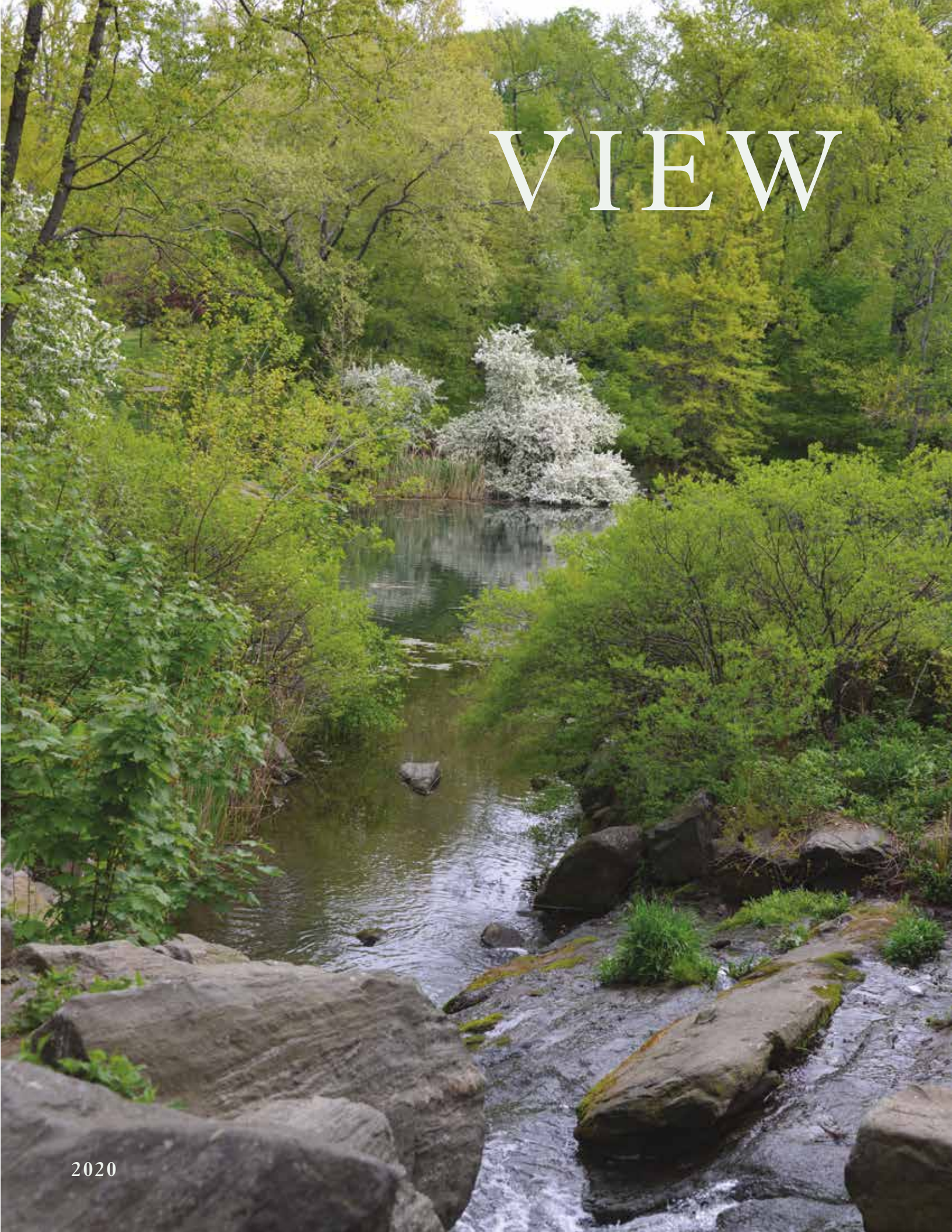
VIEW
2020

VIEW *from the Director's Office*

Dear Friends of LALH,

VIEW 2020 focuses on the theme of wild beauty as a source of solace, renewal, and inspiration—a timeless topic that the pandemic has made critical. In this issue, Darrel Morrison writes about the meadow landscapes he designed to replace traditional lawns surrounding a unique midcentury house in Connecticut. The exploration of transformative natural beauty and its role in design continues with a look at the collection of the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, IL, in particular, plans, drawings, and photographs by Jens Jensen, a source of design inspiration for Morrison and his former student, the Jensen scholar Robert E. Grese, director of the historic Nichols Arboretum in Ann Arbor.

On the eve of his retirement from the "Arb," Grese writes about that parklike refuge, designed by O. C. Simonds in the early 1900s and enjoyed by hundreds of thousands of University of Michigan students ever since. Sarah Allaback looks at the origins of another teaching landscape, the native plant garden at Vassar College, created in the 1920s by the ecologist Edith Roberts. Allaback illuminates the origins of Roberts's innovative "Ecological Laboratory" and her book *American Plants for American Gardens*, coauthored with the landscape architect Elsa Rehmann.

Ann de Forest writes about the wild beauty of the Santa Barbara Botanical Garden, one of the nation's first devoted to native plants, designed by her grandfather Lockwood de Forest in the late 1920s. An interview with Sara Cedar Miller, this year's LALH Preservation Hero, sheds light on her decades-long involvement with New York's Central Park. A gallery of Miller's photographs features several "wild" passages of Olmsted and Vaux's creation.

This year's Roundtable features the landscape architects David Kamp, Darrel Morrison, and Margie Ruddick in conversation about their reverence for wild beauty and the role it plays in their work. In this issue, we also introduce the new LALH Nature and Design Fund, established to support books that explore the role of nature in design while setting the record straight about the realities of the forces of paternalism, geographical determinism, and racism in the history of the profession.

As LALH approaches its thirtieth anniversary, we are more excited than ever to continue our work as the leading publisher of books that advance the field of American landscape studies. Your donation will support publications that investigate our past and inspire vital new designs to make our cities and towns, campuses, workplaces, and home landscapes sources of well-being, connection, and renewal.

With gratitude for your support,

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Front cover: Pool, 2013; page 1: Pond and Hallet Nature Sanctuary, 2008; inside back cover: Pool, 2013; back cover: American Elm, East Meadow, c. 2000. All photographs of Central Park by Sara Cedar Miller/Central Park Conservancy. Page 69: photograph courtesy Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

VIEW

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
LIBRARY OF AMERICAN LANDSCAPE HISTORY

A Midcentury Classic and the Beauty of the Wild

DARREL MORRISON

Ross! Ross!" Rea David called to her pet rooster in the chicken pen just down the slope from her house—and Ross immediately crowed an answer. A small flock of hens joined in, clucking happily at the sound of her voice. The house David called from, though, is no ordinary farmhouse. A perfectly circular steel-and-glass structure, the Round House sits on a pedestal, a mushroom-shaped form perched at the upper edge of a sloping, amphitheater-like site—an icon of midcentury modernism in the suburbs of Wilton, Connecticut.

And David is no ordinary client. With a background in art, married to the art and architecture critic Judd Tully, David has an eye for beauty—in art, architecture, and nature. She loves not only plants but many other living things, from the chickens she cares for to the birds, butterflies, and bees that now flit through the six acres surrounding the distinctive home. "What I find most satisfying about living here," she confides, "are the panoramic views that provide intimate and instant access to the nature surrounding our home—the sights and sounds, from the frogs in the pond to the birds playing in the aspen and sumac, racing through the meadows." As the landscape architect Jens Jensen wrote in *Siftings:* "Clients are of all sorts. Those with a real understanding of landscaping are very, very few. Some know too much, or have an idea they do, and they are better left alone. Then there are those who want a garden because their neighbor has one, and I am afraid these are in the majority. But there are the few who have a love for growing things."

Designed by the architect Richard Foster, the Round House was completed in 1968 and featured in *Architectural Record* almost immediately. After having worked with Philip Johnson for a few years, Foster founded his own firm in 1962 and went on to design many notable projects, including the Round House, where he lived with his family until his death in 2002. Among its many unusual attributes is its capacity to revolve in either direction at the turn of a switch. Shortly after David and Tully purchased the house in 2012, they commissioned Mack Scogin Merrill Elam Architects to reconfigure the interi-

View to the Round House. Photograph by Jonathan D. Lippincott.

or with the goal of maximizing views to the outdoors. But as the neighborhood had become increasingly suburban, bucolic views of old fields had gradually been supplanted by manicured lawns. This is the landscape I saw when David and Tully contacted me in 2014 about a commission to design a new setting for their home.

One of our first projects in the effort to "re-wild" the site was to replace an acre-plus expanse of turfgrass with an eastern meadow, the new panoramic view from the reconfigured interior. I envisioned purple lovegrass, Canada wildrye, and little bluestem on the upper slope; little bluestem, purpletop, and Indiangrass in the midsection; then a mix of Indiangrass, big bluestem, and switchgrass in the lower, moister segment. I hand-broadcast drifts of quick-growing beebalm and black-eyed Susan as well as an overlay of slower-to-establish forbs matched with the moisture level.

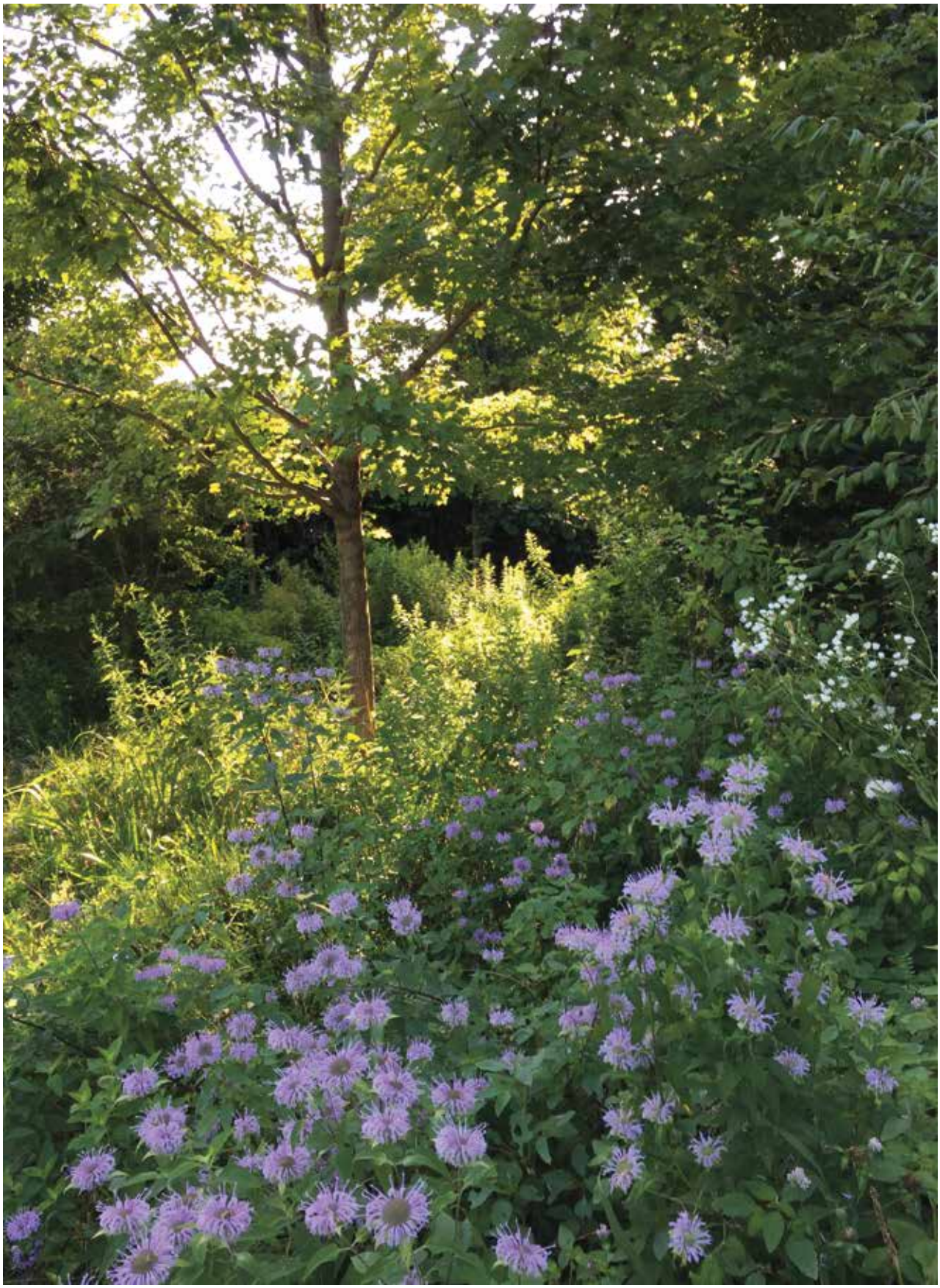
Since then David and I have collaborated on several other garden projects on the property. At the pond edge, we planted blue flag iris, cardinal flower, blue lobelia, swamp milkweed, cinnamon and sensitive ferns, rushes, and sedges. We developed a rock garden with boulders discovered on the site and relocated into a slope ranging from full sun to part shade. There we planted purple lovegrass, sundrops, blue-eyed grass, wild strawberry, butterfly weed, prairie phlox, woodland phlox, and Pennsylvania sedge. Close to the house, on a rocky dry slope with a hot southwestern exposure, we planted purple lovegrass, little bluestem, butterfly weed, harebell, and even prickly pear cactus. For a moist woodland setting, we chose gray birch and dwarf bush honeysuckle, as well as lady fern, Christmas fern, Pennsylvania sedge, Jacob's ladder, wild columbine, wild geranium, woodland phlox, and ragwort.

