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"Landscapes with figures with gadgets": The Picturesque in British Experimental Architecture circa 1970

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Around 1970, Cedric Price and the Archigram group presented proposals for inserting inflatables, geodesic domes, robots and other prefabricated systems into the landscape. This article discusses these proposals as part of a historical trend with important cultural significance. Historians Leo Marx and Reyner Banham considered such proposals to reflect the difficult search for a _middle landscape_: a landscape model in which nature is balanced and stabilized by art. Since the 19th century, this search has been guided by the belief that the _machine_ will build the _garden_.

TWO TREES AND NO MORE

In November 1971, British architect Cedric Price began work on a plan to renovate Two Tree Island, an uninhabited islet at the mouth of the Thames near Southend-on-Sea[1]. Price had accepted an assignment from local businessman David Keddie to construct a marina, housing and recreation areas to accommodate the growth in tourism that southeastern Great Britain was experiencing at the time. Photographs taken during one of Prices's first visits to the site show a marshy landscape with a flat, solitary horizon. The land was partially flooded and covered by herbaceous plants.

According to Price, the natural surroundings of Two Tree Island provided "a unique opportunity on an economically sound basis to establish in Southend an exciting place of excitement, repose and delight unequalled in the United Kingdom"[2]. These conditions prompted Price to document the ecological characteristics of the location, to investigate compatible land uses and to design an intricate zoning plan[3]. The final proposal included activities and housing suited to the island's various ecosystems: marshes, a breakwater, a meadow and a port. The proposed housing included a wide variety of residence types, such as tents, caravans, cabins and houseboats.

When the plans were released, controversy commenced, and in April 1972, Southend's local authorities and property owners commissioned a committee to determine Two Tree Island's

future. The commission heard testimony from a substantial number of interested parties and sent proposals to forty local associations and public figures to solicit their input[4]. In November, the commission published its final report with an unequivocal decision: it did not accept any of the proposed plans and requested guarantees that the island be maintained in its natural state. One of the document's seven recommendations summarizes the overall tone of the report by suggesting that "as a nostalgic gesture in accord with the nomenclature of the island ... two trees be planted on the island and no more"[5].

The report used scientific reasons to oppose a project that, a priori, involved the transformation of a site of ecological interest. However, it also incorporated emotional resistance, as expressed by its nostalgic tree-planting suggestion. Such an argument might have been predicted if one had considered the culture of conservation in Great Britain, which prioritizes aesthetic impulses ahead of environmental concerns[6]. In fact, British planning originated as a reaction against the growth of 19th century industrial cities and expressed the desire to preserve rural landscapes. In 1969, Peter Cowan commented as follows:

> The British have a very special attitude towards their countryside and landscape. They like their landscape tamed but romantic, and they care greatly that the countryside should be designed [...]. Above all the British have felt that the city must be contained - it cannot be allowed to spread across the face of the nation, eating up land unchecked[7].

As noted by J. M. Wiener, this attitude reflects the deep ethical and aesthetic alliance that British culture forged with the rural landscape as the country moved into the 20th century[8]. Identifying the countryside as the only clear alternative to the failing industrial city, those who shared this attitude viewed the world in terms of starkly opposed values: rural versus urban, simple versus complex, cooperation versus competition, stability versus change as well as harmony versus alienation[9].

The aesthetic and ethical challenge that Price's ideas represented slipped into the background in the course of the numerous unsuccessful appeals that Price made to the authorities after the project was rejected. In these documents, he argued that the plan for Two Tree Island ensured a carefully controlled development process, improved the area's character and interest and guaranteed the enjoyment of nature[10]. Price aimed to achieve this complex goal through an intricate composition of nature, architecture and human activities in which he sought to reconcile antithetical positions[11].

