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The Inhabited Landscape: An Exhibition

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ARCO Chemical Company
Research and Engineering Center,
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Kyle Thayer

To Rally Discussion

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Measurement, it may be argued, is a surrogate for intimacy. We measure things that we do not know, that are not a part of our being. Measure gives structure to our observations, makes it possible for us to draw relations between things and to register nuance and particularity.

Cadence, the rhythmic modulation of stressed and unstressed measurements presented to our senses, induces recognition. The cadence of a place may be as particular and as characteristic as the natural cadence of a voice. It may also be as effectively contrived as the cadence of a poem.

The landscapes we inhabit may be as spontaneously structured as the sound of a voice or as carefully invented as a poem. In this issue we offer examples of both. They differ, we think, in the degrees of intimacy required to read human significance in their appearance.

To know Westport, California, rather than simply to be charmed by it, requires a close reading of its forms with an insider's knowledge of the acts intertwined with them. The examples included in the *Inhabited Landscape* exhibition, on the other hand, are artfully conceived. Each is deliberately set to a cadence that will make us consider it a distinct place.

Measurement in the landscape is not a matter of meters and feet, but of rolling contours, spaced verticals, soft canopies and distinct edges.

The measures of inhabitation are not just elements of shelter, but recurring units of construction that define a human rhythm through the place, marking the presence of self. When set to the cadence of tradition, or made susceptible to our inquiring imaginations, artfully measured places affirm the possibility of community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donlyn Lyndon'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Donlyn Lyndon

Architecture and Landscape: Three Modes of Relationship

Reuben M. Rainey

The fit between architecture and the land is a perennial issue since architecture in its broadest sense includes indoor *and* outdoor space, buildings *and* parks, plazas *and* parkways. A given landscape confronts the designer with a vast array of constraints and opportunities that must be addressed with clarity and decisiveness if architectural work is to respond successfully to basic human needs and embody fundamental cultural values. The history of architecture and landscape architecture reveals three basic modes of relationship between architecture and the landscape: *contrast*, *merger*, and *reciprocity*.¹ Seldom does any of the modes appear in pure form, but one is usually predominant in combination with one or both of the others. The contrasts, tensions, and ambiguities brought about by combining these various modes not only enhance the appearance of a work but also allow it to embody a rich complexity of meaning. All three modes rest in large part on basic convictions about the proper relationship of human beings to “nature,” which has been defined in a multitude of ways throughout the history of design.

Contrast juxtaposes architecture with the natural or cultural landscape. A typical strategy sets a building against a relatively untouched swath of the natural environment. The building’s scale, profile, color and materials act in concert to create a powerful counterpoint to its immediate setting. There are no transitional gardens or terraces to act as a

bridge, so the resulting contrast between building and landscape accentuates the intrinsic qualities of each. Contrast is often employed by designers who understand nature as a realm apart, with its own processes, ecosystems and visual characteristics that differ from works of art. Yet others who employ the same strategy would challenge this point of view and claim, after the manner of Dan Kiley, that “man is nature” and that all works of human artifice, regardless of their visual contrasts with their surrounding landscape, are expressions of “nature” in the form of human creativity.²

A classic example of contrast was the original nineteenth-century design of New York’s Central Park, whose sequences of pastoral and picturesque scenery constituted a totally different environment from the surrounding urban grid. The whole was to provide an experience of nature understood in Ruskinian and Emersonian terms that relieved urban stress and nurtured the moral well-being of the city’s inhabitants. More recent examples of park design, such as George Hargreaves Associates’ Fiddlers Green Amphitheatre near Denver, Colorado, depart from the nineteenth-century tradition of the picturesque park yet employ a similar strategy of contrast with their surrounding cultural and natural landscapes. Hargreaves’ earth amphitheatre is strongly reminiscent of Classical Greek prototypes. When not serving as a theatre for the performing arts, a slope for sledding or a picnic site, it functions as

a powerful piece of environmental sculpture. As such, it forms a counterpoint to the panoramic view of the Rocky Mountains, which serves as its stage backdrop, as well as to the freestanding office buildings adjacent to it. However, the amphitheatre does not merely contrast with its immediate setting. The form of its base also echoes the linear forms of the step mesa foothills of the distant Rockies, and its walkway bands are constructed of the local red sandstone.

Merger is the polar opposite of contrast. Here a building is made to appear an integral part of its natural or cultural landscape. In a natural landscape, the form of the building may reflect the surrounding topography or, in extreme cases, be placed underground so as not to be visible. Merger in a pure mode is never possible in a natural landscape because the very act of building obviously introduces an element of contrast. In an urban setting, where built form predominates, merger is more readily achievable since one need only echo or interpret the surrounding architecture. Often the view of nature that informs merger understands nature as a transcendent power that transforms human existence or evokes a sense of deep feeling states in the psyche. Or it can imply a rational, scientific attitude toward nature as a complex realm of processes that humans must respect and adapt to if they are to survive on this planet. In this sense, merger is emblematic of humanity’s capacity for harmonious adjustment, or design with nature.



Much of Frank Lloyd Wright's work, especially Fallingwater and Taliesin West, provide classic examples of merger in the American tradition, although Wright blends powerful elements of contrast in his design strategy as well. Fay Jones and Associates' Thorncrown Chapel stands firmly in the Wrightian tradition by formally recalling the forest in which it is set. Its wood structure has been hand-rubbed with grayish stain to blend with the bark of the surrounding trees. The roof beams form a canopy reminiscent of the forest, reminding us of Ruskin's observation that being in a Gothic church is like being in a great, verdant wood. Yet in the precision and intricacy

of its structure and the color and materials of its interior furnishings, the building also stands in counterpoint to the setting. Richard Haag employs the strategy of merger in his use of a natural bog as an "anteroom" in the rich sequence of highly varied garden spaces in the Bloedel Reserve. Except for the clearing of some underbrush and the introduction of mosses and ferns to highlight the massive stumps of 700-year-old trees, the bog is relatively unaltered. It is intended to evoke, through its strong aroma of decay, spongy soil, dim light and gnarled remnants of former giants of the forest, "the rapture of the deep" and a sense of the transiency of all living things.

Fiddlers Green Amphitheater, Denver, Colorado, George Hargreaves Associates

Reciprocity is the most frequently employed of the three strategies. In it, buildings and landscape modify one another—each one to some degree is reflected in the other. Building plan may be projected quite literally into the immediately adjacent landscape; or, more subtly, indoor and outdoor spaces may share the same organizing principles, expressed in such architectonic elements as terraces, pergolas, walls, arcades, pools, fountains and plants. A zone of transition may interlock or penetrate the plan of the building itself. It may also form a series of outdoor spaces that, in close proximity to the building, mirror its plan or facade but gradually undergo spacial and material transformations along a central axis until they merge with the surrounding natural landscape.

The formal strategies of this mode are among the richest and most diverse in the history of architecture and landscape architecture. They include Ligorio's brilliant sixteenth-century Villa d'Este, with its planar spaces arrayed along axes marked by fountains, and Capability Brown's great park at Petworth characterized by its immense lawn and serpentine lake bounded by undulating edges of deciduous trees. The strong American preference for siting private houses, colleges and corporate headquarters in vast pastoral landscapes is an expression of this reciprocity. Hanna Olin's site plan for ARCO Chemical Company's Research and Engineering Center in Newtown Square, Pennsylvania, preserves the English park landscape of a

former private school, augments it with additional trees and utilizes it in the visitors' entry sequence. The project successfully sites a high technology, semi-industrial complex in a "genteel, bucolic setting," with a 300-year-old tradition of design precedent. By far the majority of works in "The Inhabited Landscape" exhibition manifest a similar strategy, but with a wide range of formal expression.

The views of nature that inform reciprocity are as varied as the formal strategies used to express it: Nature as a realm admired for its order and regularity, which can be perceived by human intelligence, partaking of that same order (the Papal Residence and Garden at Pienza); nature as a province to be controlled and manipulated by political or religious authority (Versailles); nature as an ideal pastoral landscape embodying the ideals of a normative Classical civilization (Stourhead) and nature as raw material to be used in the expression of human art (Villa Lante). These are but a few of the diverse concepts that underlie this approach.

One of the most interesting aspects of the present scene in architecture and landscape architecture is the wide variety of formal strategies within these three basic modes of contrast, merger and reciprocity. Some designers may opt to restate or interpret a historic architectural tradition that first appeared in a sixteenth-century Italian villa or an eighteenth-century English country house. Others may adopt formal approaches derived from twentieth-

century avant-garde painting—from collage, from de Stijl asymmetry or from Cubist fragmentation.³

Again, though, the precise mode a designer uses in fitting a building to the land or a park to its urban context is largely determined by an explicit or implicit view of the proper relationship between human beings and nature, a view that ultimately rests upon the values of the designer. Design is, in essence, the giving of form to values.

Notes

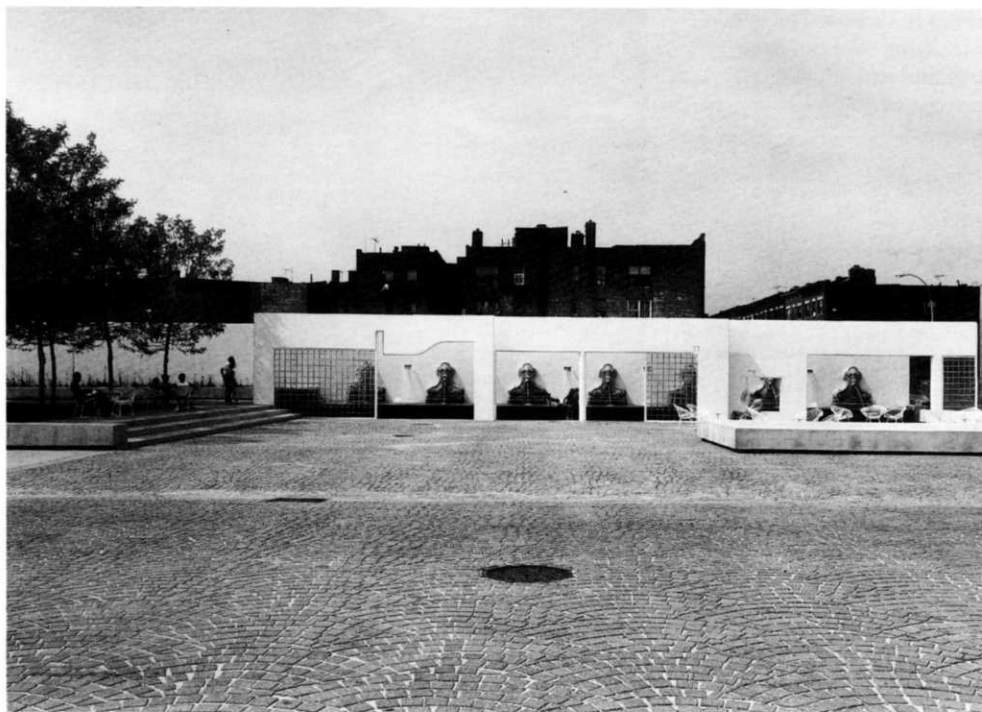
- 1 Two of the most comprehensive and lucid discussions of the possible relationships of buildings to landscape are Charles Moore, Gerald Allen, and Donlyn Lyndon, *The Place of Houses* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974) and Robert Geddes, "The Nature of the Built Environment," *Progressive Architecture* Volume 55, Number 6 (June 1974), pp. 72–81. I am deeply indebted to both of these works, as well as to discussions with my colleagues Warren Byrd, Harry Porter, William Rieley, Laurie Olin, and Marc Treib.
- 2 See, for example, Warren T. Byrd and Reuben M. Rainey, eds., *The Work of Dan Kiley: A Dialogue on Design Theory* (Charlottesville, Virginia: Division of Landscape Architecture, University of Virginia, 1983) p. 14; or Dan Kiley, "My Design Process," *Process: Architecture*, 33: "Landscape Design: Works of Dan Kiley," p. 15.
- 3 For a brief, but incisive, discussion of some current formal strategies of landscape architecture, with specific reference to garden design, see Laurie Olin, "12 Brillig and Contrary Gardens," *Places: A Quarterly Journal of Environmental Design*, Volume 3, Number 3, pp. 52–55.

Tiffany Plaza

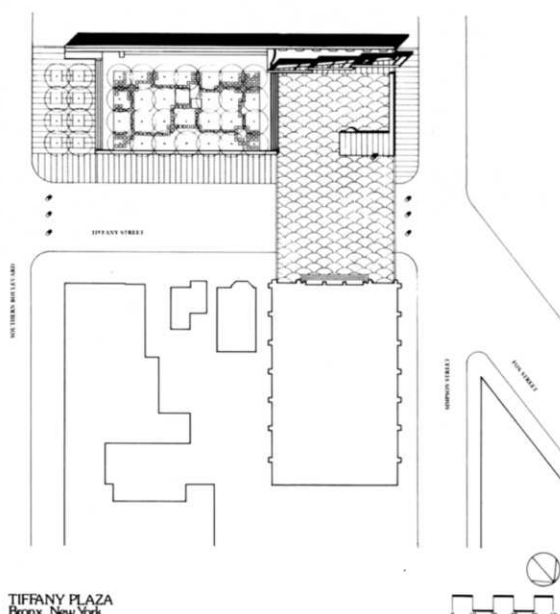
Jury Comments

Tiffany Plaza inhabits the edge of an open place in the South Bronx. Its partly veiled images are entirely alien to the surrounding physical evidences of a departed culture; they are meant to be evocative of another past, closer to the hearts of its present population.

The plaza is a compelling example of contrast and reciprocity in a cultural landscape. It is composed of two adjacent spaces separated from each other by a slight change in elevation; one is an open fountain plaza, the other a shaded bosque. The open fountain plaza enfronts a modest red brick Roman Catholic church. A raised platform and speaker's podium enable the plaza to be a place for civic and religious events. A white stucco and glass block wall defines the space immediately in front of the fountain wall. Recessed in its bays are partially framed individual lion's head fountains, which animate the plaza and provide a needed touch of variety to what is otherwise a highly abstract composition of walls and planes. Despite the marked difference in appearance and detailing, the church and plaza appear to be part of the same functional space and stand in a reciprocal relationship. One is reminded of central plazas throughout the Hispanic world and the elegant walls of Luis Barragan's outdoor spaces.



A



C

Architect's Statement

Tiffany Plaza in the South Bronx develops ideas of significant public open space explored earlier in the Cooper Field Bathhouse, Trenton, New Jersey. Tiffany Plaza uses walls made of concrete, stucco and glass block to define a hard-paved plaza that faces and becomes a piazza to a Catholic Church across the street. Here, the hard edge of the space is softened by the introduction of subtle color—a soft pink—the play of light and sound created by water pouring from lion's head fountains, and the



B

introduction of a grassed and treed area adjacent to the main gathering space. The materials, color and language of the components used at Tiffany Plaza make conscious links and associations that recall the homeland of the neighborhood's largely Hispanic population.

A Tiffany Plaza
Photograph by Elliot Fine

B Tiffany Plaza
Photograph by Elliot Fine

C Tiffany Plaza, site plan

The Inhabited Landscape

Catherine Howett

I was struck, in rereading the statements that accompanied, the projects submitted for consideration in “The Inhabited Landscape” exhibition, by a passage in Garrett Eckbo’s letter to Frances Halsband. He said that he believed that his own submissions reflected the theme of the exhibition:

I believe they all exemplify, in various ways, your concept, which has been a driving force in my work for fifty years, “the integration of architecture and the landscape . . . is absolutely central.” In actual practice this rarely happens through direct, one-time, equal base collaboration. Usually architecture/construction is there first, actually or conceptually. The landscape elements must adapt to, grow from, and extend the architectural/structural concepts (whether or not they seem to lend themselves to that), and establish connections or separations between the project and the surrounding neighborhood and region. The environment is littered with impossible tangles which have resulted from the absence of thought about this end product of each development project. The environmental art of the future will be kept busy trying to untangle such messes. The occasional one-to-one collaboration—I have had some—serves as guide and beacon.

Eckbo articulates here his impression of what the focus of this exhibition was to be, an impression that I shared but about which there

was some disagreement among the jury. He makes the point that historically the design of buildings most often literally *precedes*—and from that, *takes precedence over*—the design of the larger environment of which the buildings will ultimately be just a part. He clearly favors an alternative approach, in which considerations of the total site’s existing and potential character are addressed from the beginning of a design process that gives equal importance and priority to architectural and landscape values. This distinction is more profound than simply the question of who works with whom at the various stages of the project. Eckbo makes the point that in the right kind of design process the character of the site actually shapes the decisions that determine building form, instead of having to respond afterwards to the “architectural/structural concepts.” His reading of the criteria for the exhibition reflects my own original understanding, and I think the jury’s disagreement about the meaning of these criteria was hardly a minor matter, but rather a significant schism that must be taken into account in any effort to interpret the exhibition.

Perhaps my response to one of the projects will make clear what I see as a critical ambiguity in the selection process that has made it impossible for me to evaluate what the sum total of the projects chosen actually can tell us about contemporary approaches to the design of the “inhabited landscape.” Turner Brooks’s Sheldon

House in Vermont is useful in this way. Nothing in the architecture of this house seemed to me particularly responsive to the nature—big “N” or little “n”—of the Vermont sheep farm in which it is set, except perhaps that its wood-frame construction reflects a regional vernacular. On the contrary, Brook’s accompanying comments underscore the fact that his Vermont houses deliberately aim for the look of a “nervous” architecture that “always seems to be sliding across the landscape in the form of steamboats or some other form of vehicle.” A comment on his work that appeared in *Architectural Record* makes the point that “the hint of potential mobility” in such houses “reflects the nature of their inhabitants, many of whom are transplants from city or suburbia, or only part-time country folk.” How well the Sheldon House succeeds as architecture is not at issue here; its failure to accommodate its forms to the existing landscape, so that one has the sense that the house might have been built on another site in almost the same way, makes me question its viability as a model of building/landscape integration.

Another residential design, Antoine Predock’s Fuller House in the Sonoran desert of Arizona, offers a good example of a contrasting approach. Here the desert environment, the specific character of the *place*—its topography, geology, vegetation, climate, etc.—has determined the forms of the building, so that “the line of demarcation between the house and

the terrain becomes ambiguous.” The domestic activities to which the plan of the house responds are physically and symbolically merged with the surrounding natural and cultural world; one views the sunrise from a special pavilion above the breakfast room, the night lights of Phoenix from “the stepped exterior of the pyramidal den.” This house seeks to enter the desert reverently, mindful that what millenia of adaptive natural processes have produced is as vulnerable as it is precious. The aesthetic that shapes its forms is born out of a desire to make life *on* the desert participate in the life *of* the desert.

The two other residential landscapes in the exhibition provide a study in contrasts from another perspective: the Reed Garden by Eisenman Robertson Associates, and the series of courtyard gardens for Ceres Farm by Tori Thomas. The Reed Garden is unquestionably beautiful, but fails to move beyond or to transform in significant ways a *retardataire* style associated with the design of early twentieth-century estate gardens. Tori Thomas’s work, on the other hand, playfully manipulates historic styles and themes in a search for transformations that seem, in their freshness and vitality, to belong absolutely to the present,

although a present that admires and loves the past. That spirit, it seems to me, represents the best impulse of our benighted Post-Modernism.

Several of the projects in the exhibition demonstrate a keen sensitivity to the fact that the history of a site often becomes one of the most important of the landscape “givens” that new design must address. The Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Waste Water Treatment Plant (Centerbrook Architects) offers a model for introducing high-tech, industrial processes into a visually and ecologically fragile landscape *harmlessly*, in the best sense of that word. Jones & Jones’s Gene Coulon Beach Park is similarly modest in its approach to creating a public park on a mile of Lake Washington waterfront that had been an industrial site. The design draws upon the vernacular building tradition of mills, shipping and storage facilities and reminds us of the history of the place without lapsing into quaintness or gimmickry. I very much like the way that it celebrates the plain virtues of a vanished landscape of work. Finally, Hanna/Olin’s “The Meadows” for the ARCO Chemical Company introduces a corporate headquarters into a site that included the remains of a private school campus in the English

“landscape park” tradition. There is sympathy for that past in the design, but there are elements of unconventional departures as well. I liked the way that the building was made to wrap around a court of large trees—too close and overwhelming for the low building to accommodate picturesque distancing in space, so that the canopy trees and lawn are liberated, in a sense, to work as metaphors.

Two projects in the exhibition seem particularly strong examples of architecture/landscape integration: Antoine Predock’s Rio Grande Nature Center and Fay Jones and Maurice Jennings’s Thorncrown Chapel. It is impossible to judge whether these buildings succeed in all the ways that architecture must succeed—we do not know a thing, for example, about how the interior plan of Predock’s building meets programmatic needs, if it is aesthetically satisfying, etc. But it does seem clear that the design of these two buildings drew from the very first, as Eckbo urged, upon the nature of the site—recognizing the essential principle that each individual site is unique—and then sought somehow to express that engagement with the total landscape through the language of architectural form.

The Architectural League of New York invited designers from across the United States to submit recent works that emphasized the creation of habitable places in the landscape. The result is this exhibition, a small compendium of both current practice and future trends. The designs were selected by a jury composed of Frances Halsband, President of the Architectural League; Gerald Allen, a New York architect; Catherine Howett, a historian of landscape at the University of Georgia; Deborah Nevins, a landscape designer and historian; and Reuben Rainey, a landscape architect and teacher at the University of Virginia. Rosalie Genevro, Executive Director of the Architectural League, and Christopher Flacke, Project Director, aided substantially in the realization of the exhibition.

Frances Halsband

Understanding the relationship of man to nature is not a new concern, and the relationship of architecture to landscape is also not new. What is new, and constantly renewed, is what we bring to this relationship, how we understand it, and what we make of it.

Landscape may be defined as the human view of nature, a portion of land that the eye can comprehend. “Inhabited Landscape,” a phrase used by the philosopher Martin Heidegger, is defined by Christian Norberg Schulz as the world that is disclosed by architecture. He tells us that a work

of architecture makes certain aspects of the world visible. The building is not ‘added’ to the place as something foreign, but, “standing there, first makes the place emerge as what it is.”

Closely related to this is the idea that a piece of architecture domesticates a wilderness—a concept denoted as “borrowed landscape” by Maggie Keswick in her book on Chinese gardens.

Reuben Rainey notes that the “view” of nature changes in each culture. Nature may be seen as a transcendent power, or as a collection of scientific processes to be understood or adapted to human needs.