Throughout the process, David has supported bold moves, such as a switchgrass "hedge" that billows along each side of the narrow driveway, and a grove of trembling aspen and staghorn sumac on a rocky bank just outside the house. The trees have grown to the height of the second story, where you can hear the aspen leaves as

Eastern meadow in bloom with bergamot, black-eyed Susan, and daisy fleabane. Photograph by Jonathan D. Lippincott.

View from Round House terrace overlooking big meadow. Photograph by Carol Betsch.

View from terrace to chicken pen with ragwort, Pennsylvania sedge, and woodland phlox, trembling aspen grove beyond. Photograph by Rea David.



Sunlit opening in woods at north edge of property. Photograph by Jonathan D. Lippincott.

View from east lot across pond. Photograph by Iwan Baan.

they tremble in the breeze and, in the fall, see the orange and scarlet of sumac and the yellow-golden foliage of the quaking aspen at eye level.

In 2016, the David and Tully acquired an additional two-acre plot to the east of the original Round House lot. We removed trees growing along the property line, and now the space flows uninterrupted between the original lot and the adjacent one, which was already in a semi-wild state. An annual mowing program has revealed a traditional straight, dry-laid stone wall, a remnant and reminder of an agricultural past. A zone of aging forest occupies the southern section of the site. From the edge, a new cluster of fifty young early-successional trembling aspen emerges into the open field. Under the old forest canopy, we planted twenty-five shade-tolerant American beech saplings. One day, they will become a part of the canopy, and their horizontal branches will retain their copper-turning-to-tan leaves through the winter.

David and I typically meet each winter and plan a program for the next spring's planting, always with an eye toward increasing diversity, which leads to greater resilience—and, yes, more beauty in the landscape. An active participant in both the planning and the carrying out, David places the order and lines up a crew. In May, I place color-coded flags marking where drifts will go. David is always there, planting alongside the crew—together they have put in hundreds of plants over many years.

Neither of us likes cultivars of native species, largely because we believe that we can't really improve on what was growing here long before we arrived. On one occasion, I recommended planting some elderberry shrubs in a moist area adjacent to the pond, and when the nursery delivered a variegated cultivar, David immediately returned them and located others of the species. At times, we have had to settle for cultivars, but you can be sure that there will be no orange-flowered purple coneflowers or other such aberrations in the Round House landscape. And although some lawn remains, there are

Beauty of the Wild (LALH, forthcoming summer 2021) is the richly illustrated story of Darrel Morrison's life and career as an influential proponent of designing with native plant communities.

no chemicals used in its management. Weed species in the various garden areas are not poisoned but are cut or pulled, and overseeding or infilling with additional plants provides competition for unwanted species.

At the end of our most recent planting day, the two of us sat on the terrace under the house, cool drinks in hand, looking out over the ever-changing landscape. Surrounded by dozens of plants on the slope in front of us, alive with butterflies and bumblebees, we mused that the Round House, now more than a half century old, still seems futuristic, floating above the landscape like a flying saucer. And we agreed that the landscape, in its way, is forward-looking too.

In seeking to reintroduce native species and beauty from an earlier era, this landscape is way ahead of the conventional, late-twentieth-century landscapes that surround it—those outdated designs that are so dependent on chemicals, irrigation, and fossil fuels to keep them in a controlled, manicured, unchanging state. The Round House is a living, evolving demonstration of the abundance of life we can have in the landscape, even if it is only a quarter acre or a rooftop planting area. There is sometimes a misperception that to adopt an ecological approach in designing our landscapes is somehow to deprive ourselves. But, to Rea David, who loves growing things, who loves life, there is a feast out there. It's a win-win: doing what is good for the earth and what is good for birds, butterflies, and bumblebees is good for us, too.

Darrel Morrison is a renowned landscape designer and educator whose ecology-based approach has influenced generations of practitioners. He has taught ecology-based landscape design at University of Wisconsin–Madison (1969–1983) and University of Georgia (1983–2005). Morrison lived and worked in New York City from 2005 until 2015, and now lives in Madison, where he is an Honorary Faculty Associate in the Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin.

Bumblebee on beebalm. OPPOSITE: **Beebalm along path to east lot meadow.** Photographs by Jonathan D. Lippincott.

Jens Jensen at the Morton Arboretum

ROBIN KARSON

A landscape designer is in many ways a missionary: that is, he might consider himself as having a mission to investigate, study, and acquire knowledge regarding the beauty of Nature and to impart this knowledge to those with whom he comes in contact. —*O. C. Simonds, 1922*

Native plants have come to figure prominently in contemporary landscape architecture, but the trend is not new. Many early twentieth-century designers were also intensely aware of the aesthetic and environmental advantages of native flora, and their projects routinely featured regional plants and plant communities. Many also wrote passionately about their use, which they believed would improve gardens, parks, cemeteries, campuses, and subdivisions throughout the country.

Among the most influential of these practitioners were Ossian Cole Simonds (1855–1931) and Jens Jensen (1860–1951), both of whom designed in harmony with the "prairie spirit in landscape gardening," a term coined by the author and landscape architect Wilhelm Miller. Both also published persuasive books—Simonds's *Landscape-Gardening* (1926) and Jensen's *Siftings* (1939)—along with articles and lectures on the topic. And both men have strong ties to important midwestern teaching institutions, one of which is the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois. Simonds created the arboretum's original plan in 1922, and the Sterling Morton Library there eventually became a repository for Jensen's papers.

The initial donation of Jensen material came from Leonard K. Eaton, who taught architecture at the University of Michigan and in 1964 wrote the first monograph about an American landscape architect, *Landscape Artist in America: The Life and Work of Jens Jensen*. Soon after publication, Eaton gave the earliest lectures on Jensen at the Morton Arboretum along with Ralph Fletcher Seymour, publisher of *Siftings* and longtime friend and neighbor of Jensen and his wife Anne Marie in Ravinia. By 1966, Eaton had donated to the arboretum a wide assortment of Jensen materials collected over the course of

Jens Jensen at the Lincoln Memorial, Springfield, IL, 1935. All photographs courtesy Suzette Morton Davidson Special Collections of the Sterling Morton Library of The Morton Arboretum, Lisle, IL.

Jensen's "Prairie River," Humboldt Park, Chicago.

his research for the book, and, in time, other Jensen-related papers were donated by the Seymour family. A series of remarkable coincidences occurring at Jensen's landscape design school added a further trove of his papers to the growing collection.

After the death of Anne Marie in 1934, Jensen had moved to Door County, Wisconsin, and founded The Clearing, which was also his home and studio. From its inception, this unique "school of the soil" attracted students and landscape designers who shared Jensen's fervent belief in the beauty and ecological value of native flora. Among those practitioners was Darrel Morrison, who discovered Jensen's work and writings as a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin in the late 1960s. In 1970, Morrison made his first visit to The Clearing, then directed by Martha Fulkerson, Jensen's longtime secretary, who supervised the school from the time of Jensen's death in 1951 until she retired in 1969. Morrison was swept away by the remarkable beauty of the place, by the meadows, old fields, and varied forest communities, including a stand of ancient white cedars clinging to high limestone cliffs overlooking Lake Michigan. He would return again and again.

One of his visits, in 1973, was at the invitation of Bill Kassakaitis of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation, then the steward of The Clearing property. He had requested that Morrison search the school building for drawings and papers related to Jensen's career which would be better protected in a climate-controlled environment. Starting in the large studio/classroom where flat wooden files housed many of Jensen's original drawings, Morrison climbed the ladder to a balcony overlooking the studio where he discovered a wooden cabinet wedged deep under the sloping ceiling. To his amazement, the drawers were filled with photographs and negatives of Jensen project sites from 1900 to the 1930s, as well as pictures of groups of people on field trips, some of them members of the Friends of Our Native Landscape, a conservation organization founded by Jensen. Morrison quickly realized this was the photographic collection that Jensen himself thought had burned in a 1937 fire.

He made arrangements to have the photographs brought to the University of Wisconsin, where his student Stephen Christy used them as a basis for a master's thesis, "The Growth of an Artist: Jens Jensen and

Landscape Architecture." In time, the photographs were donated to the Morton Arboretum. During the summer of 1981, another fire at The Clearing gutted much of the school building, including the balcony that had sheltered the wooden cabinet. Had Morrison not discovered the stash, it would have been lost to history.

Carol Doty, a passionate conservationist and longtime librarian at the Morton Arboretum, worked closely with Christy to catalog the growing Jensen collection there. Thanks to her and to teachers and practitioners like Darrel Morrison and historians such as Leonard Eaton, Robert E. Grese (author of the definitive 1992 Jensen biography), Christy, and others, Jensen is well known today. His built work and design philosophy—and those of his colleagues designing "in the prairie spirit"—have had a far-reaching impact on the profession, laying the groundwork for an ecological approach that has become increasingly critical to many of today's practitioners.

The value of expansive archival collections such as that held by the Morton is multivalent. Photographs, plans, and drawings of long-lost work help historians reconstruct the vibrant teachings of insightful practitioners like Jensen, thereby adding to our understanding of the past. These teachings, in turn, have the potential to inspire today's practitioners in their understanding of the timeless patterns of nature. Respecting and responding to these principles lead to more informed designs—work that is more grounded in the environment, richer, and healthier for the planet and for the people who inhabit it.

For more on Jensen and Simonds, see *The Native Landscape Reader* edited by Robert E. Grese (LALH, 2011). See also *Landscape-Gardening* by O. C. Simonds (LALH, 2000) and *The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening* by Wilhelm Miller (LALH, 2002).

Robin Karson is executive director of LALH and author of several books about the history of American landscape architecture.

Friends of Our Native Landscape in a circle dance, Indiana Dunes.

Nearby Nature: O. C. Simonds and the Nichols Arboretum

ROBERT E. GRESE

"A staunch defender of the natural charm of American landscapes, sensitive to beauty and skillful in the means of creating it, he has found joy and service in awakening civic ideals which express themselves in the development of city plans and parks. A better heritage for later days no man can leave."

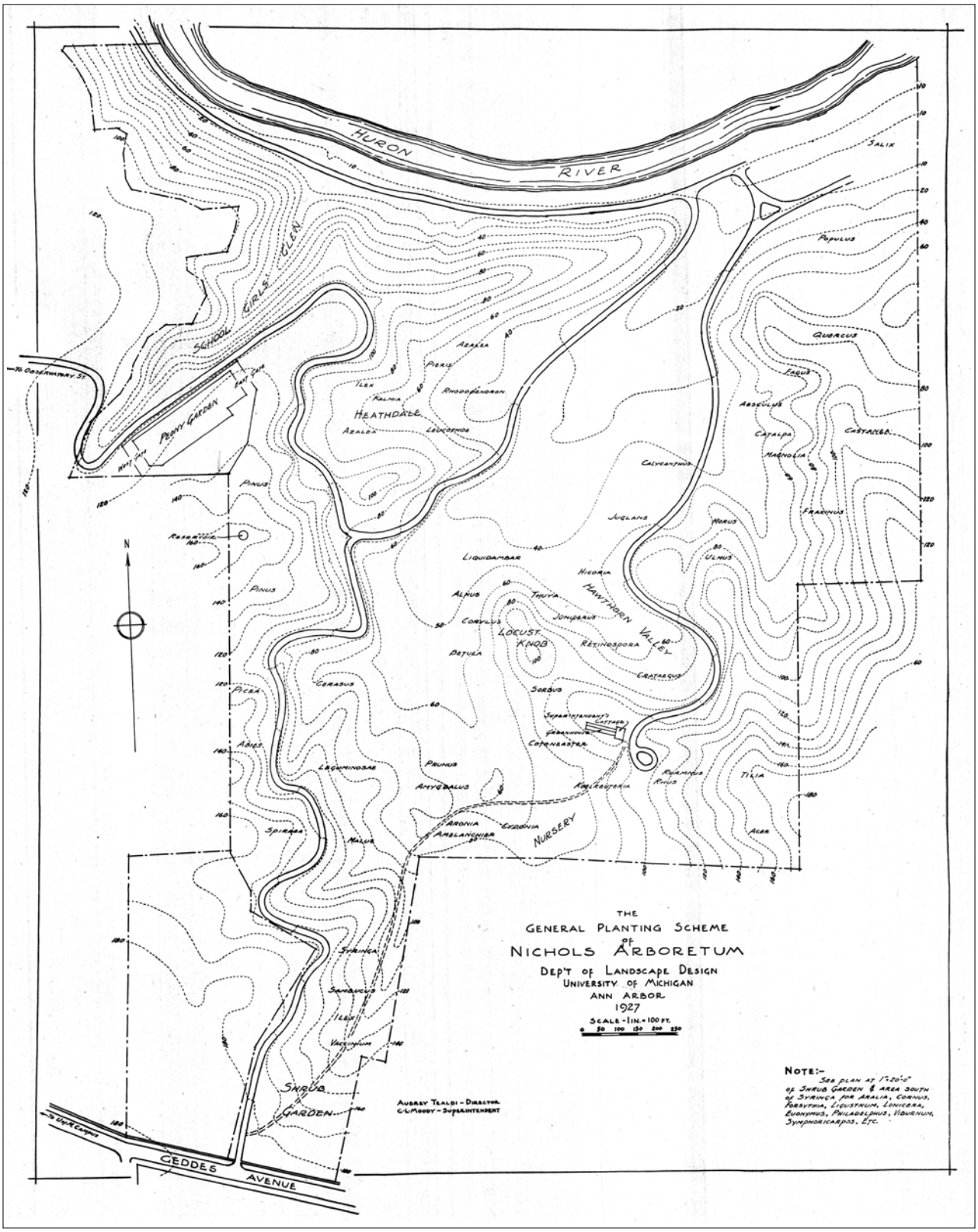
—University of Michigan Regents, 1929, on awarding an honorary master's degree to Ossian Cole Simonds

When the University of Michigan was founded in 1817, its leaders recognized that facilities such as museums, libraries, and botanical gardens would ultimately be needed by the great institution they envisioned. Although a schematic plan for the university from the 1830s shows nearly a third of central campus devoted to a botanical garden, it wasn't until the late 1890s that the first one—small, focused on medicinal plants—was actually created. But soon the search was on for a larger site.