The best example of Price's convictions is provided in a series of landscape scenes that he created to define the visual, or, rather, sensorial, aspects of his proposals. These scenes include sixteen graphite, crayon, ink and watercolour postcards (**fig. 01**). Despite this project's lack of formal definition yet without providing precise visual depictions, Price's illustrations nevertheless define the character of the landscape. Some scenes focus on nature, while others inject artifice by depicting alternative ways of exploring the environment: flying in a hot air balloon, living or working on water, building observatories in the treetops.

ARCHITECTURE OF THE _MIDDLE LANDSCAPE_

The Two Tree Island controversy embodies the British version of a broader dichotomy whose origins in North America were described by Leo Marx in his influential book _The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America_ (1964)[12]. Marx studied notable works of American literature since the 18th century that were set against a backdrop of technology's incursion into the rural landscape and used them as a mean to investigate deep-seated cultural values. Works by Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Frank Norris, Henry Adams and Henry James enabled him to consider the

intersection of literature, general ideas and certain products of the collective imagination that he termed "cultural symbols"[13]. On the basis of numerous examples, Marx showed how the rapid transformation of the American landscape resulted in large contradictions in value and meaning between the country's former bucolic image and its new image as an industrial power.

Marx's book reveals the coexistence of two pure aesthetic models: *garden* and *machine*. The first views landscapes as objects of enjoyment, a tradition that Marx believes was introduced to America by the first European settlers[14]. Marx relates the strength of the first model to its origins in the English garden and its accompanying body of aesthetic theory, which makes complex distinctions between beautiful, picturesque and sublime landscapes[15]. The garden model shaped artists' first look at the American landscape, stimulating works such as *The Hudson River Portfolio* or *Picturesque Views of American Scenery*, both from the 1820s[16] **(fig. 02)**. In contrast, the second model is an authentically American model of technological exaltation. Marx identifies its origin in the country's westward expansion, when man and machine together first entered the forest landscape. The settlement of the new territories relied above all on the railroad, thus elevating it to a symbol of progress and source of artistic inspiration[17]. This development inaugurated a *machine* rhetoric that intensified until by the end of the 19th century a new aesthetic category had been established: the technologically sublime[18]. The new images stirred sensations in humans that in the mid-1800s had been reserved for natural disasters and other large-scale natural phenomena.

Marx's contribution was not limited to identifying and describing the two models. His most important achievement was to reveal how a tense but productive compromise emerged between the *garden* and the *machine* during the second half of the 19th century[19]. *The Lackawanna Valley* (1855), a painting by landscape artist George Innes, is representative of this phenomenon. Commissioned by the first president of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad to provide the public a preview of the natural magnificence they would encounter on a journey, Innes's depiction of the Lackawanna Valley in northwestern Pennsylvania seeks an ideal balance between the celebration of nature and the newfound enthusiasm for technology[20] **(fig. 03)**. Marx considered Innes's painting a *middle landscape*, i.e., a view of nature balanced and stabilized by art and informed by the belief that the *machine* would build a *garden*[21]. However, as noted by Charles Sheeler in *American Landscape* (1930), around the turn of the century, an imbalance developed that favoured the *machine* and disrupted the relationship between the two models **(fig. 04)**. Marx's book concludes without resolution although he argues for the opportunity to re-explore the *middle landscape* through cultural productions capable of adding meaning to the post-industrial environment[22].

After *The Machine in the Garden* was published in 1965, Reyner Banham acknowledged the significance of Marx's contribution[23]. Banham identified architecture as another cultural product that, like literature or painting, helped consolidate the American *middle landscape* in the latter half of the 19th century. The most credible evidence was found in *The American Woman's Home* (1869), in which Catherine Beecher presented innovative proposals for homes in the new territories[24]. Banham notes the remarkable evolution of the author from her previous book *Domestic Economy* (1942), attributing the change to the reality of life and technology in the newly settled Midwest.[25] He described Beecher's compositional scheme, a light and free-standing framework with a central core of services, as the idealized ancestor of every suburban home in which energies were balanced[26]. The relationship of the home's protective outer shell with the abundance of equipment it contained even enables him to establish a historical association between the *middle landscape* and "Wright's Usonian houses, the Eames house, Philip Johnson's glass house and most of the U.S. domestic architecture we have been brought up to admire"[27].

