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Foreword by Alessio Russo

As a landscape researcher and educator, with some previous practice experience I find myself constantly hunting down new publications that will not only inform my own practice but also the future thinking of the next generation of young environmental designers—my students. With that as a context for much reading across my subject area it is with great pleasure that I find myself writing the foreword to an exceptional book written by an architect whom I have admired for some time.

I have recently read Martin van der Linden's book—*Architecture: Changing Spatial Transitions Between Context, Construction and Human Activities*. Martin is a Dutch architect educated in the Netherlands, Japan and the UK. Before establishing van der Architects in 2001, Martin worked for the renowned Japanese architect Hiroshi Hara on the Kyoto station and Umeda Sky Building. In the mid-90s, he was employed by the Japanese office of César Pelli, and then became a design consultant to the Japanese Ministry of Education's privatised architecture office (EFI) from 1997–1999. He was teaching at Waseda University and Tokyo University of Science for around ten years. This rich background and experience have no doubt contributed enormously to Martin's current thinking on modern architecture and space.

His book *Architecture: Changing Spatial Transitions Between Context, Construction and Human Activities* is exceptional. It is truly thought provoking and with the depth of research and referencing to past and contemporary projects and theories in architecture, art and landscape architecture, this publication is both highly informative and current in terms of its views and opinions. The book is a fascinating and well-charted journey through time from early humans to the modern city that shares Martin's professional thoughts on modern architecture. This book captures much more than just architecture and space. Martin has addressed the idea of space for human activities and explored controversial concepts such as 'Sequential Space', 'Universal space' and 'Transitional Space'. Martin has also explored the concept of landscape in which he critically explored relevant literature such as Georg Simmel's 'The Philosophy of Landscape', the gardens of Capability Brown and James Corner's idea on landscape. It also contains an excellent overview of contemporary Japanese architecture theory and projects with a chapter dedicated to the world's most famous unknown architect. In his book, Martin has also provided answers on a range of contemporary and timely questions such as why does the constructed world look

the way we perceive it today? What is the role of architecture in the city? What is modern architecture?

In the book, Martin has also identified world ecological problems (e.g. global warming, rising sea levels, the destruction of primary forests plus species and resultant biodiversity losses) and has argued that our survival on this planet depends on the implementation of self-imposed limitations in the way we live our future lives and the idea of taking ownership of the issues that will determine the planet's future.

Martin has been influenced by the drawings of architects such as Le Corbusier, Lebbeus Woods, Lars Lerup, but also of the *bandes dessinées* artists such as Jacques Tati and Hugo Pratt. This appreciation of signature drawings and distinctive drawing styles has framed his own considerable talent for sketching, and we see many fine and compelling examples in this book. This book is a 'must have' for students and practitioners of architecture, landscape architecture and planning.

To conclude, I believe that the book *Architecture: Changing Spatial Transitions Between Context, Construction and Human Activities* will be a highly influential and inspiring publication in the field of arts, architecture and architectural theory.

Dr. Alessio Russo
Course Leader in MA Landscape Architecture
University of Gloucestershire
Cheltenham, UK