A team led by the U of M botany professors Frederick Newcomb and George Burns commissioned the well-known landscape architect and Michigan alumnus O. C. Simonds to help scout and review potential sites. The best option appeared to be a dramatic, hilly parcel of about twenty-five acres that was a short walk from central campus. Walter and Esther Nichols, both also Michigan alumni, were willing to donate the land, and the City of Ann Arbor, which owned adjacent property, agreed to collaborate on a botanical garden as a joint venture. By 1906, Simonds had laid out a plan for the property, and a year later the new garden opened. Ultimately renamed the Nichols Arboretum, the parklike landscape would become one of the most cherished open spaces in Ann Arbor.

The steeply sloping site featured a variety of glacial landforms and topography that dropped nearly two hundred feet from Geddes Avenue on the south to the Huron River on the north. According to Simonds, this variable terrain provided "an exceptional opportunity to grow plants of all kinds." In comments to the university's Board of Regents, Newcomb also noted presciently:

Sugar maple on the edge of Black Oak Kame. Photograph by Jack Pritchard.



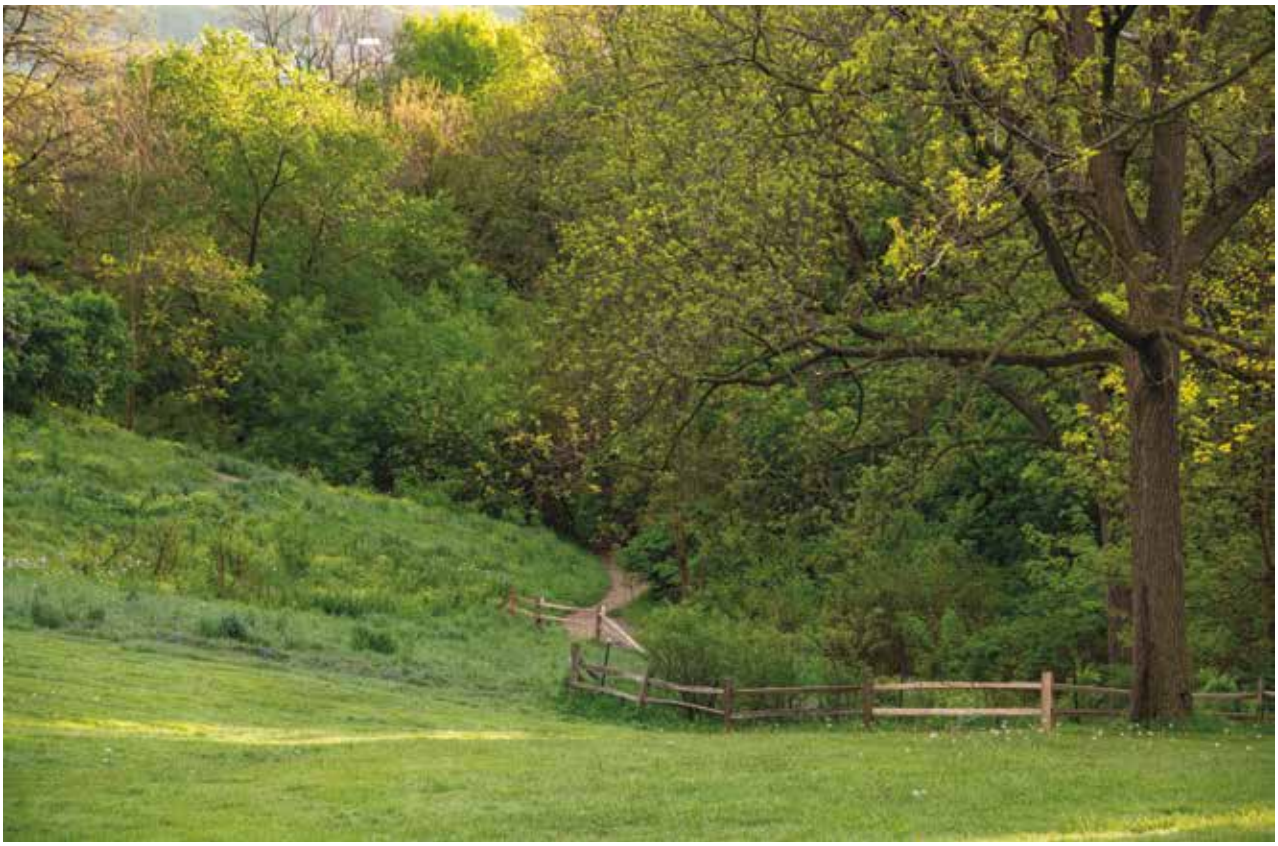
General Planting Scheme, Nichols Arboretum, 1927. Courtesy Nichols Arboretum.

> In this University we have been able to work without a botanic garden, because we have been able to use the whole surrounding country for our field of study. But one can foresee that in twenty-five years the farmer's woodlots will be put under cultivation for timber, the bogs will be drained, and no land will be left where vegetation can be studied in natural conditions. The land of the proposed donation is ideal for the purposes of bringing together in a small area all the vegetation of this climate, giving to each plant society its characteristic conditions. The tract is made up of hills, ravines, level low land, a bog, and a rivulet.

Newcomb continued:

> It is the idea of the donors and myself that the tract of land could be treated and maintained at relatively small expense by restoring to these hills, ravines, and meadows the natural grouping of plants, leaving them with a little aid to care for themselves. This done, the University students of the future and the school children would have a field within fifteen minutes' walk of the Campus where practically all the lessons taught by vegetation growth could be learned."

The new botanical garden opened to the public in 1907 with only limited improvements. The main roads were realized according to Simonds's plans and plantings initiated, but not all of them were native. Some of the earliest turned out to be highly invasive exotics, such as common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) and shrub honeysuckle (*Lonicera spp.*). As well, botany faculty experimented with plants related to research, in particular Asiatic species that were being tested in Michigan's climate. Within a few years, faculty botanists became disillusioned with the diverse terrain of the property, which precluded the construction of greenhouse complexes necessary for broader plant research. By 1914, when the university had secured a separate property for a new botanical garden, the question arose of what to do with the old one. The roughly planted parcel was turned over to the new landscape design program at the university and, in 1922, renamed the Nichols Arboretum, soon and ever since known affectionately as "the Arb."

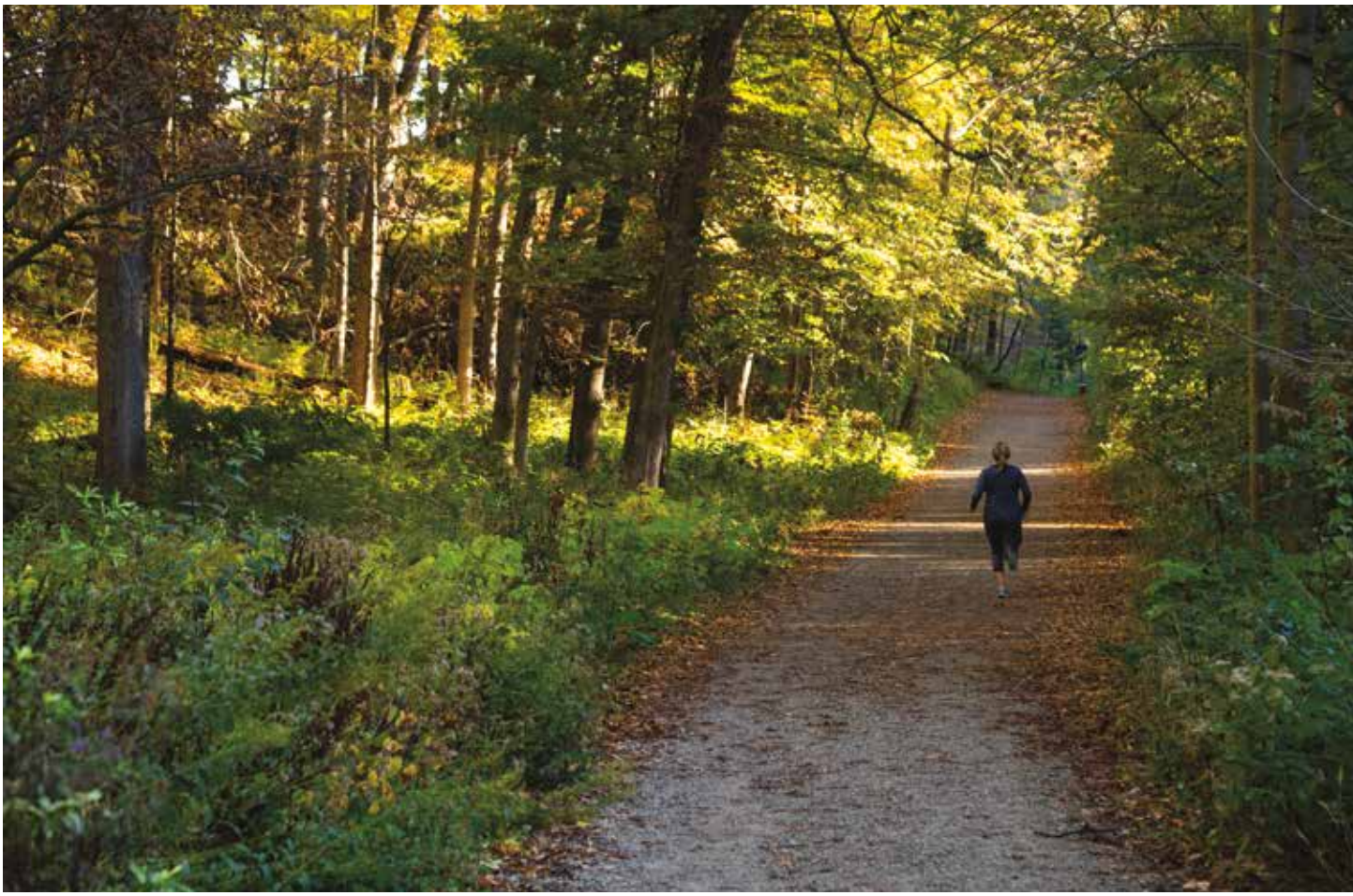


Trail enhancement project near Geddes entrance. Photograph courtesy Nichols Arboretum.

Under the direction of the landscape architecture faculty, plant collections developed gradually according to the framework set up by Simonds. The cleared valleys were kept as open meadows with various trees and shrubs planted around their perimeter. Many of the glacial kames that had been cleared of native oak forest were planted with groups of conifers—white pine, scotch pine, and spruce—per forestry practices on cutover lands throughout Michigan. A teaching shrub collection was initiated at the southern, higher edge of the Arb, with views across the Huron River valley to the north. Plant collections were generally arranged by plant family with a general eye to aesthetics and their overall landscape effect.

The concept of an arboretum did not go without challenge, however, as the perceived need for recreational facilities close to central campus was deemed important. The steep topography of the glacial kames were perfect for sledding, skiing, and other winter sports, and in 1921, the engineering professor Ferdinand Northrup Menefee proposed that the university convert significant

Chinese Fringetree (*Chionanthus retusus*) in the Main Valley. BELOW: **Remnant oak wood with understory of mayapple and interrupted fern.** Photographs courtesy Nichols Arboretum.



Jogger through oak woods along Nichols Drive. Photograph courtesy Nichols Arboretum. OVERLEAF: **Disturbed woods with black locust and understory of invasive celandine poppy.** Photograph by John Meltzer.

parts of the property to a winter sports complex as a way of combatting "the evils of student life" during Michigan's long gray winters. Arb director Aubrey Tealdi passionately opposed the idea, noting that the "scientific development of the arboretum and its use for sports are incompatible. You can't keep a lion and a lamb in the same cage." The debate raged through the 1920s until 1934, when university president Alexander Ruthven convened a committee to decide the issue and the future of the Arb's land. Ultimately, the decision was made to continue to support the land's use as an arboretum. As Tealdi noted, "The distant future should be carefully considered in the development of the area. It should be kept so that it might become a haven of quiet one hundred years from now when our rich native flora will have become a thing of the past in most places."

One of Tealdi's lasting legacies was the creation of a formal peony garden with donations of rare cultivars. The specimens were given by William Erastus Upjohn, founder of the Upjohn Pharmaceutical Company, and other peony enthusiasts; the collection was planted in 1922 and opened to visitors five years later. At that time, the university's graduation coincided with the peony bloom in early June, and the Peony Garden joined several private gardens in Ann Arbor that were open to the public. In June 1935, the *Ann Arbor News* reported that peony bloom across the city gave Ann Arbor "a distinctive charm in the glamorous days, the lingering twilights, and the moon-lit nights of the commencement period." Today, with eight hundred herbaceous peonies, tree peonies, and intersectional hybrids, the Peony Garden remains a cherished local landmark and a valuable reference collection of historic cultivars.

