

# Play as a Design Tool

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Bath Spa University,  
School of Art & Design.

# My background

PhD Student, Bath School of Art & Design,

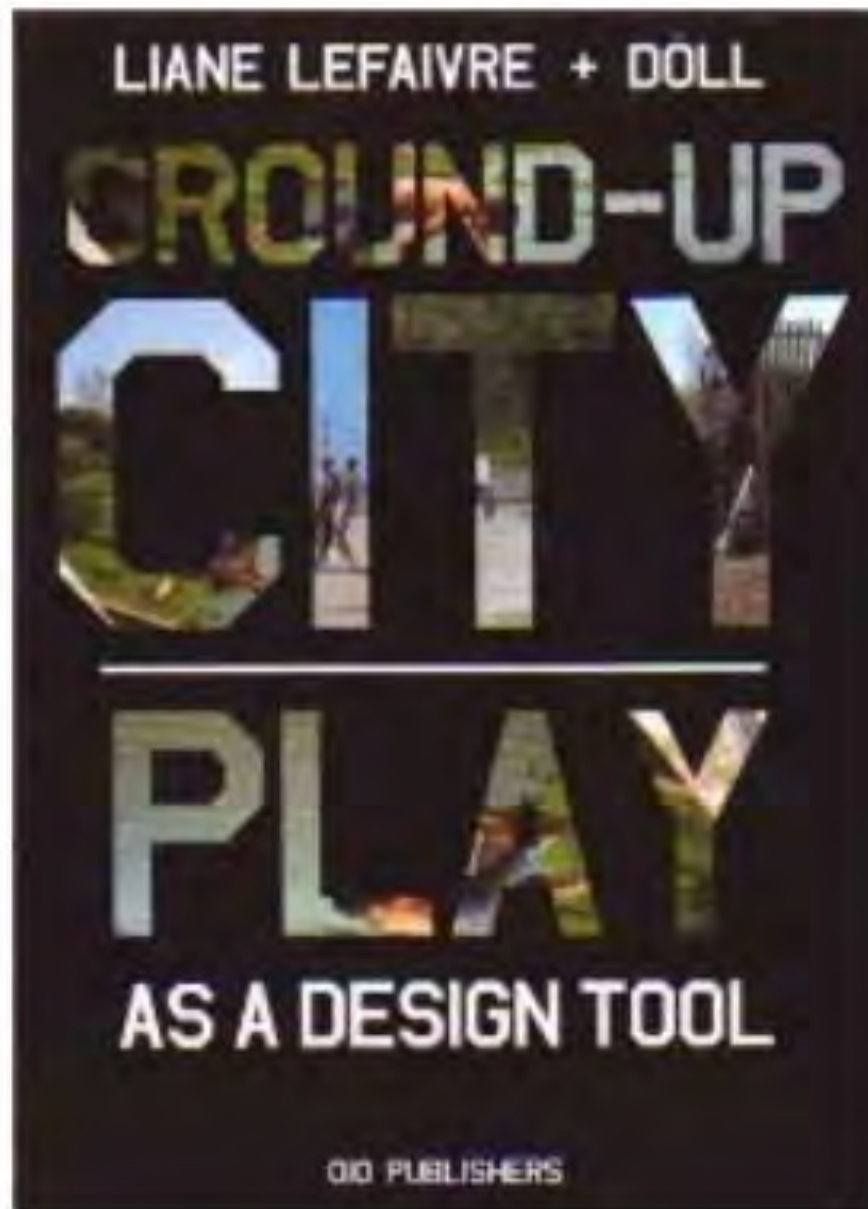
Senior Teaching Fellow, Winchester School of Art,

Creative Director, Interface Europe Ltd,



Play and Sociability,  
Amsterdam post war  
model.





Playgrounds as an urban strategy, Rotterdam theoretical model.

# A Design Tool for Urban Designers & Planners

My research is exploring the potential of 'play' as a tool for gathering information to support the co-design of public space,

The design methodology will encourage the advancement of playful design processes that engage communities in the (re) design of emergent public space.

# Play as a Design Tool

My research practice has designed, tested and observed playful methodologies as tools to engage communities in the (re)design of the urban environment,

Today I am going to focus on one of my research projects.

# Springfield Recreation Ground

Springfield Recreation Ground in Corsham,  
Wiltshire

A regional, design-led fieldwork project, 2013-2014

Create a popular major park for Corsham that  
meets the needs and demands of the local  
population.