This line of formal inquiry also provided Banham an opportunity to advocate his well-known ideas regarding mobile architecture in his article *The Great Gizmo*: "Portable technology closes Leo Marx's contradiction as surely as do the meanings discovered by serious writers"[28]. The essence of the argument extends to *A home is not a house*, another of Banham's well-known essays, also published in 1965[29]. Banham proposes architectural artefacts that bear more than a slight resemblance to Beecher's. In addition to sharing a formal radial design, both writers always locate their buildings near adequate transportation and highly value the mental and physical benefits of a landscape setting[30]. Easy-to-assemble devices, caravans, geodesics, inflatables and other systems of temporary environmental conditioning now offered the opportunity to follow historical antecedents and readdress the *middle landscape*, that is, to resolve the conflict between *machine* and *garden*.

Developing his architectural style, Banham invokes in *The Great Gizmo* a picture of the new landscape to be built. He does so by imposing requirements for highlighting seasonal changes in Connecticut's forests, which he describes as "perhaps the most paradisiacal suburban landscape in the world", and in the Midwest, described as "a landscape that could have come from the brush of Claude Lorraine"[31]. Thus, mobile technology fits into landscapes with figures (the populated or humanized scenes that reflected the tastes of 18th century landscape painters) while returning the landscape ideal to where Innes positioned it in the mid-19th century. One must appreciate the fine point suggested by the title Banham used to characterize the new *middle landscape*: *"Landscapes with figures with gadgets"*.

SCENES OF ANALOGY AND CHANGE

Urban ideas from the US strongly influenced the British academic debate during the 1960s[32]. The Californian model was particularly influential. However, the geographical, historical and cultural differences (primarily differences in land-use ratios, the city's relevance and the appreciation of the constructed landscape) forced one to question the relevance of Europe applying new urbanization models centred on the automobile and a low population density[33]. These differences did not prevent the development of shared ideas on both sides of the Atlantic, reinforced by the effects of globalization and the increasing resemblance between post-industrial urban areas.

This discussion formed the context for *Non-Plan: An Experiment in Freedom* (1969), an article-manifesto by Banham, Price, editor Paul Barker and geographer Peter Hall that, inspired by the systemic self-organization of the terrain, breaks with the British planning tradition[34]. The application of such non-plans results in a model of smaller residential nuclei, scattered across the land but close to the city and connected by modern communication channels. Such residential nuclei are preferably temporary and suited to the new lifestyle. Whether due to British flight from the city or because of local cultural conditions inherent to the US, the suburb becomes a popular locus for the most experimental architecture[35].

For these architects, planners and theoreticians, the new settlements required architecture consistent with their ephemerality. As such, they adopted a housing model with a central service centre enclosed by conditioned spaces enveloped in their own shells. Price elaborates on this discussion in his brief essay *Camping with Fred and James* (1967), citing the radial layout and creating variations of this layout by using the spatial relationship provided by the conditioning devices and the areas they serve[36]. Price categorizes Banham and Dallegret's proposal, Fuller's domes and inflatable systems according to the spatial organization they offer and discusses the innovations introduced by Archigram's robots and mega-structures.

This background explains why Price and Archigram could emerge as the advocates in Great Britain of the *middle landscape* Banham described in connection with America. Price's

distinguished research in search of innovative architectural objects and his lesser-known proposals to implement alternative modes of territorial organization came to fruition around 1970 in the form of landscapes that strongly resonate with the landscapes with figures of the picturesque tradition.

In 1969, Archigram member David Greene created *Park Scene with Mobot Facilities* for his LAWUN speculative series **(fig. 05)**[37]. It shows people in a park on a cold and wintry day. In contrast with the warmly clothed passers-by, a couple sits on a lawn wearing light clothing. They are protected by a thin, transparent membrane typical of the inflatable architecture with which Archigram, Price and Banham were experimenting at the time. Behind the couple, a person lying on the lawn seems to be watching a portable television. An editorial in *Archigram 9* described the work as one that alleviates the tension between the mechanical and the natural[38]. Therefore, the word "scene" in the title is not without meaning, particularly considering that the park displays several highly distinctive features. The composition refers to an English garden, and the title refers to the construction of the pictorial scene.

