

arcca

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REFLECT RENEW

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- * Transcending the Everyday
 - * St. Joseph of Arimathea
 - * Underground Romance

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Comment

"A Knowledge-Driven Profession"

(A Parable in Two Acts, inspired by sad tales at the AIA Knowledge Leadership Assembly, Claremont Hotel, Berkeley, Halloween 2003.)

Act One. *[Stage left: the office of Rupert Snoggins, AIA; center: the office of Periwinkle Jones, AIA; right: the office of Harrietta Woopcastle, AIA. As the lights come up, Rupert lifts his phone and dials. The instrument on Periwinkle's desk rings.]*

R.S.: Hi, Perry. Rupe Snoggins. How ya doin'?

P.J.: Great, Rupe, just great. What can I do for you?

R.S.: Well, Perry, in this town you're the waterproofing expert, and we've got a tough situation on our hands. I was thinkin' . . .

P.J.: Whoa, now, Rupe. That's our stock-in-trade. Surely your roofing guy can take care of it . . .

[Lights and sound fade. Lights come back up on Harrietta, dialing. Rupert answers.]

H.W.: Hey, Rupert. This is Harrietta Woopcastle. I see you got through discretionary review. That's terrific.

R.S.: Thanks. It was a tough sell, but that's what we do best.

H.W.: That's why I'm calling, Rupert. We're up against a bear of a neighborhood group.

R.S.: They sure can be difficult.

H.W.: You're not kidding. I was wondering, could you walk me through what you did?

R.S.: You know, I'd love to, but, you know, I'm just up to my ears over here, and . . .

[Fade. Lights come back up on Periwinkle, dialing. Harrietta's secretary answers.]

Secretary: Office of Harrietta Woopcastle.

P.J.: This is Periwinkle Jones. Is Ms. Woopcastle available?

Secretary: May I say why you're calling?

P.J.: Sure. I'm an architect here in the city, and I'm doing some work for Acme Brothers. I under-

stand you've worked for them before, and I'm having trouble understanding some of their concerns.

Secretary: One moment, please. *[Pause; Secretary and Harrietta confer.]* I'm sorry, Mr. Jones; Ms. Woopcastle is in a meeting . . .

[Fade.]

Act Two. *[An elegant restaurant. Three smartly dressed business people enjoy a sumptuous dinner.]*

First Business Person: . . . boy, do I. That Snoggins character doesn't know a damned thing about waterproofing. The place leaks like a sieve!

Second B.P.: I don't know how these people stay in business. Woopcastle made such a mess of our neighborhood process, I thought we'd never get through entitlement.

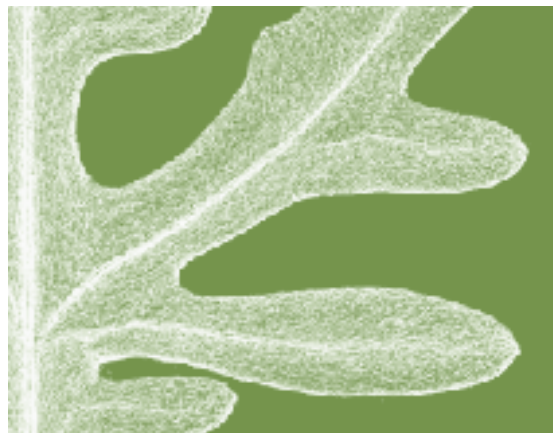
Third B.P.: That's why we don't use her anymore. But I have to tell you, this Jones guy's turning out to be every bit as bad. He just doesn't get our business, at all. Architects!

First B.P.: Like I say, none of 'em knows a damn thing . . .

[Lights lower as conversation fades to indistinct grumble. Curtain.] ●

Tim Culvahouse, AIA, editor

Correction: **arcCA** apologizes for misspelling the name of Jonathan Segal, FAIA, on page 27 of O3.3, "Done Good."



Contributors

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David C. Martin, FAIA, is design principal of Los Angeles-based AC Martin Partners, an integrated architecture, engineering, and planning firm. Founded in 1906 by Albert C. Martin, Sr., the firm continues to shape the Southern California region, creating user-focused, innovative, sustainable, and beautiful landmarks for the 21st century. David Martin wishes to thank Elizabeth Meyer for her assistance on this article.

Seth Paré-Mayer is a student in the Bachelor of Architecture program at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he serves as caretaker for Poly Canyon, a nine-acre outdoor experimental construction laboratory. For nearly four decades, Poly Canyon has been the host site for structures designed and built mostly by students of the College of Architecture and Environmental Design. For more information, see www.caed.calpoly.edu/polycanyon.

Derek Parker, FAIA, RIBA, FACHA, is the chairman and a senior principal at Anshen + Allen, where he has worked for over forty years. He received his Diploma in Architecture from the Birmingham School of Architecture in England. The focus of his career has been the planning and design of health-care and academic research facilities worldwide. He is a member of the Design Review Committee at the University of California, an associate professor at the University of Hawaii, and a member of the Board on Infrastructure of the National Academies.

Lynne D. Reynolds, AIAS, is a student in the architecture program at California College of the Arts who spent most of the previous two decades as a professional photographer of furnishings and interiors. She is a frequent contributor to **arcCA**.

Naomi Sachs received her Master of Landscape Architecture at UC Berkeley. In 1999, she founded the Restorative Landscapes Database (www.healinglandscapes.org) an online resource on healing gardens and related topics. She is principal of Sachs Design, a design and consulting company with an emphasis on therapeutic landscapes.

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D. J. Waldie, public information officer for the City of Lakewood, California, is the author of two books: *Holy Land: a Suburban Memoir* and *Real City: Downtown Los Angeles*.

Amber Whiteside holds a BA in Religious Studies from Whittier College and a Master of Visual Criticism from California College of the Arts.

Correspondence

The results of the poll indicating only 9% of architects rated design as the prime quality of a successful practice is shocking. Your Comment (03.2, "Global Practice") was right on. Where have we gone wrong? I am embarrassed to belong to an organization that has gone so far astray that only a handful recognizes the true meaning of being a professional.

**George Bissell, FAIA
Newport Beach**

I would like to commend you for dedicating an issue of **arcCA** to architectural practices in different parts of the world (03.2, "Global Practice"). As a historian of the profession, I strongly believe in the benefit of understanding the plurality of ways architecture could be practiced. As an American architect with prior experience outside the US, I believe this understanding can be achieved by comparing architectural practices in different countries.

I was born and received my architectural education in the former Soviet Union. I left in 1987 and began to explore the profession in America. Soon, in the wake of the reform in Russia, I began to think that, in order to organize their work in the new economic conditions, architects in Russia should study architectural practices in America. After two recent visits to Russia, however, I now think that American architects could also learn from their Russian counterparts. During these visits, I found a profession whose small size and strong traditions of peer evaluation help gain a high degree of social respect and decent income.

My first visit to Russia took place thirteen years after my emigration. It was the year of the twentieth anniversary of my graduation from the Moscow Architectural Institute (MArchI), and I decided to participate in the class reunion. After years of working, studying, and teaching in America, my original appreciation of my *alma mater* grew even stronger. Once a famous school of the artistic *avant-garde*, known by many under its original name of Vkhutemas, it went through a period of abrupt changes between the 1930s and 1960s. By the late 1970s, however, various forces converged there to form a strange and wonderfully stimulating educational environment. It included elements of the Beaux-Arts education, a renewal of

some of the Vkhutemas's experiments, and a growing interest in late modern architecture and urbanism in the West.

The Institute has been the country's main architectural school. Its graduates, 300 per year, constituted almost half of the young architects joining the work force each year. How this number of architects could satisfy the needs of a country the size of the former Soviet Union is beyond the scope of my letter. Suffice is to say that, during the Soviet era, the demand for architectural services remained quite low. However, when this demand grew significantly after the fall of the communist regime, architects were able to negotiate relatively decent rates of compensation for their work. Architects, it seems, became the only exception to the general trend in Russian society, in which the economic upheavals hit quite hard most of the country's professionals. While my former schoolmates' lifestyle could be called comfortable only by Russian standards, it stands in sharp contrast to both the extravagant wealth of the handful of "New Russians" and the appalling poverty of large portions of the population.

The small size of the profession and the unique place that the MArchI has played in its formation have had another important consequence. Respect gained within its walls in the late 1970s and the 1980s turned out to be a source of success in the 2000s. Granted, leading architectural offices and individual designers had to win their strong position in fierce economic competition. Yet the respect from the professional community also remains a strong factor. Significantly, quite a few possibilities have recently opened to those who earned the esteem of their colleagues through their alternative practices, such as teaching at the Institute and producing conceptual designs. The fact that a number of former "paper architects" can today take on building design practices seems especially promising. Altogether, the above conditions translate into an environment in which the excellence of design becomes a strong factor of business and economic success.

My short account does not reflect many problems that individual Russian architects and the profession in general are facing. These problems are numerous, and I would not advise my American colleagues to rush to open offices in Moscow. However, one important lesson could already be learned from Russia. The recent experience of Russian architects shows that remaining relatively small in size and developing stronger means of internal validation of its members are among the most important keys to a profession's success.

**Alexander (Sasha) Ortenberg, AIA, SAH, ASAI
Marina, California
www.ortenbergarchitecture.com**

Transcending the Everyday:



It is a simple,
yet

profoundly

spiritual,

experience.

The Journey Toward Sacred Spaces

David C. Martin, FAIA

On sparsely inhabited Santa Cruz Island off the Southern California coast, there exists a 1900s rancho complete with vineyard, ranch house, and a small, simple chapel. Once a year, a group arrives on the island to celebrate the Feast of the Holy Cross—the island's namesake. Worshippers arrive on boats and small planes and walk from the shore or dirt landing strip in quiet excitement. In front of the small chapel, a guitarist, singer, altar boy, and priest lead the procession inside. Not all visitors can fit. Some sit on the surrounding hill. Mass is celebrated with singing and music. After the celebration, a procession leads to the ranch house for a fiesta, which culminates this very special day. It is a simple, yet profoundly spiritual, experience.

The worshippers' spiritual journey begins the moment they decide to participate in the annual ritual—when their mind first anticipates the experience of spiritual reflection and renewal. The preparation, physical journey, and layering of rituals add to the experience of moving away from the everyday world into a spiritual realm. This sacred journey, incorporating elements of ritual, procession, surprise, and transformation, is central to the design of spiritual spaces.

THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Recently, I was speaking with a film-director friend about the narrative nature of architecture. "It's like creating a film," he

said. "You don't want to reveal the plot at the beginning. Instead, you want to reveal the story slowly, building up to the climax and conclusion, and leaving your audience with a message." Like the creation of a film, the successful creation of a space that transcends the everyday depends on this narrative build-up.

The spiritual journey pertains to all building scales and religious traditions. It is just as relevant for a cathedral, a mosque, a synagogue, or a simple suburban church. A great example of the journey is the Church of the Nativity in Rancho Santa Fe, designed by Moore Ruble Yudell. From the thick front gate, through the landscaped gathering space, into the worship space, the transformative journey is exquisitely choreographed using space, form, detail, and material.

In too many other instances, designers overlook the importance of the transformative journey. Often, the architecture gets simplified into a question of site planning. First, locate the parking lot, then place the vernacular form of the church, mosque, or synagogue. It is as if the designers expect that the space will evoke a spiritual response simply because it is labeled "church," or crowned with a steeple.