Although we are architects, or because we are architects, we were inspired to mount this exhibition not by our love for buildings, but by our love for gardens, parks, and the broader natural landscape.

As architects, we have recently begun to relearn the skills of contextualism—skills that allow us to relate individual buildings to the larger built fabric of towns and cities. But our colleagues—the landscape designers, critics, and analysts—have begun to teach us a broader kind of contextualism. They bring us new understandings of the history of landscape design, new appreciations of the importance of ecology, and new appreciations of both physical and cultural geography. Together, we approach the creation of the inhabited landscape with the goal of making meaningful form, of translating cultural values we share into visible forms in which we can dwell.

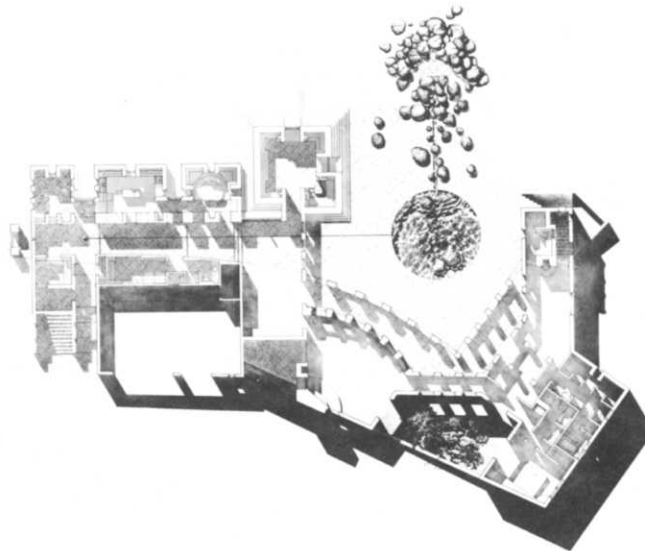
The projects exhibited here are presented not as definitive solutions, but rather as works that themselves pose questions and suggest new directions of thought. We have sought built works rather than theoretical drawings, and we have even eliminated from consideration projects under construction, because our objective is not the presentation of abstract ideas, but the presentation of real works in which the ideas are made physically manifest.

We hope that you, the audience of this exhibition, will not merely observe what is shown here, but will also be inspired in the creation of new designs of your own to make still other habitable places in the inhabited landscape.

Fuller House

Jury Comments

The Fuller House extends bare, harsh, but gently colored land forms into a compounded structure for inhabitation. It is a mixture of the strategies of merger and contrast, with the former predominant. The house stands amidst cacti and other sparse vegetation in the severe but austere beautiful landscape of the Arizona Sonoran desert. Major elements of the house merge with the surrounding desert, which has been disturbed as little as possible. Its colors, horizontality and varied spaces are keyed to the mesas, the sun and the desert floor. Yet by contrast the house itself also surrounds an outdoor space whose water and shade create an oasis reminiscent of Spanish patios. A place of refuge and outlook is carefully nestled in the desert through a masterful combination of contrast and merger.



Architect's Statement

Fuller

The high Sonoran desert site of the Fuller house is enclosed by peaks and eroded, decomposed granite ridges. Below this encircling rim, saguaro, cholla, ocotillo, and prickly pear cacti grow amidst palo verde and ironwood trees and jojoba and creosote bushes. This sparse vegetation, at once hardy and fragile, speaks of the adaptations necessary for life beneath an unrelenting sun.

In this desert environment, architecture and landscape, human procession and natural cycles, join in synchronous dances. The low, weighty perimeter of the house connects in its massiveness to the powerful geologic context and in color to the olive-beige of the desert floor. Viewed from a distance, this base becomes

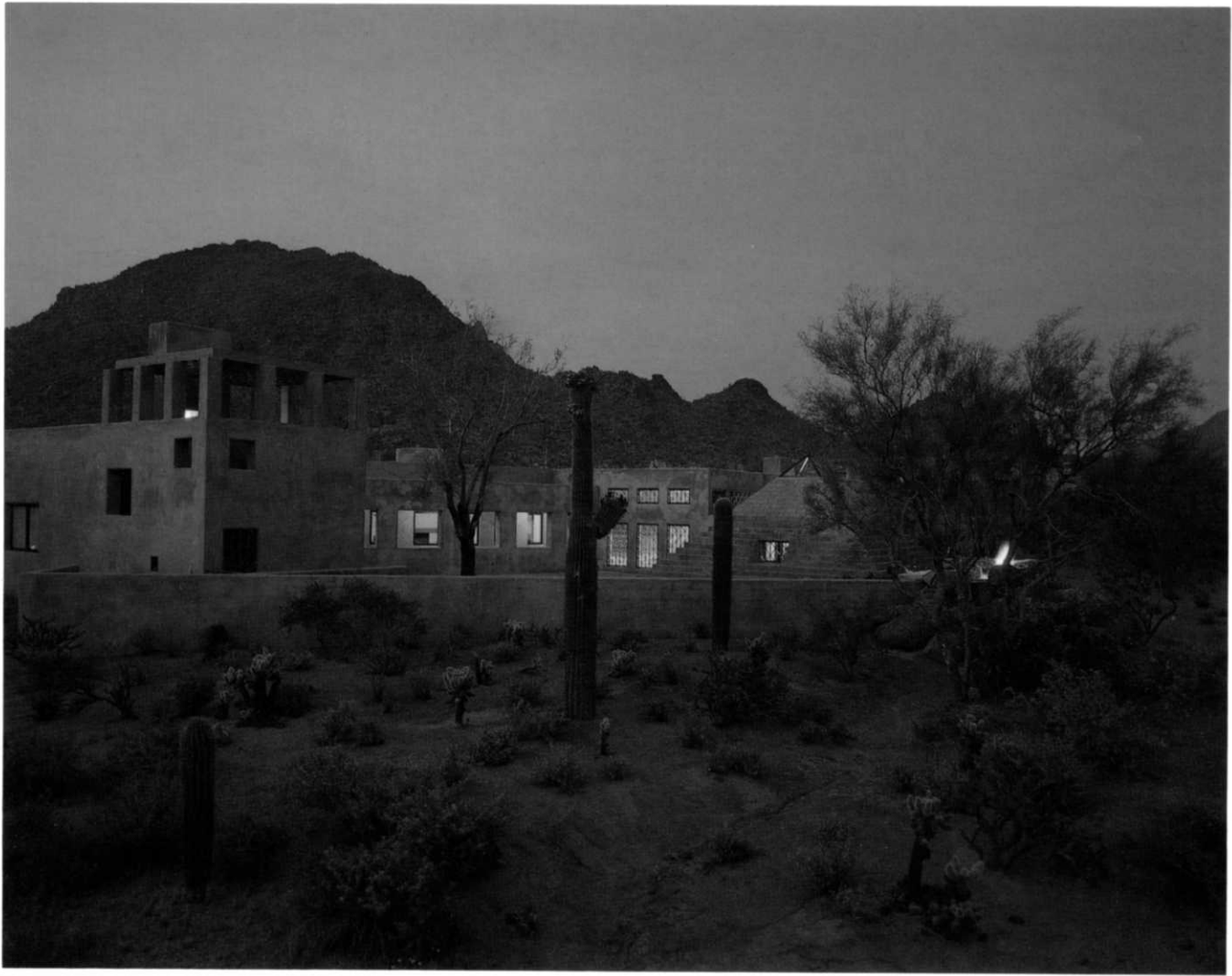
a mesa, and the pyramidal den, a mauve-purple abstraction of the surrounding sculptural peaks. Contrasting, brittle shade structures create shadow patterns of recalling the tracery cast on the site by the lacy branches of the ocotillo and palo verde.

The plan of the house distills into a single symbolic pattern the daily course of the sun and the routine of domestic activities. A sunrise-viewing pavilion is situated above the breakfast room; an interior "canyon" (gallery with centered, sequential water system) leads past abstracted kitchen and dining "boulders"; the "mountain" (pyramidal den) introduces the "valley"; a trellised, sunset-viewing tower completes the sequence.

At each event in this sequence

the building features view vantage points. The stepped exterior of the pyramidal den provides seating for viewing the night lights of Phoenix. The living areas focus on the distant mountains beyond the city. The bedroom zone, set apart from the rest of the house, concentrates attention on its private patio and sunset tower.

The gentle standoff between built forms and a desert environment is expressed in the project as a poetic tension. In the ensuing struggle, the line of demarcation between the house and the terrain becomes ambiguous. At certain places the desert enters, in other areas a tight line of defense prohibits entry. Looking out from this sequestered desert retreat the vast landscape scale can be better comprehended.



B

A Fuller House, plan
Drawing by Geoffrey Beebe

B Fuller House
Photograph by Tim Hursely

Reed Garden

Jury Comments

The Reed Garden is an extraordinary sequence of refined experiences, with paths through the landscape surrounded by markers, axes, pavilions and self-reflecting images that translate a walk through the woods, a swim or a tennis match into experiences with cultural resonances from the past.

The garden is the result of a ten-year collaboration between architect and client. At the inception of the work there was no overall master plan or program for the entire woodland site overlooking a reservoir. The garden was designed incrementally, each completed piece suggesting further possibilities, expansions and refinements.

The garden was envisioned as growing out of the existing Federal-style country house, as well as contrasting with that house as a world of its own making. Each “room” serves a specific need and exists on its own, yet the various parts are linked to form a cohesive, yet varied, setting.



A

Architect's Statement

The ongoing goal was to make a great and magical garden that accommodated the typical requirements of luxurious American country living—swimming pool, tennis court, etc.—within a loosely structured landscape conceived and developed both as a specimen garden and a work of art; a garden-to-live-in, taking its clues from and growing out of the existing house, as well as a world of its own making. While each stage was to serve its own specific need and use and exist on its own,

the various parts when taken together were intended to form a cohesive, linked and varied setting.

Formally the idea was to make a garden of architecture that struck a subtle and harmonious balance between the natural and the man-made; between the existing site and its flora, rolling high canopied woods with vistas to the water, a series of more intimate and articulated outdoor rooms, walkways, tunnels, terraces and glades; between more precise and colder architectural

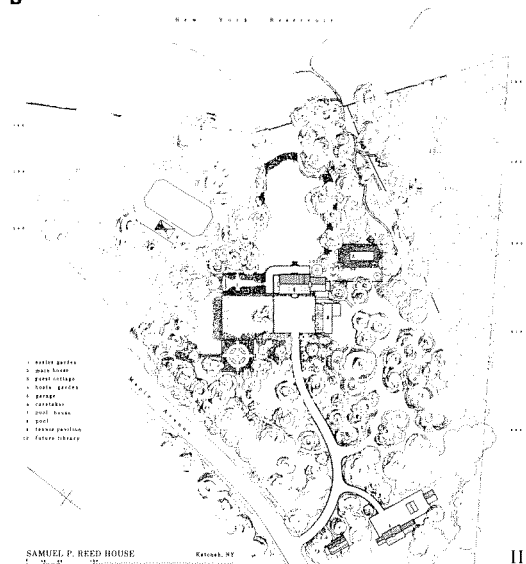
elements—pavilion, arbor, gate, fence, wall, path, statue, urn, ornament—and softer, more luxuriant plant material, each emphasizing the qualities of the other.

The property centers around a large house—high-roofed, white clapboard—its arrival court and dependencies. Each portion of the surrounding garden forms a progressive link of sequential places that all but encircle this central existing complex. The garden architecture closest to the house—the swimming

pool terrace to the east and azalea garden fences to the west—are painted white, reflecting in color and detail the house itself. As one moves farther away from the house precinct—to the hosta garden, tennis court, wisteria arbor—the elements are dark green, blending with the lush natural forest. The pavilions are simple, sturdy and practical—very “Yankee”—their enrichment being in the elaboration of their wood detailing. While certain of the outdoor rooms are for active sport and active gardening, these are always interspaced with quieter, more contemplative areas. The passage through the garden like that through the day, contrasts activity and reflection, sunshine and shade, heat and coolness, reality and fantasy.



B



C

A Reed Garden
Photograph by Langdon Clay

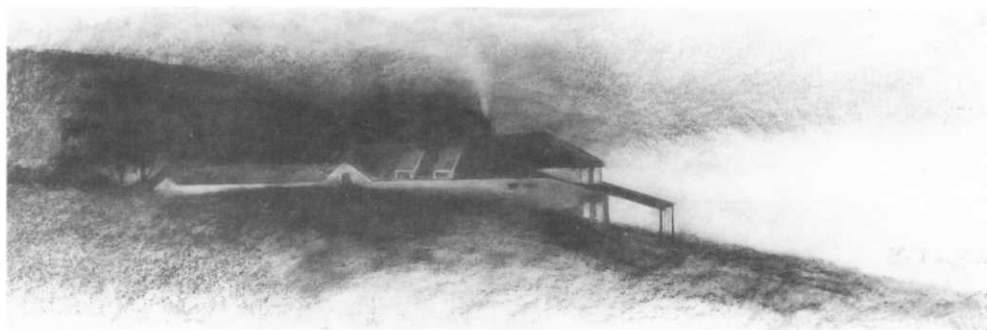
B Reed Garden
Photograph by Langdon Clay

C Reed Garden, site plan

Sheldon House

Jury Comments

The Sheldon House is a classic example of reciprocity. Sited on the brow of a hill, it claims its site, and its color, massing, materials and scale are all reminiscent of the regional rural vernacular. The house enfronts a panoramic agricultural landscape, and its porch and generous second-story bay respond to the sweeping prospect. Here we have literally a pastoral landscape, since this is a working sheep farm. Farms like this were carved out of the natural forests that once dominated New England; a piece of forest remains behind the house. It and the gracefully rolling hills of glaciated terrain have a timeless quality characteristic of agricultural landscapes in which human beings and the landscape coexist in a mutually sustaining bond without either one dominating the other.

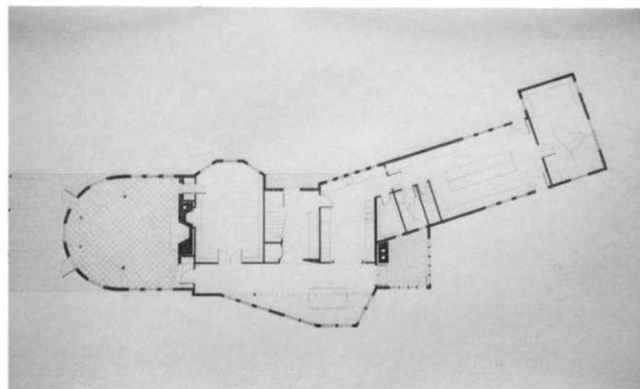


Architect's Statement

*Sheldon House,
Shelburne, Vermont*

This house stretches out long and narrow on a landscape of gently undulating meadowland near the shore of Lake Champlain. There is a slight twist at the midsection of its vast length where it alters course and, led by its curved front (the living room) and its hooded brow (the master bedroom), heads off, sliding between two bulges in the topography, directly towards the nearest view of the lake. If you are sitting in the music room in the "tail" end of the house, you can see up its entire bending length to the curve under the porch roof and the sense is that you are being pulled through the landscape at a considerable velocity.

The charcoal drawing shows this house as perhaps I most like to see it—hissing steam, sliding taut and somewhat streamlined, moving along under its own power through a dark smoldering landscape.





C

A Sheldon House
Charcoal drawing by Turner
Brooks

B Sheldon House, plan

C Sheldon House
Photographs by Turner Brooks

The Configured Landscape

Donlyn Lyndon

What might one expect from an “inhabited” landscape? Something lived in? Dwelt upon? Nurtured? Might not one expect to find a place in process? A recognizable extension of one’s self, an extension of society, and a place of the intersection of both? More precisely, would one not expect to find in the inhabited landscape the presence of people? Not just viewers, but makers. Not just strollers, but doers. Not just takers, but givers. Not just the obvious, but also the subtle.

The inhabited landscape would also body forth some view of the world we live in—a world of natural processes, a world of conceptual orders, a world of care for resources both inanimate and animate. This would be a rich, various landscape; it would speak of clarity, of secrets, of dalliance, of purposefulness, of whispering sounds, of varying smells.

What, by contrast, would we *not* expect to find there? Curiously, we seem to ask that landscape not be disordered. Even though we expect clashes in our cities, strife in the marketplace and cacophony in our headsets, we still preserve in our minds the dream of landscape as a place of harmony. This is doubtless because natural processes, left to their own devices, represent a comparative stability: they move slowly, while we change precipitously. The natural order of the universe is at a time scale that makes Stonehenge seem but a passing phenomenon. The order of nature has seemed, and does seem, the enduring matrix in which

our various human acts and meditations take place, the ground in which our hoe sticks.

Of what are these inhabited landscapes made? Earth, trees, ground cover, building materials, paving, walls and roofs, of course. But these are arranged in ways that encompass the person: canopies that cover; paths, platforms and terraces that provide for easy movement; frames that select views, bound domains and filter the relations between inside and outside; markers that invest particular spots with significance. These are the elements of the architect’s art, whether practiced in landscape or in buildings. In landscape, the materials change and fluctuate seasonally if not daily, while the materials of buildings are meant to endure and the architect of buildings is meant to keep things warm and dry (or cool and breezy, as the case may be). In the inhabited landscape, the materials of building and of growing are used interchangeably and the intersection of professions is productive.

Commitment to a place and its potential is the first step. Imagining ways of dwelling there is the second. The rest is skillful work. The twelve examples shown in this exhibit are only suggestions of the rich interweaving of people and circumstance that can result from conceiving the land and the structures set into it as one inhabited entity.

It is worth examining how the fundamental configurational elements (canopies, paths and

platforms, frames and markers) recur in diverse materials. The specific character of a place or course depends on just which materials—hard or soft, natural or synthetic, geometric or organic, resilient or immutable, durable or ephemeral—form these elements of our surround.

Canopies are the quintessential image of shelter: the umbrella of a shade tree, the gabled roof of a house, the tent in a meadow.

Tree canopies, grouped and trimmed together, are a recurrent image in the tended landscape. They welcome our presence there. They may be pruned into figurative elements as at the Bloedel Preserve, or more noticeably measured out in a regular order as at Tiffany Plaza. Set in the islands of Fountain Place in Dallas, they act perhaps as surrogates in a fantasy of an idyllic dwelling among cooling waters.

Canopied roof structures are most poignant when they are open, when they are evidently available to us as places of refuge and outlook. It is not coincidental that centered pavilions appear so frequently in these examples. They are focusing points, places where you may gather in the world around and feel yourself at the nub of it. At Cold Spring Harbor, the little gazebo invites you to direct your attention away from the project itself by making you the center of a larger scene.

The great suggestive power of open pavilions resides in our tendency to imagine ourselves inside them. The

porch at the front of the Sheldon House invites us to take a commanding position at the edge of the meadow, while the shadow-dappled miradores of the Fuller House offer fragile respite from the New Mexico sun. The far outlook these latter offer stands in sharp contrast to the encompassing shelter suggested by the sequestered pyramid at the center of the composition.

Gazebos and pavilions come in many shapes and sizes, all of them ultimately referring back to the upright human figure. They may provide a variety of shifting vantage points as in the Reed Garden, or they may serve to mark gathering spots in a larger landscape, as they do in Coulon Beach Park.

The ground is the first condition of an inhabited landscape. How it is modified and shaped for use, how buildings are joined to it, how platforms, floor and terraces extend its usable surface; these are all critical determinants of the character of a place.

By shaping and surfacing the land itself or by making floors that create large, perfectly simple areas for use and stairs that lead from one level to another, the architect is building choreography. How we may move in a place is derived from how the irregular, unpredictable natural land is transformed into flat usable spaces for the foot. How the land is perceived, in turn results from the delicacy with which those transformations are made. The

architect, builder of foundations, of necessity plays surgeon to the land.

At Thorncrown Chapel, the built, flat surfaces are literally cut into the land and made of stone, itself a form of earth. At Bloedel Preserve, surfaces to walk on are intricately interwoven with the growing surfaces of the land, which are themselves sometimes made flat as a floor. At Coulon Beach Park, the carefully considered edges of the water and extended lawns and terraces are made playful by a multiplicity of levels that offer users differing kinds of involvement with the place. At Fountain Place, cascading platforms tumble water through the park and unexpectedly abrupt pavement edges sharpen the artificiality of the areas created.

Often the control of our footing is very subtle—the light step up to a wood porch from the clipped grass in front of the Sheldon House; the changing surfaces of the floor in the Reed Garden, from stone to wood chips to soft plant materials deliberately underfoot. Often, too, the play of paths across the land and up through structures to varying points of outlook is one of the principal pleasures of the place. At Cold Spring Harbor, the invitation to stand on a flat terrace raised off the slope of the land provides just enough place of repose to induce renewed interest in the harbor and its surroundings.

Markers abound in the inhabited landscape. Objects, isolated specimen trees, floral groups, towers: things to stand next to, things that

are distinct, things that have been invested with special imaginative care and which invite us to store meanings in their midst.

In the Reed Garden, various gazebos mark out and differentiate positions within the garden. By their differing silhouettes creating added distinction, they are further impressed upon our memory by details—a curious window, an oversized weather vane. Most poignantly, at one unforgettable point, a bronze figure nearly our size interrupts the path looking intently into our eyes.

Surprising size turns most anything into a marker. The great bollards at the ARCO complex that stand above our heads in a ring turn a serviceable dropoff turnaround into a stunning figure of entry, and a group of mature maples, isolated from any others and from subsidiary undergrowth, stand up as markers in a court between anonymous buildings. In contrast, the diminutive, stand-alone pavilion of Cold Spring Harbor is more a companion that invites us to use the terrace rather than to actually enter the building.