In contrast, the idealized image of Hedgerow Village, located somewhere in Sussex County, has a somewhat more built-up appearance[39] **(fig. 06)**. This image is a collage created by Peter Cook in 1971 that unifies through visual coherence the habitats of a stream and a lake, adding swaths of vegetation for a leafy look with more colour variety. In the centre, architecture appears. It is constructed of modular, perhaps removable panels, and partly camouflaged by the vegetation. Adjoining it are a car, a caravan and several tents. The collage was presented as an alternative model for a suburb in the environs of the future airport of Foulness, with a number of small neighbourhoods hidden in the airport's rural surroundings[40].

Cook, Greene and Ron Herron created numerous such scenes of suburbs and rural settlements using a variety of techniques: large format drawing, collages of photographs, prints on transparencies and acrylic paint. Most were produced between 1966 and 1974 and deviate slightly from the group's main themes at that time. In the scenes, mega-structures are broken up by technology and temporary conditioning robots, enabling the designers to define their own version of what the British post-industrial landscape should or could be. This approach to disintegrating the architectural object Hadas Steiner has termed Archigram's *technological picturesque*[41].

Beginning in 1967, Price too created landscape scenes. Several of the first such scenes appeared in his Potteries Thinkbelt, Port Eliot & Port Hole and Atom projects[42]. However, Price's most characteristic efforts began in 1969 and include the previously noted Two Tree Island proposals, the scenes that supplement his projects in Glasgow and Abu Dhabi as well as in the last Generator[43]. The progress represented by these scenes results from paying less attention to the architectural object and more attention to the intricate combination of artifice and nature and to the use of more colour. They reveal a special quality in the use of 22x30 cm note cards for the project layout, in which Price displays agile technical skills **(fig. 07)**. In addition, Price offers variants, such as collages and simple drawings on photocopies of photographs, a particularly effective means to highlight pre-existing artefacts. Generally, Price's approach is less elaborate than that of the Archigram group, and he creates products more aligned to the traditional canon but no less significant for that.

Several postcards of this type created by Price in 1973 depict the envisioned vista of the Abu Dhabi beach once the Sea Garden has been constructed, a great protective barrier for the coast equipped with recreation equipment[44]. A maritime funicular, footbridges between coral reefs, underwater gardens, observation domes, floating stages for events and mobile buoys on the ocean's surface are examples of technology that guide the user to discover the artificial bay through new modes of observation. The horizons illustrated on the postcards are full of motion: the sun's rays, the fountains, the breeze, the movement of boats **(fig. 08)**. Combining

ink, gouache and wax, Price explored the dynamic whole, including the spectacle of water, light and colour that occurs when, once daily, spouts and fountains are turned on in the artificial bay.

Another series of eight scenes was created in the latter half of the 1970s for Generator, an activity and rest centre to be located in a rural environment of Georgia or Florida[45] **(fig. 09)**. Price starts with two sketches of the natural environment in which the project would theoretically be located. The perspectives face northeast and southwest of the site. Price then photocopies these sketches to create a number of different scenes. The panoramas interweave nature and artifice and evoke the changes and possibilities of various landscapes all constructed on the same site, thus creating more or less figurative representations. Radiant points, planes of light or compositions with fluorescent elements are among the resources used to evoke the sensations of a body immersed in the dynamic landscape.