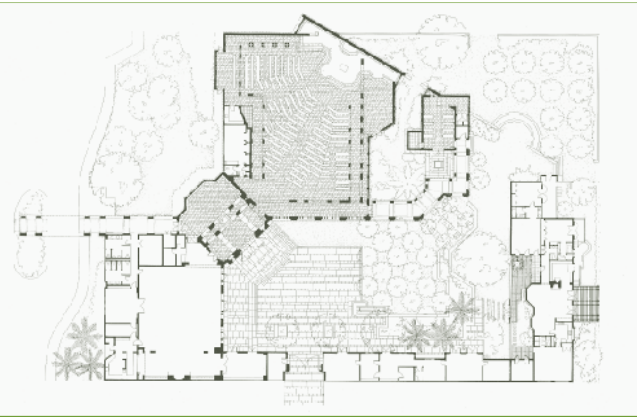
The architect must strive to accomplish more. Trained to design spaces that evoke emotional response, the architect must draw upon the tools of design to create spaces that speak without words. Spaces that, through their spatial



the Angles Cathedral in downtown Los Angeles, Raphael Moneo extends this procession to dramatic effect, elongating the ambulatory to emphasize the worshiper's journey.

In the suburban context of the Padre Serra Parish Church in Camarillo, California, we orchestrated the procession to begin while still in the car—passing through the specially designed decorative gates. The journey continues as visitors enter on foot into the lushly landscaped plaza, filled with native plants that evoke a Southern California version of the Garden of Eden. The landscaping becomes more lush and the church's color palette more vibrant as worshipers move through the courtyard and into the sanctuary. In the soon-to-be-completed All Faith's Chapel at Chapman University in Orange, California, we employ a dramatic use of natural elements to define the procession space. Because of the inclusive mission of this chapel, the design equates nature with the spiritual in lieu of religious symbols.

Within the transformative journey, the architect must create spaces that encourage and celebrate the communal aspect of religious worship. A communal space can be as simple as the landscaped courtyard at the Padre Serra Church, which encourages congregants to share the experience of moving into the spiritual world together. Or, the communal space can be an integral part of the worship space itself. When the Vatican II liturgy recognized the importance of the shared experience of worship in the Catholic faith, it encouraged the movement of the altar to the center of the worship space (a



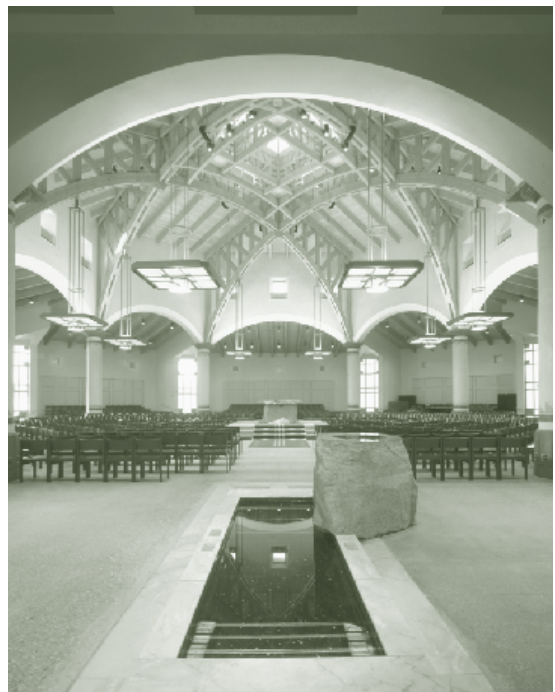
Church of the Nativity, Moore Ruble Yudell

vocabulary, can evoke emotions that ennoble the human spirit and provide the proper physical and symbolic setting for worship and reflection. The architect must use these elements to choreograph the sublime experience and bring the worshipper into the spiritual realm.

SENSE OF PLACE

In designing the Church of Our Lady Queen of Angels in Newport Beach, we were confronted with a suburban community filled with new, quickly constructed structures that are mostly lacking a sense of permanence. We designed the church with thick walls punched with holes for doors and windows and partition walls that act like heavy slabs, forcing visitors to move around them in order to enter the worship space. The solidity of the form adds import and awe, identifying the church as a permanent entity within the community. The spiritual journey continues as the worshipper begins the procession toward the sanctuary. That procession elevates the individual's mental and emotional state, engaging both the senses and spirit.

In designing this path, the architect must still answer the somewhat banal questions of parking capacity, and egress. But the poetic essence of the procession is attained by choosing materials, colors, textures, sounds, smells, and light effects that reach the soul and initiate its sublime transformation. In the recently completed Our Lady of



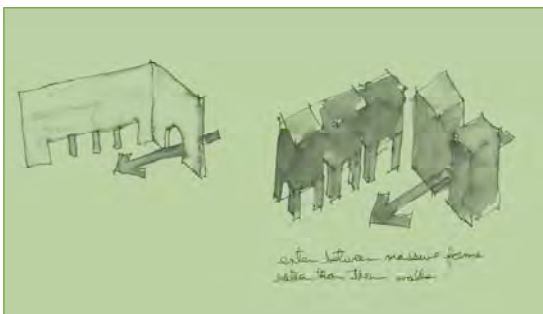
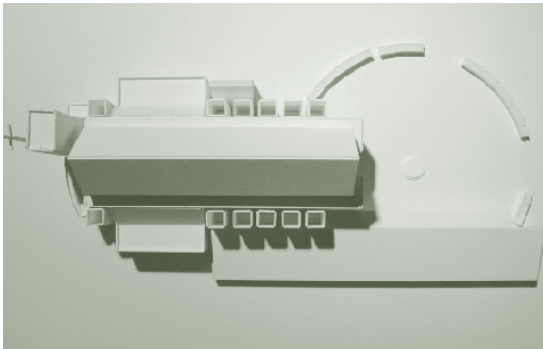
Padre Serra Parish Church, AC Martin Partners

change that we first incorporated into the plan of the Padre Serra Church). In the All Faith's Chapel, the multi-denominational aspect of the space necessitated a flexible layout, but also one that would allow several religious communities to come together. To create that flexibility, we designed a main worship space as well as a small reservation chapel for individual worship.

LIGHTING THE WAY

Since the earliest construction of churches, the manipulation of light has been a prime concern of religious architecture, its effects often being as important as the physical forms it illuminates. Light and enlightenment are the most persistent of sacred and religious metaphors. The potential of modulating light and space can be one of the architect's most powerful tools in evoking reverence, love, and awe, while at the same time creating the appropriate drama and focus, as well as the variegated textures so important in religious spaces. Le Corbusier, in describing his chapel of Notre-Dame-du-Haut at Ronchamp, said, "The key is light, light illuminates shapes and shapes have an emotional power."

Daylight should be specifically designed and directed with the precision and attention to detail often reserved for artificial light. At Eero Saarinen's Chapel at MIT, the sense of mystery comes from the dramatic, yet simple, lighting effect. In the Chapman Chapel, we took great pains to create a balance between the desire for a bright, light-



Our Lady Queen of Angels, Newport Beach, AC Martin Partners



Chapman University All Faith's Chapel, AC Martin Partners

filled, and airy feeling, and the need to create an awe-inspiring effect. Too much natural light would neutralize the effect of the multi-colored, punched-out windows. The solution was to work with artist Nori Sato to create side windows that use light as an artistic material. Even the ambient light in the small chapel is specifically designed to filter through translucent panels, so that the wall appears to glow.

There is a long tradition of the integration of art into sacred spaces, but, in the middle part of the 20th century, that tradition began to be stripped away. Modernism separated the artists from the institutions of religion. Art is now becoming reinvested into these spaces. The artistic vision not only moves a space beyond the realm of the everyday, but also elevates its ability to stir the soul. Art activates the surfaces and forms, creating possibilities for storytelling and symbolism as well as visual poetry. For centuries, religious facilities have been among the world's greatest patrons of the arts. If art is the pathway to liturgy and through art we become more in touch with God, than art must indeed be an inseparable part of the architecture of the church.

Sacred spaces—whether of religious, artistic, or natural circumstances—are places that touch our soul. The architect has both the responsibility and the creative opportunity to infuse these spaces with a sense of joy, reverence, and reflection and to create a journey that transcends the everyday world. ●



In Encino, **Light, More Light**

First Presbyterian Church Abramson Teiger Architects

D. J. Waldie

Walk north on Balboa Boulevard in the San Fernando Valley from the commercial hurly-burly of Ventura, and in 200 feet you're deep in the suburban grid that consumed square miles of chicken ranches and orchards in the 1950s. Today's landscape looks domesticated, but the light is for a desert, simplifying everything into glare or shadow. By 10 a.m. on this Sunday morning in August, half the slightly milky sky is incandescent and the valley heat is already a material presence. What you need is shelter. What's available is mostly nostalgic, given that virtually everyone here was, less than sixty years ago, an immigrant, full of longing.

The campus of the First Presbyterian Church, a block up from Ventura Boulevard, replicates the immigrants' longing and some of their provisional remedies. The original church from 1945 is a vaguely English, half-timbered shed constructed, one parishioner told me, with the help of the actor Edward Everett Horton. Attached to it is a more substantial block of classrooms and offices that implies an abbey cloister. The second church, put up in 1954, suggests its European roots with a shorthand of historical detail applied to the exterior of the simple A-frame structure. There are hundreds of churches like this in the city's mid-century

neighborhoods, evoking comfortable traditions on a framework of everyday modernism.

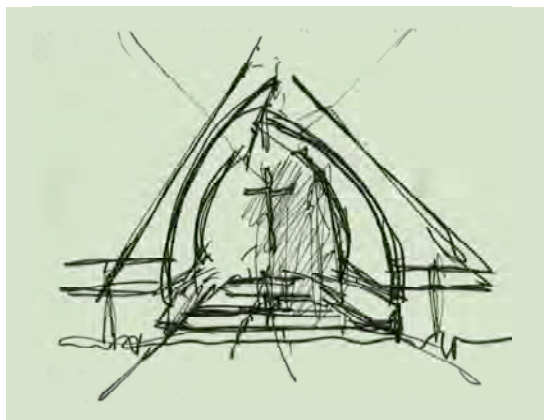
But it's too bright to stand outside considering this utilitarian coupling. You want shade.

Step inside the newly remodeled church and what you get is more light. It's light with a remarkable emotional range and almost always presented—even when it's artificial—with great subtlety and sophistication. It's never unmediated light. It's light that's passed through something, been cut by asymmetrical openings, allowed to screen on a tilted and curving panel, been half blocked by the overlapping edge of another, let to gather in irregular polygons from fourteen mostly unseen skylights, been reflected onto white oak pews and absorbed by the deep gray of the carpeting and the concrete chancel platform. It's as if you had taken a platinum photographic print and enlarged it to wall size blocks of tones graduating from not exactly white to not quite black.

And this pervasive, ambivalent light isn't static. The succession of cool tones modulates minute by minute as the morning sun climbs and follows the ridge of the roof, turning the recesses of the east facing chancel wall into a gallery of monochrome abstractions. A comparable experience—interior light as theology—is in the church paintings of the early 17th century Dutch artist Pieter Jansz Saenrendam. He caught the pale northern light pouring over Gothic pillars and arches from the clear windowpanes that had replaced the stained glass in the stripped and whitewashed naves of newly Calvinist cathedrals. Saenrendam painted the undecieving light of reform.

