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METHODOLOGY

by Christophe Girot and James Melsom

The design program mixed intuitive modes of working, such as site immersion and appraisal, with conceptual modes of modelling and projection using a common set of tools.

Video, digital modelling, and mapping tools developed by each student through discrete exercises enabled abstract design projections to coexist with atmospheric landscape projections. In turn, the Toolset for the design program mixed these media to facilitate the perception, development, and projection of the dynamics of landscape.

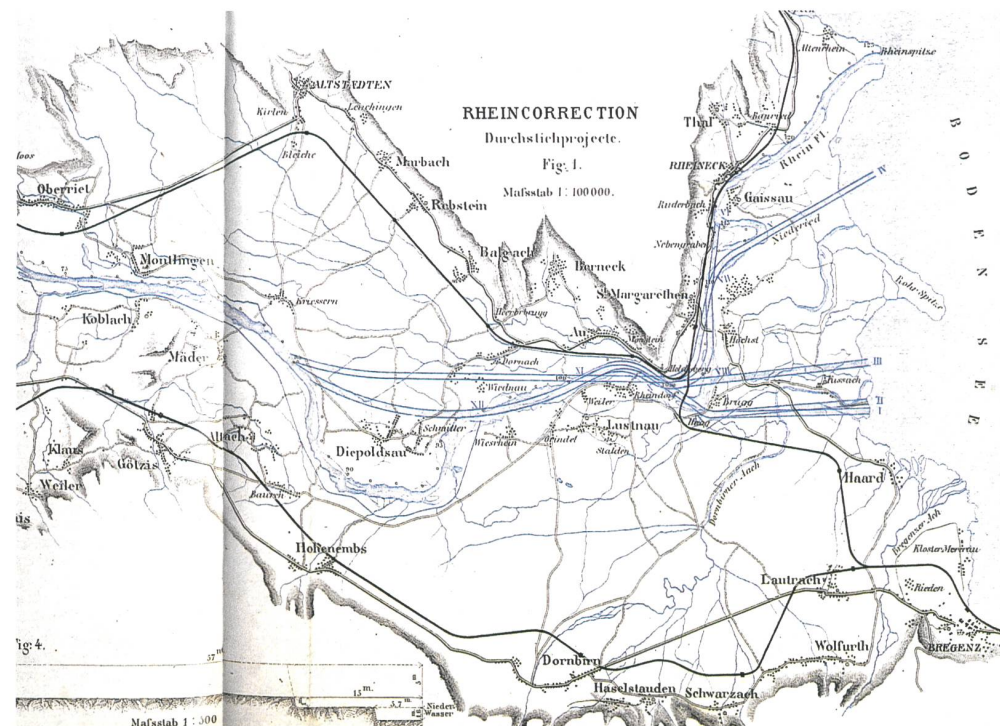
The design development during the first semester of the MAS LA course followed the manner in which landscape architecture progressively takes shape at different scales. In relation to the semester workflow, it was conceived in order to maximize the opportunities for students to investigate, react and transform salient aspects of the site within the given timeline.

The students worked in groups to collect and assemble impressions and footage, filtering the enormous amount of data intrinsic to such a heterogeneous site. Working in groups also allowed each student to develop and apply the tools required. The aim was to enable each student to find his or her place in the design process and work towards a consistent design hypothesis.

Taking the large-scale landscape hypothesis as a basis, the students applied it to a medium to large-scale intervention (3000+ ha) and developed a detailed design project during the second semester individually and in groups. At this stage, group interaction, discussion, and criticism was encouraged to sharpen the critical frame of each project in the context of contemporary global and theoretical discourse.

Scale of Work

At each step of the design development the scale of work shifted between large and small scales. The range went from 1/10 000 scale to 1/100 scale, passing through 1/1000 scale. It was important that all projects respected this three-step approach; not only was it a necessary tool at this scale of territory, it also enabled a better comparison and dialogue between projects on both a conceptual and pragmatic level. In order to enable the discourse to evolve and deepen throughout the course, distinguished international guests were invited to critique the results of each subsequent semester. This kind of involvement in the development of the projects led to a deepening of the discourse and an improved understanding of the critical implications involved.



Between the 17th and 19th centuries, many engineering works were proposed for the Rhine Delta before the present-day Rhine Correction was constructed (1888-1920).