A variant of this technique appears in Price's proposal for an idea competition sponsored by the city of Glasgow in 1972 for the purpose of revitalizing the obsolete Clyde River industrial area[46]. Price produced a collection of twenty-two small scenes using photocopies of photographs of the current state, on which he draws freely with bright colours **(fig. 10)**. The technique enables him to incorporate the ruins of the existing large artefacts into the composition and address the sky, river and ground. This approach reveals Price's propensity to add grass and other vegetation, which lends the designed area the atmosphere of a park. However, the greenery plays more than an ornamental role. Plantings could be placed on land and supported by a hydroponic system or float on the surface of the river. In either case, they are designed to combine productivity and aesthetic enjoyment.

PICTURESQUE CONDITION IN EXPERIMENTAL ARCHITECTURE

If we consider the historical development traced by Banham, these landscapes can no longer be viewed as a radical and disruptive innovations but instead associated with an established historical trend. The works mentioned here extend the British picturesque to a new phase, partly analogous to the American *middle landscape*. That is, the scenes introduce variations on the traditional picturesque while seeking to imbue it with qualities that emerged spontaneously in mid-19th century North America. Thus, access to the suburban neighbourhoods depicted in the scenes requires extending effective transportation networks, and the architecture of these neighbourhoods could thus be categorized as spokes of residences emanating from a hub of services and with free-standing outer shells. The proposals, therefore, assume the basic characteristics that Banham identifies in the *middle landscape* and that he sought to reproduce in the form of landscapes with figures with gadgets.

The first variation on the tradition of the British picturesque is the creation of a dialectic between the rural landscape, as the beautiful, and technology, as the repository of the renewed experience of the sublime. In the picturesque aesthetic, a dialectical synthesis between pastoral beauty and sublime landscapes of nature was customary. Gilpin recognized picturesque beauty (as he did in those paintings in which the changes and roughness of the scene positioned the work in the middle) to occupy a position between the beautiful and the sublime. Acknowledging the picturesque as a category, Uvedale Price allowed its individuation as a third option. However, he did not fail to recognize its intermediating capacity. Thus, in response to the need to define the beautiful and sublime pairing to achieve the picturesque, the path of renovation is presented. The new landscapes continue to combine nature and artifice. However, the aesthetic power of the artefact has been renewed. Now, inflatable, transformable or mobile architecture acquires a role superior to that assigned to artifice in the picturesque scenes because it embodies the technological sublime.

In addition, the scenes exemplify how the solitary aristocrat who strolled through his lavish estate, thus connecting the garden with property and private life, has been replaced by the citizen of a democratic state[47]. For Banham, this transformation was an inherent element of an American ruralism that was born free but not of European ruralism, given its feudal origins. Different from the urban and social pattern in Europe, the US had no society or land ownership until the advent of the railroad, which introduced the first pattern of human organization in the country. For the British experimenters, overcoming this difference was facilitated by profound changes in their country's lifestyle in areas such as family, education, work and free time, with direct consequences for mobility, tourism and leisure[48]. Thus, the picturesque environments depicted in Price's watercolours for Two Tree Island and in Greene's park collages are not accidental inventions but reflect the social demands of their time, which had become opportunities for architecture. Therefore, another aspect of the picturesque renewal concerns the democratization of aesthetic experience.

As Uvedale Price wrote at the end of the 18th century (thus surpassing most theorists, who limited the picturesque genre to the visual), to consider the outside world in terms of perspectives and the overall effect of the picturesque "is delight or pleasure of some kind to the eye, to the imagination, or to both" and reflects that "the mind requires to be stimulated as well as soothed"[49]. Generally, the new landscapes continue the search for aesthetic enjoyment based on psychological stimulation and the imagination through kinaesthetic delight, to use one of Cedric Price's favourite phrases. However, the duration of the aesthetic experience is now considered in its temporal and spatial *continuity*. Escaping its confinement to the garden, it spreads to the everyday landscape[50]. The active aesthetic experience that concerns the stimulation of the imagination and links knowledge to emotion and memory to discovery appears as an ideal: it is the act of knowing through feeling.