The members of the First Presbyterian Church are still getting used to its appearance in their California neighborhood. When an usher, working the unfamiliar controls before the service, extinguishes the spotlights that define the altar in front of the chancel and the opalescent plaster of the 16-foot-high cross that projects into it, the remaining daylight is much less metaphoric. It's more nuanced in shades of gray, more capable of affirming the physical qualities of the plaster-over-sheetrock of the large side panels, more architectural, and even more mysterious (and less liturgical) in the way it compels attention to its passage over the planes and angles of the chancel wall.

Whatever it might be as neutral space for manipulating light, this sanctuary is a machine for praying in a particular way. With the spotlights back on



and the service begun, the worship space reorganizes around the hulk of the black grand piano accompanying the hymn tunes, the six-foot-high video projection screen displaying the order of today's service, and Pastor Malcolm Laing standing at the ambo reading aloud the words of the Gospel. However diminished, there is a parallel text in the light animating the white panels that bend and clasp over his head.

This luminous church interior deservedly earned the AIACC Honor Award for Design in 2003. Apart from the astonishing beauty realized by principal architects Trevor Abramson and Douglas Teiger, with Michael Cranfill, architect in charge of design, the work took just seven months to complete and cost less than \$900,000.

The optimistic lesson of the First Presbyterian Church is that a lyrical, humane modernism is a fit alternative to nostalgia in making sacred spaces in southern California. Hundreds of suburban churches from the 1950s, crowded with shadows, await the new enlightenment. ●

First Presbyterian Church, Encino, remodeled by Abramson Teiger Architects in 2003, with lighting consultant Bridget Williams, structural engineer Soly Yamini & Associates, and acoustical engineer Martin Newson & Associates. General contracting by AJ Engineering & Construction Company.



Delicate Insertion

Hidden Villa Youth Hostel & Summer Camp

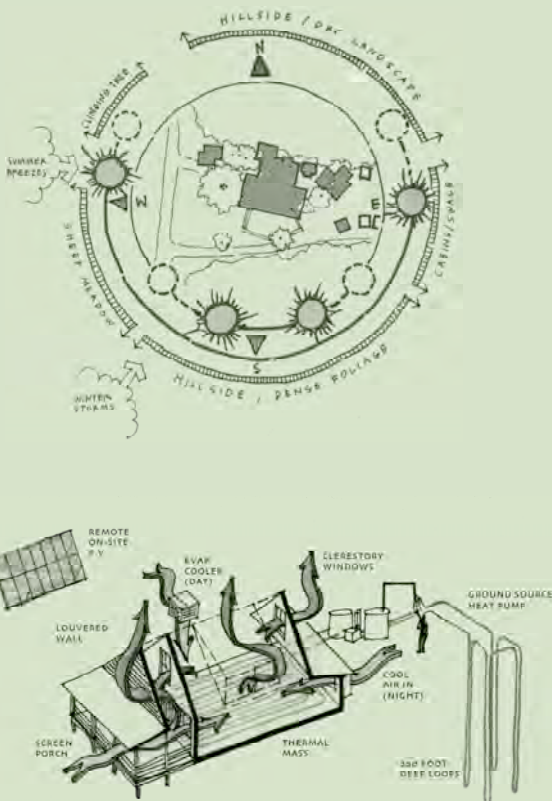
Arkin Tilt Architects

Seth Paré-Mayer

There comes a time in the life of a facility when the old can no longer support current needs. It was at one of these times that architects David Arkin and Annie Tilt of Berkeley were commissioned to replace the existing gathering hall at Hidden Villa Youth Hostel and Summer Camp in Los Altos Hills. Their effort was recognized by an award of merit from the AIACC. Hidden Villa resides on a 1,600 acre parcel in the heart of Silicon Valley. Although it is surrounded by a pace of life that mimics the technology invented nearby, at Hidden Villa time seems to slow.

Hidden Villa was started by the progressive Duveneck family in 1945 as the first multi-ethnic camp west of the Mississippi. The original gathering hall was designed by the Duveneck's daughter, Liz Duveneck Dana, in 1947. It was from this and other existing buildings that the vernacular precedents for the new building were taken. Materials from the beloved old hall were salvaged and used in the construction of the new hall.

The new gathering hall is a delicate, vernacularly responsive insertion into the existing fabric of the camp, and it is carefully sited. The old hall sat squarely in the middle of the mouth of a narrow, west-east





canyon. The new hall has been thoughtfully nestled up to the north side of the canyon mouth. Cabins occupy the converging canyon behind the hall.

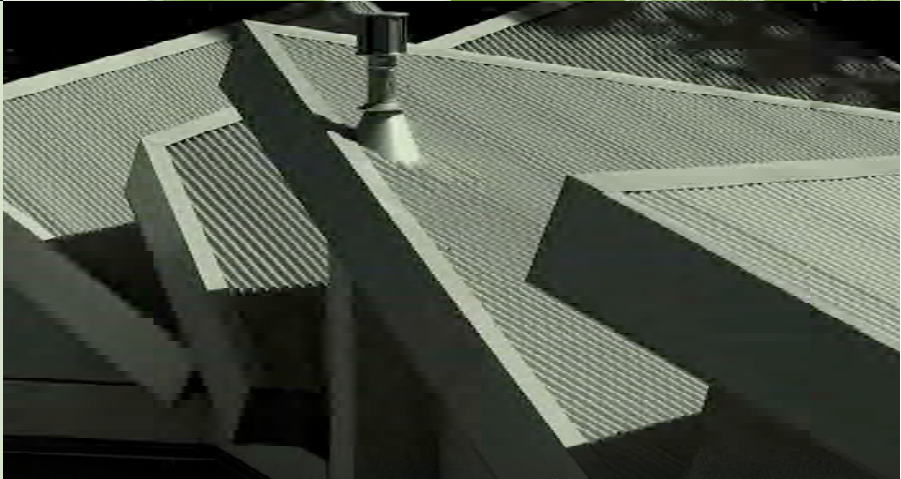
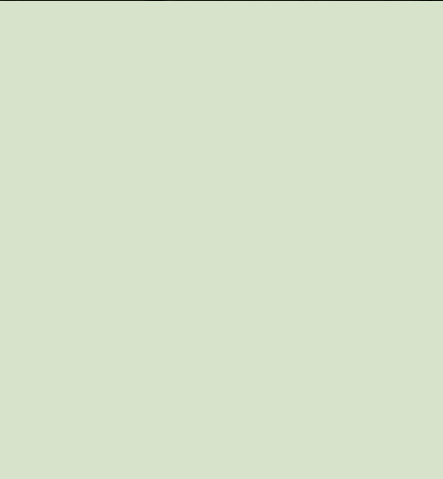
The effects of this seemingly simple move are immense. Views from the cabins have been opened up past the hall, around the “Old Climbing Tree,” over the organic farm, and out to the mountains to the west, which separate Hidden Villa from the Pacific Coast. The new building enjoys better solar exposure during the winter months. High, south-facing windows gather the low winter sun and direct it to storage in a concrete capped, rammed earth wall.

The mouth of the canyon itself has been opened up into an informal gathering space. This space is defined by the hall to the north, the canyon wall to the south, the cabins to the east, and the views to the west. Pockets off this space contain a wooden bench, a low concrete retaining wall, and a path through the garden. While the whole of this space links the meeting hall to the cabins, the Old Climbing Tree, and the organic garden, these pockets provide places of mediated intimacy. While not entirely secluded, they offer moments of respite from the closeness of the communal environment.

Conversely, the meeting hall brings people together. The large, open plan affords a congregational setting for meals and activities. The high, vaulted ceilings with beautiful exposed trusses increase the feeling of openness. Details of construction contribute to a personal, human scale within this volume. The rammed earth wall, opposite the wall leading outdoors, has warmly colored striations. Beginning with brick red and blending upward into a concrete gray, the color added to the earth gathered from Nuns Canyon in Sonoma warms an otherwise potentially chilly spatial boundary.

Much of the exterior cladding of the old meeting hall was reused as wainscoting in the main space of the new hall. The main doors of the old hall were recycled, built into a custom frame, which allows the four doors to fold open like shoji screens, effectively merging the main space of the new hall with its screened porch.

The natural materials and earth colored tones applied to them keep the mass of the hall from overpowering the delicacy of the canyon. This new addition, combining physical openness with pockets of intimacy, tightens the weave of the fabric that is the heart of Hidden Villa. ●



Order, Rhythm, and Form:

The Orchard for Artists at Villa Montalvo

Lynne D. Reynolds

“To find my home in one sentence, concise, as if
hammered in metal. Not to enchant anybody. Not
to earn a lasting name in posterity. An unnamed
need for order, for rhythm, for form, which three
words are opposed to chaos and nothingness.”

– Czesław Miłosz

American artists have, for the last hundred years, been the beneficiaries of the legacy of late Victorian era philanthropy. Starting in the late 19th century, large personal fortunes led to the creation of private foundations that bestowed gifts totaling countless millions of dollars in support of the arts, as well as other special interests. The immense personal wealth that enabled men of industry and those with inherited means to acquire large tracts of land upon which they could build Renaissance palazzos, Tuscan villas, and Rhinelandish castles eventually shaped the settings for the first residential communities of artists in the country. The three oldest programs in the United States—The MacDowell Colony in Petersborough, New Hampshire; Yaddo in Saratoga Springs, New York; and Villa Montalvo in Saratoga, California—were each the result of philanthropy coupled with a strong affinity for the arts.

The MacDowell Colony, founded by Edward MacDowell and his wife Marian, was the first of these institutions. MacDowell, a European-educated composer (Debussy was a fellow student in Paris), the first head of the music department at Columbia University, and the founder of the American Academy in Rome, purchased a 450-acre farm in 1896 as a retreat for his family away from the heat and congestion of New York City summers. Ten years after its acquisition, MacDowell began to visualize a community that would hold

the same promise of respite for other artists that he felt had enabled him to work more productively and that would permit them to work within a milieu rife with creativity, stimulated by the company and conversation of other artists. By 1907, the first artists were at MacDowell.

An idea born in response to immense personal tragedy generated what has long been a premier destination for artists of all kinds, the second major arts colony in the United States—Yaddo. The 300-acre estate, named for one of their children's inability to pronounce the word "shadow", was the home of financier Spencer Trask and his wife Katrina, herself a poet. The deaths of their four young children left the Trasks without direct heirs, and so they chose to bestow the mansion and grounds of their estate upon "future generations of painters, writers, composers, and other creative artists." Although incorporated as an arts foundation in 1900, it wasn't until 1926 that Yaddo welcomed the first group of artists.

In 1911, on the other side of the country, a 175-acre parcel tucked into a canyon in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains, would become the estate called Villa Montalvo. The name was chosen in homage to the 16th century Spanish author Garcia Ordonez de Montalvo, who had coined the name "California" in his novel *Las Sergas de Esplandian*. Constructed in the Mediterranean style, its villa was to be used as a country home for the honorable James D. Phelan. William Curlett was chosen as the architect, and, after his death, his son Alex—with his partner Charles Gottschalk—saw to the completion of the sandstone mansion. The landscape designer of Golden Gate Park, John McLaren, laid out the estate grounds.

