

Introducing RTG 2725 Urban future-making



Laura Schöngart

Laura Schöngart joined the RTG “Urban future-making: Professional agency across time and scale” at HafenCity Universität Hamburg as associated doctoral researcher in June 2022. Her work focuses on the intertwining of meaning, materiality, and practice in urban landscapes. Using interdisciplinary methodologies, she explores the intersections of formal and informal spatial strategies and their potentials for open space development. After studying Landscape Architecture at the Geisenheim University, Laura worked for Vogt Landscape Architects in Zurich and Berlin. Being interested in the processes of space production and in particular its social layers, she enrolled in the interdisciplinary master’s program “Spatial Strategies” at the Art School Berlin Weißensee. Currently, Laura works as a research assistant at the Department of Open Space Development at Geisenheim University. She teaches bachelor and master level design studios, a theoretical seminar on the political dimension of gardening, and a workshop on the photographic exploration and perception of space.

Laura’s doctoral project researches the richness of green urban stewardship and its potential for the discipline of landscape architecture. The overarching assumption is that changing space concepts and collective responsibilities for the environment create new socio-spatial processes and arrangements which need to be considered in the way public open spaces are planned. The objective is to understand green urban stewardship as a spatial configuration as well as an urban development tool which anchors individuals as caring space producers in the planning process and on site. Prerequisite for this is to understand how spaces structure human agency, how human agency in turn reshapes these spaces and what new spaces are even produced as a result. Therefore, green urban stewardship will be examined as an interdependence of medium and agency on different levels: (I) in the context of relational space theories, (II) in its diversity of spatial forms, spatial practices and spatial settings, (III) in terms of spatial requirements of different stakeholders (e.g. stewards and maintenance units) and spatial enhancement opportunities. By doing so, the dissertational project investigates the evolving practices of green urban stewardship in the sense of collective space production, analyzes its socio-spatial intertwining, provides an overview of its spatial patterns, and indicates ways to implement green urban stewardship into landscape architects’ place designs through appropriate spatial principles.