Similarly, the new scenes of the *middle landscape* cannot be read in their visual configuration in the same way as the sequence of views of the garden tour or the townscape sketches of the past[51]. Given the indeterminate nature of the projects, such a reading would be impossible. If the English garden adopts nature as its model, now, the process proceeds a further step. The fantasy scenes depict the exasperated search for a reference model for the image of nature in post-industrial times. They occupy a front-row seat, as a communicative medium that acts as a guide, stimulating the imagination through memories and the phenomenological mysteries inherent in the landscape. As in the past, they distinguish a landscape endowed with artistic qualities. However, at the same time, they envision a landscape that does not exist yet deserves and needs to be built.

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Notes

01. The project was published in a monograph edited by Price: PRICE, Cedric, *Cedric Price: Works II*, Architectural Association, London, 1984, pp. 86-87. A longer review appears in HARDINGHAM, Samantha, *Cedric Price works 1952-2003: a forward-minded retrospective*, Architectural Association & Canadian Centre for Architecture, London, 2016, pp. 359-363.

02. CPA & YRMA, *Two Tree Island Project for David Keddie Consultant's Report*, London, February 1972. Background document by Cedric Price, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal.

03. DE LA O CABRERA, Manuel Rodrigo, "Planning for enabling: an analysis of Cedric Price's proposal for Two Tree Island, 1971-1973", in *Planning Perspectives*, 2017, pp. 1-22.

04. COUNTY BOROUGH OF SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, *Report of Two Tree Island and Leigh Marshes Development Sub-Committee of the Policy and Finance Committee*, November 1972. Background document by Cedric Price, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal.

05. Ibid., p. 9.

06. MATLESS, David, *Landscape and Englishness*, Reaktion Books, London, 1998, pp. 25-42.

07. COWAN, Peter, "Introduction", in COWAN, P. (Ed.) *Developing Patterns of Urbanisation*, Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1970, p. 3. Renowned geographer, Peter Cowan, was director of the Joint Unit for Planning Research of University College London. Beginning in 1967, Price participated with other academics in a workgroup led by Cowan on new patterns of urbanization in the Centre for Environmental Studies. There is a clear coincidence between Cowan's agenda and the issues discussed by Price in his articles and projects of this time. On the affiliations of Price in the planning discussions in the late 1960s, see DE LA O CABRERA, M.R., op. cit., pp. 4-7.

08. WIENER, J. Martin, *English culture and the decline of the industrial spirit 1850-1980*, Penguin, London, 1981.

09. Ibid., pp. 157-159.

10. Price relied on two government documents: *Leisure in the Countryside* and *Planning for Leisure*. Both assumed a change in the planning of and conservation policies that affected the British countryside, recognizing a need for nature by the inhabitants of the cities and linking leisure, agriculture and ecology. See SILLITOE, Kenneth K., *Planning for leisure*, H.M.S.O., London, 1969, and CMND 2928, *Leisure in the Countryside of England and Wales*, H.M.S.O., London, 1967.

11. DE LA O CABRERA, M.R., op. cit., pp. 15-18.

12. MARX, Leo, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America,* Oxford University Press, New York, 1964. See the analysis by CANNAVO, Peter F., "American contradictions and pastoral visions: An appraisal of Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden", *Organization & Environment*, March 2001, vol. 14, n. 1, pp. 74-92.

13. BRYANT, John L., "A Usable pastoralism: Leo Marx's method in the machine in the garden", in *American Studies*, Spring 1975, vol. 16, n. 1, pp. 63-72.

14. MARX, L., op. cit., pp. 88-89.

15. Ibid. Marx relies on but does not cite HUSSEY, Christopher, *The picturesque: studies in a point of view*, Frank Cass & Co, London, 1927; reedited in 1967.

16. On the cultural process of appreciation of the North American landscape through painting and literature influenced by the aesthetic theory of the English garden, see FITCH, Jamers Marston, "American Pleasure Garden", in *Architecture and the Esthetics*

of Plenty, New York, Columbia University Press, 1961, pp. 180-187.

