

**THOMAS CHURCH**  
**RUTH SHELLHORN**  
**GARRETT ECKBO**  
**DAN KILEY**  
**JAMES ROSE**  
**LAWRENCE HALPRIN**  
**ROBERT ROYSTON**  
**A. E. BYE**



**MASTERS OF  
MODERN LANDSCAPE DESIGN**

**A Conference and Book Series by  
the Library of American Landscape History**

The mission of the Library of American Landscape History is to foster understanding of the fine art of landscape architecture and appreciation for North America's richly varied landscape heritage through LALH books, exhibitions, and online resources.

Founded in 1992, LALH is the only nonprofit organization in the world devoted to publishing in the field of American landscape history. Richly illustrated, and with texts written by leading historians in the field, LALH books are informative and engaging. They appeal to general readers as well as specialists, and thanks to the generous gifts of our supporters, are priced affordably.

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**MASTERS OF MODERN LANDSCAPE DESIGN**

CONFERENCE

Indianapolis Museum of Art, September 28–29, 2013

BOOK SERIES

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## Masters of Modern Landscape Design

The Library of American Landscape History, a publisher of books on North American landscape design, is dedicated to expanding the general public's perception of our landscape and those who have shaped it. In keeping with this mission, LALH is launching a series of eight books that illuminate the modern movement of the 1930s to 1960s through the careers of pioneering landscape architects who transformed the profession. The landscape architects featured in the new series began to question traditional Beaux-Arts methods of design as early as the 1930s, rejecting the limits of historical precedents and searching for spatial and artistic forms relevant to the modern condition. By the 1950s and 1960s, these designers had forever altered the American landscape.

The Masters of Modern Landscape Design series is the first group of monographs to focus on American practitioners who were responding to modern architecture and the post-World War II landscape. Each book begins with a biographical essay on the early life, education, design principles, and legacy of the featured landscape architect. This context is followed by analyses of a selection of ten to fifteen projects representing significant contributions to the field. As a series, these books document the early history of the profession and the extent to which contemporary practice is indebted to the masters of modern landscape design.

Initial funding for the book series and conference has been provided by the Viburnum Trilobum Fund of the New York Community Trust.

## THOMAS CHURCH

(1902–1978)



The designer of more than two thousand gardens in his forty-year career as a landscape architect, Thomas Dolliver Church is generally considered the founder of the modern American garden. His work was shaped by his early life in California, education at Berkeley and the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Mediterranean travels, and a 1937 trip that exposed him to European modernist design. Church opened his first practice in San Francisco in the early 1930s, designing gardens with a keen attention to the demands of the site and an unusual sensitivity to clients' concerns. The Donnell Garden (1948–1951) in Sonoma, Parkmerced (1940–1951) in San Francisco, and the General Motors Technical Center (1949–1959) in Warren, Michigan, are among his most significant works. As a groundbreaking practitioner and a mentor to some of the most famous landscape architects of the next generation, including Lawrence Halprin, Robert Royston, and Garrett Eckbo, all of whom worked for him during their careers, Church had a profound effect on the profession of landscape architecture.

**AUTHOR:** Marc Treib, professor emeritus of architecture at University of California, Berkeley, taught architectural design and drawing before expanding his scholarly interests to include landscape architecture. Over the last twenty years, he has written extensively on the history of modern landscape architecture, most recently on the efforts of Christopher Tunnard (United Kingdom) and Sutemi Horiguchi (Japan) to establish a “national modernism.” The coauthor of *Garrett Eckbo: Modern Landscapes for Living* and coeditor of *Thomas Dolliver Church, Landscape Architect*, Treib has helped shape contemporary studies of modern American landscape architecture.

## RUTH SHELLHORN

(1909–2006)



At the age of fifteen, Ruth Shellhorn decided to follow in the professional footsteps of her neighbor, the noted landscape architect Florence Yoch. She began her formal training at Oregon State in 1927, transferring to Cornell University after two years in an effort to find more rigorous instruction. Although forced to leave Cornell shortly before graduating owing to lack of funds, Shellhorn successfully established a practice during the Depression. In the early 1940s, she obtained a two-year position with the Shoreline Development Study, an early effort to preserve the scenic beauty of the California coastline. A series of commissions for landscape plans at Bullock's department stores followed, and Shellhorn developed a design idiom that would shape the Southern California shopping experience. In 1955, she was hired to create the pedestrian circulation plan through Disneyland, and she also designed the iconic American spaces "Main Street" and "Town Square." Beginning in 1956, Shellhorn served as the supervising landscape architect for the recently established University of California at Riverside, a position she held for the next eight years. At age ninety-six, after fifty-seven years as a practicing landscape architect, Shellhorn was awarded a degree from the Cornell College of Architecture.

**AUTHOR:** Kelly Comras, ASLA, principal landscape architect of the firm KCLA in Pacific Palisades, California, is involved in residential design, historical research, local planning projects, and community project development. A former National Park Service landscape architect for the Santa Monica Mountains Recreation Area, Comras specializes in Southern California land use planning and restoration. She has taught at UCLA and lectured at Harvard.