James Duval Phelan—considered the most Californian of Californians—was born in 1861 in San Francisco. His father, who had been a Forty-Niner, founded the First National Gold Bank of California. Phelan was educated entirely in San Francisco, earning an A.B. degree from the University of San Francisco and later obtaining a degree in law from the University of California. After law school, he joined the firm of Phelan & Son, assuming responsibility for the running of several banks following the death of his father in 1892. He served three two-year terms as mayor of San Francisco and became the first popularly elected U.S. Senator from California in 1913, serving one six-year term.

During Phelan's lifetime, his home was the frequent setting for arts-related events, reflective of his lifelong interest in the work of artists, musicians, and writers. Upon his death in 1930, he bequeathed Villa Montalvo to the people of California to be used as "a public park open under reasonable restrictions" and "as far as possible for the development of art, literature, music, and architecture." The San Francisco Art Association

was designated to oversee administration of the trust.

Using the MacDowell Colony as a model, Anne Dodge Bailhache, acting as director of Montalvo for the San Francisco Art Association, established Villa Montalvo's first artists' residency community in 1939. She set up the original artists' studios. Due to an unfortunate lack of fiscal support from the San Francisco Art Association, she was largely unsuccessful in attempting to create a viable artists' community and finally was forced to give up the attempt. In 1953, after long years of neglect, legal conflicts, and the recognition that the art association lacked the resources to accomplish Senator Phelan's objectives, the trusteeship of the estate was turned over to the local, newly formed Montalvo Association. By this time, the villa and its grounds had fallen into grim repair and would have undoubtedly further deteriorated but for a small group of resolute women who had formed the Montalvo Service Group. With the aid of this cadre of volunteers (which grew to number 200 members), the abandoned artists' cottages were resuscitated and decades of grassroots fundraising began.

The current era of corporate sponsorship and large-scale fund-raising has brought to Villa Montalvo a more impressive agenda than any previously attempted, one aimed at putting the arts center into a position of greater prominence and influence. Under the stewardship of Executive Director Elizabeth Challener, the arts center has engaged in an aggressive five-year plan, part of which will enhance the reputation of its artists' residency program and attract a greater number of noteworthy figures.

As part of these endeavors, a striking collection of modernist buildings has supplanted a former plum orchard on the estate grounds. Designed by five well-respected California architectural practices collaborating with artists of their choice, The Orchard for Artists is the standard bearer among the efforts being made at the new Montalvo. The design of the ten artists' cottages brought together Adèle Naudé Santos and Associates with artist Doug Hollis, Hodgetts + Fung Design Associates with playwright Lee Breuer, Jim Jennings with poet Czeslaw Milosz and sculptor Richard Serra, MACKArchitect(s) with artist David Ireland, and Daniel Solomon of Solomon, Inc. with composer Patrick Gleeson and artist Nellie King Solomon. Almost without exception, the architect/artist pairings went far beyond what normally counts as collaboration between the two professions; the input of the artists was considered both before and during the design phase. The artists' studios were divided into either writing, visual arts, or composers' spaces. Those functions were then refined by each set of collaborators into spaces that might constitute the ideal working area for the specific discipline. The cottage designs encompass the



range of current modernist practice: there are barn, shed, broken box, and curvilinear forms here. Some are brilliantly colored, others are entirely industrial in aspect. Their materials are basic—concrete block, plywood, stucco, and, in Jim Jennings' design, structural glass.

Coordinating the project for Villa Montalvo and responsible for the design of the Commons Building was Portland architect Donald Stastny of StastnyBrun Architects. Stastny collaborated with his long-time friend, artist Tad Savinar. Of their work together, Stastny says, "One could argue who drew what line, but the collaboration provided the foundations of the place." He says that their 'invention,' the Commons Building (it did not appear in the original design program), was conceived by both of them as the place "where the serendipitous meeting could spawn creativity and friendship." It is meant to operate as a magnet, drawing the artists out of their studios and into a communal space for the sharing of meals, conversation, and—perhaps—collaboration.

Stastny says that his role as project advisor required him to "nurture and facilitate an on-going collaboration between the architects and artists while the designs evolved." He was "entrusted by everyone to maintain the intent of each of the designs, while trying to make the project work economically." One of the unfortunate casualties of his obligatory vigilance was the bulk of the "green" part of the design program. The Orchard project had intended to incorporate a large number of sustainable features into the designs of all of the cottages; these elements were for the most part jettisoned,

owing to unforeseen budgetary constraints. While some few of the environmentally responsible features more integral to the design of the structures did make the cut, what remains of that part of the program are chiefly the gains obtained through thoughtful site orientation, natural ventilation, and the maximum use of daylight for illumination. Adding a further measure of environmental sensitivity, concrete for the project was mixed with flyash and all paints were specified to be low VOC.

What binds the project as a whole together is the unfailingly high level of design. From the ebullient twin waves of Adèle Naudé Santos's roofs to Jim Jennings's elegant geometry, each architect/artist partnership took on the task of creating workspace that simply, brilliantly, does so much more than craft boxes in which to paint or write or compose. Mark Mack's variation on Peter Blake and Jackson Pollack's pinwheel design; Hodgetts & Fung's crow's nest, catwalk, and spiral stair; Daniel Solomon's tuneable composer's rooms; Donald Stastny's deft balancing of the historic/contemporary and public/private all contribute to the awareness that something wonderful has been attempted and accomplished here. The collaborators' solutions are thoughtful, distinctive, and idiosyncratic in the extreme. Within the confines of a small footprint (averaging 600-900 square feet), the architects and artists have fashioned places that defy easily calculable space, one's senses putting the lie to any notions about limitedness. Instead, inside each studio, there is the expansiveness and exhilaration that come from illumination falling from a height and the unimpeded movement of air.

Despite the cutbacks caused by budget constraints, the price tag for excellence in this case is nonetheless rather dear: the project is expected to cost in the neighborhood of ten million dollars. As Gordon Knox, the new director of the residency program described its goal, "The real work of an artist's life [is] the creative process" and not the final product, so it must be that the work of a world-class arts center is not about the money that they spend but how it is spent. A long look at the eleven buildings for The Orchard for Artists sitting upon the sun-washed hillside confirms the reasonableness of the expenditure. It is a bold and amazing concept that has been realized in a truly splendid way.

The most fitting summation of the Villa Montalvo architect/artist collaboration may be Dan Solomon's: "It is always nice to be asked to a party with good company. This was a very good company of old friends, with a gracious host. What's not to feel good?" ●

For more information and images, go to www.villamontalvo.org/OrchardGallery.htm.



St. Joseph of Arimathea

William Dutcher, FAIA

Amber Whiteside

Named for the quiet believer who, witnessing Jesus's crucifixion, boldly took down the tortured body to protect it from further desecration, the St. Joseph of Arimathea chapel in Berkeley is a small, unassuming structure, within which are found exquisite moments of beauty and strength.

The chapel, built in 1975, functions as the nucleus of the St. Joseph of Arimathea Anglican Theological College. Bishop Morse, who commissioned architect William Dutcher to design the chapel, continues to oversee the seminary's service to the Anglican Province of Christ the King.

Flanked by what look to be fraternity houses (the more pristine of which is actually the seminarians' living quarters) on the busy intersection of Durant and Bowditch, the chapel easily goes unnoticed. It is only upon rounding in toward the recessed entrance that a crucifix and bright Byzantine door come into view, and the vaulted roof is hinted at behind the rust-toned stucco exterior.

In response to its situation amidst the bohemian buzz of Berkeley, the chapel conceals itself from casual passersby. The plain exterior wall protects its traditions—both liturgical and aesthetic.

Indeed, Bishop Morse proudly touts his seminary as “Fort Defiance”—St. Joseph’s belongs to a diocese that holds firm to religious roots in an ever-changing cultural climate. The Bishop says he doesn’t have a problem with people not accepting this faith (he jokes that they might even get to heaven faster!), but if they are going to accept it, they must accept every aspect of it wholly—not change it or water it down to make it more palatable.

This is an environment built to support those who dedicate their lives to one eternal faith—and thus to experience the chapel requires commitment. It is impossible to glean anything from outside. To know the chapel’s beauty, one must enter into the building fully, bodily—to listen to the choir sing in Latin, see the beams of sunlight stream into the room, and smell the incense.

The front doors of the chapel enter into a narrow narthex, its only adornment an image of the Madonna and Child by a famed Russian iconist in the tradition of “Our Lady of Vladimir.” From the narthex, the nave opens fifty feet long and twenty feet wide, crowned by a vaulted ceiling with low clerestory windows. The wood slats of the ceiling are stained in alternating red tones that complement the warmly patterned tile floor. It is the ceiling that the music director Robert Melhuish credits for the chapel’s near-perfect acoustics.

A beautifully crafted, pale wood organ, on long-term loan from UC Berkeley, so dominates the west end of the nave that it appears at first to be built in. Against the opposing east wall, the altar is raised three steps, with a single candle suspended from the ceiling and a crucifix on the wall.

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The weather-worn wooden crucifix was carved 400 years ago by an unknown German peasant and brought to the chapel by a friend of Bishop Morse. The crucifix’s understated beauty—and simultaneous authority as the only icon adorning the nave—makes it a dramatic presence.

Four backless wooden pews are set up for services. It is then, sitting among an intimate group of believers, that the sensory promises of this small chapel are realized. During daytime prayers and Mass, incense dances through the shards of light that pierce through the clerestory windows. At candle-lit evening Compline services, St. Joseph’s celebrated acoustics carry the soaring voices of the choir, followed by a featured musician on the organ, guitar or other instrument.

The beauty of St. Joseph of Arimathea is not apparent from the outside. There are no steeples or stained glass windows or ornate trimmings—and it is precisely such a seeming lack of design on the exterior that makes the interior so powerful. Like the linen-lined tomb in which St. Joseph of Arimathea laid the body of Jesus to rest, the St. Joseph of Arimathea chapel is designed wholly for the people who enter into it. ●



Building the Reflective Space, Building a Practice

A Conversation

Derek Parker, FAIA, RIBA, and Jeff Logan, AIA

Derek Parker, Chairman of the Board of Anshen + Allen, joined the practice in 1960. Jeff Logan, Director of Design, joined the firm in 1995. Historically, the firm is well known for being one of the practices that designed Eichler homes and some important modernist churches. More recently, they have been recognized for their academic and healthcare work. We asked them to sit down and discuss the practice and how spaces of reflection found their way into the firm's work over three generations.



(above) Silverstone House, Taxco, Mexico – The interior features local materials and concrete beams. Skylights give the space a church-like quality.

(opposite) Silverstone House, Taxco, Mexico - Exterior

HISTORY & CORE IDEAS

JL: *Derek, I want to reflect on the broader background of this practice. How does an approach to design move through three generations of practice?*

DP: I have to go back to the beginning. Bob Anshen and Steve Allen were trained at Penn, and they thought their curriculum was dated and artificial. Although they received “mentions” in the Beaux Arts method, they reacted against it. Their own inclination was that how you build should be the key design determinant, within the modernist context. They were focused on revealing the method of construction and solving the problem.

