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AZ ACÉLPARK

A dunaújvárosi acélszobrászati alkotótelep komplex tájépítészeti vizsgálata és műélménye

THE STEEL PARK

Complex landscape analysis and art experience of the steel sculptor workshop and symposium of Dunaújváros (1974–2024)

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ABSZTRAKT

A szoborparkok (SP) olyan emblematikus tájépítészeti kompozíciók, ahol a kultúra és a művészet szabadtéren találkozik a látogatóval. A nemzetközileg elismert példák, mint a Storm King Art Centre (USA), a Yorkshire Sculpture Park (UK) és a Louisiana Museum Sculpture Garden (Dánia) jól illusztrálják, hogyan forr egybe a kurátori elképzelés, az ökológiai tervezés és a látogató-központú művészetélmény, hogy végül egy széles körben ismert, tudatos kulturális célpontot alkosson a tájban.

Ezzel szemben a közép- és kelet-európai szoborparkok a szocialista városi és ipari tájképek hátterében alakultak ki, ahol a művészi alkotások ideológiai elvárásoknak és infrastrukturális követelményeknek feleltek meg, ami felveti a kérdést, hogy hol is van a helyük a szoborparkok nemzetközi kánonjában. Ez a tanulmány a poszt-szocialista tájörökség egyik példáját, a dunaújvárosi „Szoborparkot" vizsgálja, nemzetközi párhuzamok és referenciák alapján egy szabadtér-értékelési keretrendszer segítségével. A park a 70-es években jött létre helyi acélmunkások és művészek kezdeményezésére, és az évtizedek során fokozatosan bővült, évente néhány műalkotás elhelyezésével a Duna magaspartján.

A tájépítészeti mesterképzésben résztvevő hallgatókkal kvalitatív terepi felmérést végeztünk helyszíni megfigyeléssel, fényképes monitorozással és térbeli ábrák segítségével. Elemzésünk hat szempontot alkalmaz: felszíni topográfia és térbeli forma; természetesség és növényalkalmazás; karbantartás, gondozás és zavarás mértéke; komplexitás és sokféleség; koherencia és integráció és a képiesség mértéke. A tanulmány rávilágít és alátámasztja a park egyedülálló kulturális és tájtörténeti jelentőségét, amely során több különleges adottságot integrál: a folyópart stabilizációs kultúrmérnöki múltját, az arborétum jellegű növénykiültetését és a vas- és acélszobrászati alkotások sokaságát, amelyek mindegyike szerves részét képezi a szocialista ízlésvilágnak – ezáltal is megkülönböztetve magát nyugati társaitól. Cikkünk alátámasztja, hogy a kurátori koherencia, a karbantartás és a látogatói hozzáférhetőség kisebb hiányosságai ellenére is a kiforrott nemzetközi szoborparkok rangsorába emelendő.

Kulcsszavak: posztszocialista, tájépítészet, látogatói élmény, közösségi művészet, térelemzés, átfogó, mérnöki tájművészet ⦿

ABSTRACT

Sculpture parks (SPs) represent emblematic landscape architectural compositions, where site, culture, art and public interest converge. Internationally celebrated examples such as Storm King Art Centre (USA), the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (UK), and the Louisiana Museum Sculpture Garden in Denmark demonstrate how curatorial planning, ecological integration and visitor infrastructures combine to create coherent and widely renowned cultural destinations. Central and Eastern European SPs, on the contrary, evolved against the backdrop of socialist urban and industrial landscapes, wherein artistic creation responded to ideological dispositions and infrastructural imperatives, raising questions with respect to their place within the international canon of sculpture parks. This study examines the Dunaújváros SP in Hungary as a case of post-socialist landscape heritage with international benchmarks via an evaluative framework. The park originated in the 1970s through the initiatives of local steelworkers and artists, and gradually became more complex over the following decades, as a few artefacts each year were placed on the steep slope of the Danube bank. A qualitative field survey was conducted with master's students via the implementation of site observation, photographic monitoring, and spatial analysis. The analysis applies six analytical criterions: Surface Topography and Spatial Form; Naturalness, and Vegetation Design; Maintenance, Care, Level of Disruption, Complexity and Multiplicity, Coherence and Integration, and Degree of Imagery. The study reveals that the park integrates unique cultural and environmental resources born of riverbank stabilisation programs, arboretum-inspired plantings, and the Steel Sculpture Creative Workshop, each integral to post-socialist tastes, thereby setting itself apart from its Western equivalents. Still, deficiencies in curatorial cohesion, upkeep, and visitor accessibility prevent its categorisation as a mature International grade SP.