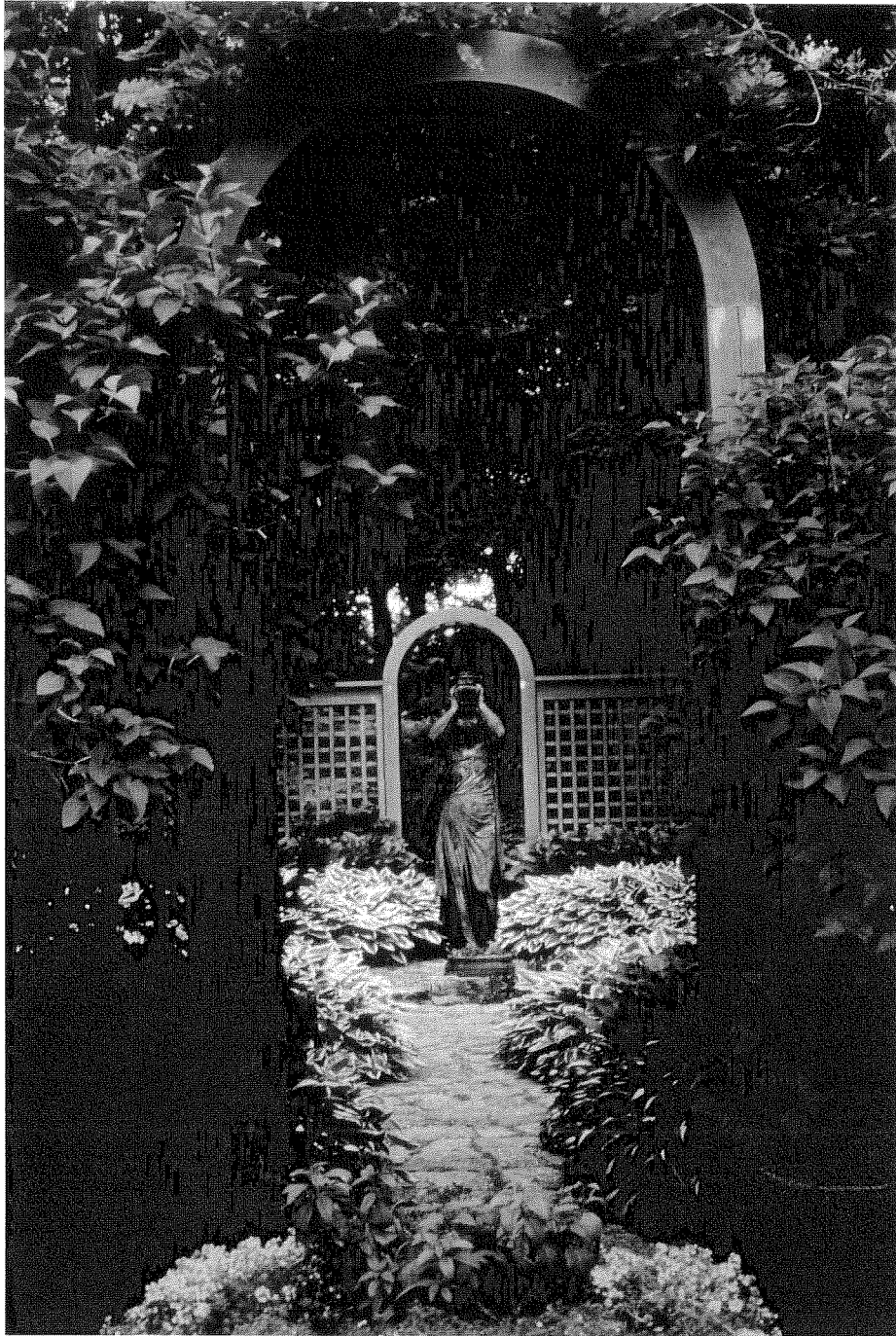
Configurations that stir us into unintended reverie also make a particular mark in the landscape. The lionheads and scrolls of the Tiffany Plaza fountains almost merge, from a distance, into still more mysterious, unexplainable masks; the dormers at the thin end of the Sheldon House tease us into seeing a mask in front of the trees (or, as Turner Brooks would have it, a locomotive surging into the meadow). At Bloedel Preserve, the

stark, startling rectangularity of a still pool set in grass embeds the place forever in our minds.

At Ceres Farm, the walled frame of an outdoor room, with its oversized door opening to the adjoining meadow, marks the transition between objects specially selected or configured for temporary display and the more constant, less willful landscape of the surrounding farm. Referral across the frame from a place of one sort to a place of another is intense and dramatic here, but it is in less insistent ways the very stuff of walled enclosures.

Such framed transitions are evident in each of the examples—as rows of trees framing paths, or bordering meadows; as great building enclosures sheltering a special view of the world; as fragile, intricate transitions such as those of the Thorncrown Chapel that is, for all its merger with the forest, a place meant to be apart, an appointed place of meditation.

The inhabited landscape is, by definition, a landscape turned to human purpose.



Reed Garden
Eisenman Robertson Architects

Ceres Farm

Jury Comments

The contemporary private garden is most often conceived primarily as a realm of repose and peace, a haven from the constraints and pressures of the world of work. It is frequently an autobiographical statement of reveries and hopes—a space subject to constant tinkering and major modification emblematic of the maturation and ever-changing interests of its owner. For instance, Garrett Eckbo's private garden in the Berkeley Hills is a series of intricate patio spaces interlocked with the rooms of his house, which has dramatic views of San Francisco Bay. Eckbo's studio looks down on the patio garden, which is subject to constant rearrangement as he adds sculpture and designs with new plant material.

The perennial materials of the garden have been stone, water and plants. Some contemporary garden designers are experimenting with new industrial materials and lighting technology to explore the relationship between past design traditions and contemporary expression in a manner reminiscent of the work of Gabriel Guvrekian and Christopher Tunnard earlier in this century. Yet most of them use nontraditional materials for traditional ends—to create serene spaces for quiet, con-



A

templation, and renewal. Tori Thomas's Glass and Gravel Garden is an attempt to integrate "formal elements of classical Italian and French gardens into the twentieth-century garden vocabulary." This is done in part through the use of new materials.

Tori Thomas's courtyard is a personal exercise in the transformation of a traditional farm place into the locus for ephemeral urbanized insight. The clear boundaries of the space and

the framed view of the surrounding meadow and trees set up tense referrals between the "just now," the "has been" and the (with luck) "will be."

A Ceres Farm

B Ceres Farm
"Agricola"

Architect's Statement

The Glass and Gravel Garden

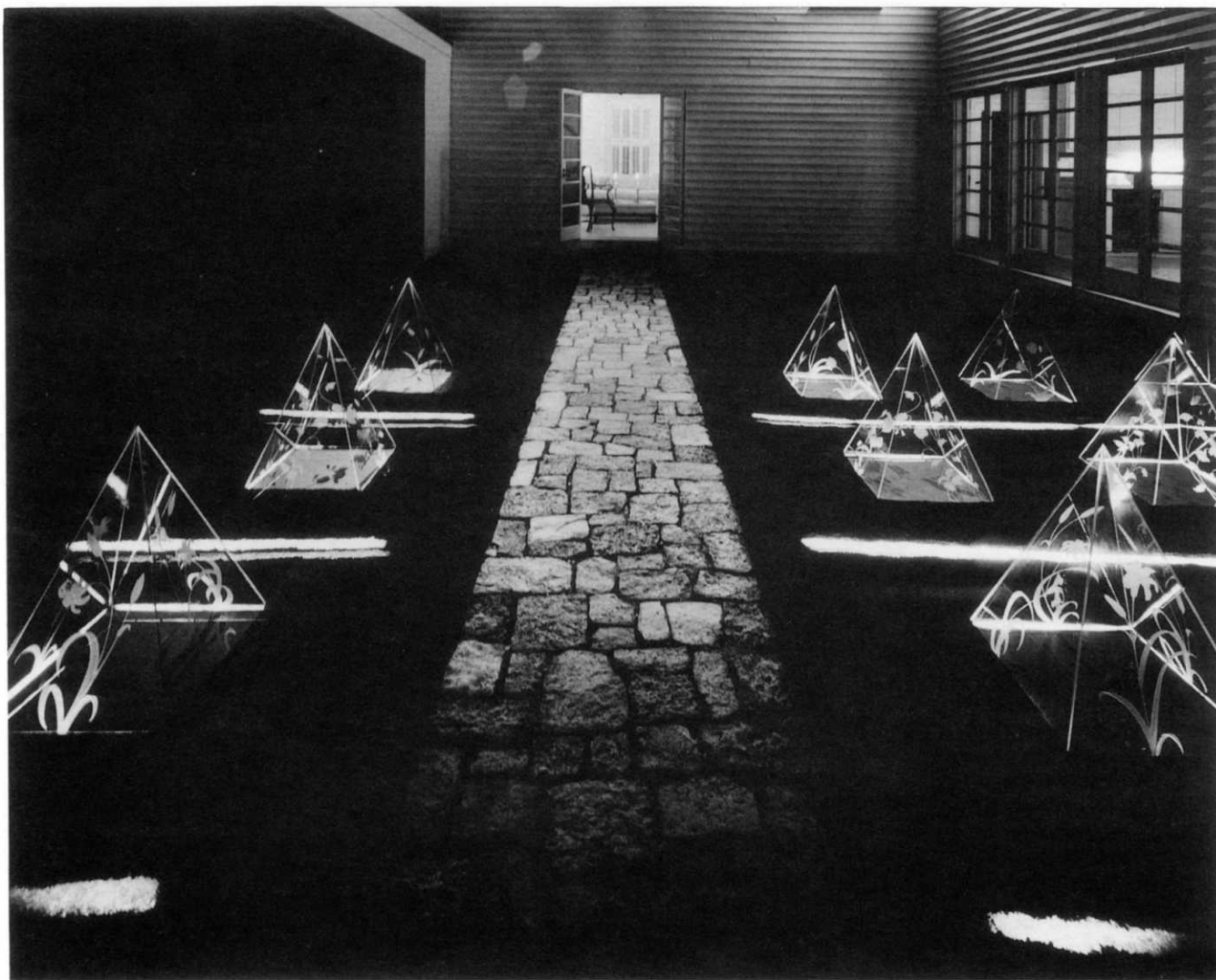
The Glass and Gravel Garden is the second in a series of three walled garden themes examining the history and the future for landscape design. Located in the Virginia countryside, the garden is about an hour drive from Washington, D.C. It derives from a consideration of the Post-Modern garden. Springing from a deep interest in the historical precedents from which modern landscape architecture springs, my interest lies in integrating formal elements of classical Italian and French gardens into the twentieth-century garden vocabulary.

For this project, I have designed a walled courtyard 40 feet long by 30 feet wide. The walls are 10 feet high with sliding panels that allow for a diversity of views. The garden can be entirely open to the surrounding landscape or entirely walled off from it, thus acting as an atrium or peristyle. Like shoji screens, an infinite variety of views between the two extremes can be arranged.

The enclosed garden fits into the L of a nineteenth-century frame millhouse creating an additional room for living. The walled garden is raised 4½ feet above the surrounding natural grade



B



C

C Glass and gravel

Photographs by Christopher
Casler, copyright Christopher
Casler, 1986

enhancing the perspective of the views out. The garden is reached by slate steps from the outside and opens directly off both the living room and the kitchen from the inside.

A path of hand hewn limestone, outcroppings of which are evident across the meadow, provides a private approach to the house.

The design of the Glass and Gravel Garden is based primarily on the concept of a simple flower garden, wherein geometric rows of different flowers are linked by an axial path. The same elements combine in this garden—transformed by contemporary materials. In addition, the analog is expanded by the shape of the pyramids and their construction from glass.

The pyramidal shape derives from the boxwood topiaries used by the master garden designer Le Nôtre at Versailles and at Vaux-le-Vicomte. The glass refers to the glass cloches or bells that, historically, were placed over fragile or tender plants in order to provide additional shelter from extremes of temperature.

In this garden, I have included three rows of flowers: the tulip, the poppy and the lily. As in the natural garden, each flower is shown in four stages of development from the bud to the faded and decomposing bloom. In this case, however, the flowers are etched on the glass pyramids. Fallow rows awaiting new growth lie between the mature rows. Emphasizing the geometry, these rows are made of stark white gravel.

At night, the garden assumes the color usually evident in the natural garden in the day. Working with Gordon Anson, Lighting Designer for the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., I have designed a system of colored fluorescent tubes to light both the pyramids and the furrows.

This space cut from a meadow, is a consideration of the question, "What comprises a garden?" While employing three rows of flowers, a garden path, an antique garden gate and tilled furrows, there is no plant material. Yet it serves to create tranquility—that place apart—that is the heart and magic of a garden.

Agricola

Agricola is the third in a series of gardens at Ceres Farm, wherein classical garden motifs are redefined in contemporary landscape vocabulary.

Agricola expands on the most primitive form of landscape design: the simple plowed field.

I have designed three basic variations upon this theme. In the first variation, stark earthen furrows are enclosed in a formal courtyard addressing the earliest relationship of agriculture to the home, the farmhouse and the field. Snow falls, and the furrow assumes another character entirely.

The second variation incorporates irrigation. The sculptural nature of the linear water element is the most contemporary manifestation of the irrigation theme. The agricultural analog is further expanded by showing the same garden planted first with hydroponic lettuce and then with stainless steel rods.

In the third variation, the water element is expanded to form abstract canals—a

modern twentieth-century interpretation of these two primitive elements.

At night, lasers are introduced as another level of sculptural landscape design. Introducing sophisticated lighting techniques to a field that continues to rely on lamps resembling mushrooms is an area of great interest to me. As in earlier projects, the lighting for *Agricola* was done in collaboration with Gordon Anson, Lighting Director for the National Gallery of Art.

Agricola comprises the final exploration of garden themes at Ceres Farm. Through the design of the courtyard, whose walls move to reveal or exclude the landscape beyond, I am looking at the relationship of landscape design as it links architecture with the natural environment. These gardens examine the antecedents of landscape architecture and seek to bring the field into a stronger alignment with modern architecture.

The Lay of the Land

Gerald Allen

Now that we are well over a decade into Post-Modern architecture, it is easy to see what a disappointment much of it has turned out to be. What was promised to be brave and new has often, in built fact, turned out thin, repetitious, and silly. For this reason, a strongly negative public reaction must soon follow, and indeed it has already begun.

But all is not lost. The adventures of the last decade have at least shown us—or, more accurately, they have at least discretely hinted at—three useful lessons:

First, we have begun to learn to look backwards, over our shoulders as it were, to our architectural past. At best, we have learned to do this not as plunderers, nor as zealots of some particular style, but as stewards of the past's riches, available once more for use in our own time.

Second, we have begun to look sideways—that is, to our colleagues, the decorative artists and ornamentalists whom we (and also our designs) had previously been used to holding at arm's length.

Last, we have begun to look outwards to the whole environment in a different way than before. We have, that is, started to learn from landscape.

The subject of landscape has thus become the rage in almost every architectural quarter, having the kind of status in the mid-1980s that historicism, structural expressionism, or vernacularism possessed in earlier epochs in the evolution of design trends.

What is landscape? Our modern word "landscape" comes from the late Middle English words *land*, which means "land," and *skip*, which I believe in this context means "shape." So landscape can mean "land-shape," or "the shape of the land." I actually slightly prefer "the *lay* of the land," which has the ability to imply—appropriately, I think—a human situation as well as a topographic configuration.

Landscape, as it is currently discussed in architectural circles, seems actually to be two basically different things. The first is, of course, the more traditional design discipline as practiced by architects and landscape architects. The second is a mainly descriptive and analytical discipline.

This latter discipline is sometimes called "cultural landscape" or "human geography," the study of the earth as modified by people. Human geography is thus a very inclusive subject, which, of course, accounts for a large part of its appeal. It is the study of people through the study of the shapes they have made across the face of the world, and thus it potentially coalesces with human history itself, since it is hard to think of many significant human acts that, sooner or later, did not result in some physical modification to the earth. In practice, of course, human geographers focus primarily on the more obvious modifications like fields, roads, dams, bridges, towns and, of course, buildings.

However involved studies of human geography may become, they are in

fact based on a single, quite simple axiom: The physical configuration of the man-made world—any part of it, not just high-style architecture or consciously designed gardens—can be observed in the same way that a chronicle of political or social events can be read, and the result will be found to have human meaning.

The first kind of landscape that I mentioned—landscape design—is of intense interest to many architects today. They feel it is a subject of vital importance, avidly study its history and assert somewhat tactlessly that its essence is something with which the actual profession of landscape architecture has somehow lost touch.

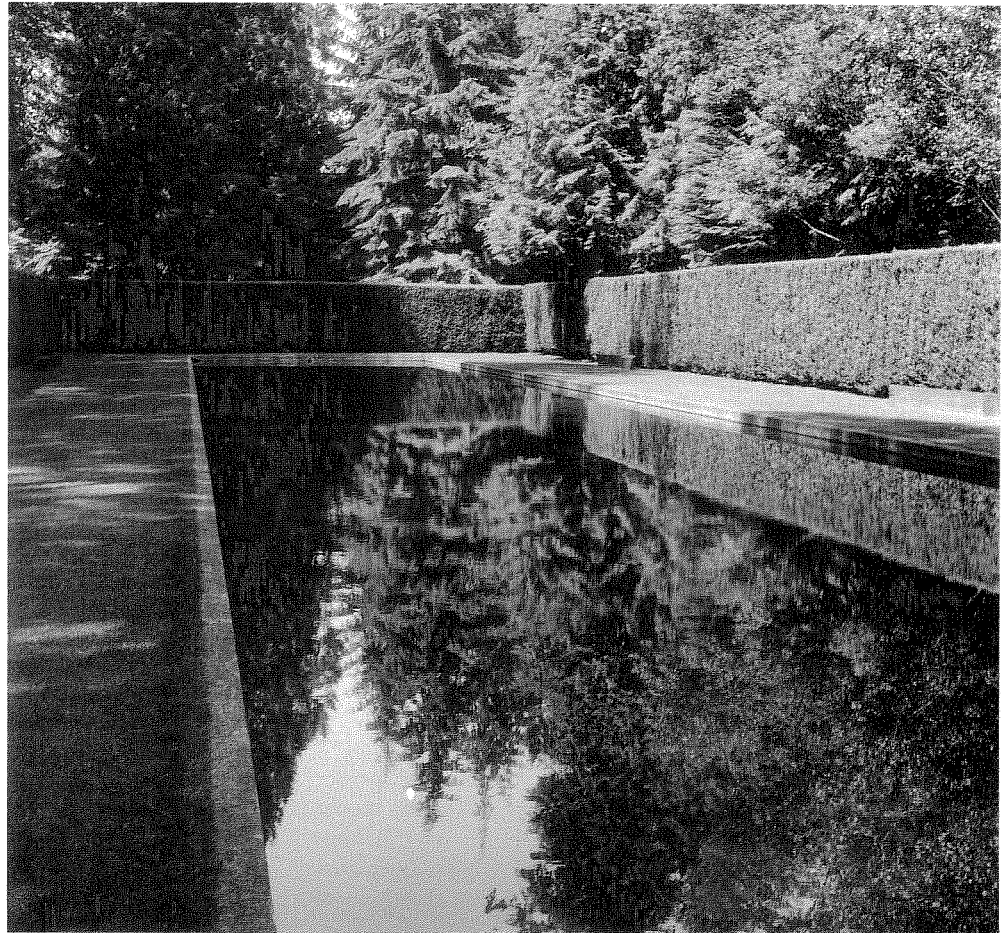
Architects, like everyone else, need every so often to feel that they have discovered something new. The recent discovery of landscape design is in many ways not so much a discovery as it is a somewhat new way of reformulating an old and enduring concern.

This concern, quite simply, is for a way of understanding and then making the connection between individual buildings and the rest of the world. The geographer Peirce (sic) Lewis has suggested that architects could better improve the world by paying closer attention to two things: centers and edges. When he says this, he seems to be implying that architects have on the whole done somewhat better at the former than at the latter, and I suspect few would disagree. Learning from landscape design is meant to be a way of redressing this imbalance.

Bloedel Reserve

Jury Comments

The Garden of Planes juxtaposes two sharp-edged gravel pyramids with a series of sculpted mounds, a geometry that symbolizes a wide range of human attitudes to nature. The contrast may be perceived as a Buddhist statement of unenlightened humanity's alienation from nature. The next major space, the "Anteroom," is essentially a preserved bog. Here underbrush was cleared and mosses and ferns planted, but massive stumps remain, ghosts of trees that would be 600 to 700 years old. Amid the dim light and odor of decay, Haag says, "you can almost get raptures of the deep." In the Reflection Garden, Haag reverts to a serene orthogonal geometry, with a rectilinear reflecting pool of ground water 200 feet long. The pool is framed by closely mowed turf, that in turn is bounded by crisply planar 10-foot-high yew hedges. The calm may bespeak *nirvana*, the peace that comes from snuffing out attachment to the transient world. The fourth and final room, a "natural" bird sanctuary, paradoxically is primarily a work of Haag's artifice. Here he created a series of ponds as habitats for waterfowl and migratory birds, celebrating the cycle of nature and humanity's ability to create life-sustaining environments. In Buddhist terms, the duality of man and nature is overcome here through life lived from the depths of enlightenment.



A

Architect's Statement

The purpose of the Reserve is that it be a place where people become aware of and learn from their emotional and aesthetic experience with nature; that it be an expression of man's several, varying relationships with nature. Mr. Haag won a limited competition and was selected as the prime consultant. Between 1979 and 1984 he worked extensively at the Reserve, a

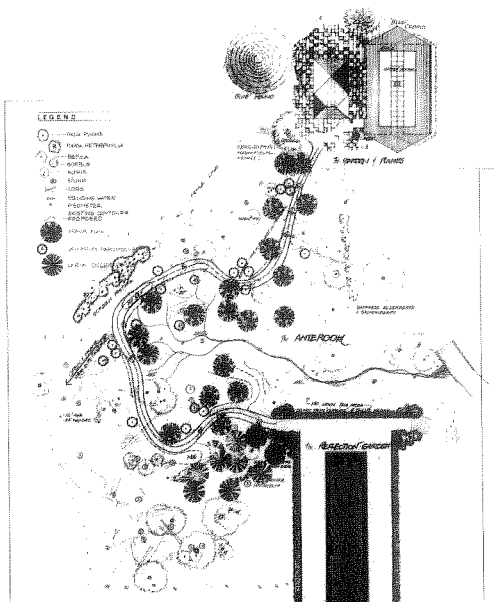
140-acre site, planning site improvements, developing a policy on circulation, locating trails and reconstructing roads. During this time he also conceived and designed four gardens. This sequence of gardens, Garden of Planes/Anteroom/Reflection Garden/Bird Sanctuary, received the American Society of Landscape Architects' President's Award for Design Excellence in 1986.