You can see this clearly in the early small buildings. For example, at the Silverstone House in Mexico, they worked with what was available. The concrete beams were poured on the floor and lifted onto stone columns. They used materials that were locally available, like stone and wood—very little was brought in.

JL: *What about some of the architectural influences?*

DP: Frank Lloyd Wright was a strong influence in terms of relating to place and materials. I think Bob and Steve would say they were rationalists. They were not modern in the inter-

national modern sense. You see, the International Style, if we mean the strict European modernism, was like the Beaux Arts, in that it could be transplanted anywhere. Bob and Steve were more sensitive to the particulars of time and place.

I would say that they were modernists in that they wanted to determine the most efficient way to solve the problem. Even if it was unsaid. There was a sophisticated sensibility in terms of how things are formed and the expressiveness of unique elements.

JL: *Do you think the connection to landscape, the temperate California climate relaxed their modernism?*

DP: Perhaps. Their being in California was an accident. When they graduated, they received travel scholarships and went to Europe and Asia. They settled in San Francisco because they had taken a freighter here from Japan. They needed jobs to pay their bar bill and get their luggage back. So the climate was just one of many influences. Serendipity played a part too.

JL: *As it does in architecture. Looking at this early work, I would say they were focused on the tectonics of architecture as well as the poetics. They seem to have developed an architecture around place, site, materials, and technology. When they started, they were applying these attitudes to relatively small projects. But over the history of the practice those ideas have been expanded to larger projects that are more technologically complicated. How did this shift take place?*

DP: In lots of ways, really. At its core is the approach I just mentioned, which is flexible. Over time, the people working here were interested in shifting from the small societal unit of the family to working with larger societal institutions.

FIRM GROWTH/PROTECTING THE MAVERICK

JL: *But what was their process?*

DP: Bob and Steve created an often contentious dialogue between two people. Steve was thoughtful, a beautiful draftsman. Bob was the talker, an idea a minute. They would fight; they scrapped a lot. It was a noisy drafting room. They would not accept a concept until both of them agreed. It all came from an argumentative discourse. That was their process. We've extended that dialogue, but structured it within a constructive design review process so everybody can participate. What that means internally is that no one person dominates. There are groups of teams. The culture of the office is that we all have a voice—we cannot predict where good ideas will come from.

JL: *This isn't a practice that foregrounds a single designer.*

DP: No. In the beginning it was really Bob and Steve. When Bob died in 1964, Steve created a space for me to move into. The process became less argumentative, but Steve still encouraged debate. I did not replace Bob; the process changed. There has to be a lot of space, space for change, for new voices.

JL: *I want to understand how the design principles evolved over time. How do you think the firm has maintained the core design values but encouraged change?*

DP: There was not an epiphany or a great plan. I think it is a self-selecting kind of culture. Big egos don't do well here, but mavericks do. In this culture we protect the maverick. As the firm grows, we are running a big business; certain things have to be done in a systematic way. But if you are not careful you squeeze out the mavericks and they are at the heart of the firm. They have to be nurtured. The mavericks are the ones who find the poetic spaces.



Eichler Atrium – The atrium offers the family an unprogrammed space of reflection or entertainment. Often lushly planted, these atria connect with mature landscaping outside.

CONNECTING HISTORY TO TODAY

JL: *It is interesting that Bob Anshen was writing in the pages of Arts & Architecture in the 1940s about systematizing the construction of housing, and sixty years later we are still discussing it in the pages of Dwell. Other than nostalgia for the 1950s, what do you think is the lasting architectural legacy of the Eichlers?*



Central Methodist Church, Stockton, California - Continuous concrete bents frame the chapel, community room, and outdoor space.

DP: The Eichlers are a direct result of what we are talking about. They are part of the mainstream of the firm's evolution. They are not a branch, but a result of the core principles. How could you build affordable housing for GIs in this climate using the available technology? It is a societal question and a technological question. What should a modern house be like? They produced a simple, clean house that was in some ways mass produced, not factory-built, but a systematic building process on the sites. They were connected to the landscape; they were housing for California, not New England.

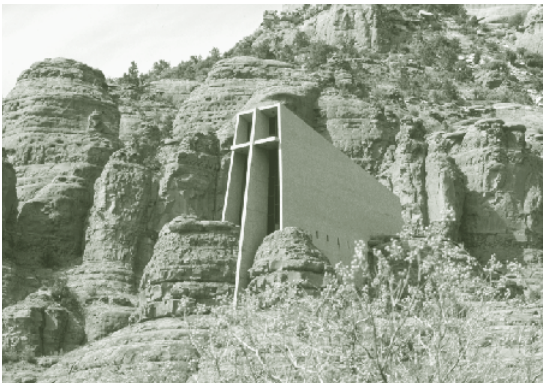
JL: *Can you comment on the nature of the Eichler atrium? There is a precedent in the Spanish courtyards, but the Eichler atrium is smaller—in the scale of the composition, and often without any identifiable purpose, except as a landscaped space, a sort of quiet moment.*

DP: We never talked about that, but I think you are right. A private space for the family and a place for them to entertain. I doubt it was in the program. We still use atria today as an organizational element in our academic and healthcare work. It is a place for meeting, it works much as it did in the house—the light filled center. Rarely is there a line item in the program for that kind of space.

One of the partners from our Los Angeles office used to say that the most memorable places are in the gross and not in the net. They are rarely in the program; they evolve from how you connect the program. At the Central Methodist Church in Stockton those dramatic, but cost-effective, concrete bents provide the structure for the chapel, the community room, and the undefined congregating space in between. Sometimes, outside of an urban context, the poetic moment can be seen from afar. There is great clarity in the solution for the chapel at Sedona. Although distinct from the two buttes, it has an inevitability about it. I think this idea is one of the links between the early work, like the Eichlers, and the work we are doing today.



Central Methodist Church, Stockton, California



Chapel of the Holy Cross, Sedona, Arizona – Siting the chapel between two buttes gives the exterior a poetic quality.

CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE

JL: *But the times are so different. How do you see these early principles extended?*

DP: At your recent Diablo Valley College, you see an economy of means, every essential element becomes part of the architectural expression and that undefined space is in the generous circulation.

Yes, the times are more complicated. We are also more sophisticated in things like lighting and acoustics, mechanical systems, and the incorporation of technologies that did not exist when Bob and Steve were alive. Another aspect that has changed is the recognition that interior architecture is integral to a successful building. The interior and exterior are equal—it's all one project. This is especially important in healthcare and academic research environments. The reality is that most of our users—students, patients, researchers, medical professionals—spend most of their time indoors, and they are profoundly affected by those spaces.

Part of the skill of the architect is to create some-



Diablo Valley College – The essential elements of the structure are part of the architectural expression.

thing out of nothing—like a good chef. It's in the amounts and the sequences. That hasn't changed.

JL: *Given the complexity of the large healthcare and education projects, a strong simple idea is central to the development of the architecture. But over time I think it becomes a war of attrition. For example, in healthcare architecture there are so many forces to contend with. If the idea is not clean and simple, it will be challenged and compromised.*

DP: I can describe my favorite buildings in a sentence. The idea of the building should be clear and unambiguous. It is very important to have that idea. Then you can maintain that, protect it, and grow it, and don't let people nibble away at it. You have to be able to answer the question: What is the big idea?

JL: *I agree, but it happens at different scales. For example, at the Laguna Honda Hospital Replacement Project, all 1,200 residents will have their own window with a connection to the outside—that is a big idea at the scale of the individual. When*



Diablo Valley College

designing the site plan, we had to deal with a number of existing buildings that will be in use until the new buildings are completed and occupied. But you don't want a site plan shaped by the residual effect of soon-to-be demolished buildings—that's the wrong big idea. In this case the site plan, when built out, maintains an existing strong idea—the residential units on the knolls. The linking buildings will house most of the community functions—they are a metaphorical and physical link—are placed in the valley. The pieces will read as distinct but interdependent. You need clarity at the macro scale, as well as the individual scale.

DP: At the individual scale, light is important for quality of life. At the end of a multi-year process, we are going to be able to say something simple. At Laguna Honda everybody has a window. This was under attack almost daily for two years. We stuck to the idea.

LOOKING BACK/CONCLUSION

JL: *Looking back at the practice, what would you have done differently?*

DP: I would have emphasized our connections to the academic community earlier. You seem to be correcting that. My mentors were really Bob and Steve, but yours are more related to your academic experience.

JL: *The kind of modernism that I was drawn to was not so much a stylistic one as a social one. That came from Berkeley, and I suppose from Harvard, from Maki and Moneo. Fragmented buildings or buildings that are formed largely by aesthetic forces outside the challenge of the project—that is not what interests me.*

DP: We had no training in the social sciences. My thesis was a humongous block of apartments like Unité d'Habitation. The tenants would have been criminals in a month! The firm's strength has been in projects that have some social context. You know John Dewey said something like "Health is the first liberty." If we can raise healthy kids we can educate them. Children are the intellectual capital of society. If adults are healthy, with their basic needs met, they can participate freely in a democratic society. The architect has a central role to play, especially in healthcare, education, research, and working conditions. Our clients are motivated because they are doing something important, something that contributes to the public good. We believe that architecture can help, whether we are healing people or educating them. ●



Down by the River

Like

Thoreau,

we seek nature,

in search

of physical,

spiritual

or emotional

renewal

Alan A. Loomis

Every weekend, thousands of Southern Californians head for the hills. They head for the San Gabriels in Angeles National Forest, for the Santa Monicas in Griffith Park. In the mountains surrounding the city, Angelenos seek escape from the city's smog, noise, and congestion. Like Thoreau, we seek nature, in search of physical, spiritual or emotional renewal. Our identification of nature as "out there," away from the city, is as old as Virgil's *Eclogues*.

During the winter, monsoon storm waters cascade out of these mountains and their picturesque *arroyos* into the valleys and coastal plains. Historically, these floodwaters overwhelmed the usually dry channel of the Los Angeles River, spreading across much of what today constitutes the urbanized area of greater Los Angeles. Following the disastrous flood of 1938, the Army Corps of Engineers fixed the river's course in concrete channels, in what remains one of the largest public works projects west of the Mississippi. The result is a river that looks more like an empty freeway than the "beautiful, limpid little stream" William Mulholland described in 1877. Today, the river is a largely forgotten landscape, except for the occasional appearance in movies

River Channel Through Downtown



Glendale Narrows

(*Them!*, *Grease*, *Terminator 2*) and storm coverage newscasts (“Rain Pounds the Southland”). Perhaps for those who appreciate the minimalist sculptures of Donald Judd, Richard Serra, or Robert Smithson, the concrete river channel has a certain stark beauty. Like an enormous work of land art, the wide, vacant, abstract space of the river is a silent void in the middle of the city, whose emptiness signifies a form of spiritualism. For most of us, however, the Los Angeles River—one of the most environmentally degraded and maligned rivers in the country—is a most unlikely place to seek nature. Yet if we value nature in the mountains, why not also in the city? What hope is there that the Los Angeles River might be perceived as a natural landscape, with meaning for the individual and body politic?