## GARRETT ECKBO

(1910–2000)



In 1937, while still a student at Harvard, Garrett Eckbo launched himself into the design scene with a manifesto that demanded gardens relevant to the age of technology. From 1939 to 1942, Eckbo incorporated his design philosophy into housing for the U.S. Housing Authority and migrant worker camps for the Farm Security Administration. In 1950, Eckbo published *Landscape for Living*, showcasing the work of his firm—Eckbo, Royston and Williams—with a revolutionary synthesis of social ideas and technology. This firm would evolve to become Eckbo, Dean, Austin and Williams (EDAW), a multinational planning corporation. Through his writings, his teaching at USC from 1948 to 1956 and at Berkeley from 1963 to 1969, and his numerous designed landscapes, Eckbo promoted his faith in landscape design as a means of social change. The Alcoa Forecast Garden (1952) in Los Angeles is one of his best-known works.

**AUTHOR:** David Streatfield, RIBA, professor emeritus of landscape architecture at the University of Washington, taught in the urban design and preservation planning programs as well as in the department of landscape architecture. Streatfield is the author of *California Gardens: Creating a New Eden* (1994), one of the American Horticultural Society’s “75 Great American Garden books in 75 Years.” He is currently working on a biography of the Santa Barbara landscape architect Lockwood de Forest Jr.

## DAN KILEY

(1912–2004)



Raised in urban Boston and the rolling pastures of New Hampshire, Dan Kiley was intrigued by the spatial relationships between nature, landscape, and architecture from an early age. He apprenticed with Warren Manning for four years and then attended the landscape program at Harvard. There he joined James Rose and Garrett Eckbo in condemning traditional Beaux-Arts design methods, and after two years left in frustration to pursue his own understanding of landscape architecture as a synthesis of the traditional and the modern. During the war, Kiley worked for the U.S. Housing Authority and the Office of Special Services, where he was influenced by emerging architects, including Louis Kahn and Eero Saarinen. He later collaborated with these and other leading modernists on his most significant projects, including the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis (1947) and the Miller House Garden in Columbus, Indiana (1953–57). Despite his rejection of Beaux-Arts education, Kiley is known for his use of a classical architectural vocabulary within modernist design compositions.

AUTHOR: Jane Amidon, ASLA, is professor and director of the Urban Landscape Program at Northeastern University. She is the founding series editor for Source Books in Landscape Architecture and has written many books and articles on contemporary and modernist landscape, including *Dan Kiley: America's Master Landscape Architect* (1999); *Moving Horizon: The Landscape Architecture of Kathryn Gustafson and Partners* (2005); *Reconstructing Urban Landscapes* (2009); and "Two Shifts and Four Threads in Contemporary Landscape and Urbanism" (*Topos*, 2012).



## JAMES ROSE

(1913–1991)



A classmate of Garrett Eckbo and Dan Kiley at Harvard, James Rose was expelled in 1937 for refusing to design landscapes in the traditional Beaux-Arts manner. His rebellious approach to the profession took shape in a series of articles and books, including *Creative Gardens* (1958), *Gardens Make Me Laugh* (1965) and *The Heavenly Environment* (1987), and in the private gardens he created for adventurous clients. Rather than work for a firm or on commercial commissions, Rose preferred the freedom and creativity of smaller projects in which he could control the final product. His most famous garden is at his former home in Ridgewood, New Jersey, now the James Rose Center for Landscape Architecture Research and Design. Rose used recycled materials and incorporated the existing natural features of the landscape at Ridgewood, which became an ongoing demonstration of his personal approach to design as a never ending process of change and development. Known for his ability to sculpt spaces appropriate to the time, Rose has been described as a catalyst of the modern movement.

**AUTHOR:** Dean Cardasis, FASLA, is professor of landscape architecture at Rutgers University and director of the James Rose Center. Cardasis previously taught at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and maintains an active professional practice. The author of numerous articles and book reviews on landscape architecture, he is currently completing a monograph on Rose's work, the culmination of more than twenty years' research.

## LAWRENCE HALPRIN

(1916–2009)



A native New Yorker, Lawrence Halprin graduated from Cornell and received a master of science degree in horticulture from the University of Wisconsin before earning a degree in landscape architecture from Harvard. After returning from naval service in 1945, Halprin joined Thomas Church’s firm, where he worked on the Donnell Garden in Sonoma, California. Four years later, he opened an office in San Francisco, launching a productive career spanning six decades. By the 1960s, Halprin’s firm had gained recognition for significant urban renewal projects, including Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco (1962–68), Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis (1962–67), and Freeway Park in Seattle (1970–74). In 1969, Halprin and his wife Anna developed the “RSVP cycles,” a collaborative system of approaching design problems that focused on movement through space. This philosophy is embodied in one of Halprin’s favorite works, the FDR Memorial in Washington D.C. (1974–97), in which the story unfolds as visitors move through four “rooms” accentuated by water features.