A Bloedel Reserve, Reflection Garden

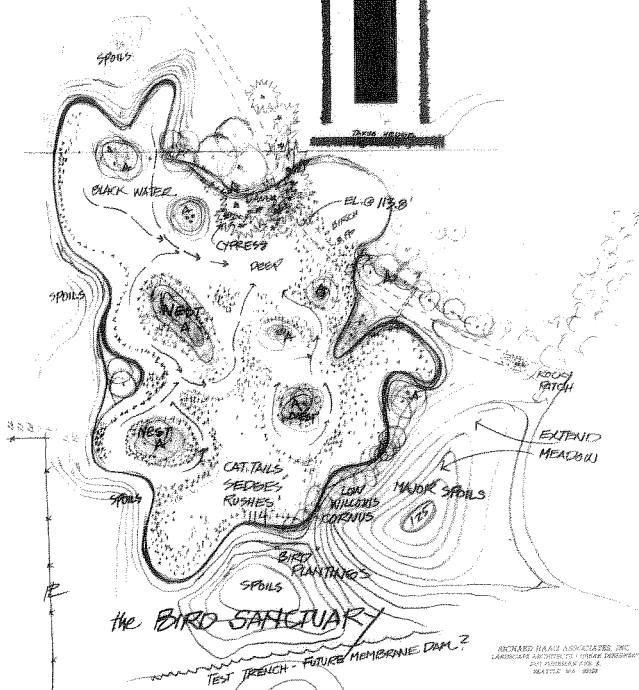
B Bloedel Reserve, site plan

C Bloedel Reserve, Bird Sanctuary

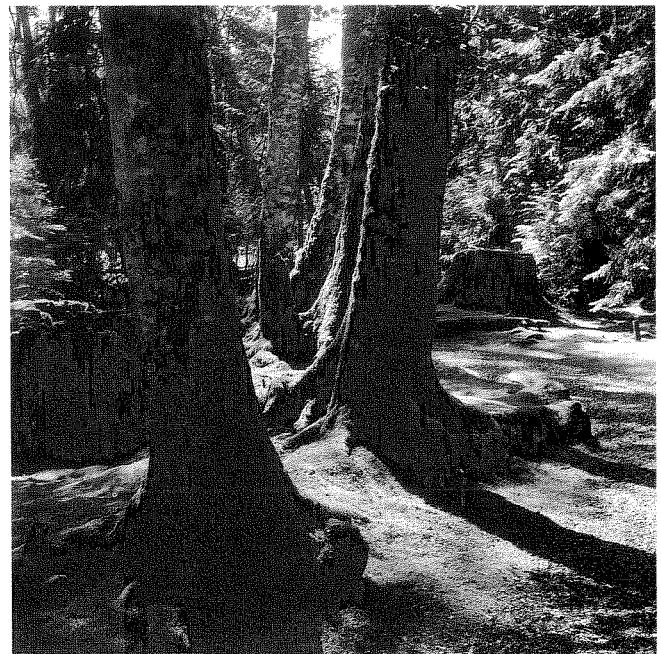
D Bloedel Reserve, Anteroom
Photographs by Richard Haag



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Thorncrown Chapel

Jury Comments

Thorncrown Chapel is a building that is also an astonishing formalization of the forest setting into which it is placed. Great care was taken to preserve its wooded site. A cage of small wood and glass pieces carried through the woods stands among the trees. Its wood pieces have been hand-rubbed with grayish stain to blend with the bark of the surrounding trees. The roof beams form a canopy reminiscent of the trees, reminding us of Ruskin's observation that being in a Gothic church is like being in a verdant forest.

Yet the precision and intricacy of its geometric form and its interior finishings set the building apart as well. The cool blue of the bench cushions reinforces the serenity and peace appropriate for a place of worship and meditation.

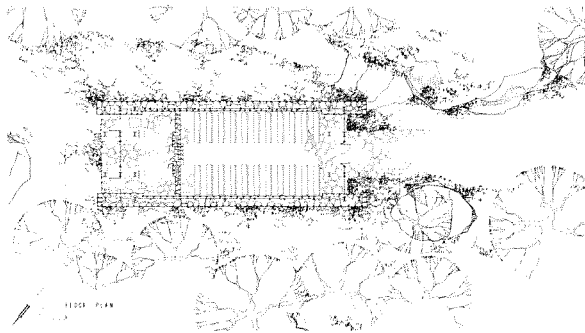


A

A Thorncrown Chapel
© Hursley & Lark

B Thorncrown Chapel, interior
© Hursley & Lark/
Christopher Lark, photographer

C Thorncrown Chapel, floor plan



C

Architect's Statement

Thorncrowne Chapel, set on an eight-acre wooded hillside site near Eureka Springs, Arkansas, is a nondenominational Christian chapel for the wayfarer.

In walking the site there was an early realization that heavy earth-moving equipment or massive construction materials could not be used without destroying the wooded setting; and that the whole design must hinge on not using anything too big for two men to carry along a narrow hillside pathway. This limitation was the key to the structural concept. It became a building of many small pieces—pine two-by-fours and two-by-sixes linked together into modular, angular structural elements, that formed a larger cage-like structure infilled with clear glass.

In its structural expression, it is a kind of reversal of Gothic cathedral architecture, which has repeated external flying buttresses pushing the structure upward and inward. Thorncrowne Chapel has this repetition of structural elements, but stability is achieved by wooden tensile members pulling from within. This stabilizing web of braces, under a ridge skylight, receives a constantly changing play of light and pattern—a natural ornamentation of the structure and the space.



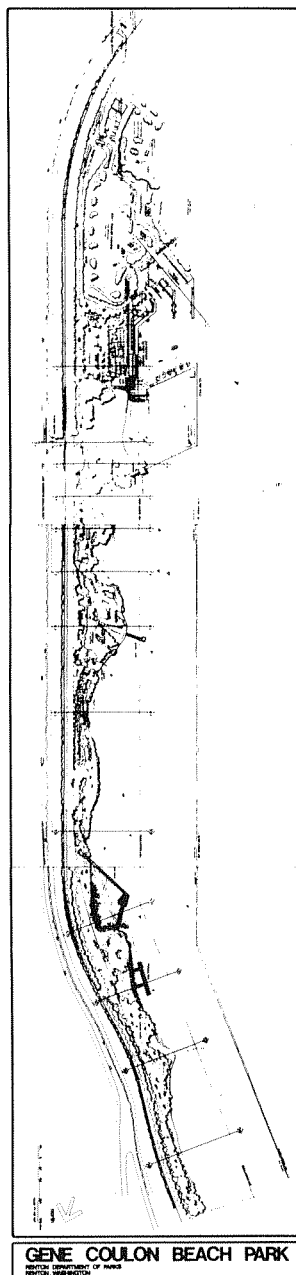
B

Gene Coulon Beach Park

Jury Comments

Many landscapes are seen primarily as places for meditation and only secondarily as fields of action. Coulon Beach is a welcome exception to this pattern. Its multiple levels, interweaving paths and differently constructed edges are all transformations of the landscape that are intended to accommodate diverse people and age groups as they swim, boat, walk, romp, wait and watch. Its forms merge the tin echoes from industrial sheds of the working world with exuberantly unrefined seaside pavilions.

The park exemplifies strategies of contrast and merger. Like many urban parks throughout the country, it is constructed on industrial land that has become obsolete and is now reclaimed to add coherence and amenity to the community. The program for the park spaces was influenced by consultation with the community and special user groups. It is a year-round park, consisting of a carefully composed series of formal and informal landscape areas linked by prominent landscape elements, such as open meadows, contoured land forms and groves and avenues of trees.



A



B

Architect's Statement

The purpose of the overall project, completed in 1982, was to develop a 57-acre city park on over one mile of Lake Washington shoreline. The site is significant historically because its past industrial uses reflect the region's development from the late 1800s through to the 1950s, when the long, narrow property was declared surplus by the railroad.

Originally the site of a horsedrawn coal barge loading dock for the nearby mines, the waterfront property had been used for log dumping, shipping, a

sawmill, wartime ship fitting and surplus ship storage. The subsequent revitalization of this industrial shoreline was the result of fifteen years of visionary planning and effort to acquire the property and obtain voters' support for a \$7.8 million bond issue for its adaptive reuse as a public park.

The design of the structures took into consideration the historic nature of the site, and the building style recalls the traditional forms of turn-of-the-century waterfront architecture. The buildings are placed in a carefully composed series of formal and informal landscape areas linked by strong features



C

such as contoured landforms, open meadows, and groves and avenues of trees.

The architect and owner developed the building program together, assisted by extensive involvement by both the community-at-large and various special user groups. One of the primary goals was to create an

activity space for informal use by individuals and families that would also accommodate large groups and civic events. By combining the multipurpose picnic and group shelter with the restaurant and boating structure, the designers have provided this flexibility, and also created a park that can be used year-round.

A Gene Coulon Beach Park,
site plan

B Gene Coulon Beach Park
Photograph by Jones & Jones

C Gene Coulon Beach Park
Photograph by Randy L. Shelton

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Waste Water Treatment Plant

Jury Comments

The Cold Spring Harbor Waste Water Treatment Plant makes a mechanical necessity an environmental asset. It is also an example of the strategy of merger in a cultural landscape.

The problem was to accommodate a waste treatment facility for a biological laboratory. The site also possessed one of the best views of Long Island's Cold Spring Harbor, and therefore the site itself was quite visible from the harbor and demanded sensitive treatment. The solution was to build a park over the treatment facility. The spaces of the park are of an intimate scale in keeping with the residential context. The mini-park, outlook terrace and gazebo yield images of the tended landscape that merge with the traditional character of the place. A harmonious, limited palette of plant materials and a turf ground plan of simple geometry reinforce the sense of tranquility.



A

Architect's Statement

As Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory had expanded since the 1890s, its need for sewage treatment expanded as well. The various waste products generated at a biological laboratory are complex and need special treatment before they can be returned to the ground water system. In 1973 and 1974 the sand-filter system that had been used by the laboratory in the past was determined to be inadequate. Because of the location of the sand-filter plant, all pipes from the various laboratory buildings ran to one location on the site. This location happened to be one of the most beautiful places on the site with the best view overlooking lovely Cold Spring Harbor. The site also happened to be directly

between the administration building and Cold Spring Harbor. Engineers who were engaged to design and construct the waste treatment plant had proposed a fairly large building to be placed on the site to house the waste treatment equipment. Our job was to incorporate this sophisticated equipment into some kind of a structure that would have the least impact on the visual surroundings of the laboratory. The solution was to bury the building as deeply into the hillside as possible, staying above the high water line, and to make the building a visual asset rather than a liability.

The building is constructed of reinforced concrete with the top being concrete plank on which has been placed a

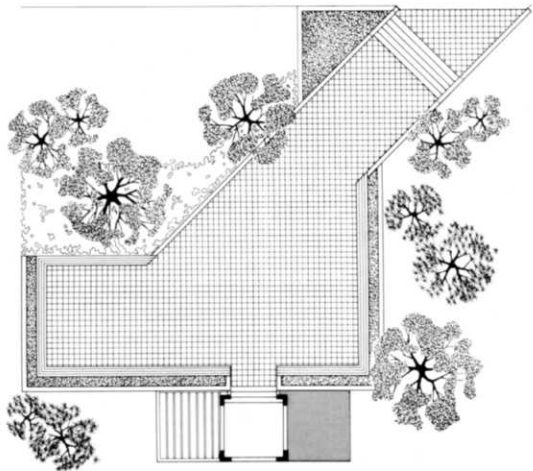
A Cold Spring Harbor Waste Water Treatment Plant
Photograph by Centerbrook

B Cold Spring Harbor Waste Water Treatment Plant
Photograph by Norman McGrath

C Cold Spring Harbor Waste Water Treatment Plant, site plan

D Cold Spring Harbor Waste Water Treatment Plant, terrace level plan

brick terrace. The existing hillside was replaced around and on top of the building and extensive planting and landscaping has been done. On the eastern side of the building facing the harbor has been located a wood shingled gazebo topped by a copper finial made by the architects. The finial was made to represent an adenovirus molecule as a documentation and celebration of the type of molecule currently being studied at the laboratory. It is our hope that when visitors come to Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory they will be impressed by the beauty of the landscaping and the site and the gazebo and be completely unaware that a sewage treatment plant exists beneath it.



TERRACE LEVEL PLAN



C



SITE PLAN

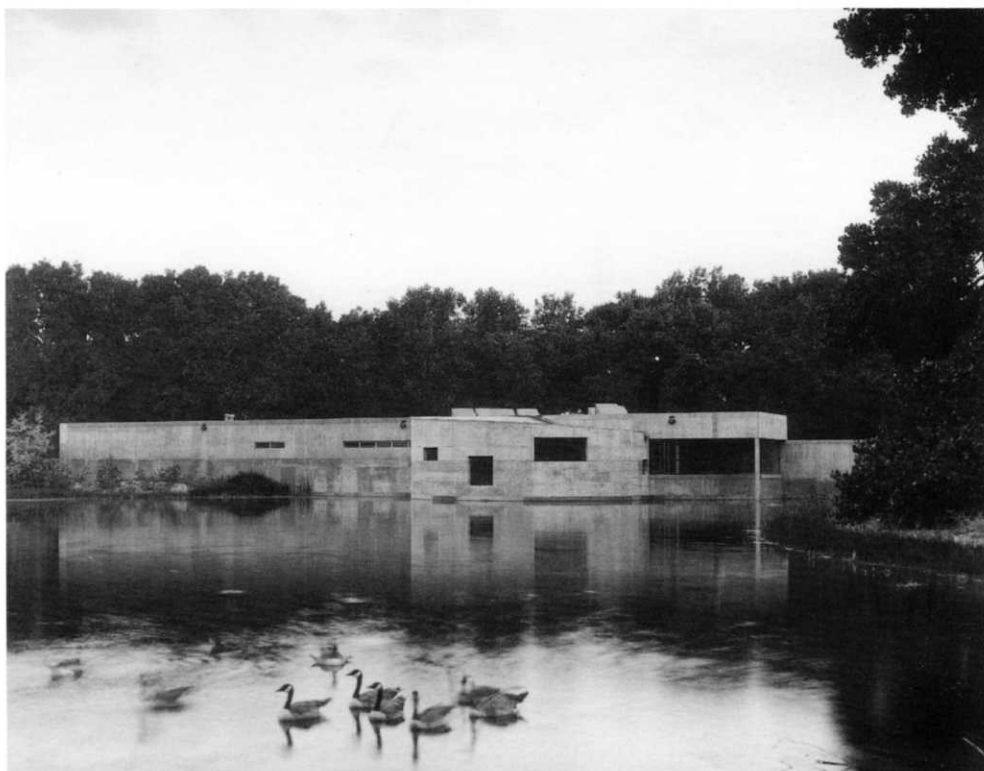


D

Rio Grande Nature Center

Jury Comments

The bare concrete building forms of the Rio Grande Nature Center are set into a natural preserve in ways that are meant to limit their impact on the surroundings and contain the disruptive bustle of observation and instruction. The center has been carefully sited on one of the larger ponds and engages the water's edge, yet its occupants do not become part of the scene. The building boldly contrasts with the site, yet it also enfronts it. Plan and fenestration are structured to provide a sequestered series of views of the wetlands landscape.



A

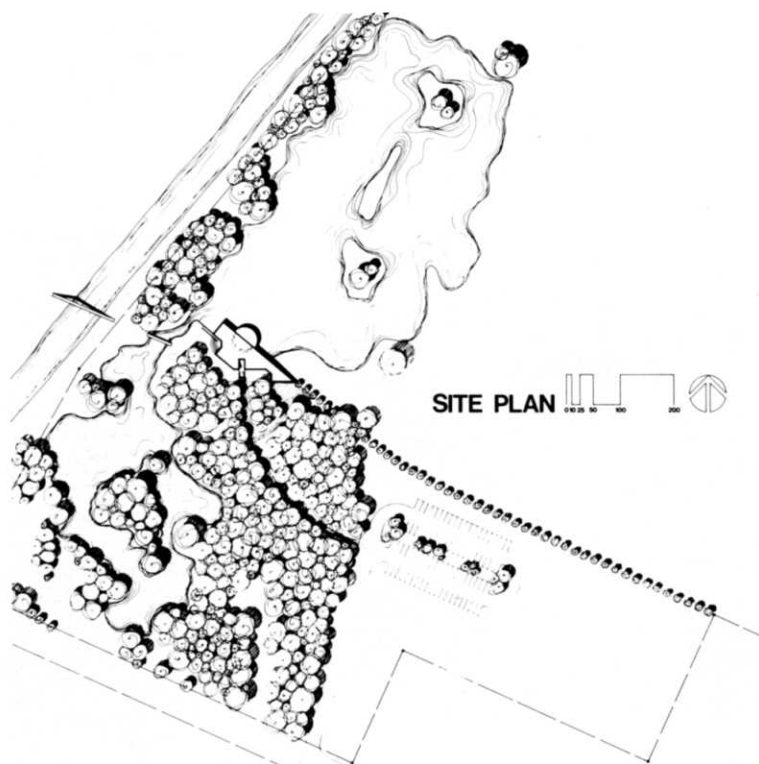
Architect's Statement

The Rio Grande Nature Center site is a symbol of a profoundly important, but rapidly diminishing, New Mexico ecosystem. Despoiled sections of the Rio Grande attest to the fact that in many ways we have turned our backs on this prime resource. The open fields are a mere vestige of a once beautiful pastoral setting stretching the length of the city. Water is an all pervasive resource that, traditionally, has shaped life in the Rio Grande valley. The meandering canals, with

their engineering roots in Andalusia, create complex and interesting paths for people and irrigation. The natural wetlands ecosystem harbors a diverse set of processes that contrast magnificently with the upland semi-arid mesas. The state of New Mexico land acquisition contained in the site represents a large scale potential for holding on to these connections with the river and its symbiotic agriculture. Since the 170-acre site is on the Rio Grande flyway for migratory wildfowl, it is a natural preserve location. Expansions

of native wetlands have been constructed with contiguous forage crop areas for birds. The forage areas will be sharecropped by local farmers, leaving a predetermined percentage of the crop for the birds with the remainder to the farmer as a cash crop, thus contributing to the local economy.

The Nature Center Building acts as a "blind" affording visitors panoramic views over these wildfowl areas without intrusion. Children's groups will be major users of the facility, so the building has a playful, yet educational



B

emphasis. Elements drawn from a “river-bottom vernacular” are used such as an 8-foot diameter corrugated drainage culvert used as a tunnel entry to the building. The perimeter structure is bunker-like using rough formed concrete, and on the opposite side the wetlands pond laps against the structure. Views of the preserve are not revealed until the visitor emerges from the culvert entry tunnel. Then, symbolically, a ramp descends through view layers: the vast forage areas, the close range marshland views, a reverse periscope

underwater view of aquatic systems and finally, at the bottom of the ramp one can operate an old-fashioned hand-pump. At each stage along the descending ramp, interpretive displays augment the actual views. Vertical 8-foot-high water-filled plastic tubes circle the sunken, ramped exhibit/view area. Light shimmers through these tubes from skylights to create an underwater effect. On exiting, the flow is past an A/V area, through a small orientation amphitheater and then on to the interpretive trails of the refuge.

Local farmers are retained to grow feed crops for migratory birds, thereby reinforcing local agricultural economy. Schoolchildren are attracted to the facility to engage in hands-on experiences in displays, classroom experiments and nature trails.

A Rio Grande Nature Center
Photograph by Tim Hursely

B Rio Grande Nature Center,
site plan

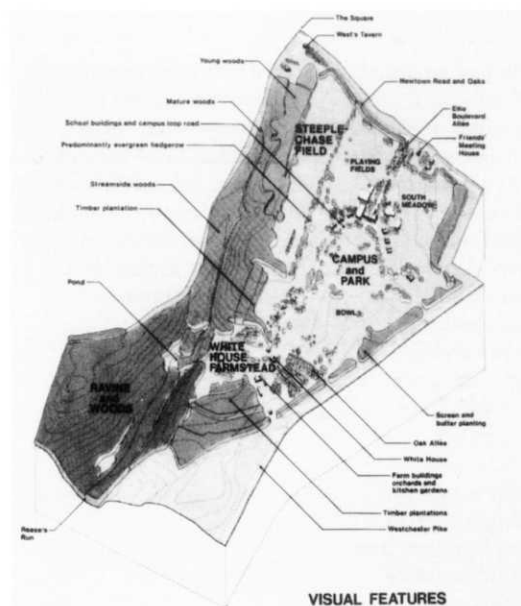
ARCO Chemical Company Research and Engineering Center, "The Meadows"

Jury Comments

The site design succeeds in placing a high-technology, semi-industrial building complex into a bucolic landscape by consolidating cars and buildings into one section of the site. The ingenuity and care of previous generations of gardeners have been preserved. They created the picturesque, rolling landscape and the hedgerow that now divides the workaday part of the site from the rest. A new, finely detailed stone entrance plaza terminates the prominent hedgerow and strongly marks the entry to the complex.



A



B

Architect's Statement

The ARCO Chemical and Polymer Company sponsored a competition for the design of a large research and development center on a 312-acre suburban site, formerly used by a boarding school. The site contained an abandoned farmstead with relic orchards, a defunct school with English Park landscape, playing fields, Georgian buildings, an arboretum and overgrown steeplechase, an evergreen hedgerow and a forested ravine. The task was to devise a way to locate the buildings while preserving the ambiance of the site and surrounding residential community. We prepared a detailed site assessment that examined the existing natural processes and major elements. The site concept evolved from this thorough assessment and led to the scheme subsequently built.

Major building masses and parking lots are located in the steeplechase, while the evergreen hedgerow separates and screens laboratories, pilot plant and parking lots for the smaller-scale Georgian school buildings, which together form the Village Green Commons. The loop road provides two major employee and service entrances. Visitors use the old school drive, which skirts the edge of the English Park—the central focus of the site—and passes by the gracious older

school buildings. The new office wing overlooks the park and extends the crescent of the older buildings.