The Nichols Arboretum's diverse nature settings are also deeply revered by visitors. Simonds's general approach to design, treating the landscape as a series of outdoor rooms, provided the arboretum with a progressive series of spaces where people can gracefully disperse,

a scheme that allows the landscape to absorb the 330,000 or so estimated yearly visitors without feeling crowded. Today, the acreage comprises about 128 acres.

Among the most distinctive of these spaces is the "main valley," which was kept open in the original design and serves as a place for informal picnics, tossing a Frisbee, or playing Quidditch (a game from Harry Potter novels). Heathdale supports a collection of Appalachian azalea, rhododendron, mountain laurel, and other acid-loving broad-leaved evergreens set against a native Michigan oak-hickory forest. Magnolia Glade features a collection of southern Appalachian magnolia trees and cultivars from around the world, many of which came from the remarkable Michigan breeder Phil Savage. The River Landing area serves as a gathering spot along the Huron, and Dow Field supports remnant prairie and oak savanna areas. It is currently being restored through fire management.

In the past two decades, programming at the Nichols Arboretum has included a number of arts performances inspired by and integrated with settings throughout the landscape. These have included children's storytelling events, dance and musical performances, and recordings of unique outdoor sounds. One of the most durable examples of the fusion of "performance" and "landscape" has been "Shakespeare in the Arb," which began in 2001 in partnership with the drama program in the university's Residential College. Kate Mendeloff, the creative force behind these productions, has staged a number of Shakespeare's plays in the arboretum which involve the audience's moving along with the actors to different settings as the scenes unfold. These Shakespeare productions have given the arboretum landscape a magical quality for many visitors, who half expect to find fairies hiding behind trees, festive wedding dances in open glades, or funerals in solemn groves.

When the founders of Nichols Arboretum wrote that they were determined to secure a place "within fifteen minutes' walk of the Campus where practically all the lessons taught by vegetation growth could be learned," they couldn't have imagined how the city and campus would grow to completely envelop the green oasis. Now the landscape is bounded by one of the country's largest medical complexes on one side and a variety of residential neighborhoods—including private homes, apartments, university dormitories, and fraternity and sorority houses—on the other.

There is little question that encroaching urbanism has taken its toll. Runoff from parking lots and city streets threatens steep ravines with erosion; major sewer lines running through the area have occasionally developed leaks; and medical helicopters flying overhead disturb the quiet with their roar. The landscape has been severely challenged by legacies of invasive plants and by deer populations that have exploded in recent decades. These threats require constant vigilance and careful management. But, even with these challenges, the Arb

Snow on Black Oak Kame, overlooking Main Valley. Photograph by Jack Pritchard.

continues to provide critical relief—whether from a hospital patient's window or for someone just needing a place of nearby nature to clear their mind.

In this period of sequestration during COVID-19, places of nearby nature like the Nichols Arboretum are even more valuable. They serve as a reminder of the foresight of past generations in nurturing pockets of beauty in the midst of our cities. Patients and visitors can literally move from surgical wards to native woods and fields within a five-minute walk. Recovering patients sometimes point to the hospital and say, "There's where I go for my treatments but here is where I come for my therapy." Students frequently remark on how important the Arb is as a place to hang out and maintain their sanity in balancing the pressures of an academic life. Countless others from the community also come seeking respite and refuge.

Having served as director of this revered place for nearly twenty years, I am constantly reminded of the fragility of urban nature and the need for careful stewardship to protect the remnants of wild nature as well as garden spaces in the heart of any city. The designed beauty of such landscapes is easily lost. As the late landscape architect Alfred Caldwell once told me, "making landscapes is like making angels in the snow. Wait an afternoon and they're gone."

We have been fortunate at Nichols Arboretum that the long string of directors has helped to keep structural features of Simonds's original design intact through the years. And, during my tenure, we have been aided by teams of dedicated volunteers and thoughtful staff who have helped manage and restore this dynamic landscape according to Simonds's principles. For me personally, it has been a joy to help steward a place that is beloved by so many people and to see firsthand the value of nearby nature in people's lives.

In his lecture "Parks," delivered at the university in 1909, Simonds spoke about his sense of the importance of nature from a heartfelt perspective:

> I wish that all the children of the present day, as well as their fathers and mothers, could have some place to go where they could sit quietly and enjoy nature, or where they could romp about and play on the grass, or go in wading or swimming; a place where they could become acquainted with the shapes of all the leaves and their habits of growth; with the perfume of the linden and lilac, with the songs of the thrushes and cat-birds, with the motions of the chipmunk, and, in short, all the charms of the country.

For the people of Ann Arbor, he provided just such a place.

Robert E. Grese, FASLA/FCELA, is Professor Emeritus of Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan, author of *Jens Jensen: Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens,* editor of *The Native Landscape Reader* (LALH, 2011), and coeditor of *Passion for Peonies,* a history of the Nichols Arboretum Peony Garden.

Roberts, Rehmann, and Vassar's Ecological Laboratory

SARAH ALLABACK

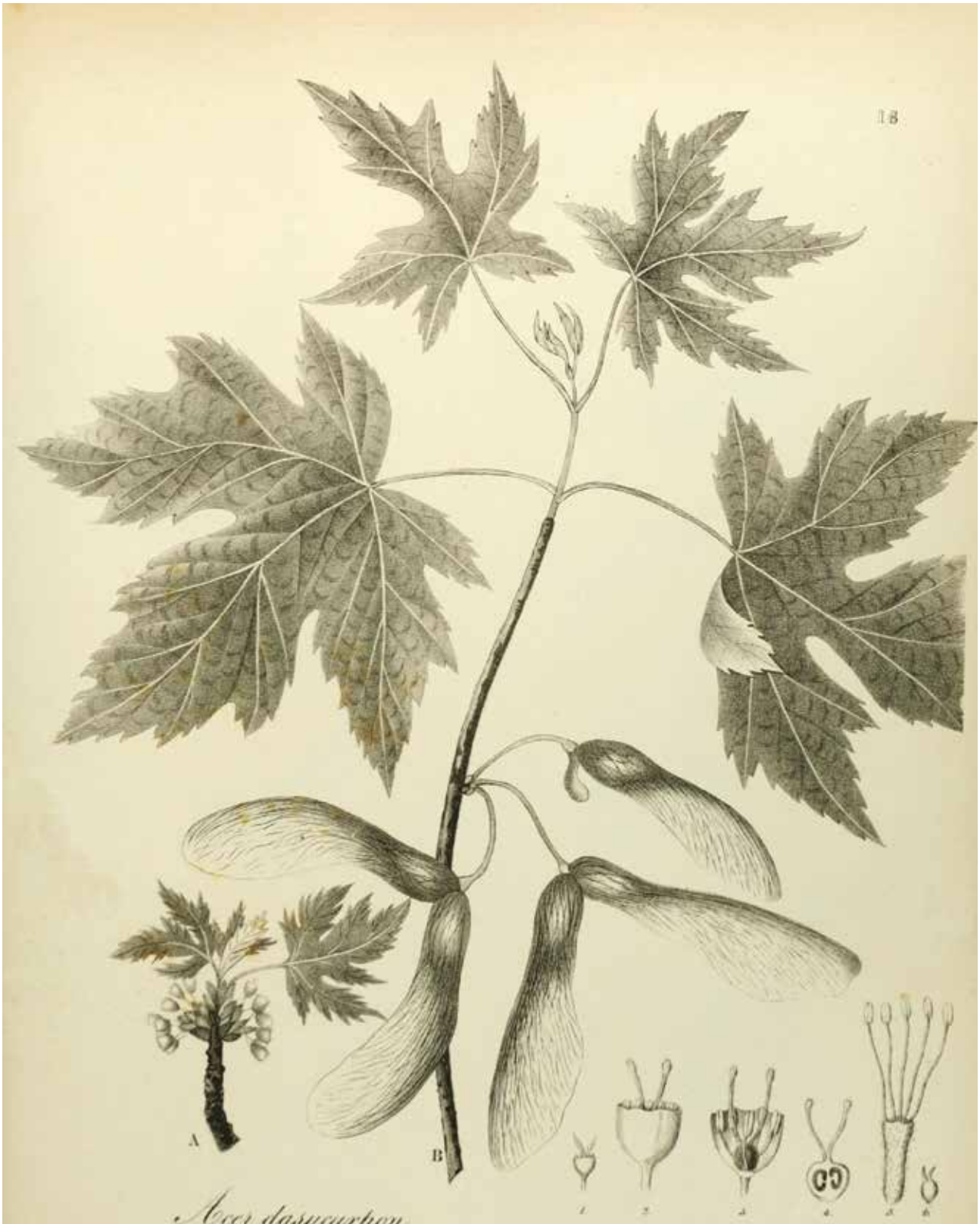
American Plants for American Gardens, published by Edith Roberts and Elsa Rehmann in 1929, was the first design guide of its kind. There Roberts and Rehmann, a botany professor and a landscape architect, outlined an aesthetically sensitive yet scientific method of analyzing regional landscapes through a network of complex plant relationships, or "associations." Few readers today realize that Roberts and Rehmann's book was based on an actual place, a four-acre garden on the Vassar College campus in Poughkeepsie, New York, designed by Roberts.

Roberts's garden was inspired by an effort to replicate examples of the regional native landscape through thirty specific plant associations. Popularly known as the Ecological Laboratory, the Dutchess County Botanical Garden attracted national as well as local attention. In 1939, the quarterly bulletin of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden named it one of the famous gardens of the world.

Edith Adelaide Roberts was born in 1881 on a farm in Rollinsford, New Hampshire, where her daily life was shaped by intimate association with the land, human reliance on animals and plants, and seasonal cycles. She earned a bachelor's degree from Smith in 1905 and several years later enrolled at the University of Chicago, where she studied with Henry C. Cowles, considered by many the father of ecology. Under his tutelage, Roberts learned about the concepts central to his study of plant succession and "plant associations." After earning her PhD, she became a professor at Mount Holyoke, where she put Cowles's principles into practice through plant studies she conducted on the nearby Holyoke Range and, farther afield, the beaches of Cape Cod in Falmouth. After she accepted a position as associate professor of botany at Vassar College, she began to explore the Hudson River valley.

A year after arriving at Vassar, Roberts began to lay out a botanical garden inspired by her local fieldwork. No ordinary plant collection, the garden was designed to replicate the dynamic patterns of nature—plant communities in which each species played a changing role as growth progressed. Over the next two years, Roberts and her Vassar colleague Margaret F. Shaw, also in the botany department, together researched "the ecolog-

Silver-leaved Maple. All illustrations from John Torrey, *A flora of the State of New-York, comprising full descriptions of all the indigenous and naturalized plants hitherto discovered in the state; with remarks on their economical and medicinal properties* (1843). Courtesy New York Botanical Garden, Mertz Library.



Acer dasycarpon

Silver-leaved Maple

Lith. et Endicott

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **Wild Sarsaparilla; Wild Balsam apple; Black-Snakeroot; Star Catchfly.**

ical aspects of native vegetation," identifying the plant associations that would become the framework of the design, where groupings documented each species and also created a sense of the regional landscape.

Roberts's project captured the imagination and support of college administrators, and in 1922, the Department of Botany agreed to finance her work for the next seven years. She also procured funding for the project through the Garden Club of America, sponsors of a comprehensive report that documented thirty plant associations, *The Ecology of the Plants Native to Dutchess County, New York*. As Roberts and Shaw wrote in the report's introduction, their ultimate purpose in the initiative was "to add to that phase of our knowledge" to encourage the conservation of native plants. Soon work began on an indoor laboratory as well as a general nursery and small nurseries for each plant association to supply the new garden. Once the plants were established, Roberts gave lectures to finance the construction of limestone walls and flagstone paths.

Born in 1886 to parents who had emigrated from Germany, the landscape architect Elsa Rehmann was reared in an artistic household. Her father, Carl F. Rehmann, was an architect and the principal of the Public Drawing School in Newark, New Jersey, and her older sister, Antoinette Perrett, became a successful photographer. Rehmann began her higher education at Wells College in Aurora, New York, and transferred to Barnard, in New York City, for her final two years.

After graduating in 1908, she decided to study landscape design and spent three years at the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women. Rehmann gained practical experience in the offices of the well-known landscape architects Marian Cruger Coffin and Charles Lowrie and while still an assistant published her first book, *The Small House* (1918), a compilation of designs by some of the country's most prominent practitioners, among them Olmsted Brothers and Warren H. Manning. When Rehmann began lecturing on landscape gardening for the botany department at Vassar in the fall of 1923, she was already an established author and practitioner.

Roberts, meanwhile, had been searching for opportunities to present her research "in a popular manner for the purpose of interesting the general public in constructive conservation and ecological methods." Encouraged by Vassar's multidisciplinary atmosphere, she approached Rehmann with a plan for collaborating on a series of articles about her recent discoveries that was geared to the general public. Having just published *Garden-Making* (1926), a popular guide to garden design, Rehmann was more than suited to the task.

From June 1927 to May 1928, Roberts and Rehmann's series of twelve articles on "plant ecology" appeared in successive issues of *House Beautiful*. At the time, the popular magazine was geared to both professionals and the interested general public, a reflection of the editorship of Ethel B. Power, who was an architect as well as a graduate of the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Design for Women and the author of *The Smaller American House* (1927). In 1929, the articles were published by Macmillan as *American Plants for American Gardens, Plant Ecology—The Study of Plants in Relation to Their Environment*.

