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# Lill-Valla: Tracing Landscape

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Nestled between the Linköping city center, a science park, a university campus and old farmland, the four-hectare Lill-Valla Park is destined to undergo transformation from rustic open-air museum into a contemporary recreational area that will cater to existing neighborhoods as well as a new housing expo, Bo 2016.

The highly heterogeneous nature of the site and its surroundings calls for a strategy of contour tracing: Of connecting disparate elements by drawing their outlines – literally drawing them together. The project begins by tracing the existing site’s different landscape elements, culling out their varying levels of detail. This is a multi-step process of gradual refinement. The first step is a pixelated map that picks up contrasts between open landscape and areas with denser vegetation. Locally removing pixels that interfere with defining features in the landscape refines the map further. The remaining pixels are relaxed into a mesh that retains details where relevant and smoothens them out elsewhere. The line work that results from this process loosely forms the basis for the site’s new infrastructure.

Instead of separating “nature”, infrastructure and playground equipment from each other, our project proposes to integrate them in playful and unexpected ways. We maintain Lill-Valla’s multiple programmatic identities, ranging from living history museum, socially diverse park, playground and 4-H camp, but knit them tightly together with dense web

of new footpaths. The paths provide a new, cohesive identity for the park as a whole, while allowing for local variation as they encounter the site’s different landscape features – dense forest, groves, open meadows and bird ponds. Their geometry forms islands and bays that subdivide the site into manageable parts that can be programmed individually. Different levels of detail in the landscape are picked up by varying degrees of resolution in their design. A wide main path that follows a long, sweeping edge of a forest might suddenly fork into a dense network of narrow trails that sensitively snake their way around trees and boulders. Some are paved and sharply figured against their background, while others are loosely defined by for instance white stone dust.

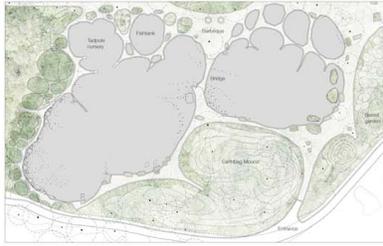
Playgrounds are integrated in ways that amplify and subtly alter the experience of existing landscape elements and biotopes. Opportunities for play are often created in the interplay between paths, environments and equipment. The forest is experienced from narrow footbridges that tread lightly on the ground and provide access to a rope castle that is hidden in the foliage of the tall trees. Another example is in the site’s north-west corner, where the main path forks into a detailed delta of trails that wraps around existing and added humps in the landscape – adding opportunities for play, hide-and-seek and climbing.

Overall, the project balances designed landscape elements with more dynamic processes that rely on the shifting nature of plant-life

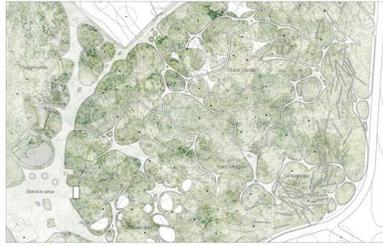
and materials. It explores “nature” and biological matter as means to create strange experiences that simultaneously belong to contemporary culture and fairytales.



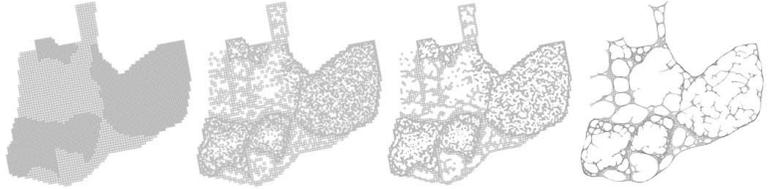
THE MEADOW Cropped site plan 1:1000



THE PONDS Cropped site plan 1:1000

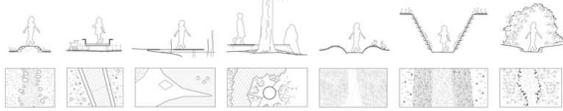


THE FOREST Cropped site plan 1:1000



TRACING LANDSCAPES DIAGRAMS  
 1. Open landscape and denser vegetation.  
 2. Defining features in the landscape.  
 3-4. Relaxation from pixels to mesh based on degree of detail. The line work that results from this process loosely forms the basis for the site's new infrastructure.

FOOTPATH DETAILS 1:100  
 Variations of footpaths and their relation to surrounding terrain



SITE PLAN 1:2000  
 A dense web of new footpaths provide an overall cohesive identity for the park, while allowing for local variation and adaptation.



PERSPECTIVE The forest with foot bridges and rope castle.  
 MODEL Relationship between footpaths, terrain and trees.



PERSPECTIVE Meandering footpaths of white stone dust and an existing gazebo covered with gold.

# LILL-VALLA PARK

## Tracing Landscapes

Linköping, Sweden, 2012

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LANDSCAPE / GEOMETRY  
 C. T. H. Sørensen, "The Geometrical Gardens"  
 Herning, Denmark, 1984



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Overall, the project balances geometrical landscape elements with more dynamic processes that rely on the shifting nature of plant-life and materials. It explores "nature" and biological matter as means to create strange experiences that simultaneously belong to contemporary culture and fairytales.