C

A ARCO Chemical Company Research and Engineering Center, "The Meadows"

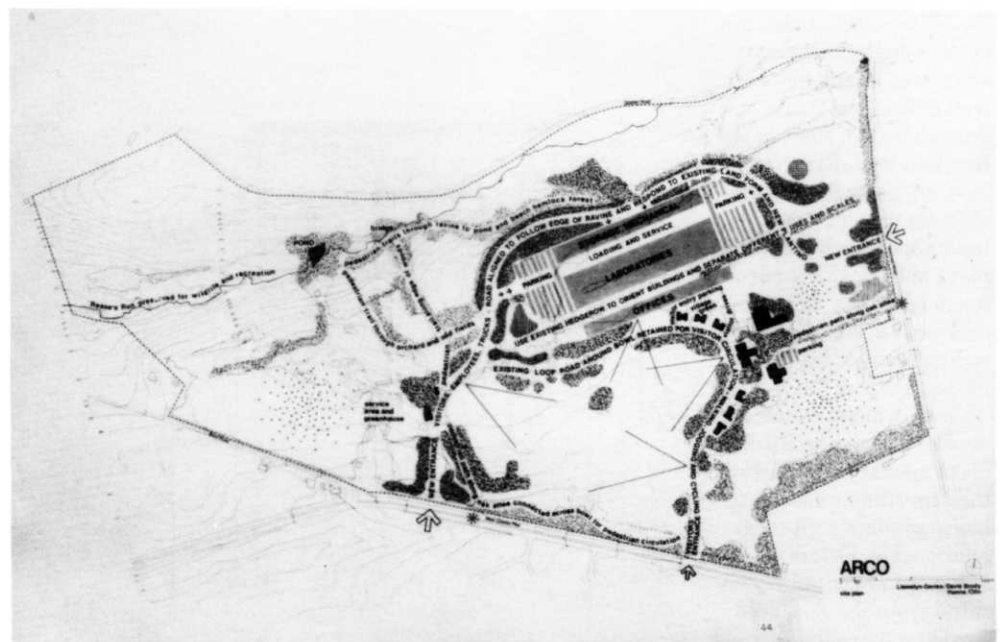
© James D'Addio, photographer

B ARCO Chemical Company Research and Engineering Center, existing visual features

C ARCO Chemical Company Research and Engineering Center

© James D'Addio, photographer

D ARCO Chemical Company Research and Engineering Center, site plan



D

Allied Bank Tower at Fountain Place

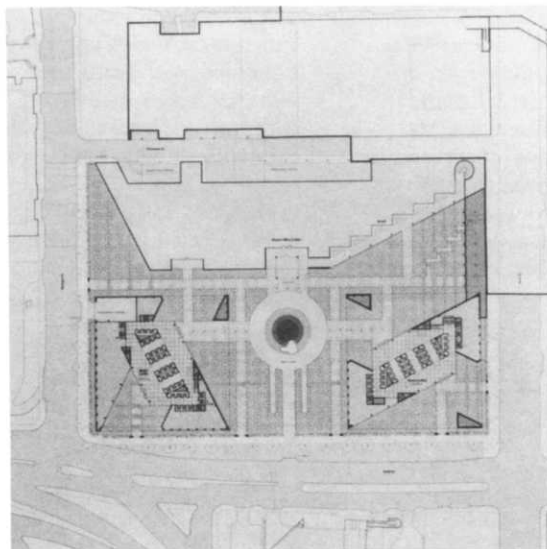
Jury Comments

The development of American cities is characterized at present by a sharp decline in the construction of publicly funded outdoor spaces. The task of creating vibrant, elegant, and civil streets, parks and plazas has fallen, to a large extent, to the private sector.

Allied Bank Tower at Fountain Place in Dallas thrusts a world of Magritte strangeness into the center of Dallas, commenting in a sophisticated way on the total disruption of the natural order in that place and creating a fantasy of waterfalls, isolated trees and bubbling geysers that is as hard to locate in the world of commonplace reality as are the shimmering mirrors of the building from which it withdraws our attention. Its world of disconnected make-believe is perhaps more bravely reflective of our financial institutions, and the public life they afford us, than most of us can bear realizing.



A



B

A Fountain Place
Photograph by Wes Thompson

B Fountain Place, site plan

C Fountain Place
Photograph by Wes Thompson



C

Architect's Statement

The Allied plaza combines elements of a pond and a European public garden. Seventy percent of its surface is water, so that from above, the office tower appears to be floating. Some areas are dark and tranquil, like the surface of a swamp, while others froth and roar with bubblers and cascading waterfalls, like miniature upland landscapes. A dramatic computerized fountain sits in the center of the plaza, surrounded by

hundreds of bald cypress trees in soldierly rows and interlaced with a grid of walkways. It is a rigorous classical design, a downtown version of a Le Nôtre landscape, in which building and site come together as one. The plaza lures us in with a glimpse of water and trees, only to reveal something beyond, and then something beyond that. Our imagination does not stop at the edge of the site; the cypress trees, planted 15 feet on center, could go on

forever, like the horse chestnut trees in the Tuileries. And as we walk among the trees and beneath the legs of the building—the Eiffel Tower again—interior and exterior spaces merge. The outdoor plaza is the real lobby of the building.

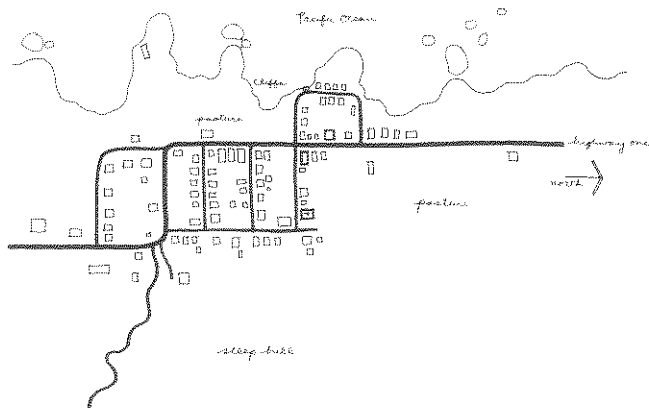
Allied currently stands midway between a fledgling arts district and a revitalized warren of warehouses and commercial buildings known as the West End Historic District. Unrelated formally

to either, it nevertheless acknowledges its urban responsibilities through its grand plaza, which may be the key to unifying this entire area as a kind of garden office district, unlike anything else in the city.

In the meantime, Allied balances skyline bravura with urban sensitivity. If it is unapologetically open to the future, it also provides an illustration of how to live civilly in the present.

The Landscape Occupies Us: A Portrait of a Small Town

Randolph Hester, Jr.



During 1986 I lived in Westport, California, a coastal village of ninety-two people, fifteen miles and thirty minutes north of Fort Bragg. The village is tiny. There are about fifty houses. The Eagletons run the single general store. It is the center of community life where, in addition to food and gas, everyone gets gossip, news, newspaper and mail. It often takes an hour and a half to get the mail. Our one small church was built entirely by volunteers and was dedicated in 1986.

Visitors often ask what there is to do in Westport. Once a year we have a chicken barbeque as a fund raiser for the volunteer fire department. The children put on a dime toss, with the help of Nedra Lancaster—this past year they raised sixty-five dollars. We also have a Christmas pageant and a Halloween party. This may not sound like much to do, but the landscape we live in occupies us.

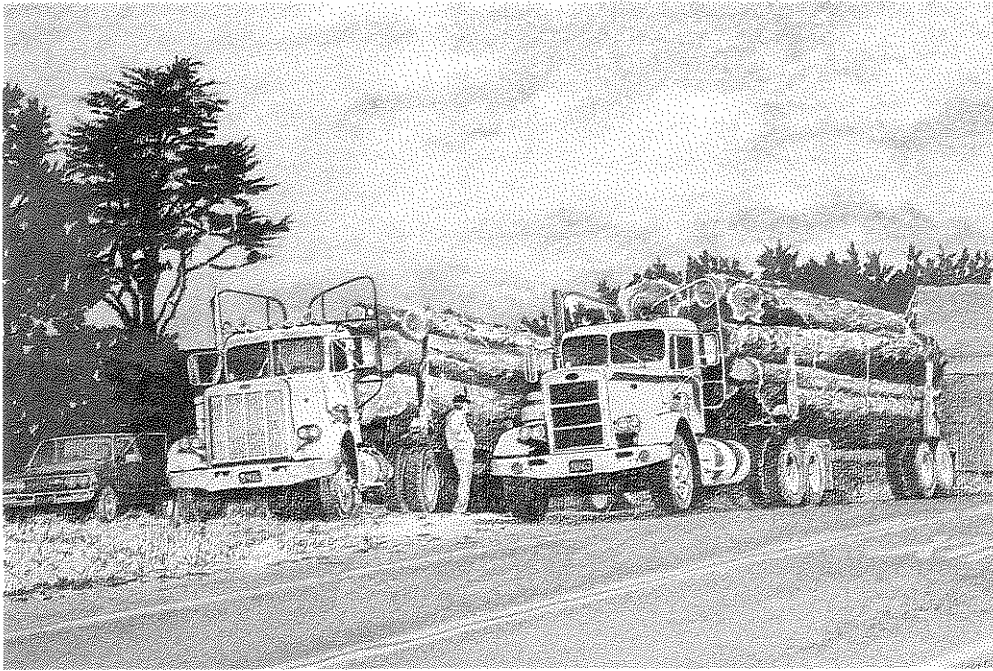
About midyear I began sketching outdoors, first in my own yard, then all around town. After I had done half a dozen drawings of everyday landscapes, I realized I was doing a portrait of the town. The sketching became more self-conscious after that. I wanted the portrait to be realistic and loving. I wanted it to celebrate the daily life of the community. I wanted to draw the town's soul, not

merely its surface. I wanted the sketches to communicate to the people who live in Westport the essence of their community. In December I had the first-ever art show in Westport with an "opening" at the Westport Inn. Almost everyone in town came.

Local people told me that I had indeed painted much of the soul of the town. However, they were quick to point out my oversights, creating a list of paintings that must be done next summer: the Westport cypress on Omega Street, the old house behind the Killions, the view north from Lee and Doreen's and the Morgan's house. Locals were clear about the sketches they did not like: the fog and suggestions of changes in the village. They were also embarrassed by some of the drawings, particularly a row of rusting cars that have been abandoned on the main road. A butterfly is no more beautiful than a caterpillar; the butterfly just looks better on paper.

At the opening of the show in Westport, one local resident told me that before I showed these drawings in Berkeley I would have to do some abstract ones. He expected that my devotedly realistic drawings would not be seen as art in that academic environment. That comment struck me as a valuable insight about the role of art in celebrating and making places.

Westport, California

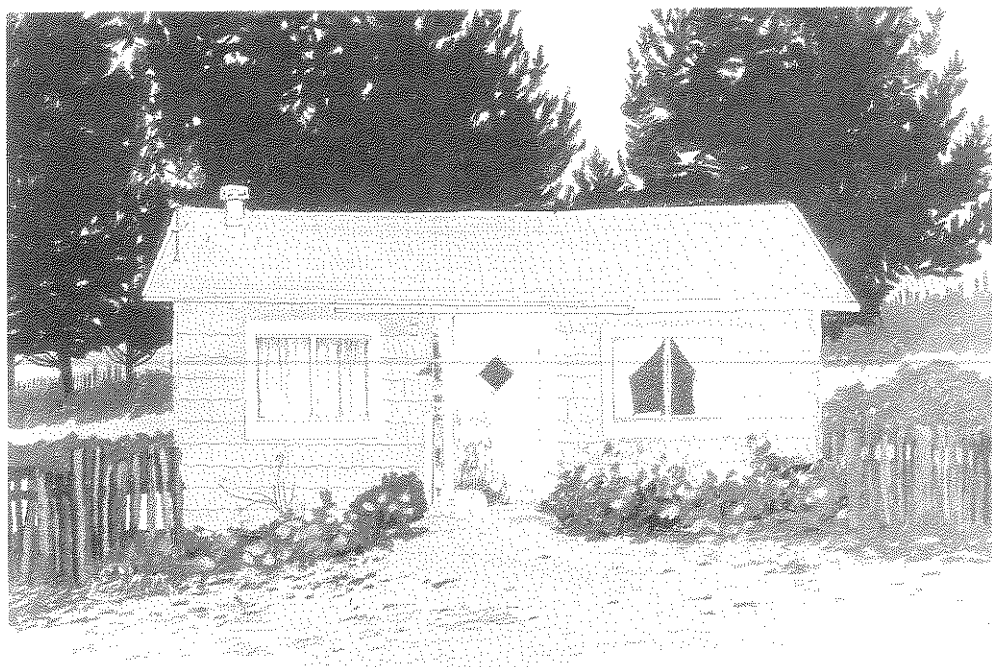


It is not easy to make a living in Westport. At the turn of the century over a thousand people gained their livelihoods from logging. Today only three families are supported by the timber industry; tourism, not timber, is the town's largest employer. The Westport Inn and Deli provides seasonal work for seven people. The Deli also serves as the town's family room.



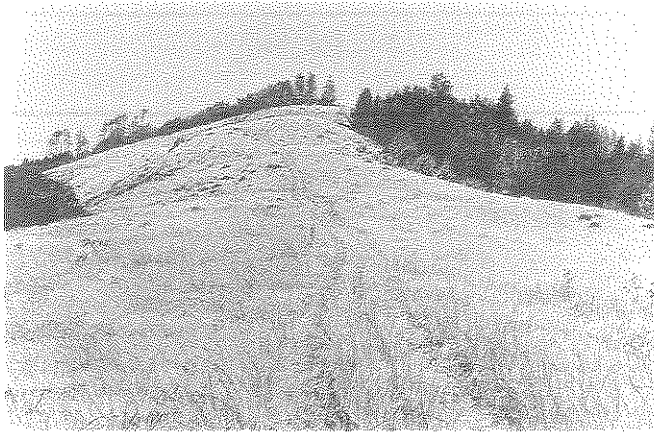
One couple runs fifty head of cattle, but ranching is mostly one butcher cow for the family penned by two strands of barbed wire requiring weekly repair.

If you notice the surf net missing from the stoop at the turquoise house you know that the smelt are running, and the Stillwells are catching them, if anyone is. A lot of people get by fishing. Others get by raising a few rabbits in cages arranged in classical formality. The geometry has no effect on the taste of the meat.



About half the families in town help make ends meet by gardening. In a sun pocket protected from the wind you can grow cool-weather crops in beautiful patterns year round, making both food and art.





Mr. and Mrs. Jones own this whole ephemeral landscape; over a thousand acres that give eastern definition to the town. They are not sure what should be done with all this land. I think she would like it to be preserved as a state park. When I go by to

see her, she talks about the novel she is finishing. Then she always asks why people do landscape art when the landscape is already art. When she asks me that, she pokes me with a finger and her eyes twinkle.

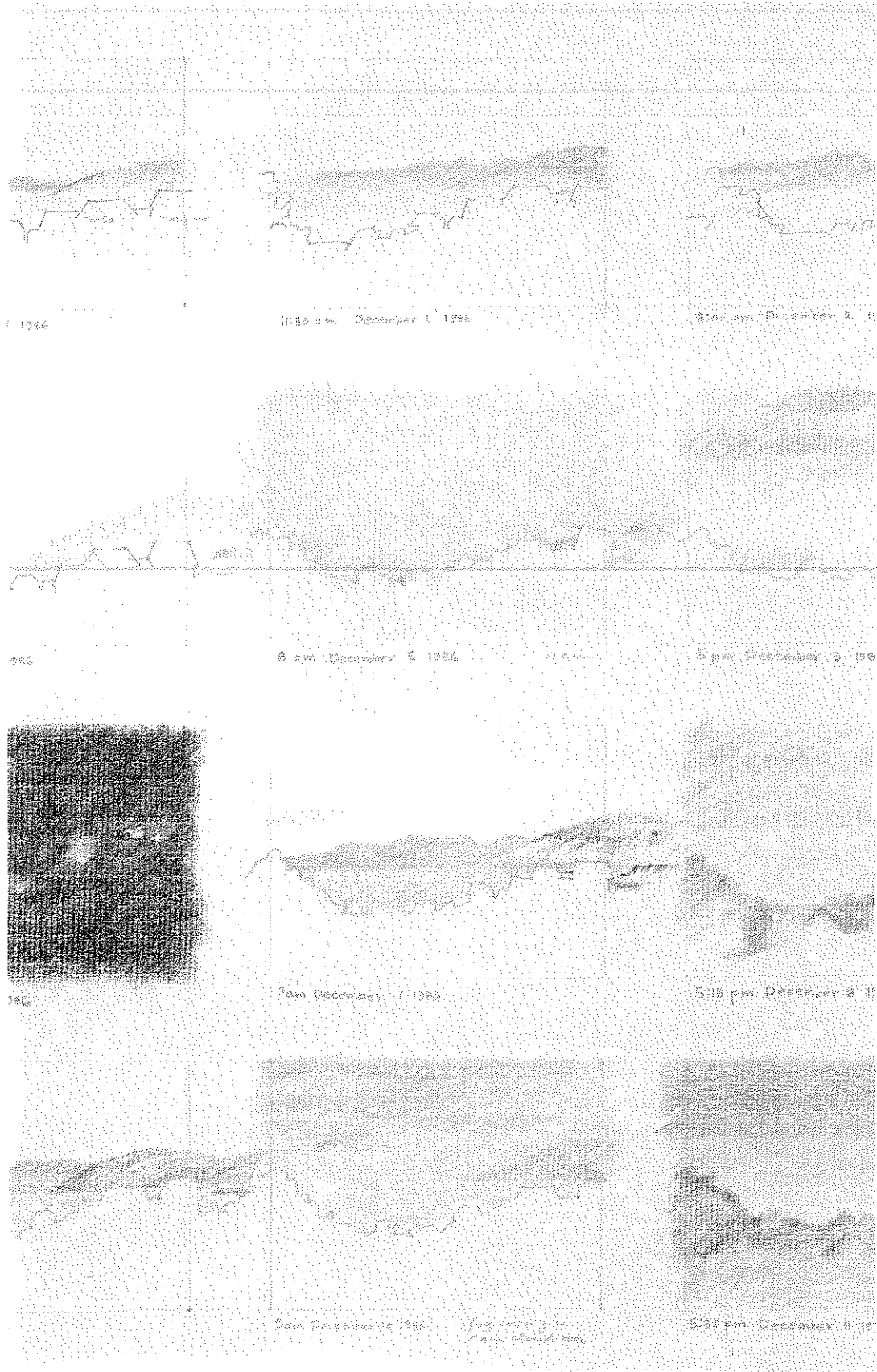


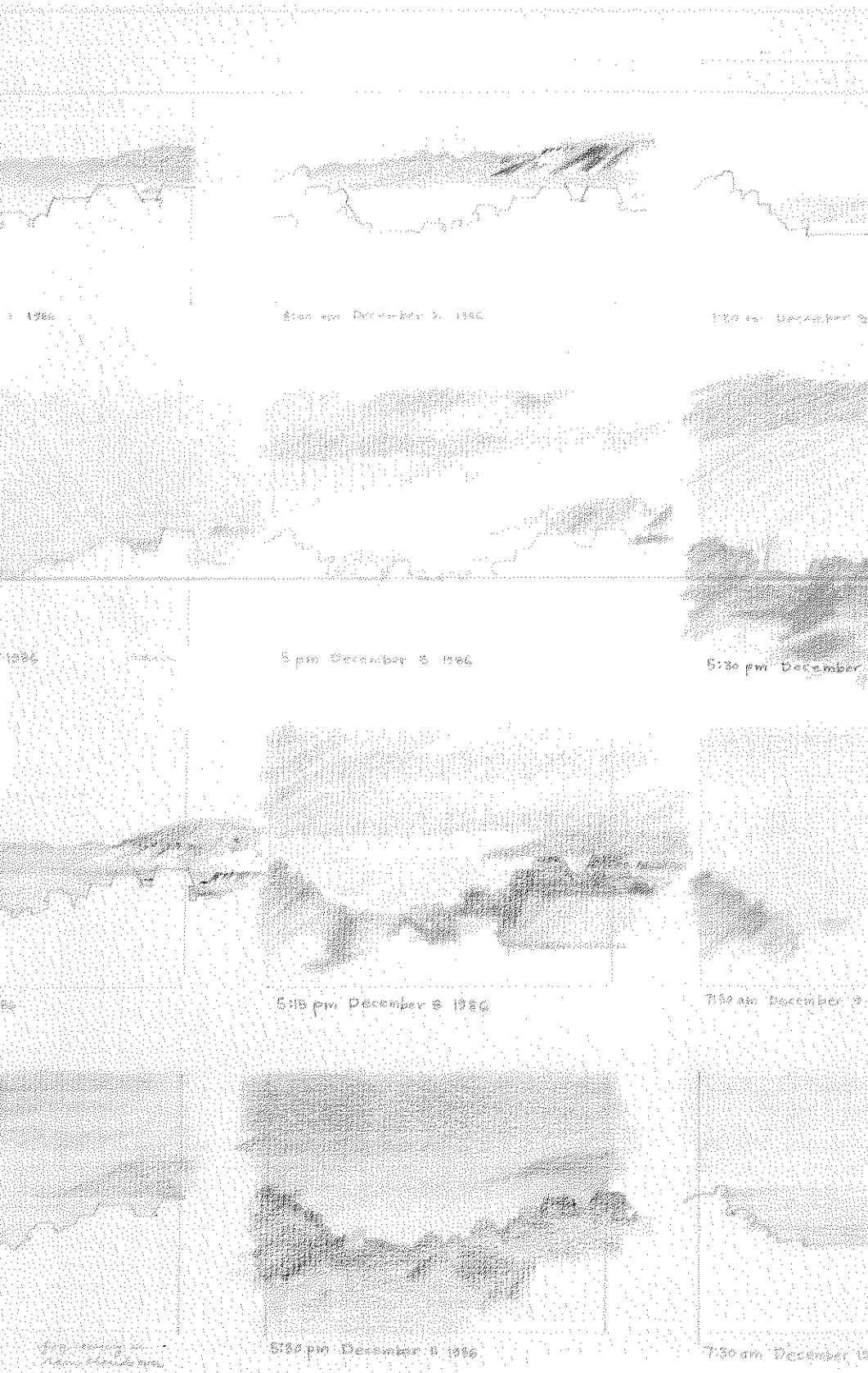
If you turn and face south, the landscape resembles Mother Earth with her head in the clouds, body-hair and flesh exposed. Thom Alcoze remarked that he loves this earth, not because she is like his mother, but because she *is* his mother. Small children experience their first freedom

in this pastureland. By age five you can tag along, playing a minor role in a game of G.I. Joe. By seven you can cardboard-slide down the steep ravine. By eight you can hike two miles to Death Valley. By ten you hide in the evergreen forest to be alone with this view.