With this book, the authors hoped to reach a broad audience, and to this end they emphasized the practical appeal of incorporating native plants into small home lots as well as estates.

> The owner of the large estate has begun to understand the rich heritage that is his. He is appreciating the landscape value of the oak woods, is preserving their beauty and allowing their character to control the character of his house and its surroundings. The owner of a few acres has the same opportunities even if he has not quite so varied a landscape. He, too, can retain the roadside growth, build his house under the trees, reestablish the natural outlines of the clearing and preserve the real charm of the woods in their minutest details. (p. 52)

The collaboration of the landscape architect and the ecologist, of art and science, resulted in an engaging book that illustrates the wisdom of environmental balance. Roberts and Rehmann charge the gardener as well as the landscape architect with the "power to create a natural scene." The text encourages homeowners to borrow elements for the house exterior from surrounding boulders, trees, and other natural features, and it urges readers to restore damaged areas to their natural state, providing examples of how these "reproductions" could be achieved. *American Plants for American Gardens* championed sustainable landscape design generations before such practices became common.

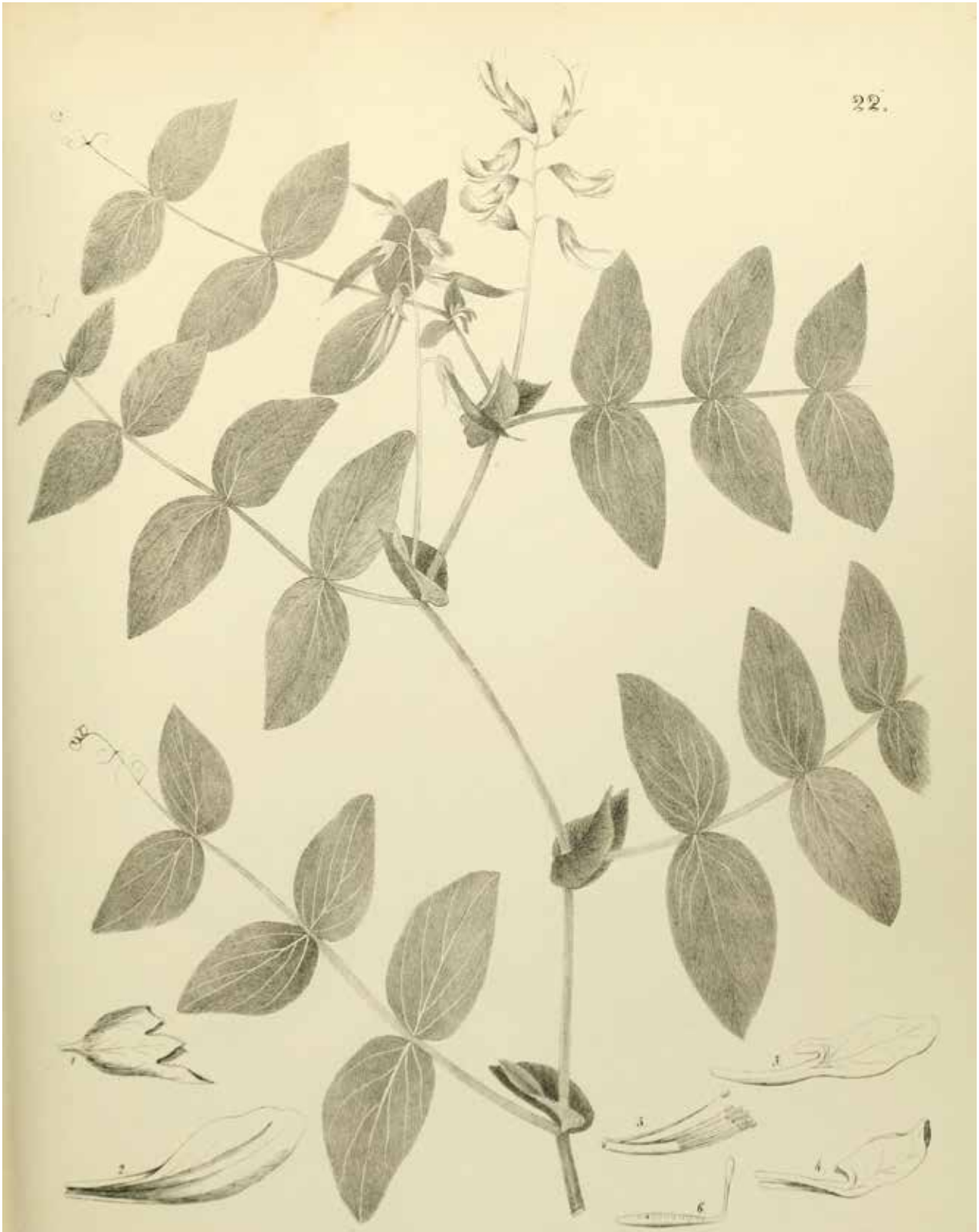
To celebrate the Ecological Laboratory's ten-year anniversary in 1933, Roberts wrote an extensive article, "The Development of an Out-of-Door Botanical Laboratory," for *Ecology*, the scientific journal of the Ecological Society of America, documenting the research and writing resulting from Vassar's experimental garden. She described the use of native plants in reclaiming a "waste land" to create "an attractive landscape picture." Her essay emphasizes the continuing success of the experiment, which came to offer the general public a botanic garden of native plants and Vassar students a working laboratory.

A few months later, in July 1933, Rehmann's article "An Ecological Approach" appeared in *Landscape Architecture*, the magazine of the American Society of Landscape Architects. By continuing to translate the study of native plant communities into a form comprehensible to everyone involved in such work, she hoped to curtail the serious environmental damage caused by haphazard development. Rehmann challenged landscape architects to bring science into the drafting room and apply it to real life "problems."

More than six decades later, Meg Ronsheim, professor of botany at Vassar, discovered landscape remnants of the Ecological Laboratory. Since then, she has led a devoted effort to revive interest in this designed landscape—through public outreach and student participation. The battle against invasive species is never-ending, but as Ronsheim fights back vines and other aggressive volunteers, she has also taught her students the rewards of hard, physical labor. She hopes to use the laboratory to continue to educate students in evolving concepts in plant ecology, reviving a project that Roberts declared would "never be finished . . . its very dynamic character makes this impossible."

Sarah Allaback, senior manuscript editor at LALH, is author of *Marjorie Sewell Cautley, Landscape Architect* (LALH, forthcoming 2021) and *The First American Women Architects*. An architectural historian, she is a coeditor of *Warren H. Manning, Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner* (LALH, 2017).

ABOVE: **White flowered Azalea; Golden Rod.** OPPOSITE: **Cream-colored Vetchling.**



Lathyrus ochroleucus Cream colored Vetchling

Going Native: Lockwood de Forest and the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

ANN DE FOREST

The dispute came down to the shape of a line.

In 1943 two prominent American landscape architects, Beatrix Farrand and Lockwood de Forest, argued over plans for the path visitors would take as they entered the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, where both served as design consultants. Farrand advocated a straight, direct line, an axial path that would highlight the newly built administrative complex and connect the architecture with the meadow and mountain beyond. De Forest disagreed. The path, like the trails that already wound through the garden's varied terrain and linked its diverse ecosystems, should, he insisted, meander from the start, with the new building hovering at the periphery of a visitor's attention, incidental, like an afterthought.

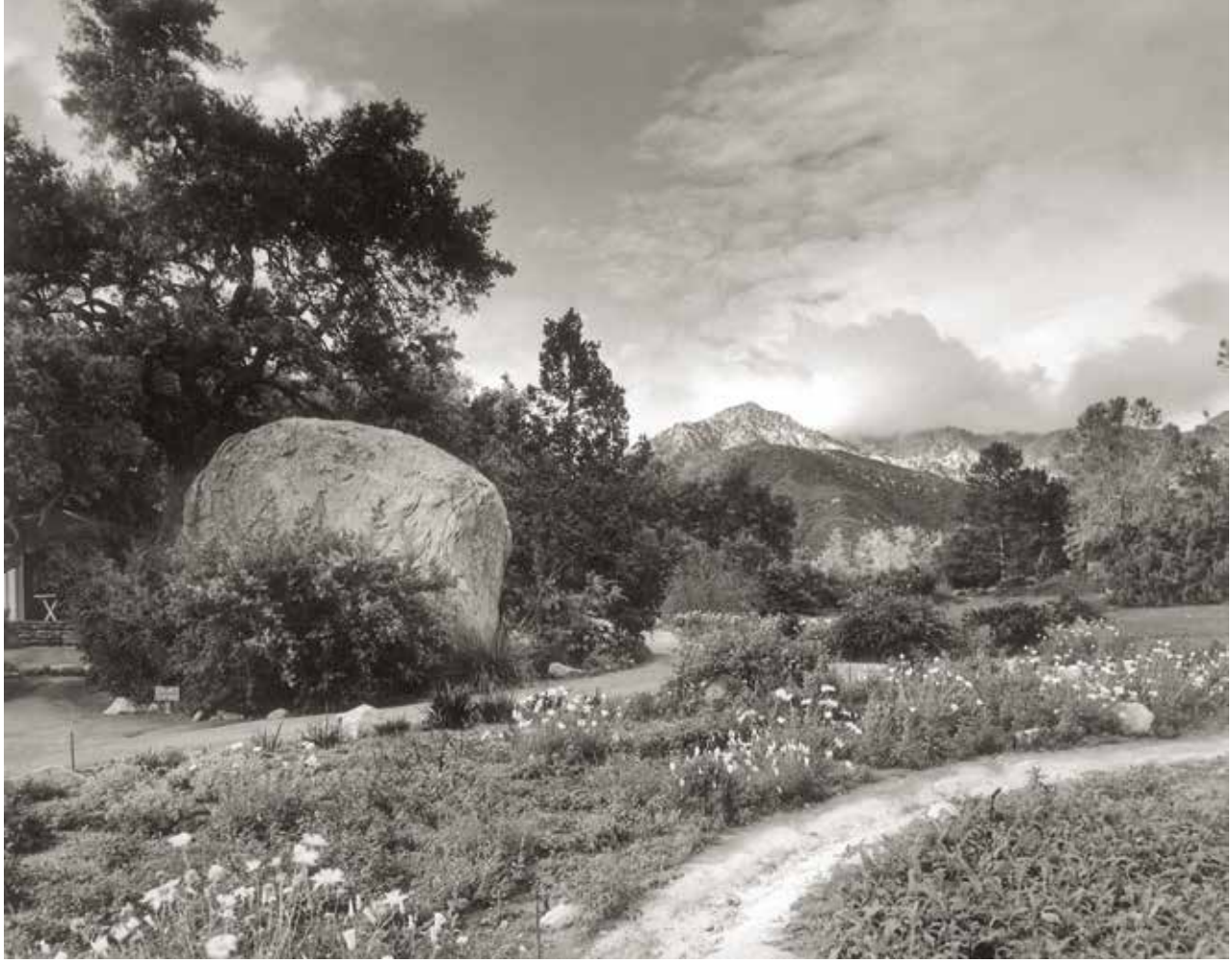
Lockwood de Forest wrote to Farrand from Los Angeles, where he was assigned to a wartime camouflage unit, to express his objections: "The formal setting of the new Library building is far too important for such an inconsequential bit of architecture. . . . I should like to see as much of the building covered by planting as possible. After all, the garden is a botanic garden for native plants and not an architectural exhibition."

For Farrand, though, that building, designed by another prominent Santa Barbara designer, Lutah Maria Riggs, signaled the Botanic Garden's coming of age. "The Garden has passed from its first experimental and somewhat haphazard stage," she wrote to its benefactor, Mildred Bliss, "into an important unit which should be treated with dignity of design."*

Lockwood de Forest, who was my grandfather, was known for his casual manner. He often worked, my father recalls, without plans, sketching his ideas on the spot. Whether Farrand intended her words as a pointed jab at her younger colleague or not, my impression is that for my grandfather the haphazard and experimental constituted not only the Botanic Garden's beauty but its very purpose and essence. No mere romantic gesture, the shape of that entry path meant everything to him.

*All primary source quotations and much of the information in this essay are drawn from the comprehensive history written by Mary Carroll for the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden in 2003. Similarly, Susan Chamberlin's "Lockwood de Forest ASLA and the Santa Barbara Landscape" in *Eden, Journal of the California Garden & Landscape History Society,* summer 2014, was an invaluable resource.

Meadow, view to Cathedral Peak and the Santa Ynez Mountains. Photograph by Saxon Holt.



Blaksley Boulder from Ground Cover Display, 1930s. OPPOSITE: **Desert Section, 1937.** All photographs courtesy SBBG.

As soon as visitors stepped onto the path and were gently led to a magnificent vista—a sprawling, blooming meadow anchored to a giant boulder, a natural feature of the terrain left undisturbed by human intervention, the lofty triangle of Cathedral Peak rising behind, distant, yet remarkably near—they would know that they had entered a place like no other. That meander away from the main buildings expressed what made the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden distinctive and hinted at the encounters with nature to expect there, curving away from the man-made artifice of architecture and into a wilder, natural world.

From its founding in 1926 as part of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, the Blaksley Botanic Garden, as it was first known, was envisioned as something new and unprecedented. Ervanna Bowen Bissel, the garden's first designer and wife of the garden's second director, Elmer Bissel, wrote in 1930: "Blaksley Botanic Garden is an exhibition garden; its aim is to grow attractive plants native to the Pacific Slope; its plan is to set these plants in communities, artistically arranged; its object is to show the beauty of native plants and their adaptability for use in private gardens; and its slogan is Back to the Soil—with native plants. Back to California's soil—not with thirsty exotics—but with California's drought-resistant plants which conserve the state's water supply."