17. The passenger train first appeared in America in the 1830s and quickly attracted the attention of several of the most celebrated landscape painters, such as Thomas Cole, Thomas Doughty, Asher Durand and John Kensett. See MARX, L., "The Railroad-in-the-Landscape, An Iconological Reading of a Theme in American Art", in DANLY, S and MARX, L., (Eds.), *The Railroad in American Art: Representations of Technological Change*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1988, pp. 183-208.

18. MARX, L., op. cit., pp. 195.

19. Ibid., p. 226.

20. CIKOVSKY, Nicolai, "George Inness and the Hudson River School, 'The Lackawanna Valley'", in *American Art Journal*, 1970, vol. 2, n. 2, pp. 36-57.

21. MARX, L., op. cit., pp. 228-229.

22. Ibid., pp. 364-365.

23. REYNER, Banham, "The Great Gizmo", in *Industrial Design*, 1965, n. 12, pp. 58-59.

24. *The American Woman's Home* was in fact authored by two sisters, Catherine and Harriet Beecher. Banham studies this book based on the analysis by FITCH, J. M., "Our Domesticated Utopians", in *Architecture and the Esthetics of Plenty*, pp. 65-85. Fitch refers to the location of the house in the landscape as follows: "the houses sit on spacious plots and the whole family gardens, but now one feels that the motive is as much moral as economic", p. 75.

25. REYNER, B., *Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1969, p. 102.

26. REYNER, B., "The Wilderness Years of Frank Lloyd Wright", in *A Critic Writes: Selected Essays by Reyner*

Banham, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1996, pp137-151. Originally published in RIBA Journal, 1969, n. 76, pp. 512-518.

27. Ibid., pp. 139-140.

28. REYNER, B., "The Great Gizmo", p. 58.

29. REYNER, B., "A Home is not a House", in *Art in America*, 1965, n. 2, pp. 109-118. In the article, Banham presents an inflatable architecture proposal developed together with François Dallegret.

30. See reference 24.

31. Ibid.

32. COWAN, P., op. cit., p. 4, notes: "And if there are profound differences between the two cultures in their attitudes towards urbanization, are we correct in taking the western United States as a model for the future of this country?" See reference 7.

33. The arguments of Banham in *The Great Gizmo* and Cowan in their introduction to *Developing Patterns of Urbanization* coincide in noting the territorial, historical and cultural differences between the UK and the US.

34. BANHAM, R., BARKER, P., HALL, P., PRICE, C., *Non-Plan: An Experiment in Freedom,* in New Society, 1969, n. 338, pp. 435-443.

35. If 20th century British ruralism emerged as an idealized antidote to the evils of cities, North America was revealed as the essence of a nation capable of maintaining "a creative culture full of life without cities". See REYNER, B., "The Wilderness Years of Frank Lloyd Wright", p. 138.

36. PRICE, C. *Camping with Fred and James*, in Architectural Design, March 1967, p. 106.

37. GREEN, David, "Gardener's Notebook: LAWUN Project Number One", in *Architectural*

Design, 1970, n. 8, pp. 385-387. A year earlier, the project appeared in GREEN, David, "Gardener's Notebook", *Architectural Design*, 1969, p. 507.

38. *Archigram*, n. 9, 1970, p. 1.

39. COOK, Peter, et al., in *Archigram*, Studio Vista, London, 1972.

40. Not coincidentally, Two Tree Island is also located in Essex County, and the future construction of Foulness airport was one of the strategic reasons that led local businessman Keddie to promote the project.

41. STEINER, Hadas A., *Bathrooms, Bubbles and Systems: Archigram and the Landscapes of Transience*, PhD Dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2001. See also STEINER, H. A., *Beyond Archigram: the structure of circulation*, Routledge, New York, 2009, pp. 222-242. Steiner considers Archigram's tendency to represent ephemeral environments in which the artefact melts away as a picturesque technology. He adds that while the traditional picturesque presented nature and culture as indistinguishable Archigram presented technology as a landscape inextricably intertwined with architecture. In addition, instead of a stable set of forms, the picturesque technology would be determined by projections of desire.

