empowerment that takes place allow for the discovery of the widest possible range of approaches, and as a result, the possibility of choosing concepts that are very different from one another. For the instructors, this means they must accept each of these approaches, and -- with the help of the competence and experience that they already possess, in addition to that which they gain through the projects and the issues that arise -- give advice and support while maintaining a critical eye. The goal is always an active exchange within this teaching and learning community. This demands of the instructors a high degree of openmindedness and dedication, and at the same time, an awareness of our own expertise and our role in the students' process of development. The foundation for all of us lies in mutual respect and high regard, as well as active commitment. A consuming approach is not possible in this type of teaching, and thus, the student is responsible for his or her own actions and progress.

Cooperation as a working method

In order to provide an anchor for cooperation as a working method and for the integrative perspective as a stance, and to breathe life into them, over the past five years we have initiated and developed a number of formats. As a part of the Faculty for Architecture and Urban

In order to provide an anchor for cooperation as a working method and for the integrative perspective as a stance, and to breathe life into them, over the past five years we have initiated and developed a number of formats. As a part of the Faculty for Architecture and Urban Planning we have a perfect base of operations for breaking through the limits of the disciplines. For this purpose, in our design studios we have launched intensive cooperative agreements not only with obvious partners, such as those in landscape architecture, but as a historical first at our university, with the but also with scholars in the areas of building construction, architectural theory, and housing. We have always encountered in our colleagues a high degree of openness. Our cooperation has been characterized by mutual respect. In the demanding process of working with and between scales, we have been in agreement regarding the common basic approach of designing spaces with spatial qualities. For the students, this kind of cooperation makes it possible to gain insights into the various fields of knowledge within our disciplines, to examine them and work with them from a holistic viewpoint, and in this way, to also practice thinking and creating designs within the complexity inherent in planning tasks.

Besides our cooperative work within the faculty, we also maintain as a matter of course an exchange with people working in the field. To this end, we invite colleagues to come and talk about their projects and experiences, and to discuss the students' projects within the framework of guest critiques. Since we design projects with a relationship to a specific place, cooperation with local stakeholders is also a given, since it is only in this way that we can enter into an intensive interaction with the place, its narrative, and its development. In particular design projects we go so far as to translate the designs into built reality as so-called „real experiments.“ The immediate reactions of users make possible in the students' learning process an expanded level of reflection with regard to their own actions. In addition, the realization of designs on a 1:1 scale requires the further development of that which has been thought out as a concept into a structure that can be built: How can the fundamental conceptional design qualities be realized in terms of material, joining, and building structure? Which aspects must be considered in the building process? Which stakeholders must be brought into the picture, and when? These questions and challenges become clear to the students in a very immediate and effective way in the course of their own activity. Particularly in this respect, the cooperation with the workshops at

the university and the local stakeholders is indispensable, as is, in equal measure, the eloquent mentoring by the instructional team.

I call that „in-practice“ or „practical“ urban design („Praktischer Städtebau“). The encounter with newly created spatial qualities at a particular location is not only an enriching experience for students, but it can also be actively employed in urban development processes. The spatial specificity facilitates an immediacy and an efficacy for those receiving it, who, through their active participation in discussions, through co-production and/or the use of that which is being offered, become involved stakeholders in the sense of citizens involved in designing. With just minor interventions, spatial qualities can be represented beforehand and discussed, even in the case of major development activities. „Praktischer Städtebau“ is based on reality, it designs and creates spatial situations together with different stakeholders, and it is, in addition, very useful for making complex visions of the future in long planning processes visible and tangible. The word „praktisch“ in German refers to both experience in the field, and also to the quality of usefulness, and is thus a particularly fitting adjective for describing these modes of work.