Keywords: postsocialist, landscape architecture, visitor experience, public art, spatial analysis, comprehensive, engineered land art

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper defines an SP as a spatially choreographed, outdoor landscape in which large scale sculptures are curated in a designed ground (Benkaid Kasbah et al., 2025; Benkaid Kasbah & Eplényi, 2022; Florence, 2020; Harper & Moyer, 2008; Kwon, 2004). The typology merges art and nature, and most were created in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Catterall 2018). Exemplary international precedents include: Storm King Art Centre (USA), the Yorkshire SP (UK), the Olympic SP (USA), Jupiter Artland (Scotland) and Laumeier SP (USA). These sites integrate curatorial mission, environmental spatial design, and visitor experience into a large-scale, integrated setting where art, nature, and people blend in enriching settings particular to each location (Krauss, 1979). These leading SPs share a set of recognised international standards, including:

① Curatorial clarity and collection management: concept driven artwork placement, spatial legibility, controlled visibility.
② A landscape-architectural framework: calibrated sightlines, designed landforms, Structured circulation, and planting schemes that amplify the staging and meaning of the artworks (Florence, 2020; McHarg, 1992).
③ Ecological integration: vegetation layering, meadow typologies, water systems, and habitat continuity supporting aesthetic quality and ecological performance.
④ Visitor interpretation and public access: wayfinding network, interpretive panels, guided tours, and educational outreach enabling visitor engagement (Dewey 2005; Harper & Moyer 2008) (Dewey 2005, Harper & Moyer 2008);
⑤ Maintenance and long-term stewardship: continuous care of artworks, paths, view axes, and vegetation to preserve legibility, safety, and experiential quality (Morrison et al. 2022).

By contrast, several Central, and Eastern European SPs emerged in communist urban and industrial settings such as Nagyharsány, Nagyatád, and Memento Park (Hungary) as well as Grūtas Park (Lithuania), where

Figure 1: Early installed sculptures in Dunaújváros SP shown within their parkland setting during the 1980s–1990s
SOURCE: JAKD, 2021; MONTAGE BY THE AUTHORS