**AUTHOR:** Kenneth I. Helphand, FASLA, is professor emeritus of landscape architecture at the University of Oregon, where he has taught courses in landscape history, theory, and design since 1974. He is the author of *Colorado: Visions of an American Landscape* (1991); *Yard Street Park: The Design of Suburban Open Space* (with Cynthia Girling, 1994); *Dreaming Gardens: Landscape Architecture & the Making of Modern Israel* (2002); and *Defiant Gardens: Making Gardens in Wartime* (2006). An honorary member of the Israel Association of Landscape Architects, Helphand is a former editor of *Landscape Journal* and chair of the Senior Fellows at Dumbarton Oaks.

## ROBERT ROYSTON

(1918–2008)



As an undergraduate at Berkeley in 1937, Robert Royston began his career employed in Thomas Church’s firm, acting as supervisor on projects throughout the San Francisco area, including the Parkmerced Apartments. After serving in the navy, Royston joined Garrett Eckbo and Edward Williams in establishing the firm of Eckbo, Royston and Williams. This partnership foreshadowed the development of larger planning and design firms in the 1960s, including the one Royston joined in 1958—Royston, Hanamoto, Alley and Abey (RHAA). Beginning in the 1950s, Royston produced a series of “public gardens,” including Bixby and Mitchell Parks in Palo Alto (1956) and Central Park in Santa Clara (1960), embodying his social and spatial theories and featuring his trademark biomorphic forms. Royston, who taught at Berkeley from 1947 to 1951 and at Stanford in the 1950s, was a mentor to many landscape designers, including Eldon Beck, Francis Dean, and Robert Reich.

COAUTHOR: JC Miller is a partner at Vallier Design Associates in Point Richmond, California, and director of the Landscape Architecture Certificate Program at UC Berkeley Extension. He worked for over a decade in the Royston office, and as a principal, assisted Royston in the design and execution of his final projects. Miller is the coauthor with Reuben Rainey of *Modern Public Gardens: Robert Royston and the Suburban Park*.

COAUTHOR: Reuben Rainey, FASLA, professor emeritus at the University of Virginia, taught landscape architecture history and theory for more than thirty years. A former professor of religious studies, Rainey has written on a wide variety of topics, from Italian Renaissance landscapes to modern “healing gardens.” He is the coproducer of the ten-part PBS documentary *Gardenstory* and codirector of the Center for Design and Health, University of Virginia.

## A. E. BYE

(1919–2001)



Arthur Edwin Bye, a native of the Netherlands, moved to Pennsylvania as a child and graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1942. A professor of landscape architecture at Cooper Union in New York for forty years who also taught at Columbia and the University of Pennsylvania, Bye influenced the profession through his teachings and hundreds of landscape designs that he photographed extensively. Although he worked at the height of the modern movement, Bye saw his work as intimately connected with the act of gardening. He was a pioneer in advocating for native plants and the restoration of native woodlands at the same time that he worked as an artist shaping land forms—what some might describe today as land art. Bye’s best-known works include the Reisley house in Pleasantville, New York, with a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, the George Soros landscape in Southampton, and Gainesway Farm in Kentucky. His philosophy of landscape architecture is the subject of two books, *Art into Landscape, Landscape into Art* (1981) and *Moods in the Landscape* (1999).

**AUTHOR:** Thaisa Way, ASLA, associate professor of landscape architecture, teaches history, theory, and design at the University of Washington. She has published and lectured on feminist histories of design and, in particular, on the role of women as professionals and practitioners. Her book *Unbounded Practice: Women and Landscape Architecture in the Early Twentieth Century* was awarded the J. B. Jackson Book Award by the Foundation for Landscape Studies. Way is currently completing a book on the work of Richard Haag and the postindustrial landscape within the modernist movement.

COVER: Miller House and Garden, Columbus, Indiana. Courtesy the Indianapolis Museum of Art.

Thomas Church in his San Francisco office, where he established his own firm in 1932 and remained in practice until 1977. Courtesy Marc Treib.

Ruth Shellhorn with Walt Disney, Disneyland, 1955. Photo by Harry Keuser. Courtesy Kelly Comras.

Garrett Eckbo (left), Francis Dean, Edward Williams, Robert Royston (right), principals of the firm Eckbo, Royston and Williams, early 1950s. Courtesy RHAA archive. Creative Commons License.

Dan Kiley at home in Charlotte, Vermont, 1997. Photo by Karen Madsen from *Dan Kiley Landscapes: The Poetry of Space*.

James Rose enjoying a house-warming party at his newly constructed residence in Ridgewood, NJ, 1953. Courtesy James Rose Center.

Lawrence Halprin writing in one of his trademark sketchbooks. *The Hook* [Charlottesville], December 24, 2009. Courtesy Lawrence Halprin.

Robert Royston inspecting one of the “garages” he designed for Mitchell Park, Palo Alto, 1957. Courtesy Reuben Rainey and JC Miller.

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