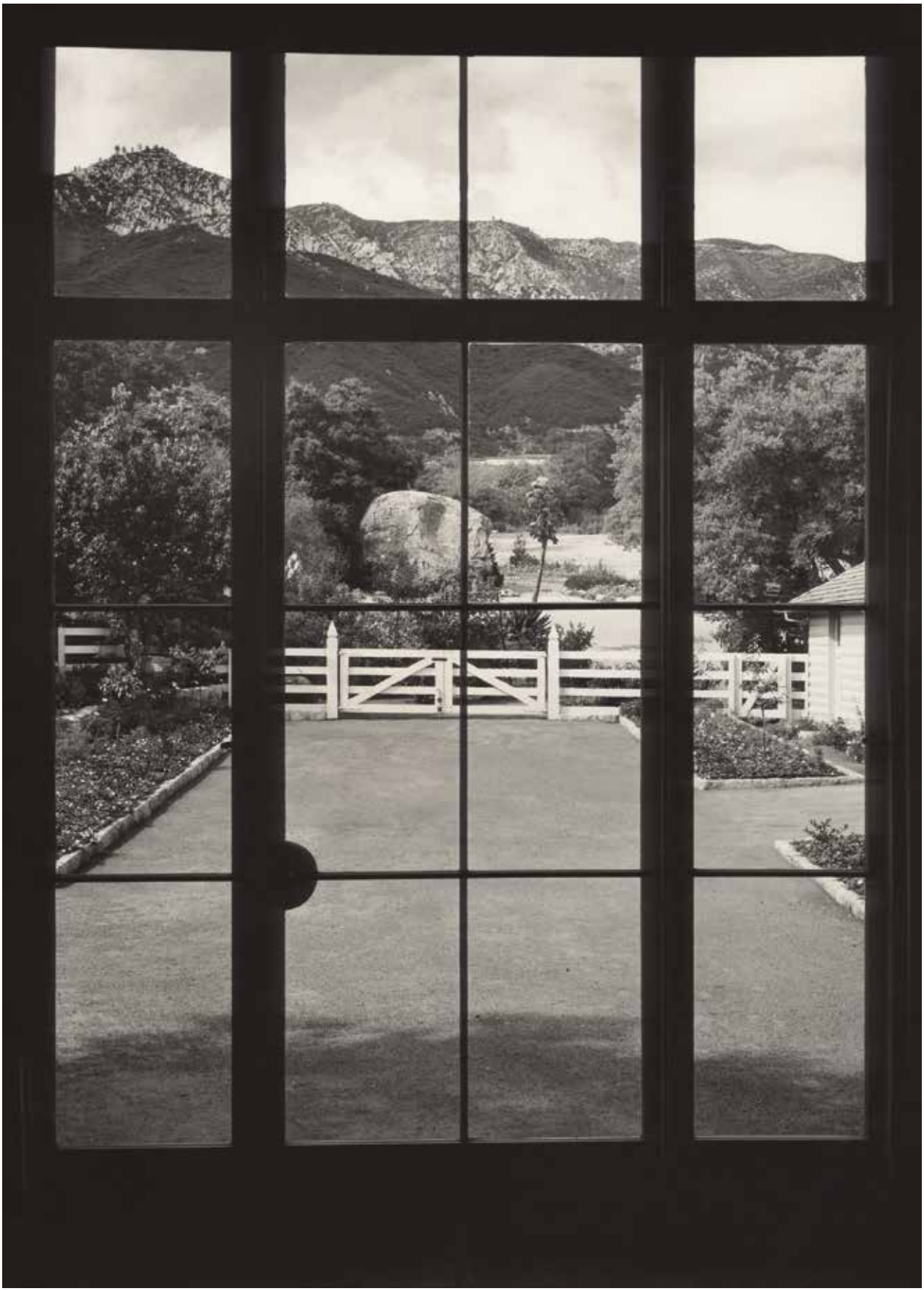
The Botanic Garden's mission was, from the first, educational and experimental—an inspiring showcase for native plants that could thrive in California's arid climate and would inspire home gardeners, as well as local nurseries, in cultivating and planting their own gardens. That unprecedented mission demanded a bold new design as well. The native plants were not displayed as individual specimens but arranged in ecological communities in an expansive parklike setting. Tucked into the upper reaches of Mission Canyon, at the base of the Santa Ynez Mountains, the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden became, as its design and mission evolved over the next decades, a fluid ensemble of distinctly California environments, from flowering meadow to dense forest to sparse desert, all adapted to the particularities of the coastal climate and canyon terrain.

Traditionally botanic gardens have been cerebral

experiences. Though not without their aesthetic delights, botanic gardens from Kew to Florence to Berkeley present an orderly sampling and sequence of plant specimens, grouped by either botanical or regional classifications, the outdoor equivalent of a museum or library. It's not surprising that my grandfather, who had no truck with formal education, collaborated on designing an educational garden that was more experiential than intellectual. His stints at East Coast boarding schools, and then again at Williams College, were brief. The only place where he thrived was Thacher School, in Ojai, California, where he rode horses and camped in the back country of the Matilija wilderness. It was at Thacher that he fell in love with the California landscape, climate, and terrain. There, he received his true education. Transplant from a New York City upbringing though he was, he loved the California hills—gold in summer, green in winter, bright with poppies and lupine in spring. This felt to him like native soil, perhaps because it was there he finally flourished. An educational garden that was organized formally would be antithetical to the improvised, hands-on, kinetic way that he preferred to learn. If a garden was going to be a teaching tool, let it teach through immersion.

So, for the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, he designed a system of trails that, still today, draws visitors into an immersive, sensory, and in some places physically challenging experience. Today, the entry path flows seamlessly past the meadow and then offers choices, divergences, opportunities for exploration and discovery. One direction descends into desert dryness, another to dense forest, where the trunks of redwood trees seem to exhale coolness, even in full summer. Visitors climb, descend, cross a creek, scamper across rocks, face the looming triangle of Cathedral Peak, or climb again and are rewarded with the panorama of the Pacific stretching blue, dotted by a chain of Channel Islands. The environ-

California poppies in Spring Meadow, 1940. OPPOSITE: **View of Courtyard from Blaksley Library window, 1943.**



ments and the plants that define them change, but the trails that my grandfather designed unify these spaces into a single experience, a single, expansive garden.

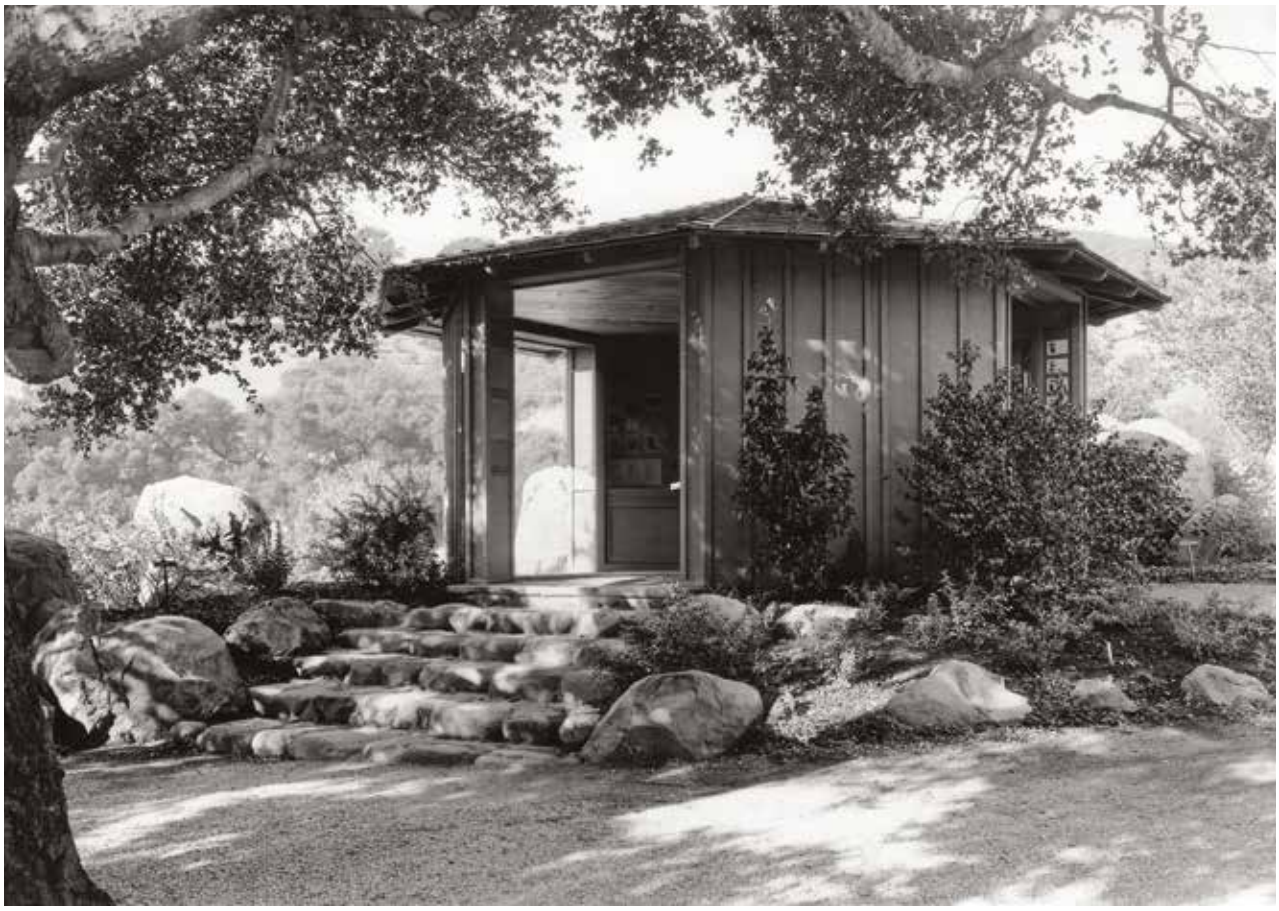
As many historians have noted, the tiff between Farrand and de Forest was short-lived, and resolved in my grandfather's favor. One could chalk up the argument to a clash in style and manner: Farrand nearly a generation older, formal in taste and habits, an easterner; de Forest, a twentieth-century innovator and casual Californian, a "maverick," in the words of the landscape historian Susan Chamberlin. In reality, they shared many aesthetic affinities. Both brought a painterly sense of color, line, and texture to composing garden spaces that impart an air of ordered spontaneity. The Botanic Garden's centerpiece, the sumptuous, oval-shaped wildflower meadow, represents a true collaboration, a fusing of the two sensibilities.

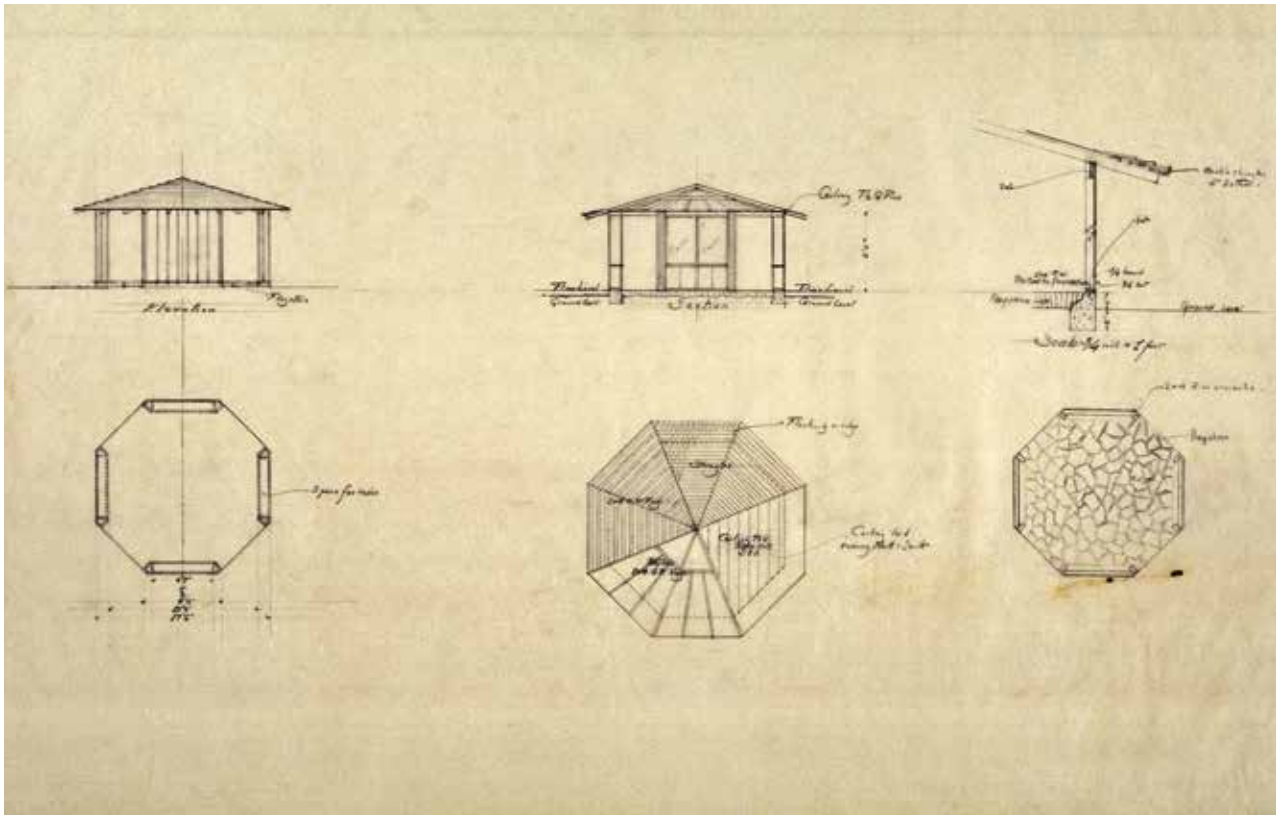
Still the argument over the entry path came down to a fundamental question: in a botanic garden devoted to the native, the natural, the wild, what is the human's place and role? Farrand's path, by framing and favoring architecture, asserted the human propensity for order in a landscape. Her design, she believed, reflected the Botanic Garden's maturity and seriousness of purpose. Architecture's formalism would tame and temper the garden's wildness, and, in taming it, make it more accessible.