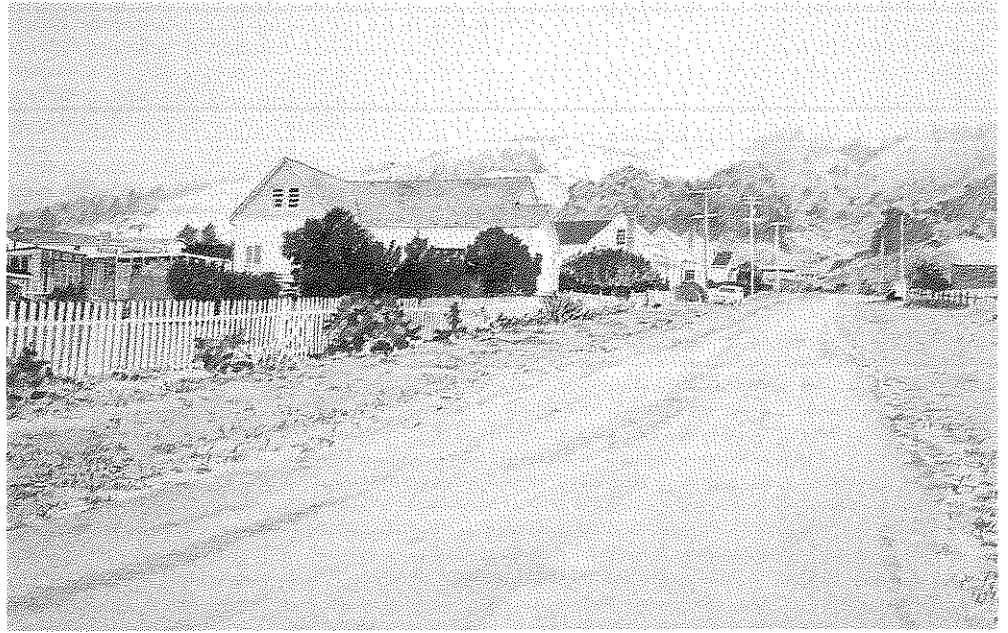


Westport is a panoramic landscape, but no one in town likes this sketch. It does not match the sunny postcard from the same viewpoint. "The fog," they say, "you can see it and feel its cold everyday without a picture to remind you."





When you look north, the weather constantly changes the landscape. For weeks, everytime I walked into Nate's room, I would look north and sketch the change. The panorama is broken only by hedgerows that form along drainage paths, by cross fencing in the ranch landscape, and by privacy hedges in the residential landscape. On the individual lot in the smallest subunit of the Westport landscape, north-south priver blocks the wind and stops the eye. Only the most creative home gardeners can get both wind protection and an ocean view.



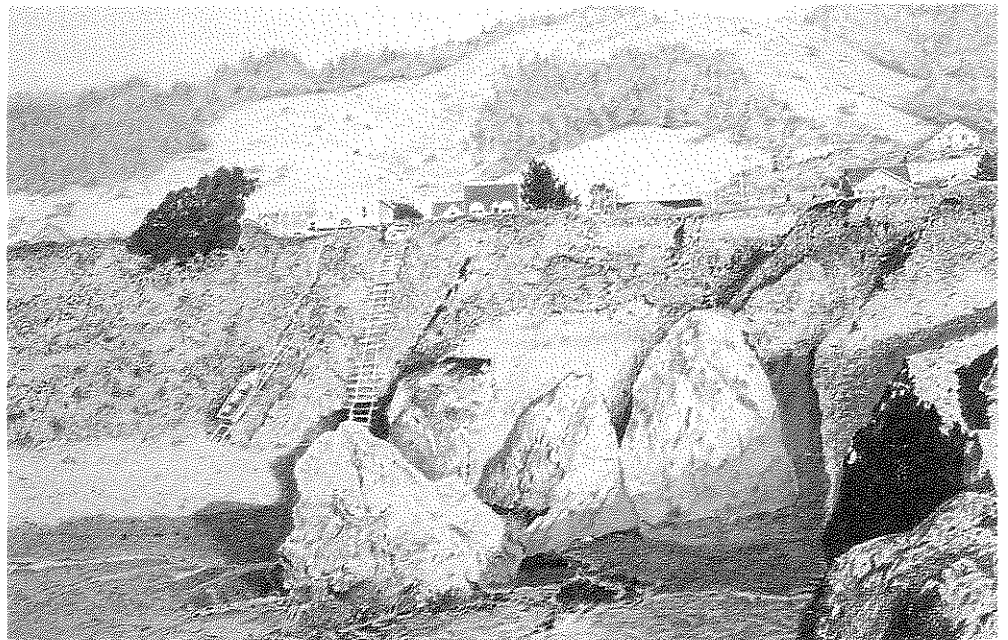
Pacific Avenue is the ideal of nearly everyone in town. There is beauty in its ecological underpinnings and its egalitarian simplicity. Does facade formalism have nothing to do with landscape aesthetics? A walk around town is a daily ritual. The walk always leads by Dutch's

house and someone always tells the story:

Dutch and his girlfriend were fighting because he had parked his 1953 Mercury too close to the house and she wanted him to move it. The fight escalated. Dutch stormed out of the house,

into the car and drove it off the cliff into the ocean, jumping out just in time. He walked back inside inquiring, "Is that far enough out of the way?" The difficulty in trying to draw the soul of a place is that it is easier to see the surface.

The view from Bridge Rock back to town recalls everyone's adolescence. Bridge Rock is where you hang out as a teenager, connected to society by the rickiest of redwood timbers. The boats represent masculine daring, ongoing adolescence, details in the landscape that evoke both love and fear for women in town.





Seen from Clay Road, the town is viewed as protected by a mountain womb, in great contrast to the exposed panoramic reality. The longer I stayed, the more I, too, came to see the hills to the east as a protector. Metaphorically, evil threatens not by sea but by land, not nature's storms but influences from the continent on the other side of the mountains.'

Coming and going is an important part of life in Westport. Because of the direction of the sunlight and sentiment, the cypress allee is always warm and womblike when you are coming home. It feels cold and harsh when you are leaving Westport.



The ephemeral landscape changes all the time and is seen as a comforting constant. Why then, is social change so terrifying? Since Westport is unincorporated, the sewer plant's capacity represents the only institution of control over community change. Westport's thirty-six remaining sewer hookups are a sought-after prize, essential for real-estate speculation. It is hard to believe that only fifteen years ago, the entire town was assessed at \$100,000.

"Change is coming, I can feel it."

"Westport will never change, not in my lifetime."



Architecture and Landscape, Landscape and Architecture

Garrett Eckbo

Architecture is the design of buildings, groups of buildings, the spaces between them, and their structural extensions—the latter used to be called engineering and has now become urban design. Architecture focuses on structures for use by people. It begins with shelter.

Landscape architecture is the planning and design of open spaces and developed or developing lands not already preempted by the other spatial professions or merchants, by law or energetic promotion. Its focus is outdoor space for use by people. It begins with land.

Together these artists and professionals are concerned with projecting the optimum forms, spatial sequences and land-use patterns for humanized environments now and in the next century.

Throughout most of my fifty-year career, I have been convinced of the need for ultimate integration of architecture and landscape. It is implied in every job we do, large or small. When it is not implied, it is because the job has no open space. In an intelligent urban society, there should be no such situations.

In actual practice, this integration rarely happens through direct, one-time, equal-base collaboration. Usually architecture/construction is there first—actually, conceptually, or economically. The landscape elements must adapt to, grow from, and extend the architectural/structural concepts (whether or not they seem to lend themselves to that), and establish connections or

separations between the project and the surrounding neighborhood and region. The environment is littered with impossible tangles that have resulted from the absence of foresight that such an end product would emerge from each development project. The environmental art of the future will be kept busy trying to untangle such messes. The occasional one-to-one collaboration between architect and landscape architect serves as guide and beacon.

Developed places are, of course, more than architecture and landscape. They include and come out of total environments—regions within continents, major topographic and water elements, climate and weather, ecology and economy, society and culture, community and neighborhood. Construction and landscape rearrangement create sequences of spaces for social and individual use, plus connecting circulation patterns for pedestrians, bicycles, horses and motorized vehicles. Storage for the ubiquitous and omnipresent automobile bulks large in urbanized places where people are concentrated. Furniture and graphics, artworks, and the persistent surprises of mechanical engineering all play a role. But the primary forces of life and identity are people, that choreography of variation from poor to rich, timid to aggressive, sad to happy, cynical to believing, underdressed to overcostumed, beautiful to ugly, with which we twentieth-century urbanites are so familiar.

Most indicators seem to tell us that most of the American people (and

probably European and Japanese as well) would prefer to live in the “country,” either in a small town or on a farm. There, the dominance of construction would decline, and the landscape elements—earth, rock, water, vegetation, animal life; meadow, savanna, forest, river, lake, marsh—would become more prominent. Ever since World War I, the promoters and developers of suburban housing have described it as a return to country living. Some millions of units later that has become clearly a scam, except for a few isolated star performances. The dream of life in the country, with nature as either agriculture or wilderness, remains a dream for most Americans trapped in metropolitan/suburban complexes. These very large places of miscellaneous urbanization are delimited roughly by 50-mile, one-hour driving radii on more or less comprehensive freeway/highway/parkway systems. These real twentieth-century places are expanded job markets, shopping centers, recreation facilities, educational and cultural systems, in which almost all connections are made by telephone, auto, or public transit. Architects, landscape architects, artists and designers struggle heroically but vainly to bring some meaning to these gargantuan and incoherent continuities. Development planning, aimed at more of the same, and engineering are the basic environmental design processes. Expedient politics governs the whole convoluted game.

Nevertheless, within this labyrinth, there are many shining and

substantial examples of well-tempered environmental elements or complexes. Some of them comprise the Inhabited Landscape exhibition, and more can be found in every edition of the architecture/landscape press. Movements for ecological and community participation in environmental planning and design are strong, and the design and art professions are alive and well. In so large, rich, and complex a society, opportunity and hope rise each morning with the sun.

The search for balance between construction and nature, or architecture and the land, is fundamental to the search for the good environment. Through the millennia of life on earth, nature has maintained a steady and level course, developing life and landscape around the world within the limits of topography and weather. People, as they began to improve their environments eight to ten thousand years ago, began the slow, steady, accelerating pressure on earth and nature. Agriculture and urbanization began at small scales that local nature could assimilate, but gradually, with acceleration, grew into the expansive, destructive and gluttonous morasses we have today.

Implicit in this picture is the need for design conceptualizing, at every scale from the individual project to the urban region, that seeks a reasonable, comfortable, healthy and inspired balance between construction and nature. Construction symbolizes Man's conquest of

Nature, long seen by Western culture as its crowning glory. Architecture, as the cultural symbol of construction, shares this vision, although often with doubt, and sometimes with sensitivity to site and nature. In the East, the Buddhist/Shinto urge for sensitive and understanding cohabitation with nature has produced building and garden complexes that have a sensitivity and elegance that inspires the West. However, as trilateralism and the free/corporate market system expand and become more entrenched around the world, it remains to be seen whether Eastern environmental culture can resist corruption.

It is necessary now to begin deliberate efforts to break through the barriers that divide the environmental design professions and related fields from the social/ conceptual fragmented thinking that has produced and supported those divisions. Perhaps we need to develop and expand ideas such as the following:

Buildings do not exist independently of the land under them or the environmental spaces around. They are linked inexorably with land and environment, by technical and functional connections that are unavoidable. (While describing a prefabricated housing proposal, a well-known architect was asked recently, "How does it relate to the site?" His response: "As little as possible." This describes the problem.)

Beyond these mandatory connections there are visual/

sensory/spatial relations that are often or usually ignored, but that retaliate by creating that sense of discomfort and disconnection, of disorder and anarchy, that is so pervasive in modern cities. I became very conscious of this on a recent trip through Italy, from Rome to Lake Como, where the most impressive experience was the profound harmony, continuity, sympathy and integrity of the Italian landscape, both urban and rural. This exists elsewhere in Europe, but nowhere so strongly, and it cannot be found anywhere in the United States except perhaps in some isolated villages not yet benefited by "development."

I believe these visual/sensory/spatial relations can be described as follows: Each building is a geometric form integral within itself. This form is not static, it is dynamic, and it is the strongest form in any environment. It extrudes geometric forces into the surrounding space. These forces need resolution in the way that they meet similar forces from other structures. When these structures are similar, as in Italy, the resolution is relatively easy, although it requires attention. When the structures vary as wildly as they do in the United States, modern Japan, and elsewhere, the resolution of these conflicts becomes almost impossible because it was not considered in the beginning. In fact, the free-market attitude seems to be that there should be no resolution, that visual/economic/environmental conflicts are essential to our health and happiness. Post-Modern

architecture seems at times to comprise or respond to this attitude.

The resolution of visual/functional forces extruding from individual buildings has been basic throughout the history of Western architecture and urbanism, from ancient Karnak through classical Rome to Renaissance/Baroque Europe. It climaxed and was institutionalized in the Beaux Arts system.

This does not mean, however, that the Beaux Arts system is the only way to resolve the complex of visual/functional forces in modern metropolitan development. Romantic, Asiatic, and Modern prototypes exist, based on landscape components that are adequate to buffer and resolve architectural forces.

Concepts of balance, order and harmony have typified urban/environmental design thinking throughout history. They have been applied to special places for special people, with at times magnificent results. Their possible expansion to general environments may be based on two ideas, both no doubt quite controversial. Those two principles of quality for all built environments are:

1. The urban environment has three primary elements: (a) buildings, (b) vehicular spaces and rights-of-way and (c) pedestrian outdoor spaces and rights-of-way. The first two are considered mandatory and indispensable in the minds of most

development and government people. The third is dispensable down to a bare minimum, and often totally displaced by vehicular surfacing.

This distortion of values is the product of over a century of high pressure urbanization, ruled largely by bottom-line mentalities. As, and if, we can return to qualitative concepts, it may become necessary to reinstate the primacy of outdoor pedestrian spaces and sequences throughout our urban areas, which could be a very big force for improving them.

2. Nature—long seen as a reservoir of raw materials, and a mechanical system subject to manipulation at will—is actually a system more complex, subtle, easily wrecked and irreplaceable than any man-made substitutes. Current conflicts will no doubt continue for a century or two, if we survive. However it may be that architects and landscape architects could come together around the development of design/planning concepts and theories that seek to integrate people and nature. These will have to be much more subtle, perceptive, understanding and imaginative than the various romantic, naturalistic, informal or oriental concepts available today.

Theoretically, a true integration of architecture and landscape, at scales from house-and-garden up to urban/metropolitan regions, is conceivable at this time as a general professional principle. It has, of course, been conceived intermittently by many outstanding

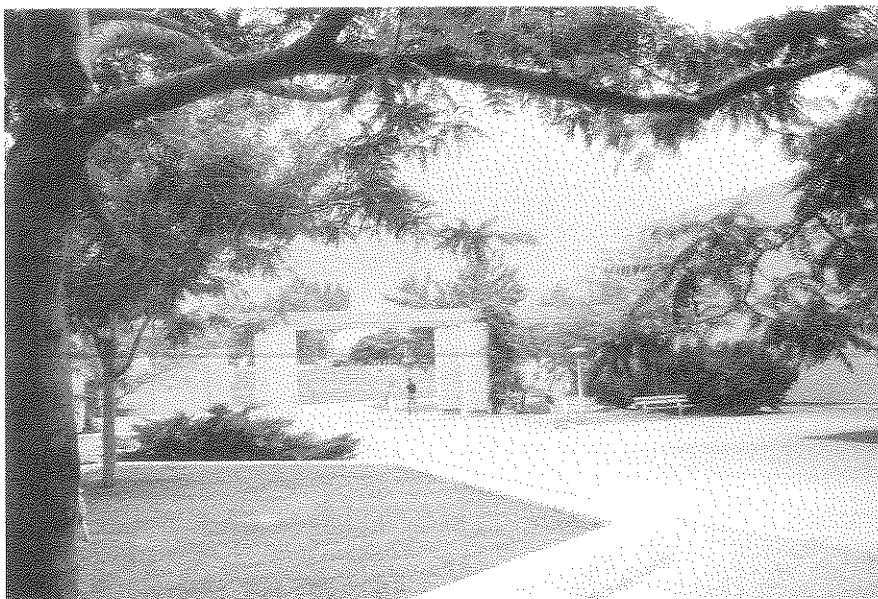
individuals and groups. They have been the pioneers for an upcoming environmental sea change.

Whether this is practicable I do not know. In a recent article in *Architecture*, Denise Scott Brown tells us that current trends include “The decline of planning The death of urban design” and “The trivialization of landscape architecture”¹ As in various large aspects of economics and foreign relations, if we allow current trends to continue, we will deserve what will happen to us.

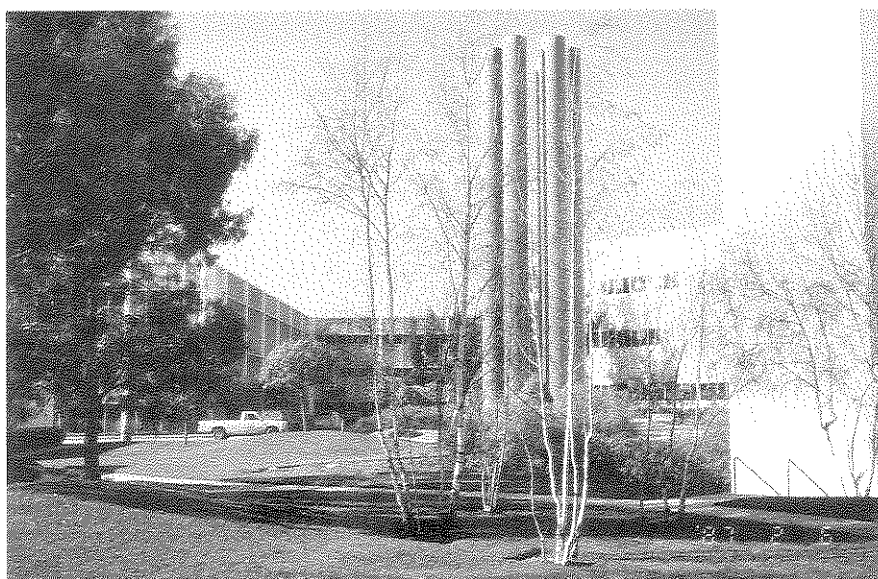
The limitation of the Inhabited Landscape exhibition to projects built within the last ten years, while providing focus, poses nonetheless a serious problem. For most landscape work, ten years is often barely the beginning of maturity. I think it took about thirty years for Dan Kiley’s tree plantings at Dulles Airport to begin to read in scale with that landscape. Most of my best work was done from the 40s through the 60s. The development of a genuine landscape takes many years, if not generations of care. The following are a few examples of works in which I have been involved that have required a more extended time frame but have developed within the principles I have devised.

University of New Mexico at Albuquerque

The University of New Mexico at Albuquerque is a 400-acre urban campus for which I have been landscape architectural consultant



1



2

since 1962. Throughout this time I have worked closely with Van Dorn Hooker, University Architect, and through him with a long list of local architects. (The original campus architect was John Gaw Meem.)

Albuquerque is high desert, hot and dry in the summer, clear and cold in the winter. The original campus layout followed the streets and blocks of the urban gridiron. Much of our work has dealt with the replacement of streets with interior pedestrian systems and peripheral parking areas. Pedestrian spaces range from small courtyards through larger terraces around buildings to still larger plazas and malls that complete a continuous open space system that is the primary structure of the campus, integrating relatively consistent architecture. The whole complex has the distinct flavor of New Mexico and the Southwest, a region unlike any other of the continent. The central campus includes a four-acre park with pond and seating complexes. This provides relief from the intensive academic surroundings.

SRI International at Menlo Park, California

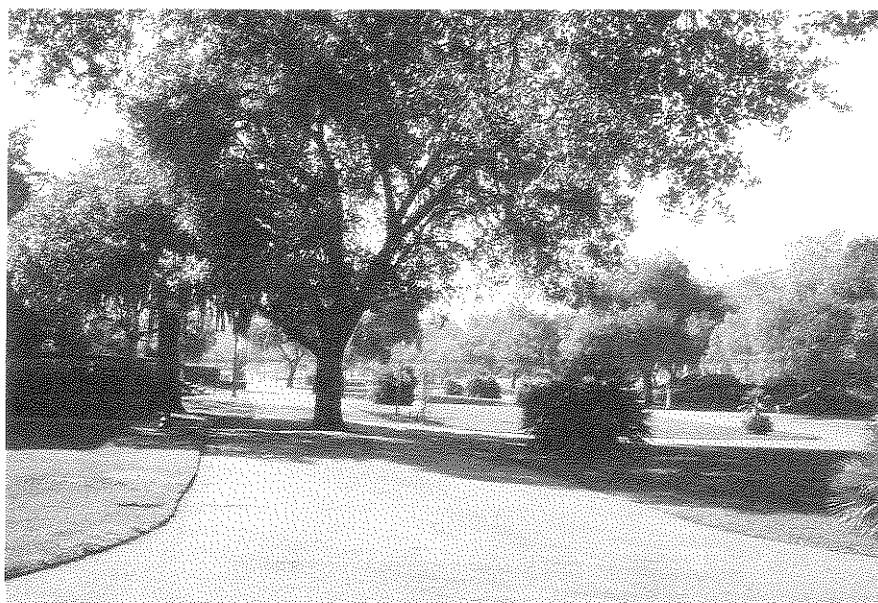
The SRI International research institute occupies a substantial campus about 40 miles south of San Francisco, near Stanford University. In the early 40s I developed the spaces around their primary engineering building. A few years ago I did the park-like spaces around and through their new science building, and a large central

parking area that provides well-planted facilities for 400 cars. The science building was done by Pereira Associates, Architects, of Los Angeles. It consists of 2 four-story (one below grade) cubes connected by an elaborate glass breezeway at two corners. The principal pedestrian access follows fancifully curved paths through this breezeway, tying surrounding garden spaces into the building. To the northeast, one enters through a shade garden under a large existing oak that was preserved. To the southwest, a cluster of large orange vent pipes accents a special entry place. South of this substantial park-like space is a central eating facility. I think of this as a modern version of the Crystal Palace in a park.