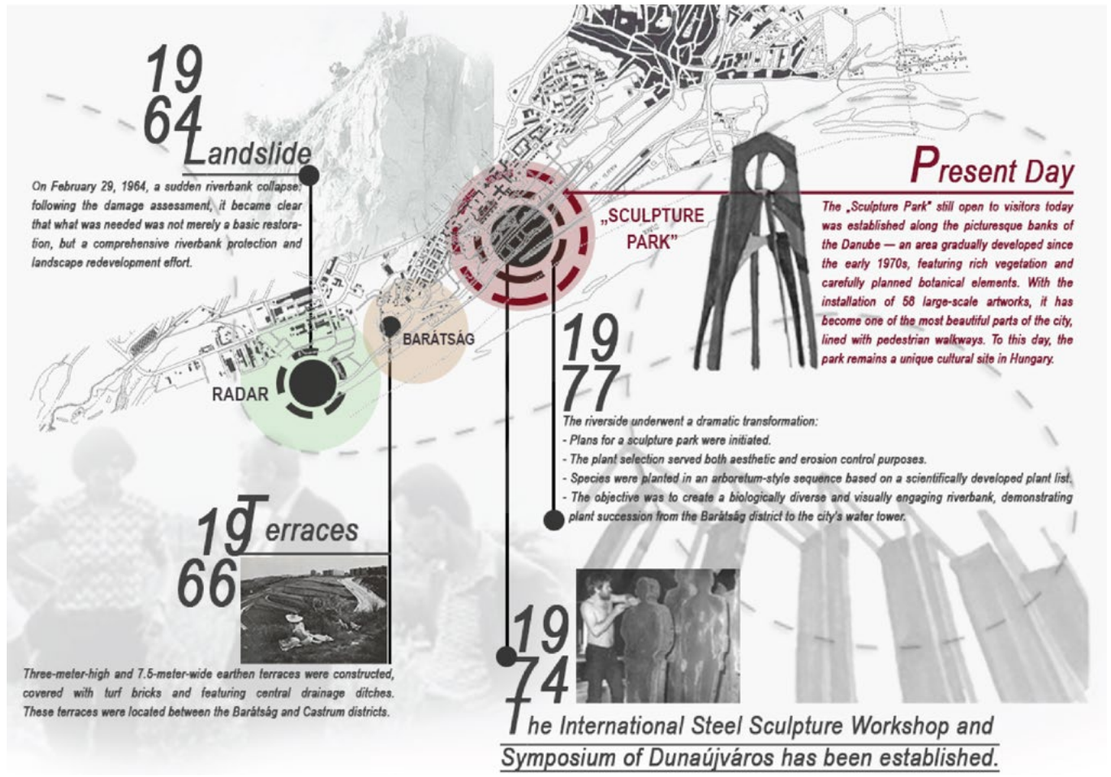


Figure 2: Dunaújváros Sculpture Park timeline: 1964 riverbank works to 1974 Artist Colony and current form
SOURCE: AUTHORS, 2024

instead of curatorial structures centred on museum imperatives, artistic practice was directly at odds with ideological and infrastructural needs. Dunaújváros SP is one example, founded in the 1970s as a result of two key developments: the stabilisation of the Danube River banks and the establishment of the Steel Sculpture Creative Workshop. It reflects the city's Soviet industrial heritage while concurrently incorporating vegetation, industrial materials, and art. Two research questions (RQs) guide this study:

- **RQ1:** How does the Dunaújváros SP perform relative to international benchmarks for SPs?
- **RQ2:** How do the distinct spatial and environmental characteristics of the park's three zones shape visitors' perceptual and interpretive experience of sculptures, particularly in terms of visibility, symbolic clarity, and experiential coherence?

Urban sculptural display in Hungary was shaped by public art policy during socialism, particularly in the "socialist city" project of Dunaújváros. Monumental sculpture was placed in city areas to convey ideology (Hegyi 1999). The Dunaújváros SP differs from Western predecessors by being state driven rather than private or curatorial. Its urban environmental safety was threatened by the loose, unstable Danube riverbank. A significant landslide in February 1964 necessitated robust bank protection (Sasvári 1964). Initiated in 1965, the development project aimed to stabilise more than two kilometres of the riverbank. Adopting a terraced, stepped earthen structure, a configuration proved more effective in managing surface water drainage and in promoting soil stabilisation through vegetation. The resulting formations were three meters in height and 7.5 meters in width (Önkormányzat, n.d.).

From the outset, landscape architectural and horticultural interventions played a major role, alongside engineering stabilisation. The project was led by Elek Nyilas, who developed a concept for plant use adapted to the urban environment (Nagy 1975). Thousands of species were planted, including sixty types of conifers, 530 deciduous trees and shrubs, and 600 herbaceous species, endowing the area with botanical value (Csongor 1976). Artistic features were added to riverbank open spaces in the 1970s (*Szoborsétány* 1976). The construction of the Upper Danube Promenade of this SP began in 1976, and early integrated artworks were steel sculptures (Figure 1).

The Steel Sculpture Creative Workshop, founded in 1974, was instrumental in the development of the SP. The workshop attracted both Hungarian and international neo-avant-garde artists. While work started in the college's studio facilities, production shifted to dedicated workshop spaces from 1977 onward (Gréczi 2016). Artists collaborated with manufacturing technicians to test materials and create experimental steel sculptures. The Danube riverbank's landform and vegetation have evolved over the decades. Several of the original stepped terraces beneath Barátság have transitioned into naturalised slopes. In the region between the Old Town and the water tower, terraced constructions have been altered into slopes for safety and functionality. In contrast, the Castrum district's terraced and inclined components maintain structural stability and recreational usability. Conserving native species was a priority in arboretum-style plantings. However, many urban-friendly non-native plants were introduced for architectural and functional reasons (the riverbank terraces were intentionally planted in an *arboretum-like* manner, as part of a *biological*

◂◂**Figure 3:** Field-trip photographs of key sculptures in Dunaújváros SP, taken during a site visit with MATE University students
SOURCE: AUTHORS, 2024

Figure 4: Study area and spatial distribution of key sculptures within the Dunaújváros SP. Aerial view of the riverfront illustrating the three analytical zones
SOURCE: AUTHORS, 2024