My grandfather's approach (figuratively and literally) gives the human a humbler role. Rather than order, organize, catalog, or even acquire information (though the plants are well labeled) as one meanders through, the visitor simply absorbs. The Botanic Garden calls visitors to be walking witnesses to the wild proliferation all around them. Lockwood de Forest's design and siting of several architectural elements in the garden reveal his perspective on this human intervention. The open, rustic information kiosk he designed near the entry in 1937, or the Campbell Bench, hewn from stone and curving against a massive boulder, which offers a shady place to sit at the end of a sun-soaked trail and take in the view, are two built features that emerge organically from the landscape, as if they have always been there, as natural and inevitable as the rocks and the trees. Like a well-placed trail sign, they appear just when a visitor might feel in need of direction, rest, or shade.

My grandfather was involved in shaping the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden for his entire career—from its founding and formation in 1926, when as a young prac-

OPPOSITE: **Island view with Blaksley Library, 1945.** ABOVE: **Pritchett Trail.**





Information kiosk, 1938; drawing for visitor kiosk.

titioner he advised the director on native, drought-resistant plants, to his untimely death in 1949, when he was completing the rugged Pritchett Trail, with its dramatic overlook to the Channel Islands. The battle over the path seems to have struck a deep, personal chord. Before he wrote to Farrand, he "registered his disapproval" to the board: "I feel a little like the private who had discovered someone wanted to put an army camp on Mt. Tamalpais. He wrote if it was spoilt he didn't see what he was fighting for." For my grandfather, I believe, the argument was not about aesthetics, but ethos. This disagreement, minor though it may seem, was a fight for the garden's very soul—and possibly his own as well.

In searching for my grandfather in the spaces he designed, I find that the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden may be the fullest expression of his identity still extant. Unlike many designers, he was less inclined to make his mark on a place as to cultivate, in this community of spaces, a place that would leave its mark on him.

As I was writing this piece, a friend who used to visit Santa Barbara every October with his family, told me how his young sons, untraditional learners like my grandfather, responded to the Botanic Garden: "However sophisticated and innovative these spaces are, it remains to me powerful that a child immediately recognizes the worth of these places, their possibilities. And the ease of moving within them is immediately accepted in the running feet and laughter of children." The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden today, guided by Lockwood de Forest's ethos, leaves a mark on anyone who embraces the possibilities of those beautiful spaces and travels those winding trails.

Ann de Forest writes fiction and nonfiction that often centers on the resonance of place. She is a contributing writer for *Hidden City Philadelphia* and editor of *Extant,* the magazine of the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia.

Wood bench on Pritchett Trail.

PRESERVATION HERO

Sara Cedar Miller

JONATHAN D. LIPPINCOTT

For thirty-six years, Sara Cedar Miller has taken photographs of one of the great works of American art. Now the Central Park Conservancy's historian emerita, she joined its staff as a photographer in 1984, when the park was at its nadir, and her images of the rampant destruction and neglect became a call to arms for the park's restoration. Over time, as improvements were made, she was able to document its transformation back to the masterpiece that so many millions of visitors enjoy today. With her deep knowledge of art history as well as her keen photographic eye, Miller has been able to reveal the brilliance of the mid-nineteenth-century design created by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux, and to encourage legions of park visitors to support the work of the Conservancy. In her photographs and her scholarship, Miller has created a vital historical record and a vivid portrait of one of the most complex, fragile, and most deeply loved places in America.

JDL: Did you study photography or history in school?
SCM: Yes to both. I have an MA in art history from Hunter, where I focused on Michelangelo and studied with Leo Steinberg, and an MFA in photography from Pratt. My former husband, who owned a camera, encouraged me to start taking pictures because I was always saying, "Look at this, look at that!" On vacation in Paris, I took my first photograph that wasn't of a painting or sculpture of a couple walking on the Champs Elysées, and the minute I clicked the shutter, I said, "I think I love this!" I set up a darkroom in the kitchen of our one-bedroom apartment and developed a small business photographing my artist-friends' work for their portfolios to shop around to galleries.

How did you start working in Central Park?
I heard about a job at the Conservancy from a grad school friend. Betsy [Elizabeth Barlow] Rogers had made two calls looking for a photographer, one to Pratt and one to Cooper Union. My friend was working at Cooper Union, and when she got the call, she immediately called me. I later found out that other applicants showed up with portfolios as if they were trying to get a show at a gallery. Instead, I brought all kinds of pictures—landscapes in Europe, weddings and parties, experimental work, portraits, still lifes; color, black and white; slides, prints—everything. The Conservancy needed someone who could do every kind of photography, so I was the lucky one who got the job.

Sara Cedar Miller at Bethesda Fountain, c. 1990. Photograph by Alison Miller.

What sort of photographs were you were taking in the beginning?
In 1984 the master plan was about to be published, and the Conservancy needed to document the restoration work under way at that time and all the conditions that had to be addressed going forward. I spent time learning how to see the park with my "teachers" Judith Heintz and Marianne Cramer, the Conservancy's landscape architects who worked on the master plan. I also took PR photos at events for donors, of the staff at work, and of park visitors. I'd be out in the mud all day and then dressed up for parties at night. The opportunity allowed me to be a fly on the wall of New York City, but it was quite a wardrobe challenge!

How did your role at the Conservancy change over time?
After five years, Betsy appointed me to be the historian of Central Park, and I began to do research for public relations and in-house staff and to answer questions from the press, the public, scholars, and students. The park is used by millions of people in a million different ways, and they all want photos or information on some aspect of it.

History and photography inform each other, so it was beneficial for me to be doing both. My art history training taught me how to interpret elements of the park's artwork, such as the iconography behind the carvings at Bethesda Terrace or many of the sculptures, in terms of the culture that created it. Remarkably, no art historian had ever studied Central Park before. Many scholars from different academic fields acknowledged the park as a work of art, but they had failed to pay attention to the iconography of many park features or to place it in an art historical context. I had been trained to look at the times, the culture, and the influences of an artist—in this case, three artists: Frederick Law Olmsted, Calvert Vaux, and Jacob Wrey Mould.

Tell me a bit about the master plan and your role in that.
The master plan was the bible of the restoration, with a description of each section of the park and the problems in it and how to fix them. I took photographs of the current park and did a bit of photo research for the document. The draft was completed in 1984, and MIT Press published the final edition [*Rebuilding Central Park: A Management and Restoration Plan*] in 1987.

When Central Park was built, it inspired other U.S. cities to build urban parks; when Central Park was restored, it inspired other cities to restore those same nineteenth-century parks. Central Park has been a major influence in American culture and landscape. It's very democratic, to have a space for *all* people: this is the Constitution in grass and trees. Central Park is a social democratic experiment that succeeded. This idea first moved out into the nation and then into the world.

How did you first approach the park? What was your initial relationship with it?
I was immediately drawn to the park as a work of art, a series of composed scenes. I looked at old photographs to learn how to see the park, how Olmsted and Vaux designed it. They were painting scenes with trees and water and rocks, and I respond to them, photograph them, show them to others. My absolute luck and joy.

How do you go about exploring the park and finding the places you want to photograph?
It tends to be very seasonal. The area around the Pool on the Upper West Side is great for fall color. In the spring, the allées of Yoshino and Kwanzan cherry trees around the Reservoir. My favorite time to photograph is after a snowstorm, when the wet snow clings to all the branches and everything, and the sun comes out and there's a blue sky. The Mall looks like a Gothic cathedral. The park is magical in the snow.

What are some of the challenges of photographing in the park?
The biggest challenge is the fences. We need to have them, of course, but they tend to disfigure a scene and distract from the idealized park we see in our minds. Today's skyline is a growing visual problem. We've gotten used to a wall of buildings around the park, but they were all the same height, more or less. Now these tall splinters stick up so much higher. If I have the complete skyline in a photo, it's too much sky and not enough landscape. The proportion of sky to landscape has changed completely. I have to crop photos at the first level of buildings and cut off the tops of the new ones in order to focus on the park.

Do you use historical photos of the park in your work?
Yes, I have spent a great deal of time looking at historical photographs to understand what Olmsted and Vaux were aiming for in their landscapes. Old photos help me

to understand how the topography has changed over time, and the ways that views have changed. I have also researched historical photographs for designers so they can restore a landscape, a bench, or a bridge. Occasionally, we use historical photos for vegetation, but plant material and conditions have changed over time, and we have a better understanding of how to use contemporary trees and shrubs. Olmsted planted a lot of invasive plants we would never use, for example.

Have all your books been about different aspects of Central Park?

Yes. It took ten years to find a publisher for my first book, *Central Park, An American Masterpiece*, because all the sales and marketing people thought only those who live on the perimeter would buy a book about Central Park. We proved them wrong. That book discussed the park as a work of art. The Conservancy's most recent book, *Seeing Central Park, Updated and Expanded*, is a short introduction for a visitor or an armchair traveler. My next book, *Before Central Park*, will be the history of the pre-park.

Tell me about the history before Central Park.

I had the privilege to spend four days in the park with our archaeologist, Richard Hunter, in 1990, and I began to see the landscape as a remnant of what was. When I lead tours, I'm often asked, "What was here before the park?" No one asks this of Times Square, but Central Park just begs the question! Nothing much has been written about *before*. *The Park and the People* by Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar treats the decades leading up to the creation of the park, and the 1997 exhibit *Before Central Park: The Life and Death of Seneca Village* at the New-York Historical Society also focused on a short span of time, whereas this new book will cover more than two centuries of social history as well as the millennia of geologic history. It's been a thrill to do this research and work with original documents. The 843-acre pre-park is a microcosm of New York history, and when you add the history of Central Park after the mid-1850s, it encompasses almost every aspect of American urban history.

What role do you see photography playing in the preservation of the park?

It is so important to document the work of the Conservancy visually. No one today would ever believe the park was once in such devastating condition, and those images alerted New Yorkers to how much the park needed to be rescued.

The photos, more than anything else, are the reminders that the park is beautiful because of the *people* whose hard work and dedication make it so. It isn't just Mother Nature, but the Central Park Conservancy staff who are out there in every kind of weather, every day and evening, to ensure that the park looks as beautiful and is as welcoming in real life as it is in an image. New Yorkers also need to be reminded of the park's fragility and that it requires constant care, good management, and expertise, and the photos help to inspire New Yorkers to support that vital work.

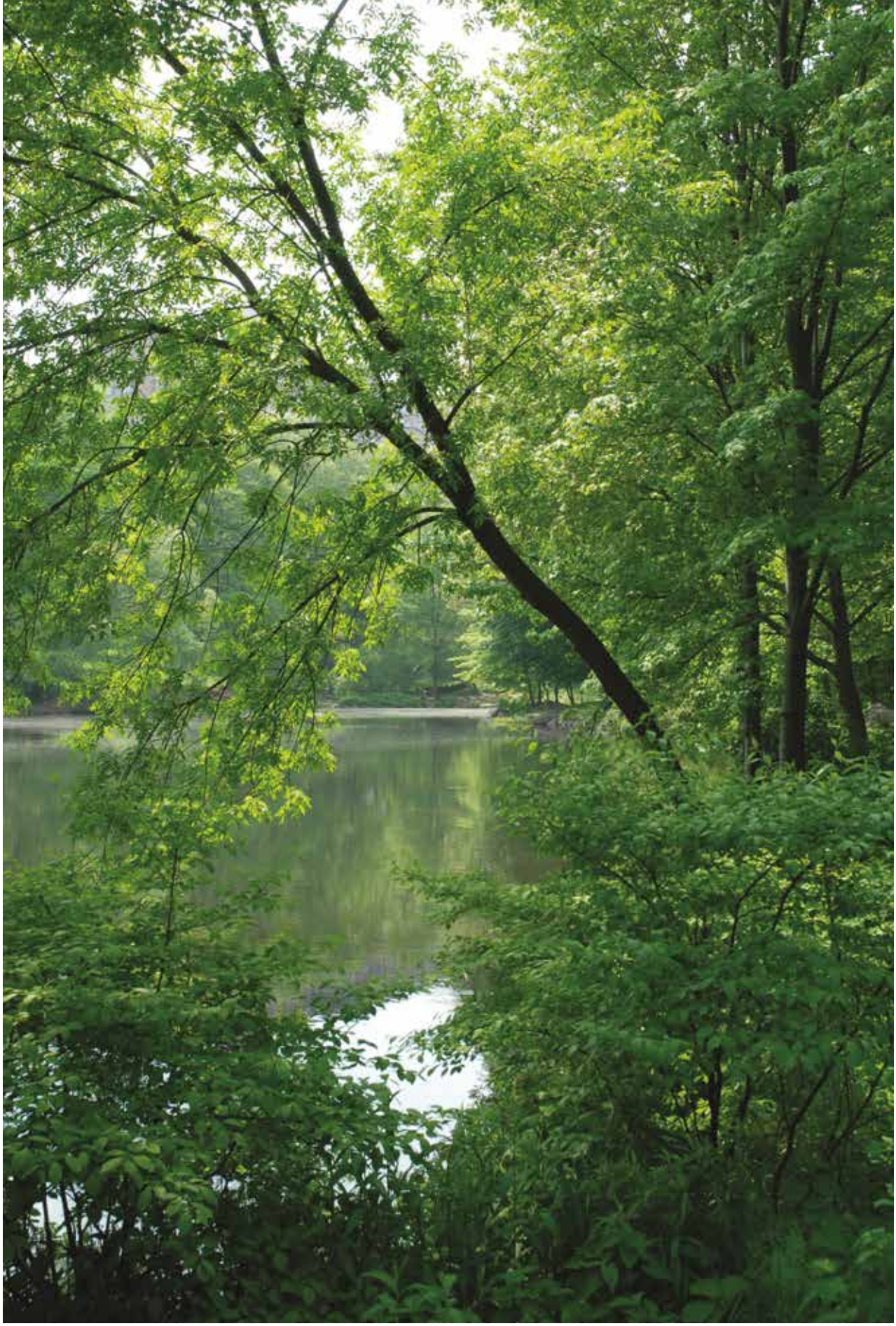
There are two kinds of photography that are required for the Conservancy's work: documentary and artistic. A document records what was in front of the camera lens, to remember how the park looked at a certain time, how we did a particular kind of work, or who was at an event.