Stanford University, near Palo Alto, California

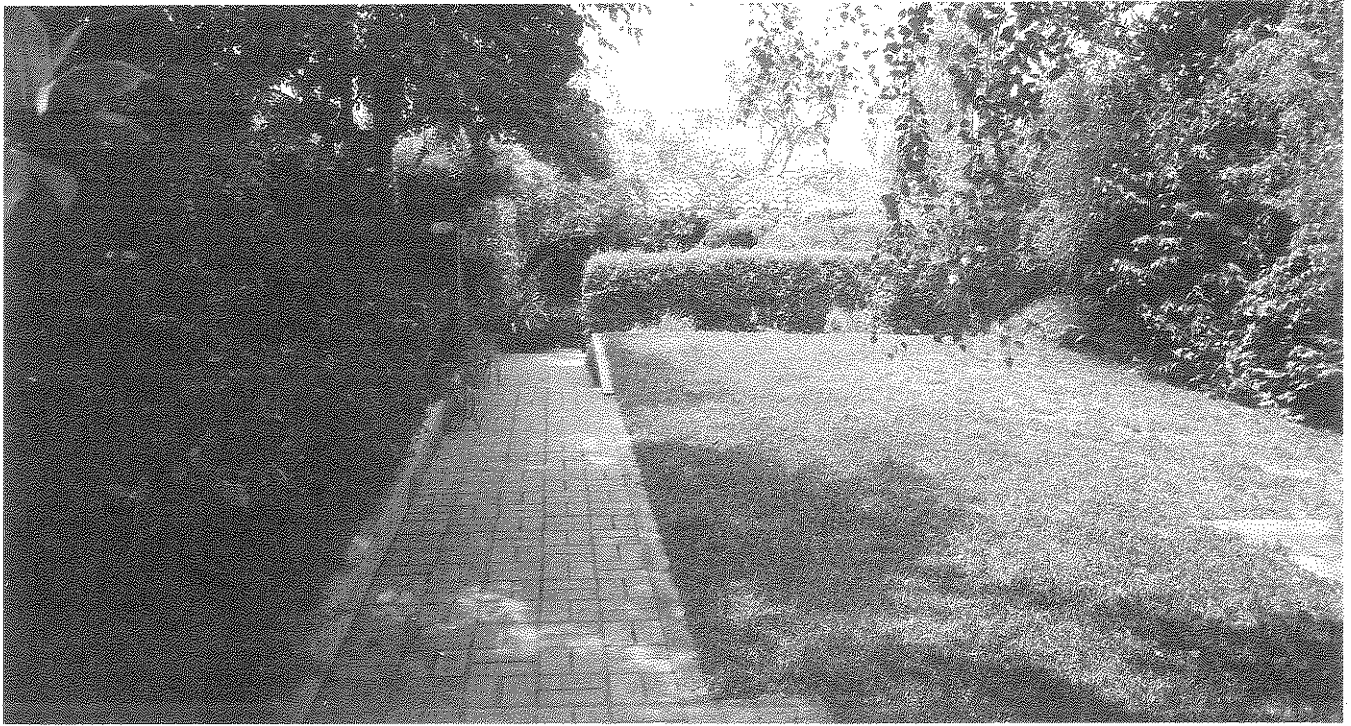
Stanford University occupies a large old campus, originally planned by Olmsted. I have recently replaced three streets with pedestrian malls, and designed the foreground spaces for a new music center that also functions as an entrance to the central campus.

Galvez Mall replaces an existing street, beginning at the main north-south campus drive and running west. It is bounded by four major campus complexes—the Hoover Center, Encina Hall, a dormitory group, and two of the main libraries. The eastern block, between Hoover and Encina, benefits from their mature plantings and some large existing live and cork oaks in the right-of-way. The path pattern

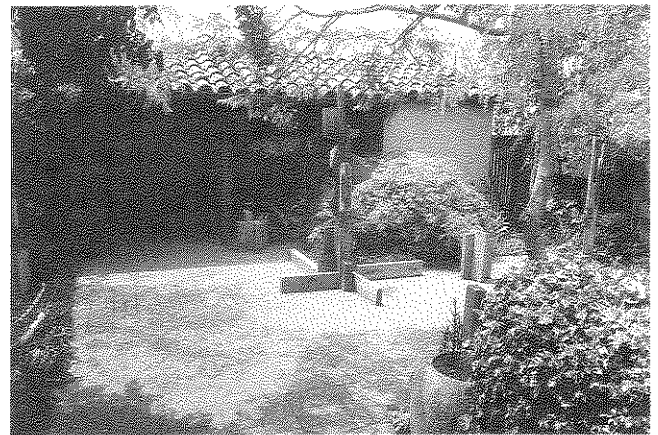


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- 1 University of New Mexico at Albuquerque
Photograph by Garrett Eckbo
- 2 Stanford Research Institute, Menlo Park
Photograph by Garrett Eckbo
- 3 Galvez Mall, Stanford University
Photograph by Garrett Eckbo



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4 Eckbo garden, walk leading to the house
Photograph by Kyle Thayer

5 Eckbo garden, entry patio
Photograph by Kyle Thayer

6 Eckbo garden, entry patio from front porch
Photograph by Kyle Thayer

7 Eckbo garden, small patio off the studio
Photograph by Kyle Thayer



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worked naturally into four squares, which gives it a touch of formality. This is accented by the introduction of Mediterranean fan palm (*Chamaerops humilis*) clumps at the corners. Seats are introduced under the oaks along the paths.

Berkeley Home and Garden

My home and working studio in Berkeley has been extensively remodeled since we bought it in 1968 and is subject to more or less continuous rearrangement. The lot is 50 by 200 feet and is fairly level for the Berkeley hills. The house, probably built in the 30s, is set back 135 feet from the street. A 25-foot rear yard, sloping steeply down from the house, presents a magnificent view of San Francisco Bay and the city, the Golden Gate Bridge, and Marin County with Mount Tamalpais. One enters from the street through a redwood carport and descends a few broad brick steps to a small brick promenade edged by triangular planters. Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*) grow in these planters, which were built from broken concrete from the original driveway. Behind the carport is a rectangular lawn with a mixed border on the north and west. On the south side, the brick path leads to the house along a border of camellias and other shade plants, sheltered by purple plums and the neighbor's giant Monterey pines. At the west end of the lawn, brick steps drop about four feet, around the end of a privet hedge, onto a brick patio about 35 feet square. My studio looks down into this patio from the



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south, and one enters the house from it to the west, through a porch with a tile roof. The patio is bounded to the north by a six-foot wooden wall on which I have made a continuous sculptural panel with scrap lumber. This is a long-term hobby; there are also sculptural figures on the patio and along the front promenade. The patio is dominated by a large jacaranda tree, furnished with metal furniture painted blue and displays three exotic panels originally painted in bright acrylic by Charles White. One enters the house through the original vaulted entry hall and arched interior openings. The living space is large and flexible, culminating to the west in a sunken sun and view room, which we added to the house. Thus there is a progression from the street through fairly small garden and patio spaces and even smaller house entry spaces to the grand panorama of the bay.

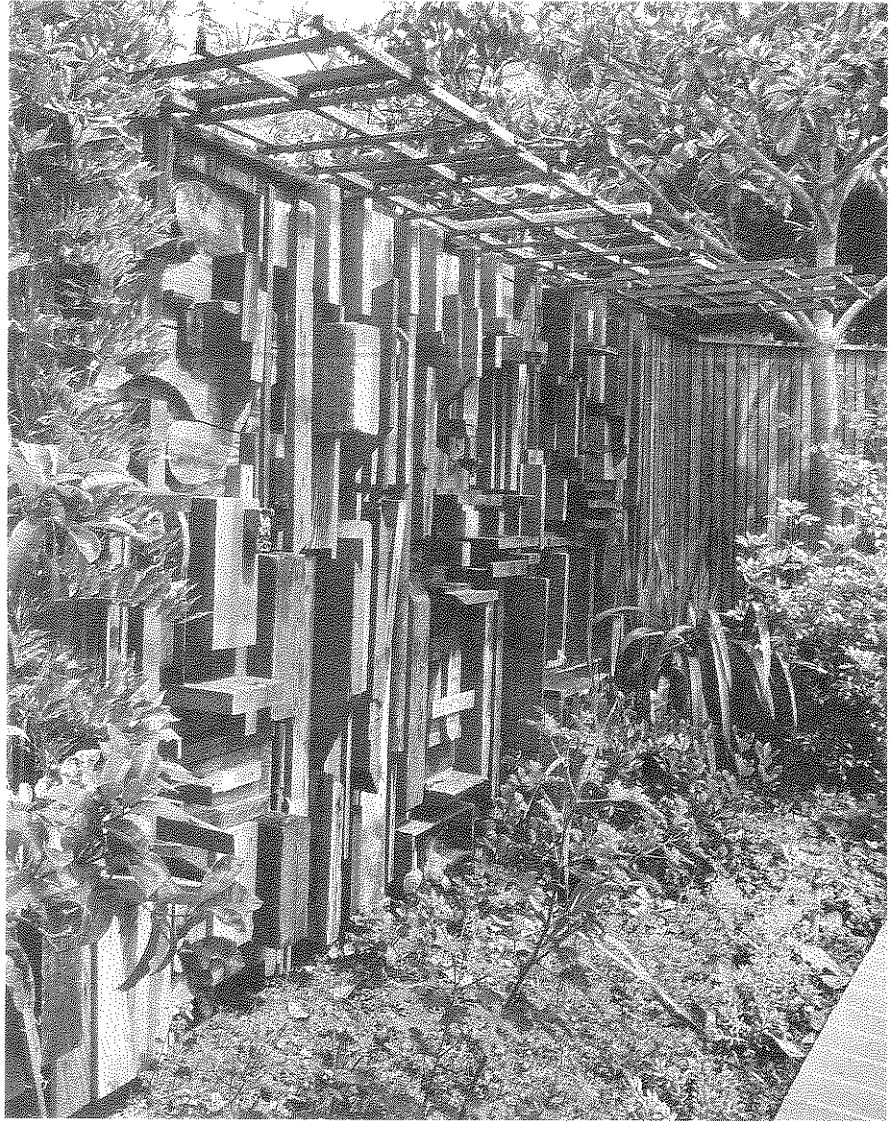
These four projects, among many developed during the fifty years of my practice, may be seen as an early response to the need for transition from Built-Inhabited Landscape to Integrated Landscape. They are also part of the mid-century need for response to the impacts of modern art and architecture on cultural and natural landscapes. There was no intention to establish a Style as a period in history, but rather to develop a way of working with environmental design problems that would express contemporary attitudes and feelings. Current post-modern confusion seems to reflect both a continuation of that effort,

8 Eckbo home, foggy view to the bay
Photograph by Garrett Eckbo

seeking to escape from the sterile institutionalization of a modern steel-and-glass Style, and an effort to invent a new style or styles, as fashion is invented or cycled. The acceleration of period changes since the Renaissance creates a clear need for continuity of sound, sensitive design processes regardless of vocabulary.

Notes

1 Denise Scott Brown,
Architecture (May 1987), p. 116
See also Conference on Shaping the City,
p. 32.



9

9 Eckbo garden, patio wall
Photograph by Garrett Eckbo

Penetrable Landscape as Democratic Form: A Walk with Olmsted

Dean W. O'Brien



Frederick Law Olmsted's 1850 walking tour through Britain inspired his eventual shift from journalism and farming to a career as America's preeminent landscape architect.¹

Intrigued by his charming account of the trip,² by the anachronistic notion of walking freely from town to town and by the prospect of seeing some of what influenced the great place-maker, I set out with my wife to follow the route taken by the Olmsted party through the Welsh marches.

A major result of our experience is the realization that the British landscape is characterized by a kind of penetrability that even now helps put the private citizen consciously in touch with public surroundings by means generally unfamiliar to Americans. Olmsted also seems to have been affected by the openings between private and public domains he found in Britain.

The penetrability is achieved there not by eliminating lines of demarcation between the domains (a logical impossibility, however seductive) but by heightening the awareness and pleasure of crossing the lines.

For us, it all started in Chester, where we joined the Olmsted route on its way south from Liverpool. In Chester, penetrability is built into the architecture as "the Rows," a tier of second-story, arcaded walkways situated

on top of street-level shops—continuing around corners and accessible by frequent open stairways from the sidewalks below. They have been there for 700 years, even though the buildings that incorporate them have changed totally.

The walkways draw the visitor through Chester by means of limited disclosures, promises of reward and opportunities to make choices. They invite participation by giving visitors, wherever they happen to be standing in the town, glimpses of something interesting but not entirely knowable. Olmsted relished the suspense created by the “unexplainable passages and unaccountable recesses” of the Rows.

At nearly every point in Chester, the scene presents a variety of reachable destinations and usually more than one route to each, asking visitors to make frequent decisions about how to proceed. All this decision making calls for a kind of consciousness—an attention to one’s position in the cityscape.

Among the rewards offered for the visitor’s exertions in Chester are new vistas, textures, patterns, and uses of material (building styles vary considerably). Comforting refuges and a liberating sense of open space accompanied by eccentricity, novelty, surprise, and a remnant from the past greet the visitor



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1 **The walls that separate public scene from private property** in Chester, England, are not the hard and fast lines that put modern man in the binary bind of either *in* or *out*. Photograph by Dean W. O'Brien

2 **The Rows**, though spiffed up a bit since Olmsted saw them 135 years ago, still contain “unexplainable passages and unaccountable recesses” to explore. Photograph by Dean W. O'Brien



3

3 Cloisters provide a resonant sense of "mirroring," a simultaneous looking out from and looking in at. Photograph by Dean W. O'Brien

4 Steps and stiles on an English footpath promise the reward of a new view to the rambler who will only make the short climb to the top. Photograph by Dean W. O'Brien

who moves through the city, ever departing from the certainties of a present location.

But these are the quiet, perceptual pleasures of moving personally through the world. Their voltage is so low they might not immediately register on a sensibility customarily entertained by the screech of car chases through the stark streets of a televised city. Nor would the rewards work for a bureaucratic mentality bent on routinizing decisions and eliminating “unaccountable recesses.”

Chester asserts a gratifying relationship between public space and private space not only by inviting exploration but also by facilitating “intrusions,” much as it did for Olmsted:

We found ourselves in one of the narrow covered ways, and . . . kept on in it, to go where it should happen to lead. Sometimes wide, sometimes narrow, running first, as it appeared, between a man’s kitchen and his dining room; then into a dust-yard, and turned one side by a stable . . . then through a blacksmith’s shop into a dark crooked passage like the gallery of a mine, at the end of which we found ourselves on a paved street not far from the cathedral.⁵

Though spiffed up a bit since Olmsted’s time, the Rows are still public rights-of-way through private property,





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5 Small, thoughtful adjustments through the years make a snug fit between the landscape and human activity.
Photograph by Polly O'Brien

avenues that penetrate and link venues to give participants the sense of a larger public whole and of how its constituent parts connect with it. This public weaving in and out of private areas takes time, requires movement and thrives on sequence strategies, much as a good picture book or movie does. It differs in that respect from two other devices that make Chester such an elegant walk-through metaphor of linkages between Self and Other: intermediate space and mirroring.

Both *In* and *Out* at Once

Intermediate space works more like an inviting still photograph—through the celebration of a particular, single moment when at least two things were simultaneously present together. In Chester, intermediate space is abundantly provided by the walk along the top of the medieval walls that encircle the city as well as by the Rows. Both give visual access *in* and *out* at the same time, and the Rows even give the tactile sense of *being* at once *in* shelter and *out* in the open. Both walkway designs keep the participant from being locked out of the separate venues while simultaneously preventing entrapment inside any one of them, disconnected from the broader public scene.

As a result, as a visitor one finds oneself at the center

of the interaction between private and public, busily mediating between *in* and *out* to shape new perceptions that accommodate the two logically irreconcilable realities, experiencing the both-at-once paradox of consciousness.

The other paradox made vivid by the town is the sense of oneself being similar to and yet different from others—a kind of mirroring. In an earlier article in *Places*, Warren Boeschstein remarks that “when viewed from below or across the street, the bays of the Rows provide appropriate frames in which clusters of people may gather” and that “it is as beautiful to look out from as it is to look [in] at.”⁴

Standing in a bay of the Rows and looking out to where others can be seen framed in a bay across the street, the explorer in Chester can hardly resist thinking, “That’s about how I must look to them.” We encountered much the same physical and psychological situation looking across the courtyards of cloisters we visited, from Chester cathedral to Laycock Abbey.

As we hiked south out of Chester along Olmsted’s original route, we were offered the license and the invitation to enter private spheres over and over again, much as we had done in the architectural environment of Chester, often walking a mile in another person’s property, to twist an aphorism.

Altogether, there are 120,000 miles of public footpaths in England and Wales, creating what is probably the most penetrable civilized landscape anywhere in the world.

An expression of the penetrability is the fact that, according to *Walker’s Britain*, trespassing itself is not a legally actionable offense.⁵ When private property is damaged, the landowner can bring suit to have the rambler pay for the cost of repair. But if the rambler merely strays from the public right-of-way as it penetrates the back regions of privacy, then the landowner can do no more than gently force the visitor back onto the path.

We had no such trouble. Lloyd, the gardener, conspiratorially let us through the duke’s private grounds at Eaton Hall, a woman patiently directed us out of her yard and back to the elusive Wat’s Dyke path, the farmer at Middle Sontley insisted on showing us the ponds he was building.

Probably the deepest penetration into private precincts is the pleasure of lodging at the ubiquitous bed-and-breakfast places, where the traveler is so warmly taken into so many interesting homes. “This would never work in America,” an American minister said during an evening chat in a b-and-b at Chirk. “You wouldn’t dare open your house to strangers in our country. No



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6 Bed-and-breakfast places everywhere and 120,000 miles of footpaths, help England and Wales to have a highly penetrable environment. Photograph by Dean W. O'Brien



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7 Walkers in Britain escape the hermetic shell of package tourism and its predictable lodgings and restaurants. Photograph by Dean W. O'Brien

telling what they might do." Although they are multiplying rapidly now, the American bed-and-breakfasts of course bear little resemblance to the open, egalitarian model so widespread in Britain.

Deep Resonance or Clear Direction

The footpath was often ambiguous, and finding it was a matter of continual speculation. There were adamant barriers and moments of lost hope, but overall we were able to wander through backyards, farm yards, playing fields, woods, along medieval dykes and on hills above the sound of church bells among flocks of sheep—helped by thoughtfully crafted stiles, convenient gates and subtle indications now and then of where the path might be. As Brenda Colvin writes, footpaths “draw attention to the landscape insinuatingly rather than aggressively.”⁶

There was often a subliminal comfort in sensing that the precise, step-by-step route achieved a snug fit between nature and humanity through the complicity of attentive little adjustments made over the centuries—someone moving a stone out of the way in Cromwell’s time, putting in a step or stile when Richard Lionheart was clanking about, adding a handrail, detouring off the direct route to appreciate a pretty vista, finding an easier way around a hill, making

the footing firmer—tunings made possible by an experience of the landscape shared deeply in the muscles across generations of human beings as they come and go.

In significant contrast, hikers in the United States are more familiar with clearly marked public footpaths laid out through controlled public parklands by experts or committees who may not have experienced the landscape so deeply or directly but who have rules against changing the route once it is set. On American paths, the loss in resonance and meaning is presumably offset by gains in clarity and the kind of convenience that relieves the walker of the need to pay closely differentiated attention to the environment. American distinctions between private and public seem to be aggressively binary, either-or constructs that impoverish both private and public realms.⁷ George Chadwick argues that “we have got used to thinking of park space as something apart from the town and its life: we must bring it back and interweave with it the threads of living, working, and moving.”⁸

Borders That Come and Go

Olmsted had trouble accepting the artifice of some British lines between inside and outside. A gate he came across “alone and unsupported by anything in the vicinity” disturbed him.



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**8 Climbing to Castell Dinas
Brân at Llangollen**
Photograph by Dean W.
O'Brien

"It seems intended as an impressive preface to a great display of art within; but here as well as at Eaton Park, and other places I have seen, it is not followed up with any great things, the grounds immediately within the grand entrance being simple, and apparently rather neglected by the gardener."⁹ While he may be savoring the absurdity drily, it is more probable that his celebrated practical turn of mind is finding it difficult to accept such a blatant sign that the distinction between inside and outside *is* artificial.

We, too, came upon several freestanding masonry gates along the route—gates with no extended wall on either side so that we could easily walk entirely around them. In one gloriously surrealistic situation, the meaningless gate was padlocked.

The abundance of ruins and ancient dykes and the walls that wander incoherently around the countryside of contemporary Britain make it hard to miss the arbitrary, transitory character of the lines people draw to distinguish *in* from *out*. The message of these historical leftovers parallels Post-Modernism in architecture (showing how structurally unnecessary but humanly intentional many elements of design are),¹⁰ Post-Structuralism in literary criticism (emphasizing that most lines of difference, thought to be givens, are

not),¹¹ and feminism (revealing quite a few "biological" differences and "necessities" as fabrications to support some chosen social construct).

And in psychoanalysis, the patient learns that the border between the unconscious and conscious can be crossed safely, joyfully and productively because the border is no more daunting than those dreamwork gates of Britain, easily walked around or seen through.

The choice is between (1) seeing through borders, which means seeing them *as* borders, and (2) seeing only limits, as if they were not actually constructed borders. To survive, democracies have to encourage the first option. The Rows of Chester and the public footpaths of England do.

Not all borders are on the landscape, though. Some are portable, surrounding the observer wherever he or she goes. Modern technology and logistical expertise have made "packaged tourists" possible and numerous, even considering the slight recent decline in their numbers in Britain.¹²

Run through the landscape in motor coaches and processed through predictable restaurants and lodgings, these packaged tourists find it nearly impossible to get around behind the surfaces and thus penetrate the environment. Reciprocally, they are unlikely to *be*

penetrated very deeply by the experience of Britain.

The walking tour diminishes the hermetic shell of modern logistics and technology while heightening environmental penetrability and personal autonomy. It may ultimately have been this form of travel, accommodated by the design of the British landscape, that more than anything else gave Olmsted such inspiration for expressing democracy in environmental forms. It continues to offer intimations of how a democratic landscape might look and work.

The enthusiasm for clear, open public space isolated from private complication has taken too strong a hold on the American imagination of public reality, accounting to some extent for the conversion of visible public arenas to deserted space primarily suitable for easy maintenance and car chases—not places for the subtle but authentic pleasure of the interplay between private and public, person and scene. Meanwhile, enclosed shopping malls and other private fiefdoms masquerade as yesterday's public main street.

Kathryn Hume says of a particularly skillful science-fiction writer, "We learn how shaky our sense of reality is when we find that we have entered his created world and lost awareness of the frame."¹³ In an enclosed shopping mall, as many of them are now designed, we

are more often simply taken in, not noticing we have lost awareness of the frame.

In Chester or on the footpaths of England it is clear when the citizen makes a choice, crossing the border, *in* or *out*. "Fasten gates, even if you find them open," the Country Code directs, and most Englishmen do. "And keep to paths, if they exist."