42. HARDINGHAM, S., op. cit., pp. 192-207, 230-237, 242-253. More scenes can be found in PRICE, Cedric, op. cit., pp. 24-25, 27-29, 60, 86, 91, 95. Regarding the Potteries Thinkbelt project, Abalos has identified "a genuine picturesque inspiration" in the amalgam of new construction and industrial ruins. See ABALOS, Iñaki, *Atlas pintoresco, vol. 2: Los Viajes*, Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, 2008, p. 214.

43. HARDINGHAM, S., op. cit., pp. 358-365.

44. DE LA O CABRERA, M. R., "'Kinaesthetic delight': Cedric

Price's plan for the Abu Dhabi Sea Garden, 1973", *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*, 2017, vol. 37, n. 3, pp. 250-260.

45. Ibid., pp. 446-469. PRICE, Cedric, op. cit., pp. 91, 95.

46. Ibid., pp. 406-413.

47. PRICE, Cedric, "Public spaces and private spaces", in *London Architecture Club Magazine*, 1978, n. 2, pp. 20-22.

48. WILLMOTT, Peter, "Some Social Trends", *Urban Studies*, 1969, vol. 6, n. 3, pp. 286-308.

49. PRICE, Uvedale, *An essay on the picturesque, as compared with the sublime and the beautiful: and, on the use of studying pictures, for the purpose of improving real landscape*, James Robson Publisher, London, 1796, pp. 166, 235.

50. PRICE, Cedric, "Approaching an Architecture of Approximation", *Architectural Design*, September 1972, n. 10, pp. 645-647.

51. On the visual empiricism of the time, see MACARTHUR John and AITCHISON Mathew, "Oxford versus the Bath Road: empiricism and romanticism in The Architectural Review's picturesque revival", *The Journal of Architecture*, 2012, vol. 17, n. 1, pp. 51-68.

Images

01. Cedric Price, *Two Tree Island*, c. 1972. Watercolor showing the interior of the dock and, behind, high density homes.

02. J. Megarey Publisher, *The Hudson River Portfolio,* 1820. View near Hudson.

03. George Inness, *The Lacka-wanna Valley*, c. 1856. National Gallery of Art.

04. Charles Sheeler, *American Landscape*, 1930. The Museum of Modern Art, Nueva York.

05. David Greene, *Park Scene with Mobot Facilities*, L.A.W.U.N. Project, 1969.

06. Peter Cook, *Settlement in a glade*, Foulness Project, 1971.

07. Cedric Price, *Two Tree Island*, c. 1972. Watercolor, without title, showing the interior aspect of an area of the island after the intervention.

08. Cedric Price, *Abu Dhabi Sea Garden*, c. 1973. Watercolor of the set seen from the beach.

09. Cedric Price, *Generator*, c. 1976. Sketch presenting the project from the northeast corner showing the light emitted by the structures inserted in the landscape.

10. Cedric Price, *River Clyde Competition*, c. 1973. Views of some project areas covered with vegetation associated with ornamental, sporting and productive uses.

06

Echoes of Olmsted in Europe. The Park System and Origins of Contemporary European Urbanism

Marina Jiménez
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With the design and construction of the Emerald Necklace in Boston by Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903), a new urban tool took shape directly targeted at adapting natural landscapes to the interior of a city, conceptualized as a system of parks fused within an urban structure and landscape design. This idea continues to be key to the development process of creating symbiosis between city and nature. Without claiming to be exhaustive, this paper reviews how this idea was introduced to Europe in a variety of ways and through diverse achievements. Through three 20th century "landscapers" rooted in different contexts and places, this paper aims to show how systems of parks have consolidated in Europe with distinctive yet complimentary points-of-views, all contributing to the development of the interaction between city and nature in urban architectural culture, laying the foundation of what is presently called Green Infrastructure.

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The Emerald Necklace in Boston, Massachusetts, represents not only a turning point in the history of urban design but also set the precedent of sustainable urban planning instruments such as green infrastructure. Its creation attests to a "longue durèe"