

## **ABSTRACT**

*In spite of increasing demand for participatory design within democratic cultures, the most effective transactive methods remain elusive. Which are most useful to address contemporary issues? CELA activist scholars have recently articulated contexts in which their techniques are successful; there is now a critical mass of such work, but it has infrequently been brought together in a forum for critical discussion. This paper modestly initiates that discussion, bringing together five participatory designers who teach and practice community design to share the techniques they consider most effective in achieving truly collaborative form-making with people. Each presents the one technique he or she thinks best enables the designer and community to work together to actually design landscapes. The focus is methods for decision-making and shared form-making as opposed to preliminary activities like listening and program generation. Attention is paid to the transaction—the give and take between designer and community—regarding precise design layout, spatial configuration and experiential qualities. The five techniques include “Design Buffet: Work with what the participants have”; “Kitchen Table Work Session”; “El Carrito: Go where the people are”; “Make It Real: communication and empathy through building small”; and “Drawing-out-the-sacred, upside-down.” We describe the techniques with instructions for implementation, case stories and reflections, concluding with tentative insights, a few lessons for improvement and how others can contribute to create a collective techniques catalogue. A long-term objective is to publish a catalogue of best transactive design techniques for landscape architects. Such a publication would significantly advance this field and serve society.*