Key Sculptures of the Dunaújváros Sculpture Park:

1. Szanyi Péter (sculptor), Memento, 1996
2. Jon Barlow Hudson (sculptor), Ablakok a végtelenre, 1982
3. Móder Rezső (sculptor), Guruló kozmosz (zenélő mobil), 1989
4. Acél-mű (sculptor), Acél-mű szobra, 1987
5. Móder Rezső (sculptor), Kék ház, a mozgó hold és háromszög, 1992
6. Friedrich Ferenc (sculptor), Viszony 96, 1996
7. Somogyi József (sculptor), Aratók-szobor, 1979
8. Péter Ágnes (sculptor), Közösség, 1989
9. Helmut Karl & Peter Sommerauer (sculptors), Rómeó és Júlia – 1956, 1993
10. Vilt Tibor (sculptor), Emlékmű-terv, 1979
12. Ingo Glass (sculptor), Alfa és Omega-szobor, 1987
13. Buczkó György (sculptor), Térplasztika, 1979
14. Galántai György (sculptor), Tárgyiasított életterv, 1975
15. Billy Lee (sculptor), Mátyás király emlékére (In Memoriam Mathias Rex), 1996
16. Bohus Zoltán (sculptor), Hengerek-szobor, 1975
17. Szöllőssy Enikő (sculptor), Csomópont-szobor, 1975
18. Karen Baldauf Delaney (sculptor), Bár különbözőek vagyunk, egy földön élünk, 1993
19. Csáji Attila (sculptor), Keresztforma-szobor, 1974
20. Paul Seynhaeve (sculptor), A szabadság felé, 1933
21. Galántai György (sculptor), Jövőbejárat-szobor, 1989
22. Klikov Vladiszlav (sculptor), Köszönet Magyarországnak, 1983
23. Várnai Gyula (sculptor), Tanácsadó, 1993

protection system. Municipal records also document non-native trees planted on the banks of the Danube, e.g., *Taxodium distichum* in 1985). (Partvédelem, 1996)

Today, the SP is located on the riverfront between Barátság and Castrum, partially on terraced embankments and partly on gently sloped land. Of the 160-hectare riverbank protection area, 50 hectares are woodland, and the rest is parkland, including 20 hectares of sculpture park. Thus, the park is a botanical arboretum, outdoor art display and community entertainment facility (Figure 4).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper applies a multi-layered methodological framework to analyse the Dunaújváros SP's alignment with international SP standards through a landscape architectural lens. A field-trip survey was conducted in 2023 and 2024 with bachelor's and master's students at the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MATE). Students worked in groups analysing three main park zones (Figure 4): ***Axis Promenade (Zone 1):*** situated on the upper terrace, ***Terraced Decline (Zone 2)***—located on the middle terrace, this zone retains remnants of past engineering interventions with drainage slopes and retaining structures—and ***Meadow Slopes (Zone 3).*** Positioned near the river, this zone has gentle slopes and an open meadow character.

The analytical framework was obtained from Ode et al. (2008), adapted here to the specific context of SPs. Six analytical criteria were used to capture both landscape structure and perceptual experience: *Surface Topography and Spatial Form; Naturalness and Vegetation Design; Maintenance; Care; Degree of Disturbance; Complexity and Multiplicity; Coherence, Cohesion, and Fitting Together and Degree of imagery.* Each criterion was evaluated qualitatively via on-site observation and group discussions. Students prepared interpretative analysis on their cognitive and sensory impressions of each zone. For Data Collection and Synthesis, photographs, sketch analyses, and field notes were coded according to the six analytical criteria. Additionally, students performed 20-minute perceptual observations of selected sculptures and submitted analysis sheets, which were then thematically coded to generate the comparative perceptual synthesis (Figure 7).

RESULTS

Students conducted on-site descriptive analysis, photography, drawings and mapping for each category. Interpretative remarks centred on experiential components accompanied their observations. The Danube riverfront's plant layers, sculpture placement, and spatial sequencing were carefully considered for each zone.

The field work analysis delineated the Dunaújváros SP into three analytical zones explained and summarised in Table 2.

In addition, as a result, the thematic coding of the student sheets revealed consistent perceptual patterns across the group. Figure 7 presents a synthesised comparative reading of the two selected sculptures: *Memento and Windows Over the Danube.* The figure captures how students collectively interpreted each work in terms of material articulation, sculptural form, sensory and spatial experience, atmospheric qualities, symbolic resonance, and overall visitor perception. The comparison shows how each sculpture generates a different experiential and symbolic presence within the landscape, shaped by visibility, spatial embedding and environmental context.