We actively employ reflection on that which has been designed or even built, and the processing of the resulting conclusions, in the so-called research-by-design approaches in our research and teaching. Through the design process and in the course of reflection on that which has been designed, research findings can be obtained. Designing function within a complex framework of technical aspects, stakeholders and underlying connections. Beginning with a specific situation and task, they develop a vision for the future, they sound out possible solutions, and always, in and of themselves, develop something new. If the design is then evaluated, one can speak with confidence of insights being gained, also in the form of the generation of knowledge. Regarding the question as to whether we are talking here about classic research findings, the two fronts of the hard sciences and the transformative disciplines stand in opposition to each other. My stance on this is clear. We should no longer have to stand up for the position that to design can be considered to be a scientific method, but rather, we should emphasize that gaining knowledge through this method is part of the culture of our discipline.

In the sense of „and,“ we are only able to discuss our interest in a specific place if we are open to placing the societal, economic and ecological processes of transformation and their

spatial impacts into an international context. For that reason, we actively maintain an exchange within a worldwide network with people in the field, with those in public administration, and those working in university environments. We look to our genesis in the context of the European City as a social construction as a starting point for this discourse. What kind of pressure are global processes exerting on the spatial foundations of cities? What importance does public space have, and how are negotiations with respect to it conducted? How can a place provide the foundation for a decent life, and thus become a home, a place with which one identifies? In considering these questions, one must focus on the built environment and urban society in the course of research, reflection, and further development. We take up two positions in this regard: understanding and shaping. Understanding means to listen, to learn to read the respective places, to ask questions, and to ask critical questions as to that which is assumed to be obvious. Engaging in this process in an intercultural space together with students and colleagues helps us to discern the lines of development in these places, and thus to conduct research concerning fertile ground for future developments. This understanding is the basis for active, collaborative shaping through design.

We take up both of these positions in international workshops, summer school programs, and design studios. Our main focus over the past five years has been in addition to European cities the examination of the type of the Latin American metropolis. Through intensive cooperation with the Walter Gropius Chair of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) at the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urbanism at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA, FADU), and with support from the DAAD, the STO and the Hans and Maiti Kammerer Foundation, we were able to immerse ourselves in teaching and research projects in this context, and in the context of creating designs, to process all of the knowledge and the experiences we gained. For students, working in a completely new context gives rise to a high level of attentiveness and concentration. Always being conscious of having an outside perspective, and of all that one does not know in and about the context, makes one more humble. In turn, this attentiveness and mindfulness leads in the design strategies to very sensitive and considered concepts, which are quite remarkable and relevant, and were, in the exchange with fellows, students and local population from the area, more than worthy of discussion.

We have established a special format for the perception of cities, called „Mit SuE nach...“ or „SuE goes to...“ In this format, we tour a city for four days with a very small group of eight students, one assistant professor, and myself. The intensive experience of a place is the core of the exercise, and the intensive exchange regarding what has been seen and experienced is the method. Experiencing a place for 96 hours, and letting oneself stroll, be influenced and inspired, reveals wholly new points of view and questions. In the process, we take the time for reflection and discussion with the participants, in order to gain insights from the experience for our own designing processes. In addition, one adds to the wealth of one's own experience of spaces, situations and everyday life, the need for which is just as essential as the need for knowledge.

The city and architecture make societal processes manifest in spatial conditions. It is of great importance to us to actively initiate debates on the spatial dimensions of our lives together. To this end, we have over the past five years organized a number of events and exhibitions, and initiated formats such as the „Denkraum“ as a space for exchange and discussion. Through invitations to the International Biennale Rotterdam – the next economy –, in 2016, the 16th International Architectural Biennale in Buenos Aires in 2017, and the 12th International Architectural Biennale in São Paulo – todo dia – in 2019, we have been able to present our research methods and projects within the context of an international debate. In keeping with our stance, we have not made use of these invitations to present finished projects, but rather, we have taken advantage of the opportunity to activate an international exchange. In each case, we have held a design workshop within the framework of the respective biennale and invited colleagues and students from a very wide variety of disciplines to discuss our thoughts and findings on a particular topic, and to develop them further.

The Chair is not focused on taking over a topic area, but rather, on issuing an invitation to a discourse. It is only in an open, constructive, creative and respectful exchange among the widest range of stakeholders, who are interested and involved in the development of the spatial environment, that we can together shape that environment in a manner that is sustainable in the best sense of the word. To be able to contribute to this process is the goal of the Chair of Urban Planning and Design, SuE.