Although most of the river is encased in concrete, sections of it have a more river-like appearance. A thicket of sycamores and cattails grows in the Glendale Narrows, the eight miles between Griffith and Elysian Parks, where the high water table forced the Corps to accept cobblestones and sand instead of concrete as the river bottom. With the

scenic hills of Griffith Park as a backdrop, it is possible here to imagine what the historic landscape of the river looked like, notwithstanding sloped concrete embankments and the noise from the adjacent 5 freeway. Here, organizations like North East Trees have pioneered a series of pocket parks, employing local artists and at-risk youth. Located in odd, left-over spaces between the public works flood control fences, private property, and the concrete embankments, these parks demonstrate that no site is too small for river greening. These parks—just big enough for one or two benches—are scaled to the individual or small groups. One, a passive fitness course, is a linear series of shaded stops, each with a plaque describing a yoga position. Other sites, like Rattlesnake Park in Frogtown and Anza Picnic Area at Los Feliz Boulevard, are simply landscaped gateways to the river, literally marked with formal gates and wildlife sculptures. These parks are a threshold between the landscape of the city and the landscape of the river, and they have introduced many people to the river. They have helped people appreciate the river’s beauty and demonstrated its recreational potential and value as a public space within the city. Most importantly, these pocket parks are showcases for other, larger, potential river restoration projects.

Just downriver from the Glendale Narrows, construction is scheduled to begin on Confluence Park, at the intersection of the Los Angeles River and the Arroyo Seco, under the 5 and 110 freeways. Where today there is an industrialized parking lot for County and CalTrans trucks, river advocates see the hub of a future 51-mile long L.A. River Greenway. This is river central—from here, gardens and paths will reach north through the Glendale Narrows up to the San Fernando Valley, northeast to Pasadena via the Arroyo Seco, and south to Downtown and the working class cities of south Los Angeles. Reclaiming the confluence site is not merely a park-building exercise; it is as an effort to renew communities' connections to each other. It is also an attempt to renew the city’s historic connection to place: the confluence was the only site in the region where a year-round supply of water could be located, the impetus for founding El Pueblo de Los Angeles downhill in 1798. At Confluence Park, the real ambitions of river restoration become evident—hopes that greening the river will not only produce bike paths and shaded

benches, but also create physical and psychic links among neighborhoods, history, and nature.

Currently, local community groups and the City are working with State Parks to create two large urban parks from abandoned rail yards adjacent to the river. At Chinatown Yard (long known as the Cornfield), just downstream from the confluence, the connection to the river is of high symbolic and historic significance, since it is here that the Zanja Madre, the original aqueduct, delivered river water to the pueblo and its agricultural fields. Taylor Yard, upstream from the confluence in the Glendale Narrows, features over two miles of river frontage. Conceptual drawings suggest breaching the concrete walls to create sixty acres of wetlands, in addition to soccer fields and other normative park amenities. Both sites will create significant recreation areas for crowded neighborhoods with a shortage of parks and public space. But more importantly, both projects are underway because river groups joined with broad-based community coalitions to resist typical industrial development schemes. At the Cornfield and Taylor Yards, the river became a common umbrella for groups committed to historic preservation, ecological restoration, watershed management, and social jus-



River Channel at the Confluence



Cornfield Yard, looking north towards Broadway Bridge

tice. The Los Angeles River has become a “civic” space, gathering the city’s diverse populace.

The Taylor Yard project additionally indicates that the most ambitious plans for the river aim to restore the river as a productive landscape—to create multi-functional public spaces that integrate flood-control engineering, recreation fields, and wildlife habitat. Thus far, new parks along the Los Angeles River have been on the river, but not “of” the river—they are essentially river-overlooks, located atop the concrete embankments. If the Taylor Yard project is successful, it will be the first of the new parks to physically engage the river’s ecology and merge it with the public life of the city. The yearly cycle of water in the river will flow in and out of the park, renewing its landscape. It will begin to renew the relationship between the ecological and civic life of the region, a relationship that arguably has been lost since the Americanization of Southern California.

The non-profit Friends of the L.A. River (FoLAR) recently unveiled similar plans for the Union Pacific Yard just east of downtown L.A. Developed by students from Harvard’s Landscape Architecture program, these conceptual studies propose strategies ranging from diversion channels to temporary dams to create ponds, lakes, and new wetlands in what are some of the most industrialized areas in the city. If such strategies are implemented, they will be the most dramatic attempts to integrate the ecology of the river with the neighborhoods and districts adjacent to the river channel. The prospect of river-nourished parks, community gardens, recreation trails, fishing ponds, and even beaches running along the east edge of downtown requires a major leap of imagination. Yet this is the vision of FoLAR and other environmental groups in the Los Angeles region. They imagine a future in which environmental restoration of the river also gives it a public face, civic presence, and cultural meaning.

Today’s pocket parks on the Los Angeles River are portals onto tomorrow’s restored ecology, revived neighborhoods, and renewed city. They are glimpses of an urban landscape where the river not only connects the mountains and the sea, but also neighborhoods and citizens. They suggest a city where the cycles of the natural world have presence, value, and meaning in public life—where the expression of the *genius loci* and the civic realm are one in the same. ●



Healing LANDSCAPES

Naomi Sachs

“Our rooms will descend close to the ground and the garden will become an integral part of the house. The distinction between the indoors and the out-of-doors will disappear.”

— Rudolph M. Schindler, 1926

Even a sleeping porch, in the right context, can be a healing garden. When the San Juan Regional Medical Center in Farmington, New Mexico wanted to expand their facility, they hired a firm specializing in healthcare design. A nurse in one of the planning meetings described an ongoing problem with the Navajo staff, who often refused to enter a room in which a patient had died. Many Navajo, whose reservation is just west of Farmington, believe that if a person dies in an enclosed area such as a patient room or a hogan, the person's spirit becomes trapped in that space. A hogan would often be abandoned if someone died inside, and might even be burned down to free the spirit. While abandoning or burning down each room after a patient's death was not an option, building an outdoor area onto each room was, and so the architects incorporated sleeping porches into the design. The architects also hired a landscape architect, a horticulturist, and consultants from the company Healing Landscapes as part of their team early in the design process. In addition to sleeping porches off



(above) Cancer Center at St. Vincent's Hospital, Santa Fe-Sachs Design

(opposite) Marin Cancer Center, Greenbrae - Delaney, Cochran, & Castillo

every patient room, the team is designing a healing garden that will be physically accessible from the entrance, the main waiting area, and the cafeteria, and visible from many of the patient rooms and staff offices

This story is remarkable because the architects assumed that the entire hospital campus—not just the building, but the whole property—should be conducive to healing. In a recent article for *Healthcare Design*, James Burnett talks about what he calls “mindful design,” in which restorative space is not confined just to a courtyard or rooftop garden, but is instead integrated throughout the site. “Why not make the entry sequence to a healthcare facility a healing experience? Could the concept of mindful design permeate the entire healthcare campus, including the full integration of all interior and exterior spaces? When is the last time you experienced a healing parking lot, a healing arrival court, a healing waiting room, or a healing cafeteria or dining terrace?” In California, several healthcare facilities have used this idea of mindful design. One excellent example is the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, conceived to feel less like a hospital and more like a retreat. The gardens—and there are gardens throughout the site—are only part of the design, which as a whole reflects deep care for the individuals whom the hospital serves, by respecting and utilizing the surrounding landscape.

Thus, a broad definition of healing gardens includes the entire healthcare facility, inside and out, as a fully cohesive restorative experience. An even broader definition of healing gardens includes places outside the healthcare setting. The Vietnam Memorial, the Golden Gate Park AIDS Memorial Grove, the San Francisco Garden Project, and Marcia Donahue’s Our Own Stuff Gallery, a residential garden open to the public, are all pertinent examples of therapeutic landscapes. Each of these places seems to be imbued with a kind of magic that works its way into the visitor, making the visiting experience more than the sum of its parts. Like any good healing garden, these are places for contemplation, inspiration, and renewal. If we do broaden our definition to include such sites, they can inform our design of the landscape within healthcare institutions as well.

Of course, private residential gardens can be healing gardens, too. A plethora of books has been published recently on the subject of garden as sanctuary, natural healer, balm for our stressed-out twenty-first century lives. Still, there is a distinction to be made between healing gardens for all and healing gardens for people with compromised health. We might call the former “wellness gardens” since they are designed to help well people stay healthy. A kind of preventative medicine, if you will. In public healthcare, however, the design process must be undertaken even more carefully with the user in mind,

preferably based on sound research and observation, hence the term “research-based healthcare design.”

My own work has focused mostly on gardens in the healthcare setting, and people often ask me to define “healing garden” in that context: “Does the ‘healing’ come from medicinal plants, or the act of gardening, or just being in nature...and can’t any garden be a healing garden?” Healing garden, therapeutic landscape, restorative landscape, wellness garden—all of these terms describe outdoor spaces that, at the very least, facilitate a sense of well-being. In healthcare institutions, a healing garden is an antidote to the antiseptic medical facility, which for many of us—patients, visitors, and staff alike—epitomizes our fears of sickness and death. A healing garden is a place for people to go, outside of the confines of the building, to get away. Away from the squeak of nurses’ shoes, the smell of disinfectant, and the flicker of fluorescent lights. Away from other patients and hospital staff. A healing garden is a place to be alone or with family and friends, to think more clearly, or to be distracted; to sit, walk, maybe even run and play, where the surroundings remind us that there is life beyond hospital walls. A healing garden also reminds us that death is part of a natural cycle, which makes our own mortality seem a little less frightening. But most of all, a healing garden is about life and living.

In California alone, dozens of healthcare facilities, including general hospitals, children’s hospitals, nursing homes, Alzheimer’s treatment homes, psychiatric hospitals, and hospices have incorporated healing gardens for the benefit of patients, visitors, and staff. California is rich in examples of what I call passive healing gardens, where the primary goal is just to be in the garden. The healing garden at the University of California, Davis Medical Center (Sacramento) is another good example of utilizing the entire site. Instead of building a garden strictly for hospital users, the Medical Center worked with an adjacent elementary school to create a shared four-acre nature preserve. People from the Medical Center and the elementary school all use the paths, outdoor classroom, wildlife pond, and seating areas, which act as medical, educational, and of course environmental resources. The Healing Garden at the Marin General Hospital’s Outpatient Medical Building (Greenbrae), is one of the best-publicized healing gardens to date. Topher Delaney converted what had been a “left-over space” into a meditation garden after she survived breast cancer. The small space is filled with plants and a fountain that people can see through the Oncology Department’s large windows. Available at the garden’s entry is a lovingly designed handout that describes the plants in the garden, many of which have medicinal qualities. At the opposite end of the spectrum is the Leichtag Family Healing Garden at the San

Diego Children's Hospital by the landscape architecture firm Delaney, Cochran, & Castillo. As the name implies, this garden was designed specifically for children and its theme is action (and distraction) rather than meditation and contemplation. Bright colors, animal sculptures, and a variety of paths and play areas encourage kids and their parents to explore, run around, and discover the many whimsical details. The garden has been somewhat controversial, criticized primarily for a dearth of plant material and quiet spaces for those who do not wish to play. Nevertheless, it is a refreshing change from most children's hospitals, where the designers seem not to have been informed about the age of their principal clientele.

