This issue opens with a focus on Landscape design. Harmon and colleagues link the digital model and the physical representation in a way that enables manual interaction with the physical to be communicated to the digital. The symbiotic relationship between physical and digital is facilitated via a *cycle of physical manipulation, three-dimensional scanning, spatial computation, and projected feedback*. The effectiveness of the tangible interface was tested with different types of user group aiming to achieve specified design goals. The outcomes reveal that there is significant improvement in outcomes; the users building more accurate and effective models than they did with either digital or analog (manual) modeling.

Augmenting the understanding of different aspects of heritage through digital techniques has been a growing area of attention and interest. In the second paper, Sahbaz and Özköse experiment with a game-based environment to investigate whether learning about historic buildings can be enhanced using this kind of contemporary digital tool. Their findings are positive in the respect and this reinforces the argument for the application of a range of digital techniques in areas such as history of architecture and heritage studies.

The thorough study by Alani in the third paper of this issue reveals that hexagonal-based patterns found in the fabric of Islamic architecture are not simply generated as a result of visual and cultural forces. They are also the product of an effective response to performance requirements; in particular actual forces and the consequent structural performance. By extension to the algorithmic investigation of Islamic Geometric Patterns, Alani is able to propose a categorization system for such forms based on their “morphogenetic” characteristics.

To round off this issue, Nisztuk and Myszkowski present a predominantly practice-focused study analyzing the effectiveness of different software and approaches used in design processes. Their particular focus is the generation of floor plans given certain criteria and parameters. They look at different approaches and software combinations applied in architectural practice, including BIM as a means of achieving the goals set by the designers. They note the deficiencies in “commercial tools” of this type and comment on the required future directions for the development of plan creation tools to address the perceived shortcomings.

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