Notes

- 1 The change, at least from journalism, was not as outlandish as it may at first seem, given Olmsted's lifelong concern for the public scene and his continuing commitment to what he called "communicativeness."
- 2 Frederic Law Olmsted, *Walks and Talks of an American Farmer in England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967). Original publication 1852.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 90.
- 4 Walter Boeschenstein, "Chester, England: Urban Design Ideas from an Ancient Source," *Places*, Volume 2, Number 4, p. 13.
- 5 Andrew Duncan, ed., *Walker's Britain* (London: Pan Books/Ordnance Survey, 1982), p. 10.
- 6 Brenda Colvin, *Land and Landscape: Evolution, Design and Control* (London: John Murray, 1973), p. 371.
- 7 Dean W. O'Brien, "Framing the Pseudoenvironment," *Landscape* (Spring 1982), pp. 26–32.
- 8 George F. Chadwick, *The Park and the Town: Public*

Landscape in the 19th and 20th Centuries (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), p. 374.

- 9 Olmsted, op. cit., p. 52.
- 10 As expressed, for example, in Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1977).
- 11 Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982).
- 12 Ogilvy and Mather, "The Current Market for American Pleasure Travel in Europe: 1981 "Image" Study," a mimeographed report prepared for the British Tourist Authority, 1981.
- 13 Kathryn Hume, *Fantasy and Mimesis: Responses to Reality in Western Literature* (New York: Methuen, 1984), p. 131.

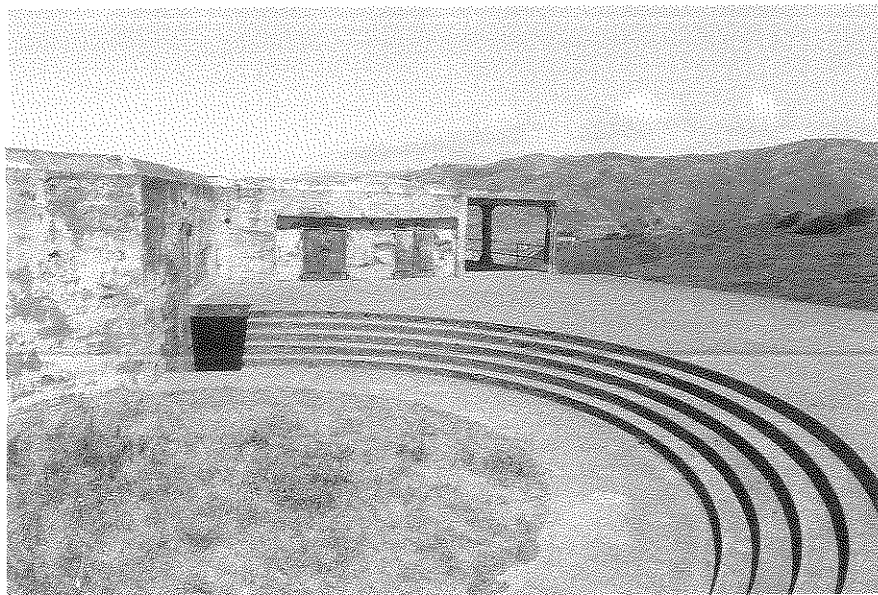


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9 Chester's medieval wall
Photograph by Dean W. O'Brien

Dwelling as Reciprocity: The Marin Headlands

Kyle Thayer



And I still find myself wondering if there is not always some deep similarity between the way war organizes space and movement and the way contemporary society organizes them: that is, if the military landscape and military society are not both in essence intensified versions of the peacetime landscape, intensified and vitalized by one overriding purpose which, of necessity, brings about a closer relationship between man and environment and between men.¹

—J.B. Jackson

The Marin Headlands is a place of quiet contradiction. It is an area that, because of and in spite of long-term military occupation from 1865 to 1972, was preserved from normal patterns of urban and suburban development. Situated just north of San Francisco on the Pacific Coast, it is an area of stunning natural beauty within a stone's throw of the city. More recently, it is an area resettled by socially aware not-for-profit groups. An energy resource center, an environmental resource center, and a multidisciplinary, arts center, among others, inhabit the simple white buildings left by the military. What were once barracks, officers' quarters and mess halls are now artist's studios, public assembly halls and overnight lodging for visiting schoolchildren. The stripped-down austerity of the military structures somehow suits the art, science and educational facilities that have moved in.

The Headlands is a good example of re-use of a military installation

I An amphitheater-like space was created at Battery Mendel when the great pivoting guns it housed were removed, still unfired, after World War II. Photograph by Kyle Thayer

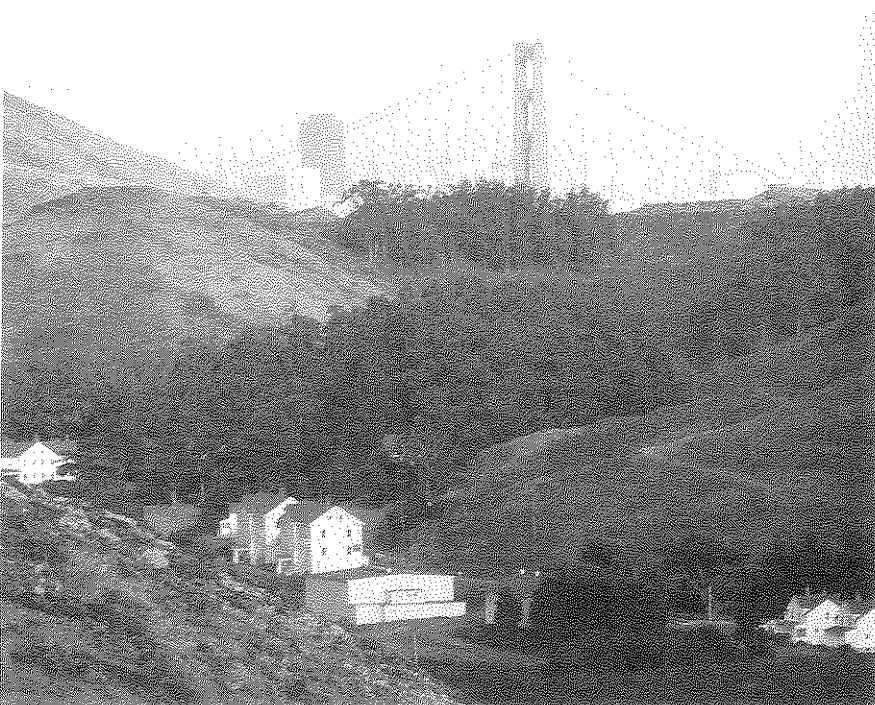


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2 The military intrusion in the landscape is subtle but pervasive; Battery Mendel, Marin Headlands.
Photograph by Kyle Thayer



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for a socially responsible purpose. The groups serve to orient visitors to the great resources of the place by offering exhibitions, workshops and symposia open to the public. It is in fact the military order overlaid on the natural order that makes the Headlands the unique place it is. New users must acknowledge both realities. Thus re-use has the implicit proviso that the public again have access to the original natural order, without the damaging motivations of development or exploitation.

The military moved out in 1972 when changing technology minimized the strategic importance of the proximity to the Golden Gate Bridge. Over 200 buildings in various states of repair were left in its wake, plus the remains of gun emplacements, bunkers, Civil War gun batteries and even a Nike missile installation. The 15,000-acre site was turned over to the National Park Service and became part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA).

Six different nonprofit groups currently lease buildings from the Park Service. The Park Partners, as they call themselves, consists of the Pacific Energy and Resource Center, the Marine Mammal Center, the Headlands Institute, the Golden Gate Youth Hostel, the Point Bonita YMCA and the Headlands Art Center (HAC). The Energy Center and Marine Mammal Center are responding directly to environmental factors of sun, wind and marine wildlife. The Youth Hostel, housed in one of the circa-

1905 officers' residences, offers casual visitors a place to spend the night. The Headlands Institute conducts residential field studies for public and private school students. Last year over 12,000 students visited the institute, lodging (for three to five nights) in converted army barracks at Fort Cronkhite. Director Steve Christiano and a staff of twelve teach the young visitors about local and regional ecology. The Art Center is a multi-disciplinary group that offers residency programs for local and national artists and hosts a series of exhibitions, lectures and symposia on art topics open to the public.

Each group has settled in the Headlands to pursue its particular purpose. Yet they share some fundamental common goals: to preserve the windswept beauty of the place and enhance the public's understanding, perception and enjoyment of it. The commonality of purpose the site induces is perhaps expressed most explicitly in a joint grant proposal submitted to the Buck Foundation in 1986. The proposal would have created a facility for the comprehensive study of resource management, centering on the social aspects of natural resources as well as practical problem solving. The educational potential of the place itself would have been highlighted, as designers and planners from here and abroad would have been invited to stay in residence at the Headlands. Of course, public outreach would have remained a key component. Although funding for the proposal was turned down,

the collective process of grant writing laid a foundation for the Park Partners to work together and share resources in the future.

The dialogue is in fact already open. Army historians brief artists and scientists on the military history of the area. Park Service naturalists give guided hikes, helping to orient the artists-in-residence to their new setting. Artists speak about their work to students staying at the Headlands Institute and are designing and building exhibits for the Energy and Resource Center. A guidebook to the Headlands, designed by the artists, will be published by the Art Center in 1988. The much-needed resource will highlight points of interest to visitors, bringing together information from a variety of sources, including historical photographs and writings.

The Headlands Art Center, under director Jennifer Dowley, has a strong commitment to orienting artists to the special qualities of the landscape and other features of the place. The specific intent is to allow and encourage artists to listen to, interact with and respond to the surroundings. In the words of the first HAC newsletter, the Art Center seeks "to explore and interpret the relationship between place and the creative process through the resource of the Marin Headlands." "Place: Exploring the Patterns That Connect," an HAC symposium held in November 1986, is one tangible example of this exploration. Sculptor George Trakas, architect and *Boston Globe*

3 Buildings 944 and 945, built by the Army in 1905, currently house the Headlands Art Center.

Photograph by Kyle Thayer

4 View from the Headlands Art Center oriented to the primeval beauty of the Marin Headlands, but close to the city as well.

Photograph by Ed Beyler



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5 Building 944 commands the Fort Barry parade grounds, now used as a playing field. Photograph by Ed Beyler

6 Officer's Mess Hall, East Wing, Building 944, renovated under direction of David Ireland for use as a lecture hall. Photograph by Henry Bowles

critic Robert Campbell, artist Leonard Hunter and former astronaut Rusty Schweickart were among the featured speakers. Hunter sums up the major theme: “Making connections . . . constitutes the primary relationship between place and the creative process. Artists and arts organizations are the facilitators, interpreters and connective links” in this process.¹

To inhabit means not only to dwell in or occupy a landscape, but implies that the landscape itself can dwell within the inhabitant, informing his or her sensitivity and sensibility. A series of remarkable transformations within Building 944 at the Headlands Art Center evokes the history of the site and

amplifies the connection with the land outside.

The results of David Ireland’s “recovery procedure” on the second floor of the building are perhaps the most permanent and subtle of the manipulations. Ireland’s careful uncovering of the original materials of the building—oak, maple, tin, plaster—long obscured under layers of paint—has given the center a focal point and a sense of home. The 650-square-foot Rodeo Room and the 200-square-foot East Wing are the stages on which the public life of the place unfolds. The Rodeo Room will function as a library/reading room and the East Wing serves as a public lecture hall. These rooms also embody a guiding



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philosophy of the Art Center: Listen to the site, take your clues from the qualities of the place. “Investigating and exploring are what is fascinating to me,” Ireland explains. “. . . looking and digging into something to see what might be there that is obscured by someone else’s hand, perhaps—I think that was largely the inspiration.”¹

The passage of time and the effects of place on the building are revealed and allowed expression. Stress cracks in the plaster caused by uneven foundation settlement were mythologized as maps of military strategy. Later the cracks were seen as “volunteers,” tangible evidence of the site’s dialogue with the building. The changing sense

of light and how it plays on the liberated interior surfaces were also conscious considerations in the recovery strategy.

Artist-in-residence Mark Thompson’s work with bees is another example of this site-building interdependence. A living hive placed in a second floor office has direct access to the outside. The bees come and go, absorbed in the business of collecting pollen and making honey. “It really is a parallel to what’s going on here,” says Ireland, who has come to admire Thompson’s work, “this collective gathering of energies for a common end.”⁴ The constant activity also reflects a disciplined “can-do” attitude reminiscent of

military hierarchy. The growing hive is the microcosmic crystallization of place. It becomes a central collection depot for the pollen gathered in forays into the Headlands. A special dance informs comrades where in the land the pollen is to be found.

The work of artist-in-residence Ned Kahn also relates to local natural phenomena. Since coming to the Headlands he has been inspired by the cycles of wind and fog that mark the area. His fog observatory contains a fog machine that produces a visual expression of the wind in a controlled environment. In addition, chairs are set up near the window of his West Wing studio so people can watch the afternoon



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7 The Rodeo Room, Building 944
 Photograph by Henry Bowles

fog roll up the valley. The smaller-scaled model inside is designed to increase visitors' awareness of the natural process going on outside. Kahn's work at the Headlands can be seen as an outgrowth of his sense of the site, but it also is related to his exhibition designs for the Exploratorium in San Francisco.

Amy Thayer's clay balls are another instance. As the school-age daughter of one of the artist/interns, she has had plenty of opportunities for creative exploration of the area. Not far from the Art Center she and her friend Liz Selvin came upon a clay bank freshly exposed by recent rains. Gathering a hunk in her hands, she worked it into a ball the size of a grapefruit. Liz's mother Nancy Selvin, potter and artist-intern, began using the local clay in her work. Amy's original ball of local clay, accompanied by written documentation of its creation, were shown at the center's exhibition and open house in March 1987.

The sonic qualities of the region are explored in two temporary installations by sound sculptor Bill Fontana. Microphones placed on the Farallone Islands, twenty miles from the Golden Gate, send audio signals to speakers in the Rodeo Room, creating a real-time audio portrait of the remote islands. The disembodied sounds of wind, waves, seals and a wide variety of coastal birds echo throughout the building. Another piece, set in the center's East Wing, is a sound portrait of the Golden Gate Bridge. Sounds of wind, the slowly shifting bridge deck and nearby foghorns are

transmitted simultaneously to the Headlands Art Center and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The piece plays with notions of “bridging” between an urban museum and a rural art center, even as its focus is the structure that geographically joins the two.

HAC’s current insistence on bringing pieces of the landscape into the building can be read as a sensitive response to the site, but not without ironic overtones. Visitors to the Headlands came in order to commune with the natural forces at work there. Yet much of the artwork produced so far at HAC appears as an abbreviated version of nature, a companion piece to the real thing happening outside. The irony is that sound, land, wind, fog and fauna are isolated from the whole and represented within the building so that we may learn to perceive them again. The artists would be quick to point out that venturing out into the land is the crucial step in reintegrating this renewed vision with the whole. To realize the full power of Amy’s clay piece, for instance, one must scrape the clay from one’s boots after a day’s hike in the hills. For Thompson’s apiary to really resonate, one must linger among the wildflowers bees love. The art ultimately points back to landscape, implicating and engaging its quiet power. In time, one hopes that the art will begin to move out into the landscape itself. Right now the landscape is seen as the touchstone of artistic endeavor and thus nearly perfect—not something anyone could improve upon.

Historically, artists’ attempts at site-specific sculpture in the Headlands have met with Park Service and public skepticism or outright rejection. A 1981 proposal for twelve projects at Battery Hill 129 was lost in a mass of bureaucratic red tape. The two site-specific artworks that were realized (by artists William Wiley and Gyorgy Laky) were soon defaced by self-righteous members of the public. Since then, the National Park Service has balked at allowing any artistic interventions in the land. This official skepticism may break down as the artists come to know the site more intimately. Changing the minds of vandals may prove to be more difficult.

But there seems to be a faith that when the time is right an appropriate artistic response will appear in the land, not as an intrusion but as a complement. The examples of artists bringing the landscape into the building is evidence that the landscape has begun to dwell within. This process would seem to be part of the essential groundwork for installing meaningful artwork outside of the buildings.

The sculptor Robert Irwin in his 1985 book *Being and Circumstance* proffers a useful definition of the site-conditioned or -determined aesthetic that the HAC seems to be working towards.

Here the sculptural response draws all of its cues (reasons for being) from its surroundings. This requires the process to begin with an intimate, hands-on



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reading of the site. This means sitting, watching and walking through the site, the surrounding areas . . . the city at large or the countryside.⁵

Depending on what one learns from this interaction with the site, Irwin continues, the “sculptural response” may be “monumental or ephemeral, aggressive or gentle, useful or useless, sculptural, architectural, or simply the planting of a tree, or maybe even doing nothing at all.”⁶ Thus far, in the Headlands doing nothing at all in the land has been seen as the appropriate response.

The flip side of the Marin Headlands is Candlestick Point Recreation Area, a windswept, rubble-strewn site on the southeast edge of San Francisco. This forlorn piece of landfill, currently used as overflow parking for the nearby Candlestick Park baseball stadium, borders Hunter’s Point, one of San Francisco’s poorest neighborhoods. (In contrast, the Headlands’ nearest neighbors are Sausalito and Mill Valley, two of Northern California’s most affluent communities.) While preservation—doing nothing at all—is appropriate for the Headlands, Candlestick Point is crying out for change. A park and picknicking area has already been created on the southern portion of the site, close to the bay. An ambitious state-sponsored cultural center, a collaboration among architect Mark Mack, landscape architect George Hargreaves and sculptor Doug Hollis, is slated for the site just north of the existing park.

An impromptu art park has sprung up north of the cultural center site, due largely to the efforts of Leonard Hunter, a teacher at San Francisco State University and HAC board member. David Ireland has erected a powerful gateway from the great chunks of concrete rubble that litter the site. John Roloff has created a boat of local wildflowers and volcanic stone that echoes the shipwrecks that were supposed to have occurred in the area at the end of the last century. Lisa Hein has fashioned provocative wedge-shaped ramps of sandbags that allow one to mount and meander through the tough rubble piles. The ensemble is exuberant, spirited and an appropriate response to the site. The sculpture takes its cues from the place, often using local materials. Where a gentle touch is the right move in the Headlands, the tougher, worked-over environment of Candlestick demands more physical, outdoor pieces.

Artists-in-residence at the Art Center should be encouraged to visit the Candlestick art park, both to enhance their understanding of the great contrasts of the San Francisco Bay Area, and, more specifically, to understand the unique qualities of the Headlands in terms of what it is not. This is apparently already happening, as evidenced by the facts that David Ireland has a foot in both places, and Doug Hollis and Leonard Hunter are Art Center board members.'

Taken together, the various multifaceted readings of the Marin

Headlands comprise a surprisingly balanced and complete view. The Art Center has one particular take, the Energy Center another, the Mammal Center another. While the power of the land is likely to stimulate even more cooperation among the organizations in the future, site visitors also have a crucial role to play in the equation. They must continue to come to the place, engage the artistic, scientific and educational facilities that have settled there and test this understanding in the land. Ideally, a renewed vision is then carried back into the life of the city itself.

Notes

- 1 John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 135.
- 2 Leonard Hunter, Unpublished transcript from the symposium "Place: Exploring the Patterns That Connect," Headlands Art Center (November 1986). Used with permission.
- 3 David Ireland, *Headlands Art Center* (Sausalito, 1986), vol. 2, no. 4, p. 2.
- 4 David Ireland, *Headlands Art Center* (Sausalito, 1987), vol. 2, no. 2, p. 6.
- 5 Robert Irwin, *Being and Circumstance* (Larkspur Landing, CA: The Lapin Press, 1985), p. 27.
- 6 Ibid., p. 27.

8 Boat sculpture by John Roloff,
Candlestick Point A World War II naval shipyard is visible in background.
Photograph by Kyle Thayer

9 Sculpture by Lisa Hein, Candlestick Point
Photograph by Kyle Thayer

To Rally Discussion

Change Of Footing, Change Of Venue

We have been used to thinking of our relation to landscapes as a horizontal affair. The American pioneer past is too close, the American ambition too grand not to conceive of simply walking out a rough hewn door to penetrate a wilderness of forest paths, out another door of grandeur to cultivate one's manor garden. This face-to-face connection to the landscape, on one's own—really a foot-to-foot control of the land around—once seemed proper or virtuous or both, according to one's rank. In time, it became acceptable to extend this virtue by rolling across vast terrain in covered vehicles, wagons or trains, "roomlets" with fabric or metal doors from which one could put one's foot down often enough to scale and control the landscapes around.

A strong distrust of urban configurations, which increased both architectural and human densities, threatened such individual, virtuous control of landscapes—thus, the popularity of the suburban house with its one-to-one, out-the-door-into-the-garden relationship. The same notion seems to lie behind the recent flurry of art parks. There, strolling from sculpture to environment to pit, we can meet the thoughts of others foot-to-foot. Earlier, the American cemetery tradition of rolling tombstoned lawns suggested that negotiating such landscape relationships would

gain us a more final landscape, a heavenly layout of lush gardens in which we might forever stroll.

But these heavens were not attained on foot. In art, souls or whole bodies were changed from one level to another by winged angels. Once off their feet, some wished to investigate more terrain with their own wings, and like Chagall, they dreamed of levitation. A higher vantage point reveals the ongoing dialogue between house and garden or house and street.

We commonly use pressurized boxes with metal wings to project ourselves from one landscape to another, speedily ignoring the greater area of land between the two ends. We stay in boxes, even ones that don't physically fly, designing simul-scapes. Our cottage computers can electronically simulate environments and landscapes that may move in any direction except the one in which we jog out the door onto a street or a mountain path.

There were earlier attempts to change the door-to-garden landscape relationship. Combinations we expected to see on the ground were elevated above us into the sky, certain and heavy in stone. In the cathedral at Laon, France, there are stone oxen thrusting inquisitively out of columniated stalls at the tops of the towers. The

beasts must be in the fields of heaven. To walk these particular fields requires real foot control to mount 280 steps from the base of the cathedral. But from the public paths of the town their startling appearance calls forth the legend that mysterious white oxen appeared in the nights during the construction of the cathedral, to fly up with the heavy stone while others slept. Sharing the view from below is a communal, public experience.

Today, our urban environment, which contains many of our public spaces, is marked by economically standardized boxes with poorly integrated landscapes, or worse, with none at all. These sins of omission and commission come from both individual carelessness and thoughtless design. Perhaps we must learn to replace the open fields and grand allees with small, intensely imagined places that can aerate urban densities. To make fully inhabited landscapes, we must design these landscapes to be both physically and visually shared by many people at many different times and from many different angles. Cultivating our own gardens may be the first step, but we need to engage the ascending path of imagination to secure communal landscapes that cannot be possessed by individual hands and feet.

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