Figure 5: Key sculptures corresponding to the numbered locations in Figure 4
SOURCE: GOOGLE IMAGES, AUTHORS' COMPILATION, 2024

▸▸**Table 1:** Analytical criteria framework used for the field-based landscape evaluation of Dunaújváros Sculpture Park
SOURCE: AUTHORS, 2024

Analytical Criterion	Observational Focus
Surface Topography And Spatial Form	Identify dominant landform typologies and prevailing spatial geometries.
	Analyse spatial organisation dynamics (static, transitional, or highly dynamic…)
	Evaluate compositional balance: harmonious, asymmetrical, or visually tense…
	Map available view conditions: close range, axial, or panoramic sightlines…
	AnalyzeAnalyse visual depth and enclosure gradients: degrees of openness, containment, and spatial fragmentation…
Naturalness And Vegetation Design	Characterise naturalness based on vegetation typologies, spatial patterning, and stages of ecological succession.
	Assess perceived site authenticity in relation to established landscape archetypes.
	Identify planting design typologies (naturalistic, formal, informal, naturalistic, or hybrid) and their integration with the broader spatial composition.
Maintenance, Care And Degree Of Disturbance	Evaluate maintenance intensity, and identify indicators of neglect or care.
	Assess material suitability in relation to site character, landscape context, and functional demands.
	Detect artificial alterations, aesthetic inconsistencies, and spatial incongruities that disrupt visual continuity and coherence.
Complexity Multiplicity	Quantify spatial richness: vegetation layers, surface treatments, built elements.
	Assess ground-surface texture and tactile qualities.
	Evaluate the sculpture distribution within the site
	See whether diversity enhances experience or produces visual overload.
Coherence - Cohesion, Fitting Together	Assess spatial congruence with ecological context and cultural setting.
	AnalyzeAnalyse structural legibility, rhythm, repetition, and axiality.
	Measure landscape-sculpture interconnectivity and functional linkages.
	Evaluate compositional harmony and degree of integration.
Degree Of Imagery	Identify high-imagabilityimageability features:, distinct spatial or sculptural elements that reinforce memorability.
	Assess narrative expression: ‚how history and meaning are conveyed through spatial composition.

DISCUSSION

In relation to RQ1, the analysis indicates that the Dunaújváros SP's alignment with international sculpture-park standards depends not only on its historical significance or collection, but more fundamentally on the *degree of spatial and curatorial integration* between sculptures and the landscape structure. Zones where movement axes, landform and vegetation framing enable clear sightlines and well-orchestrated spatial sequences—notably the Axis Promenade and Meadow Slopes—demonstrate qualities comparable to internationally benchmarked parks. Conversely, the spatial fragmentation and low maintenance conditions in the Terraced Decline compromise sculptural legibility, thereby exposing gaps relative to global standards.