A smaller number of gardens have been designed for patients to take a more dynamic role in the therapeutic process. These "active healing gardens" are designed specifically for physical rehabilitation and usually incorporate horticultural therapy into their program. Horticultural therapy combines aspects of occupational therapy and physical therapy to aid in clients' recovery in an outdoor setting. Whether they are actually gardening (watering, weeding, and working with plants) or using the garden as a space to try walking, sitting, talking, and performing other difficult recovery tasks, patients respond extremely well to this kind of therapy. Some gardens are a combination of active and passive. While some users are passing time in the garden waiting for test results or eating lunch, others are working with a speech therapist, learning to talk again by discussing the plant material around them.

Whether active, passive, or a combination, most successful healing gardens have some common characteristics that are based on research about what people respond to best. Of course, safety and accessibility are paramount in the health-care environment, and are (or should be) taken into account. To use just one example, hospitals and nursing homes usually build paths with concrete, which is colored to reduce glare, because it is one of the easiest and safest walking surfaces available (just try rolling a wheelchair or IV pole over gravel). In terms of people's preferences, one of the most important characteristics of a healing garden is greenery. People respond well to lush gardens bursting with life. Some other common elements of restorative landscapes are a "homelike" atmosphere (one that feels more like a modest private residence and less like a sleek corporate headquarters); a variety of places to sit and walk (sun and shade, private and public, large open spaces and quiet, intimate spaces); curvilinear shapes and soft surfaces; and the sound and sight of running water.

As healing gardens gain popularity and enter the mainstream, one of the challenges designers face is how to keep them from becoming pre-packaged, soulless theme gardens. How can we base our designs on sound research without



San Diego Children's Hospital, San Diego - Delaney, Cochran, & Castillo

running through a checklist that makes cookie-cutter healing gardens that no longer heal? Can we keep each design fresh, inspired, and compassionate and follow the research and recommendations? A lot of healthy dialogue is taking place about who should design restorative landscapes—should they have some sort of certificate, should they sign some kind of healing garden Hippocratic Oath? To think of the many gardens that would not have been built because the designer lacked the necessary credentials is to realize that such an exclusive approach will not work. These are just some of the questions with which those involved in research-based healthcare design have been grappling.

Architects are clearly an important part of the ongoing discussion about healing gardens. Their understanding of how space, light, color, and materials affect people's state of mind is indispensable knowledge. Today's architects have been profoundly influenced by their predecessors, many of whom were intent on blurring the distinction between inside and outside spaces long before the term healing gardens was ever uttered. Classic examples that spring to mind are Fallingwater, the Farnsworth House, and the Case Study houses. If architects can use that same respect for, and letting in of, nature for an institutional setting, we'll be able to design places where, when the time comes, we'll feel that much better about sending our loved ones, our friends, even ourselves. ●

[See Resource List, page 51.](#)



Underground Romance:

The Forestiere Gardens

Fresno

Paul Halajian, AIA

THE IMMIGRANT STORY

Every city in America has special places that tell stories of extraordinary lives unfolded along the path that connects the past to the present. From the foundation of this country to the beginning of the twenty-first century, people have left their nation of origin to cross some formidable body of water in hopes of a “better life” than the one foreseen at home. They have emigrated from every continent to settle here, their influence binding thousands of cities into the one nation called America. Their journeys—our journeys—tell unique stories of trial, failure, injustice, and success.

The American city is a living museum; a resilient organism that continues to grow and transform with each new generation. The genius of the American city, and America itself, is that our strength truly is given rise from our vulnerability. Immigrants are among some of the most vulnerable inhabitants of our cities. American cultural practices are foreign to them. Often they have no

representation, do not understand the language spoken here or the modalities and norms of commerce. Immigrants are often suspicious of the governmental mechanisms that are in place to protect them and provide opportunity. It’s difficult to be an immigrant.

Objects and places left behind by immigrants bring richness and beauty to our cities. These places tell American’s story vividly. Often, an intangible quality lays the groundwork for quiet reflection. Perhaps it is when one knows the story behind the place that it becomes personalized. Time and memory separate those of us who have grown up here immersed in “our culture” from those who journeyed here, leaving behind the places that held their ancestry. Our unfamiliarity with the condition of the world and the spirit of the times in which these places were built triggers reflection. As we grapple to comprehend what inspired our predecessors to build, we imagine ourselves placed in the midst of their journey. Reflection then engages our senses, memory, and values.

THE UNDERGROUND GARDENS

From its formative years, Fresno has been a launching point for immigrants drawn to America by the promise of land ownership. Over 100 languages are spoken in Fresno County, a testimony to the success of those who have come. The Forestiere Underground Gardens have long been a part of the collection of places that define Fresno through the power of the immigrant story. The Gardens are a place of solitude and reflection; reflection focused not on self, but on the past, the place, and the story.

Sadly, the Gardens are a forgotten place. Once surrounded by one of the world's largest fig orchards, its neighbors now include a freeway overpass, an In-N-Out Burger, and Harley-Davidson of Fresno. Yet a visit to this historic landmark continues to offer an encounter with the "inside" of the earth, time as recorded in layers of geographical history, and a conception of space for human dwelling that is alien to traditional western domestic patterns (although built by a "westerner"). The intertwined relationship that exists between the built and natural orders is reminiscent of Pueblo villages, where there is no separation between life and its spatial context.¹ The Gardens demonstrate how one man lived in spaces defined by the basic life-giving elements of earth, water, and sky.

Baldasare Forestiere, an Italian immigrant from Sicily, came to Fresno in 1900. Like countless other immigrants who came to California to farm, he soon realized that the land he purchased near the San Joaquin River was predominantly "hardpan," an impervious, naturally cemented soil layer that runs in veins of up to twenty feet in depth close to the surface throughout the Valley. Hardpan is not suitable for farming.

Given the blistering summer heat and the unsuitable soil conditions for farming, Forestiere turned his attention from livelihood to shelter. Rather than accept defeat by the hardpan, he imagined that living below the surface of the land could be more pleasant than living in a traditional wood framed structure, in which the temperature could exceed 100 degrees most days in the summer and dip below freezing on winter nights. Over the next 40 years of his life, Forestiere sculpted the layered subterranean strata with painterly vision and quixotic ingenuity. His gardens are a series of subterranean grottos, chambers, alcoves, and courtyards, which



Forestiere Underground Gardens, Fresno County



Le Corbusier's Monastery of La Tourette



Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West

feature varietal plantings, arbored grapes, and exotic fruit trees. The entire complex is approximately twenty-two feet below ground level and includes over 800 feet of circuitous pathways interconnecting living quarters with three large courtyards, an auto tunnel, and an aquarium of sorts.

ROMANCE

Romance is a powerful human force, combining thought, will, creativity, and action. In *A Psychology of Building*, Glenn Lym writes, “Day to day, year after year, we carry on a romance with space. This romance leads us to seek our place and build on the face of the Earth.”² The Underground Gardens began with Forestiere constructing a cellar to escape the Valley heat. His romance with the notion of carving negative space from within the earth to create pleasant shelter drove Forestiere to invent—and live in—an evolving experiment. In this place, enveloped by the earth, one begins to understand how romance with an idea is absolutely necessary for creative action.

The walls of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin West are embedded with massive stones serving as abstractions of the Arizona Desert. At the Underground Gardens, fractured hardpan cobbles from the excavation and indigenous cement were used to line walls, domes, Romanesque arches, and light shafts. Wright said of Taliesin that it belonged to the desert “... as though it had stood there during creation”.³ Taliesin embodies Wright’s dictum that building must be “of the site not on the site,” by both its formal gestures and its materiality. By comparison, the Gardens are not “of the site,” they *are* the site. A complete marriage unites dwelling and site by erasing the membrane between architectural space and nature. Both Taliesin and the Gardens achieve a sense of quietness and allow for reflection, because both respect the earth in a profound way. In both cases, the spoils of excavation are dignified as finish materials. They are what one touches and experiences, reinforcing human dependence on the natural order.

THE ARTIFACT

A sense of non-scientific experimentation fills each chamber. Forestiere placed conical light shafts off center from the respective chambers below. The incoming light bathes the cemented strata walls of

the chambers, highlighting the soft, variegated hues of the earth. By manipulating the diameter and the angle of the light shaft cut through the soil layers above, Forestiere varied the quality of natural light washing the surfaces below, animating the experience of each chamber. Darker passageways of differing proportions connect the cool, soothing chambers and courtyards. There is a theatrical quality about the way daylight is admitted in an approach reminiscent of Le Corbusier’s Monastery of La Tourette, where the manipulation of light is an integral component of the architecture.

The Gardens stand as something more than a truly vernacular architectural expression, unique to the place and spirit of the early twentieth century in the San Joaquin Valley. While visiting, one loses connections with the constant pressing of the here and now while being embraced by the earth, glimpsing the sky, and only sensing the muffled sound of the twenty-first century above. This is a place of reflection focused on history, not self. It focuses our view to an immigrant who did not accept defeat but invented a pure archetypal response to the challenge of living in a harsh environment.

For any artifact to be valued, it must be understood in the context of its meaning to those who created it. Each subsequent generation is enriched by the memory of those who have contributed to the advancement of culture through artifacts left as historical records. Baldasare Forestiere’s romance with his idea, creating a dwelling within the earth in direct response to the climate, remains as a vivid reminder of how the immigrant spirit has contributed to American culture. Fresno has forgotten the lesson taught by Forestiere’s experimentation. Perhaps we all need to seek out and find these artifacts in our communities, celebrate them, and reflect more on the immigrant stories that continue to teach us about romance. ●

1 Vincent Scully, *Pueblo: Mountain, Village, Dance* (New York: Viking Press, 1975), p. 9.

2 Glenn Robert Lym, *A Psychology of Building: How We Shape and Experience Our Structured Spaces* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980), p. 6.

3 Grant Hildebrand, *The Wright Space: Pattern and Meaning in Frank Lloyd Wright’s Houses* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1991) p. 115.



Under the Radar

Cintamani Monument, Jenner

Holt Hinshaw Architects with
Structural Design Engineers



Raj Sahai

Buddhism originated in India, about 300 BCE. Gautam, later to be given the title of Buddha, meaning “intellect,” was born a prince, but he abandoned that sheltered life in the peaceful Himalayan foothills to ponder life in the forests of Northern India. Years later, under a Banyan tree near the city of Varanasi, he is said to have attained enlightenment. Buddhist legacy includes many monuments in Asia, built well over a thousand years ago. So, when the design team met the Rinpoche, the head Lama from Tibet expressed his desire that this monument be designed and built to last a thousand years, following that tradition.

The Cintamani Monument site is located a few miles inland from the coast, south of the town of Jenner in Northern California along Highway 1. The large ranch, acquired by Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center, headed by the Rinpoche, is a very private area and is not open to the general public. It contains several beautiful buildings built by the group of followers, many of whom live there in a dormitory, following the tradition of monks who came from many countries to study Buddhism in a large campus in eastern India two thousand years back. This site is within two kilometers of the San Andreas Fault and is therefore subject to violent near-field shaking from time to time.

