

What is the role of architecture in urban transformation? How can architectural practice respond to challenges such as climate change, migration, social segregation, technology, and mobility? And above all, how can we integrate relevant research into our teaching of urbanism and urban design in order to advance its most provocative and compelling arguments?

Conceived as a compendium and reference for students, teachers, researchers, and practitioners of architecture and urbanism, this book looks into current topics in urban design and development. Essays and brief texts, written and presented as a dialogue between participants of the 2023 Lucerne Talks conference, offer a shared understanding of applying different, multidisciplinary approaches, attitudes, and methods in tackling urban challenges.

*Teaching Urbanism* is a call to both hold a position on and take responsibility for how political, social, and cultural matters impact planning policies. Living spaces and buildings must be designed collectively rather than individually. How can we achieve this? What can architecture contribute to these complex processes?

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# *Teaching Urbanism*

 PARK BOOKS

"A complex medium containing surprising and unforeseen developments demands complex procedures and defies analysis on the basis of rules which have been set up in advance."

Paul Feyerabend,  
*Against Method*, 1975

In order to make clearer to students the multifaceted and often complex questions posed by urban design and architecture, I will attempt a short schematic explanation of how architecture emerges, for I believe that examining the process of its creation contributes to a better understanding of our built environment. This in turn makes people aware of the complex path toward what is then realizable.

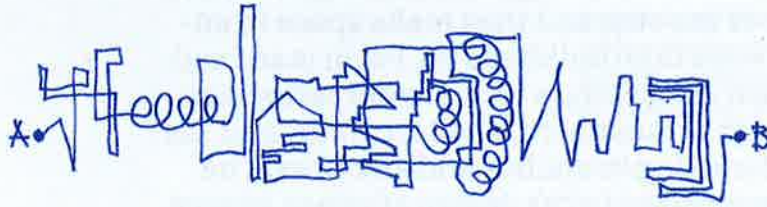
Urbanistic and architectural questions ought to be understood as products of a process in which various aspects, multifaceted requirements, and diverse parameters influence and relate to each other. I am talking here about from the belly, through the head, into the hand, all at once if possible, always in reverse as well, and all this as often as possible.

The intuitive, subjective, and indeed also creative work preliminarily designated by the phrase "from the gut" is just one of three realms at play when we think about urban design and architecture. "The head," the conceptual realm, encompasses logical thought and reflection on a conceptual level, while the "hand," which constitutes the action-oriented realm, encompasses possibilities for acting and strategies for implementation. The combination of these working realms is complex and follows no preset rules. One must address the various issues specific to a project, while also taking up the related topics derived from academic study; one must also design the process leading up to and culminating in the building of the object such that each project gives rise to new and unexpected projects tailored to the specific situation.

Following the process design of "from the gut, through the head, into the hand," *walking, talking, drawing* necessarily describes the process of urban design from a bottom-up perspective. This approach allows the placemaker to develop familiarity with the built space, history, and socio-spatial relationships before the architectural ideas are translated into urbanistic concepts.

Just as urban design and architecture do not arise in a linear fashion, they equally cannot be understood, explained, or taught in a linear way. Out of the conviction that, due to the sometimes irreconcilable plethora of demands and

requirements, there are different ways to achieve the same goal, I would like to bring constellative thinking into play as well. Constellative thinking is the ability to perceive individual components simultaneously and to fit them all together in an interpretative act whereby the whole, in turn, affects the interpretation of the individual components. This is relevant insofar as the structure of the process also determines the structure of the finished product.



The journey is the destination