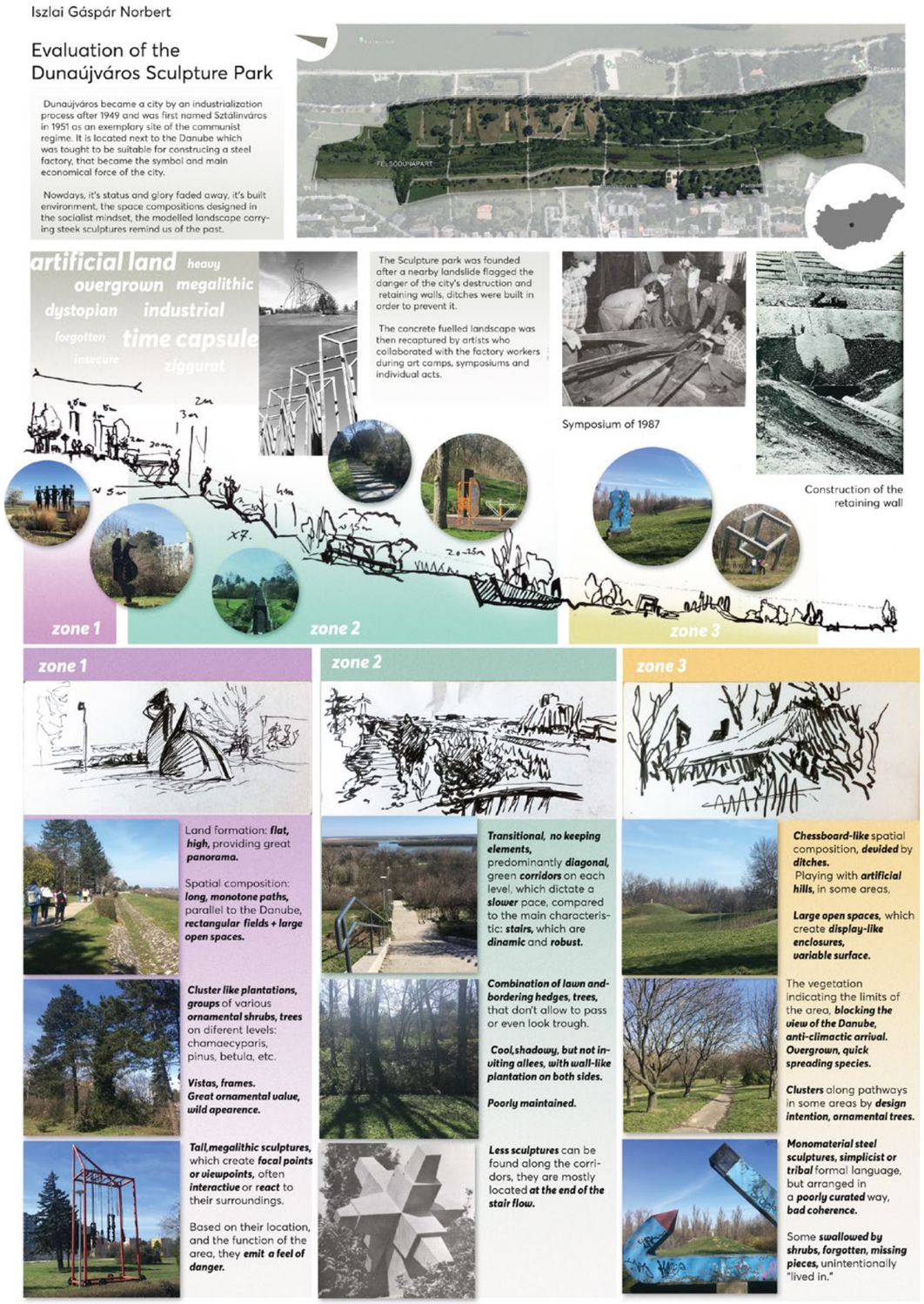
With regard to RQ2, the results prove that visitors' interpretation of sculptures is strongly conditioned by the spatial and environmental affordances of each zone. Sculptures staged within legible spatial structures, framed vistas, open meadows, or linear promenades were consistently interpreted by students as more resonant, expressive, and symbolically intelligible than those situated in visually congested, poorly maintained, or ecologically degraded contexts. Consequently, both research questions converge on the same argument: the experiential and interpretive strength of the Dunaújváros SP is rooted in the quality of the landscape art relationship, while its limitations emerge when this relationship deteriorates due to neglected engineering structures, visual clutter, or insufficient environmental management.

The cross-zone comparison further illustrates the way this dynamic unfolds across the site. Zone 1 (Axis Promenade) exemplifies how a strong linear spatial and framed river views panoramas and key sculptures as civic landmarks. Installations such as *Windows Over the Danube* benefit from uninterrupted vistas, axial orientation, and rhythmic vegetation structure: the sculpture's strong vertical geometry engages with the promenade's elongated perspective, strengthening its readability as both a spatial threshold and a symbolic point of arrival. This zone demonstrates how well coherent landform, viewed corridors, and circulation patterns reinforce the sculptural meaning and visitor experience.

In contrast, Zone 2 (Terraced Decline) demonstrates how degraded environmental conditions significantly diminish sculptural legibility. The eroding terraces and unmanaged vegetative growth disrupt visual continuity and sequences, resulting in sculptures that appear spatially isolated. Originally conceived as a calibrated interplay between steel elements, engineered landforms, and the riverbank edge, it now functions as a dispersed and incoherent composition with reduced curatorial clarity. Here, insufficient maintenance directly undermines the landscape-art relationship highlighted by RQ1 and reduces visitors' interpretive clarity, as noted in RQ2.