# Springfield Recreation Ground, Corsham, Wiltshire





# Challenges

Engaging different demographic groups

Measuring community perception

Understanding the key requirements for the space

Managing the demographics

# Project process

Measure perception and understand aspirations  
(on-line surveys, town surveys and group interviews  
- 656 respondents)

Community lead design workshops to co-design  
and develop the space using a playable  
methodology (9 workshops)

Deliver a final design concept approved by the local  
community

# Opportunities

Creating fun, playful environments that encourage the future users of the space to get involved

Using play as a design tool to engage the community through creativity

Giving the community a voice

# The playful methodology



















































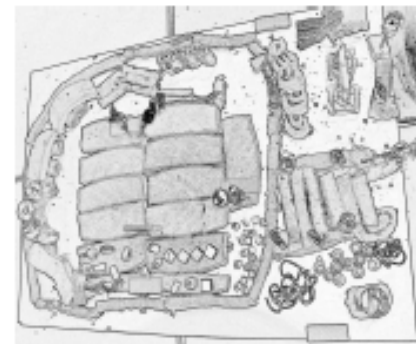
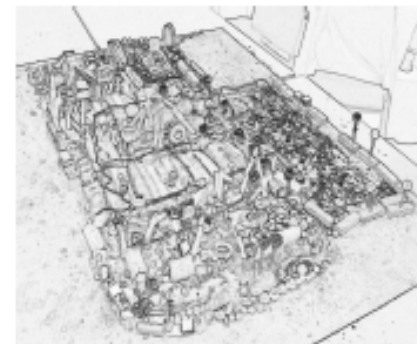
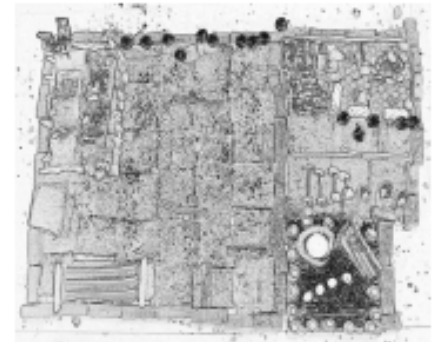
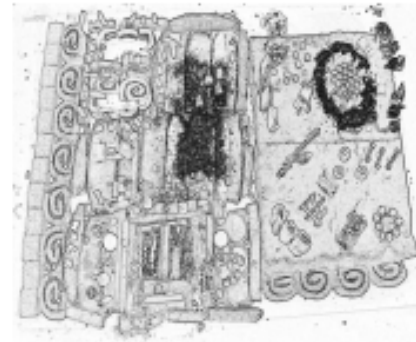








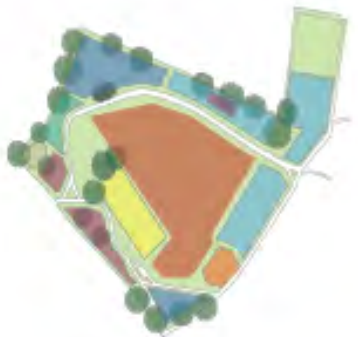
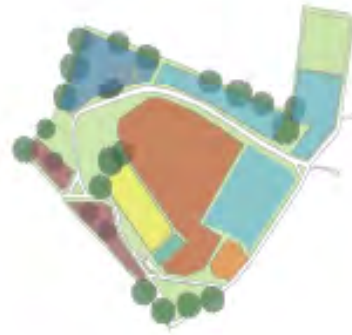












Final Layout Design  
Option 2











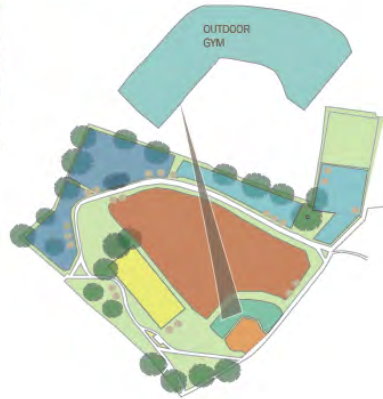




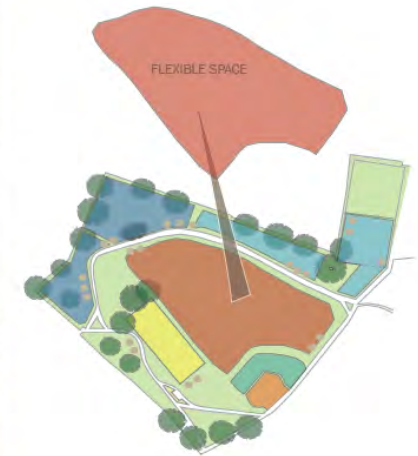




SPRINGFIELD RECREATION GROUND  
OUTDOOR GYM



SPRINGFIELD RECREATION GROUND  
FLEXIBLE SPACE



SPRINGFIELD RECREATION GROUND  
SENSORY PLAY



SPRINGFIELD RECREATION GROUND  
PLAY AREA



# Discoveries

Playful methodologies can link varying demographic groups, connecting people through the innocence of play

Play becomes a universal language that encourages people to engage, feel at ease and be open with each other

Play as a central component to design-led public engagement, helping to create identity for a local area.



# Next steps in my research

Making connections between the research theory and practice to inform the development of the playful design methodology,

The model will be tested in the form of a further urban (re)design project, working from inception to completion, to demonstrate and map the playful design process,

Please do contact me with any projects of interest!

‘There can be design without play, but that’s design without ideas’ (Rand, 1990)

# Questions?

Thank you.

# Contact

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