The Rinpoche provided the design team with a

sketch for the Cintamani Monument, which was then developed by Holt Hinshaw Architects and Structural Design Engineers. It is designed to be a bronze clad building. An octagon in plan, it is a 120-foot tall, single story structure with a ten-foot spire on top of the cone shaped top. It is seated on a concrete podium twelve feet above grade, surrounded by a colonnaded canopy. At the center of the fifty-foot plan width of the building is a twenty-five-foot tall bronze statue of Buddha seated in lotus position on a twelve-foot tall throne. Raj Sahai and Jack Laws, the two principals of San Francisco based Structural Design Engineers, decided early on that, to have a building last for a thousand years, it had to be base isolated. The criteria for earthquake ground motions development was set for an event with a thousand-year return period. There was one problem however: the Rinpoche asked that the Buddha not be isolated from the earth, since it is His attachment to Mother Earth that provides the calming influence She needs in this troubled time. So, here was the enigma: if the Buddha will calm Mother Earth, why design for earthquakes? Perhaps Mother Earth is disturbed in Her mind and not in Her body, whose shaking may be just what we humans need to know there are larger

forces in nature that we do not control. The design criteria for earthquake ground motions therefore had to stay.

The concrete base is an eighteen-foot tall structure, partially underground. It will be used to store ancient texts. Because it supports Buddha sitting on a throne, it is a fixed base structure, designed to survive the earthquake forces generated from the thousand-year event. It has reinforced concrete pilasters five feet thick to support the eight, steel braced frame columns on Friction Pendulum Isolators, which will allow the shell to sway horizontally up to twenty inches in any direction during a major earthquake. The canopy outside the main building is also framed with steel, hung from the building frame, and supported at the outer perimeter by sixteen columns, which in turn are supported on smaller isolators. A steel framed floor with metal deck and concrete topping slab ties all the isolators together. The isolators are built of steel and have a very inert surface coating. A thousand years is, however, a very long time for any component that is required to accommodate movement. Consequently, it was decided that the structure should be so designed that the isolators can be removed one at a time and replaced if needed.

The entire structure is covered with a stainless steel plate for weather protection. Brackets from the steel frame puncturing this cladding will support cast bronze panels depicting the life of Buddha on the eight faces of the building. A steel post attached to the conical steel frame will support a bronze conical spire on top of the building. The project will take several years to complete, with all the casting work being done on site. The volunteers and residents of the Tibetan Nyingma Meditation Center are doing all construction work except the steel frame. Judging from our observation of results, meditation seems to improve workmanship. ☉



arcCA welcomes submissions for Under the Radar. To be eligible, a project or its architect must be located in California; the project must not have been published nationally or internationally (local publication is OK); and construction must have been completed within the last twelve months or, for unfinished projects, must be 60%-70% complete. Architects need not be AIA members. Submissions from widely published firms (as determined by the arcCA Editorial Board) may not be accepted. Please send your submissions to the editor by email at tculvahouse@ccac-art.edu, attaching three to five JPG images with a combined file size of no greater than 1.5MB. Describe the project in fewer than 200 words in the body of the email, providing a brief caption for each image, keyed to the image's file name. (If you don't have the capability to submit by email, you may send the equivalent information by regular mail to: Tim Culvahouse, AIA, Editor, arcCA, c/o AIACC, 1303 J Street, Suite 200, Sacramento, California, 95814, Re: "Under the Radar.")

Credits

HEALING LANDSCAPES A RESOURCE LIST — Naomi Sachs

The three books on restorative landscapes that I've found to be most useful are:

Healing Gardens: Therapeutic Benefits and Design Recommendations, eds. Clare Cooper Marcus and Marni Barnes, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1999.

The Healing Landscape: Therapeutic Outdoor Environments, Martha Tyson, New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1998.

Restorative Gardens: The Healing Landscape, Nancy Gerlach-Spriggs, Richard Enoch Kaufman, and Sam Bass Warner, Jr., New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.

(*Healing Gardens* and *Restorative Gardens* both have excellent information on the history of gardens in the healthcare setting.)

Other books about restorative landscapes geared to design professionals:

Design That Cares: Planning Health Facilities for Patients and Visitors, Janet Carpman, Myron Grant, & Deborah Simmons, Chicago: American Hospital Association, 1993.

Healthcare Design, Sarah O. Marberry, ed., New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1997.

Human Spaces: Life-Enhancing Designs for Healing, Working, and Living, Barbara Crisp, Gloucester, MA: Rockport Publishers, Inc., 1998.

Landscape Design for Elderly and Disabled People, Jane Stoneham and Peter Thoday, United Kingdom: Packard Publishing Ltd., 1994.

Plants for Play, Robin C. Moore, Berkeley, CA: MIG Communications, 1993 (Children's gardens).

Books about healing gardens geared to the home gardener:

Contemplative Gardens, Julie Moir Messervy and Sam Abell, Charlottesville, VA: Howell Press, 1999.

Creating Eden: The Garden as a Healing Space, Marilyn Barrett, San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1992.

Cultivating Sacred Space: Gardening for the Soul, Elizabeth Murray, San Francisco: Pomegranate, 1997.

Derek Jarman's Garden, Derek Jarman and Howard Sooley, Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1996.

Feng Shui in the Garden, Nancilee Wydra, Illinois: Contemporary Books, 1997.

Garden Retreats: Creating an Outdoor Sanctuary, Barbara Blossom Ashmun, San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000.

Gardens for the Soul, Pamela Woods, New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2002.

The Healing Garden, Sue Minter, Boston: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1993.

Healing Gardens, Romy Rawlings, Minocqua, WI: Willow Creek Press, Inc., 1998 (This book is well-written and chock full of information—highly recommended for this genre.)

Sanctuary: Gardening for the Soul, Laurie Brunton and Erin Fournier, New York: Friedman/Fairfax Publishers, 1999.

Some books (and one article) considered to be the "backbone" of the healing gardens movement:

The Biophilia Hypothesis, Stephen R. Kellert and Edward O. Wilson, eds., Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1993.

The Experience of Landscape, Jay Appleton, Chichester, New York: Wiley & Sons, 1996.

The Experience of Nature: A Psychological Perspective, Stephen and Rachel Kaplan, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

A Pattern Language, Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, & Murray Silverstein, New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

The Role of Horticulture in Human Well-Being and Social Development, Diane Relf, ed., Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1992.

"View Through a Window May Influence Recovery from Surgery," Roger S. Ulrich, *Science*, Vol. 224, 1984.

cover: typographic illustration, **Bob Aufuldish**

page 12: watercolor, **David C. Martin**

page 14: (top to bottom, left to right), photo, **Timothy Hursley**; rendering, **Moore Ruble Yudell**; photo, **Aker/Zvonkovic Photography**

page 15: (top to bottom, left to right), model, **AC Martin Partners**; watercolor, **David C. Martin**; rendering, **AC Martin Partners**

page 16: (top to bottom), photo, **Richard Barnes**; photo, courtesy of **Abramson Teiger Architects**

page 17: (top to bottom), photo, **Douglas Teiger**; drawing, **Abramson Teiger Architects**

page 18: (top to bottom), drawing, **Arkin Tilt Architects**; drawing, **Arkin Tilt Architects**; photo, **Edward Caldwell**

page 19: photo, **Edward Caldwell**

page 20: all photos except leaf, **Robert Bradshaw**; leaf photo, **Bob Aufuldish**

page 23: all photos, **Robert Bradshaw**

page 24: photo, **David Wakely**

page 25: (top to bottom), photo, courtesy of **William Dutcher**; photo, **David Wakely**

page 26: photo, **Charles Kassler**

page 27: photo, **Charles Kassler**

page 28: photo, **Marvin Wax**

page 29: (top to bottom), photo, courtesy of **Anshen+Allen, Architects**; photo, **Roger Sturtevant**

page 30: (top to bottom, left to right), photo, **Roger Sturtevant**; photo, courtesy of **Anshen+Allen**; photo, **John Edward Linden**

page 31: photo, **John Edward Linden**

page 32-35: all photos, **Alan A. Loomis**

page 36-39: all photos, courtesy of **T. Delaney / Seam Studio**

page 40: photo, **Paul Halajian**

page 42: (top to bottom), photo, **Paul Halajian**; photo, **Paul Halajian**; photo, **Art Dyson**

page 44-45: all photos, **Structural Design Engineers**

page 54: all photos, **Steve Shephard**

Resources on the web (these two sites contain many other useful links):

Healing Landscapes Database www.healinglandscapes.org. This is my own website, a free informational database about healing gardens and related topics.

American Horticultural Therapy Association (AHTA) www.ahta.org.

Visiting

Reading is great, but one of the best ways to get a sense for how healing gardens work is to visit them. Marcus and Barnes' *Healing Gardens* lists hundreds of gardens, many in California. My website, the Healing Landscapes Database, provides an extensive list of restorative outdoor spaces. Prospective visitors should be aware that some gardens, even in general hospitals, are not open to the public; it's always a good idea to call ahead and make sure that a spontaneous visit will not be disruptive to patients and staff.



Dreams Happen / Playhouse Auction

left to right:
Mattingly Thaler Architects
Gensler
Mattingly Thaler Architects

Judith Mattingly

In 1990, the Junior League of Palo Alto took on a new project and crafted what would become the mid-peninsula chapter of an organization called Christmas in April—now Rebuilding Together Peninsula. Rebuilding Together is a nation-wide, non-profit, community based organization built primarily of volunteer labor. Its goal is the rehabilitation of homes and community centers for low income families, the elderly, and the disabled.

The peninsula chapter works in the area between Sunnyvale and Daly City, rehabilitating fifty homes and fifteen other non-profit facilities per year. To do this a staff of four—including Executive Director Loretta Cullinane, who is also an architect—marshals the forces of 5,000 volunteers, who come together on one weekend in April (hence the original name) and achieve what many would call miracles. In one weekend, dilapidated buildings are re-roofed, repainted, made handicapped accessible, outfitted with energy efficient appliances and heaters, and more—all to keep their occupants warm, safe, and dry.

Junior League members Gayle Rimerman and architect Nancy Harris Wyatt were instrumental in turning the League project into a stand-alone, non-profit agency. They helped with the creation of a board of directors and the hiring of an executive director. After the new non-profit had operated for a year, they realized that they needed to raise funds to cover overhead. While sponsorships from local businesses

covered materials for the volunteers, Christmas in April also needed funds for operating expenses and for growing the program. Gayle and Nancy were charged with the task of creating a fundraising event; their brainchild was Dreams Happen, a gala party and playhouse auction.

The first Dreams Happen Auction took place in June of 1993 at Stanford Shopping Center. Gayle and Nancy, assisted by other League members, rounded up architects and builders willing to donate time and materials. That year twelve architect/builder teams designed and built twelve fanciful playhouses, wheeling material donations from a host of local businesses. The financial success of the first auction, netting \$102,400, turned Dreams Happen into a biennial event. Now in its tenth year, with six playhouse auctions under its belt, Dreams Happen has raised over \$1.14 million for Rebuilding Together Peninsula.

The average playhouse has an eight by ten footprint and is twelve feet tall. Size and weight are dictated by height limits on local roads and inside the shopping center, plus the amount the average fork lift can handle. Miniatures predominate, and themes over the years have included a Doggie Diner, Fire House, General Store, Lunar Landing Module, Japanese Tea Pavilion, Observatory, Lighthouse, many whimsical Victorians, and more abstract themes. The playhouses are on display for several weeks in June at Stanford Shopping Center, where they are viewed by an estimated 1 million people.

For more information, go to www.rebuildingtogetherpeninsula.org.