Zone 3 (Meadow Slopes) offers the clearest example of contemporary landscape art integration. Its gentle landform, meadow-like openness, and layered spatial depth enable sculptures to be experienced from multiple angles and experienced through movement, shadow and changing sky conditions. Works like *Memento* derive heightened expressive impact from this setting, as the sculpture's ascending steel form is amplified by the surrounding openness, fostering a contemplative and immersive encounter. This zone closely mirrors international eco-cultural landscape practices, showing how high environmental legibility can strongly enhance interpretive richness.

Overall, the Dunaújváros SP demonstrates that the legibility, symbolic impact, and experiential quality of its sculptures are fundamentally governed by their spatial embedding within the landscape matrix. Where circulation patterns, views, axes, vegetation and landform operate cohesively, sculptures fulfil their intended cultural and aesthetic functions. Where this spatial coherence weakens, the artworks lose perceptual clarity and symbolic force. Enhancing these landscape art relationships through targeted vegetation management, refined visual framing, improved sequencing of viewpoints, and renewed maintenance is therefore important for aligning the park with the international standards outlined in RQ1 and for strengthening visitor experience, as emphasised in RQ2.

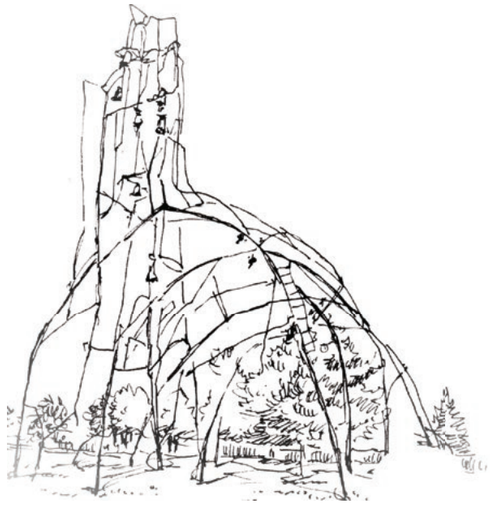


◂◂**Figure 6:** Example of one student's field-study analysis collected during the landscape evaluation of Dunaújváros SP
SOURCE: ISZLAI GÁSPÁR NORBERT, 2024

Table 2: Comparative analysis of the three main zones of Dunaújváros SP
SOURCE: AUTHORS, 2024

	Axis Promenade (Zone 1)	**Terraced Decline (Zone 2)**	**Meadow Slopes (Zone 3)**
Surface Topography and Spatial Form	Flat upper-promenade terrace	Trapezoidal drainage terraces	Gentle gradient landform
	Wide Danube vistas	Visually sunken / enclosed character	Meadow-like, English-garden character
	Urban, close-range views	Obstructed spatial legibility	Articulated spatial depth
	Defined planar layout	Disrupted sightlines	Interplay of open and enclosed rooms
	Strong spatial order	High spatial fragmentation	Dynamic spatial sequencing
	Rhythmic planting pattern	Low cognitive navigability	
Naturalness and Vegetation Design	Formal planting structure	Self-seeded poplar–ailanthus colonisation	Mixed native–ornamental meadow palette
	Grouped birch–pine–shrub masses	Invasive pioneer vegetation	Seasonal flowering tree layer
	Rhythmic vegetative patterning	Spontaneous growth patterns	Enhanced chromatic interest
	Repetitive planting cadence along promenade	Perceived abandonment/unmanaged character	Seasonal scenic enrichment
Maintenance, Care and Degree of Disturbance	High maintenance level	Lowest maintenance level	Higher maintenance than Zone 2
	Weathered sculptures (age-related patina)	Graffiti /unmanaged vegetation / litter	Well-maintained paths and sculptures
	Incongruent site furniture (benches/ playgrounds/gym)	Degraded terrace structures	Non-native species present
		Eroded protective landforms	Partial ecological instability
	Infrastructure conflicting with artistic character	Pronounced neglect aesthetic	
Complexity, Multiplicity	Sculpture–vegetation–view synergy	Repetitive terrace patterning	Varied meadow and slope vistas
	Integrated hedge structure	Unmanaged vegetative overgrowth	Distributed sculpture placements
	Extended vista corridors	Visual monotony	High visual richness
	Rich but non-overwhelming visual depth	Tired, low-richness spatial character	Strong experiential stimulation
	Balanced long-range visual sequencing		
Coherence - Cohesion, Fitting Together	Highest spatial coherence	Spatial fragmentation	Harmonious art-vegetation balance
	Clear sculpture, path and plant alignment	Dispersed sculpture placement	Meadow-based spatial clarity
	Evident structural order	Low visual unity	Coherent compositional structure
		Weak compositional cohesion	
Degree of imagery	Iconic sculptural landmarks	Dominant industrial backdrop	Open meadow structure
	High symbolic and metaphorical value	Low symbolic legibility	Enhanced sculpture staging
	Strong anchoring points in spatial composition	Poorly maintained sculptural elements	Strong visual and experiential impact
		Visual clutter obscuring meaning	Emerging cultural-landscape garden identity

Figure 7: Comparative perceptual analysis of the sculptures Memento and Windows Over the Danube, based on synthesised student observations
SOURCE: AUTHORS, 2024



	Memento (Péter Szanyi) 1996	**Windows Over the Danube (Jon Barlow Hudson) 1995**
Material and Form	Fusion of hard steel with fragile, linear geometry, creating tension and sensitivity. Dome-like structure with a transparent canopy, rooted like a tree, branching upward.	Constructed from rigid metal frames, alternating between solid and transparent geometries. Appears monumental and architectural; rectangular volumes resemble folded screens or origami structures.
Spatial and Sensory Experience	Generates an uplifting, elevating feeling, a sense of ascension. Immersive: one can stand inside and perceive both the material and the surrounding landscape. Light and shadow interplay transforms perception through the day; sunlight sketches patterns on the ground.	Positioned dramatically on the cliff-edge, frames views toward the river. Creates rhythmic visual movement, strong verticality, and a play of alternating opacity and void. Heavy shadows cast onto the ground enhance sculptural presence.
Atmosphere and Symbolism	Sacred, meditative ambiance; reminiscent of a bell or temple. Embracing and sheltering spatial quality, evokes safety and belonging. Serves as a social and contemplative node; circular form suitable for gathering or solitude.Interpreted as both sculpture and spatial architecture, a "drawing in the sky."	Expresses solidity, rhythm, and strength; evokes urban architectural associations in a parkland setting. Acts as a spatial threshold, dividing and connecting two landscape zones.Unlike Memento, it is not penetrable; the sculpture stands beside the viewer, asserting dominance and distance.
Visitor Interpretation	"Welcoming," "friendly," "sensitive," "peaceful." Encourages reflection and stillness within the open parkland context.	"Powerful," "geometric," "monumental," "unapproachable."Provokes contrast between containment and openness, control and release.

CONCLUSION

The Dunaújváros SP demonstrates how industrial-modernist riverbank infrastructure can be transformed into a multifunctional cultural landscape integrating art, vegetation, and engineering heritage. With respect to international benchmarks (RQ1), this study concludes that the park performs well in: landform-circulation structure, spatial hierarchy, and richness of its planting framework. However, it falls short in: curatorship, visitor interpretation, and long-term maintenance compared to international sculpture-park standards. Addressing RQ2, this paper concludes that visitors' perception of the sculptures is strongly shaped by the spatial and environmental conditions of each zone. Zone 1 is defined by a clear axial structure and framed river views, which enhance the legibility of the artworks. Zone 2 is characterised by eroding terraces and unmanaged vegetation, conditions that weaken visibility and overall coherence. Zone 3 offers open meadows and gentle topography, enabling relaxed, readable, and contemporary eco-cultural encounters with art. The findings point to several priority actions. These include strengthening the spatial clarity of Zone 1 and Zone 3 through continuous maintenance and improved view management; restoring terrace structures and re-framing sculptures in Zone 2; and enriching the visitor experience across the park through enhanced interpretive tools, such as signage, educational programmes, and guided walks.

Also, this paper concludes that the park advances broader discussions on transforming post-socialist industrial landscapes into cultural landscapes that blend ecology, art, heritage, and public use. Dunaújváros SP should be interpreted not merely as an open-air art theatre, but as a living repository of riverbank engineering, planting design, and social interactions. Future research should expand the framework to other Central/Eastern European sculpture parks, explore seasonal and demographic visitor patterns, and involve artists and communities through co-design processes. ⦿

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