The artistic is involved with the emotional memory of the park as an idealized space. The Conservancy works hard (alongside Olmsted and Vaux) to create a perfect landscape, and that is what the mind sees while visiting, and long afterward. This work of art has no fences, no erosion, no crooked lampposts, no signs, no dead flowers, no trash cans. When we are in the park, our brains ignore those mundane aspects in the landscape, but the camera sees all and in sharp detail. Photoshop does enable us to change a photograph from a document into a work of art, but mood and emotion—the goal of an artwork—must also come from the timelessness and magic that are captured by photography's essential tools: light, tone, color, blur, form, line, texture, pattern. These elements draw people into a good photograph, and they are the same qualities that draw people into the beautiful landscapes of Central Park.

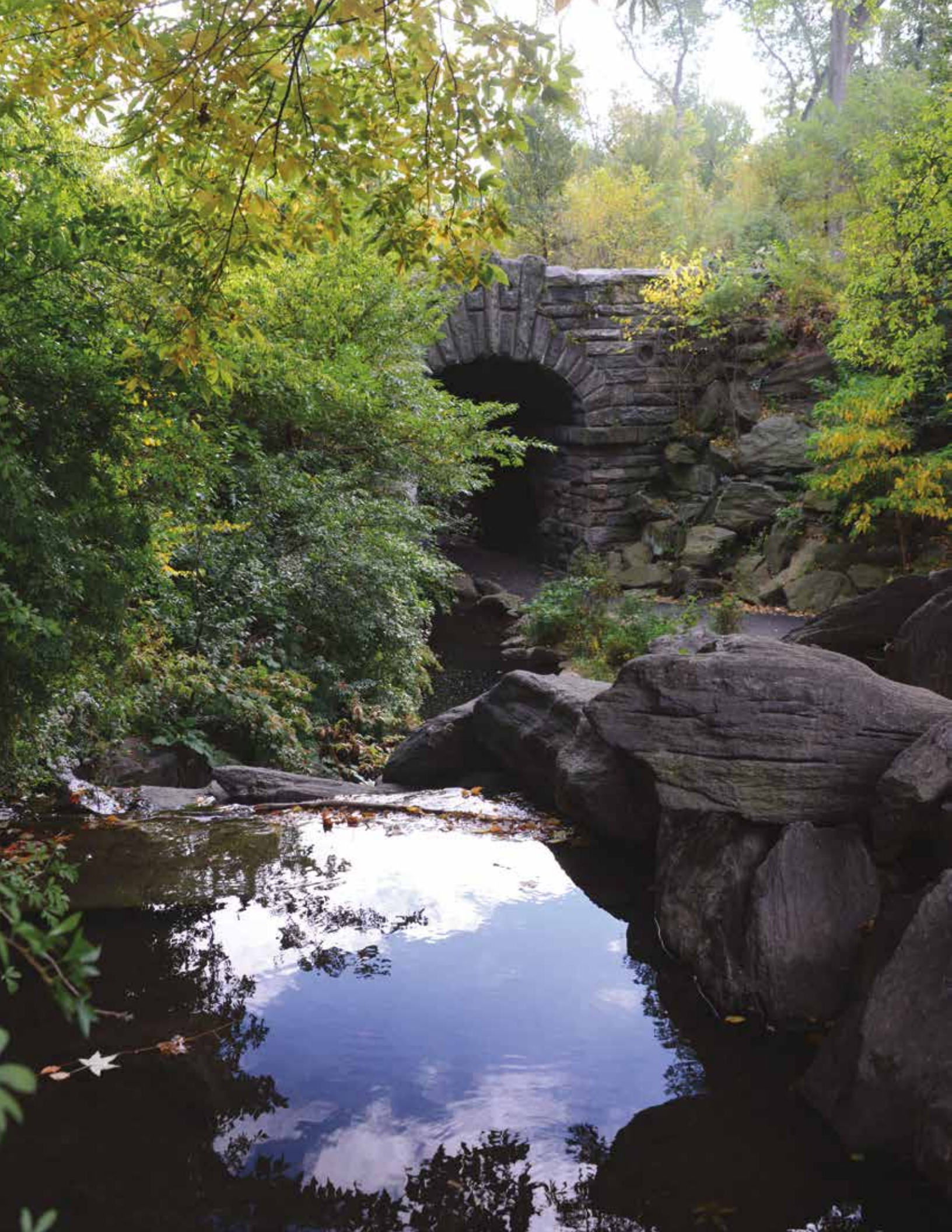
I have a sign in my office of a quote by the landscape architect Diana Balmori: "A landscape, like a moment, never happens twice." That is why Central Park is perpetually a photographer's dream come true.

Jonathan D. Lippincott is associate director of LALH and author, most recently, of *Robert Murray: Sculpture*.

Olmsted and Vaux's plan for Central Park includes many "wild" passages that were carefully designed to appear that way. Changing with the seasons and from one hour to the next, such areas offer park visitors a chance to lose themselves in nature and, in times of stress, to find solace, renewal, and, perhaps, peace. TOP: **Lake, Ramble Shoreline, 2017.** BOTTOM: **Ramble, Lake, 2016.** OPPOSITE: **Cascade, Ravine, 2013.**
All photographs by Sara Cedar Miller/Central Park Conservancy.



Pool, 2008. OPPOSITE: **Glen Span Arch, Ravine, 2014.**



OPPOSITE: **Glen Span Arch, Ravine, 2014.** TOP: **Pool, 2008.** BOTTOM: **Azalea Pond, Ramble, 2014.** OVERLEAF: **Cascade, Ravine, 2015.**

ROUNDTABLE

Wild Beauty and Its Role in Landscape Design

DAVID KAMP, DARREL MORRISON, AND MARGIE RUDDICK
MODERATOR: ROBIN KARSON

***Robin Karson**: There is mounting scientific evidence that spending time in nature offers profound physical and emotional benefits. Can you describe your sense of this phenomenon?*

Margie Ruddick: I grew up in an apartment in New York so the wild landscapes of the park and the beach were my lifeline—I don't know who I would be without them. I chose a college not for academics but because the minute I stepped off the bus to visit I was immersed in the cool scent of white pines. I learned decades later that Native Americans call white pine "the tree of peace"; people who are agitated sit underneath them, to await clarity and calm. The components of nature serve specific functions in promoting health and well-being. Still water and turbulent water have different beneficial impacts on the body.

We designed the Urban Garden Room at Bryant Park as a place where people would feel immersed in nature in the middle of the city. A narrow interior space, this vertical green environment was inspired by Northern California's fern canyons. People report that when they enter the space they feel better—their blood pressure goes down, the earthy, humid atmosphere calms them. They breathe; the space is always quiet.

I create landscapes that are less about looking than about moving and just being, immersed in nature, clearly designed or not. This challenging spring, many have found solace walking out in the landscape, remarking on how much they are taking in the cycles of plant life, noting wildlife emerging in greater numbers. Being in nature allows you to connect with life, be fully present, to turn off the mind chatter of contemporary life. It nourishes and heals.

David Kamp: I love the connection we each find with nature, often formed under very different circumstances. In contrast to Margie, I grew up in a small town in the North Carolina foothills.

Nature calls to something deep in us. For me, there is something profoundly personal in smelling a field of ripe blackberries pungent in the midday sun, feeling wet clay oozing between my toes in a creek, hearing the wind moving through the needles of a pine tree, or

TOP: **Queens Plaza, New York City, design by Margie Ruddick Landscape.** Photograph by Sam Oberter. BOTTOM: **Watermill Retreat, Watermill, NY, design by Margie Ruddick Landscape.** Photograph by Margie Ruddick.

LEFT: **Joel Schnaper Memorial Garden, Terence Cardinal Cooke Health Care Center, New York, design by Dirtworks Landscape Architecture.**
RIGHT: **Evans Restorative Garden, Cleveland Botanical Garden, design by Dirtworks Landscape Architecture.** Photographs courtesy Dirtworks, PC.

gently moving a startled earthworm out of the way in order to plant some herbs. These experiences are both calming and invigorating; they refresh both the body and the spirit.

Each of us has those personal deep-seated responses, finding intimacy with nature. They are collected since childhood and added to throughout our lives. I added to my personal cache just today during my morning walk. Sort of like discovering new secrets traversing a favorite woodland path over time. I think that intimacy—tied to something larger, the great web of life—nourishes us and helps maintain balance in our lives from the multitude of forces that buffet us. Many wiser minds than I have eloquently expressed this: Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, and Oliver Sachs quickly come to mind. Ultimately, it is a personal process. Each of us must discover this connection, this intimacy, in our own way, at our own pace, and on our own terms.

Darrel Morrison: I will always remember the sense of well-being I felt when on bright May days I entered the American plum thicket on the farm in Iowa where I grew up. It was another world inside there, where the small trees formed a low canopy just above my head, their white flowers luminous, backlit by the bright sun above. Hundreds of bees buzzed among the flowers whose sweet aroma permeated the air and my brain. The blooming of the plum trees was an ephemeral event, lasting only a few days before a rainstorm or a gusty wind brought the petals to the ground like snowflakes.

Today, on my terrace garden in Madison, that same sweet scent wafts through the air for a few days in May, from the single plum tree I planted in a cedar box. I am transported back to the simpler world I inhabited as a child. And once again, the same sense of well-being and peace washes over me. As John Burroughs wrote, "I go to nature to be soothed, healed, and have my senses put in order."

RK: *As landscape architects whose practices have been shaped by an awareness of the benefits of contact with "wild" nature, how do you go about providing these in your work? What role does "wild" nature play in your design process?*

DK: Early in my career, as one of the designers for Australia's New Parliament House, I saw how design could

express identity—and do it at vastly different scales, both individual and national. During the project, I realized that design could engender an emotional connection by heightening personal experience. I became fascinated with the fundamental design challenge of creating a vast, complex government center that preserved a sense of personal identity while instilling the collective idea of Australia.

Later I saw parallel issues in the American health care system. The response to illness can be a defining experience. In the face of what may be the most serious threat of one's life, we are often unable to maintain equilibrium or our identity in the context of the institution. I saw an opportunity to humanize health care through design with nature, addressing identity within the context of illness.

Forming Dirtworks to explore that idea, I experienced just how personal our perceptions of nature are and how important it is to understand the ways we can help address through design the sense of vulnerability and isolation that often accompanies illness. Any contact with nature, no matter how simple, might be considered "wild" for those in ill health. Even the briefest, most superficial connection might provide invigoration, a much-needed boost of self-esteem, and restoration. Conversely, nature for many vulnerable people can be perceived as threatening. Designers need to remind themselves that our perceptions of nature, and our sense of identity within it, are shaped by individual circumstances.

DM: I remember a solo visit to Avoca Prairie, a 2,000-acre preserve along the Wisconsin River, in the mid-1970s. Midday, I picked a spot to have my lunch in the middle of a patch of prairie dropseed, a native grass with clumps of fine, arching leaves, about two feet tall, with aromatic seed heads that bobbed in a soft breeze. I was engulfed in the distinctive sweet smell of the dropseed grass all around me in the warmth of the October sun. Borrowing David's words, this was for me an emotional connection, a heightened experience.

That moment and others in a variety of natural areas moved me to try to provide the possibility for people (and other creatures) to experience similar emotions

Sensory Arts Garden, Els Center of Excellence, Jupiter, FL, design by Dirtworks Landscape Architecture. Photograph courtesy Dirtworks, PC.

in the landscapes I have designed. In terms of process, I first like to get the feel of the site, walking over it and seeing it at all times of day. Then I make quick sketches of masses and space, which I translate into distillations of native plant communities characteristic of the place. All the while, I try to imagine the experience of being in that landscape as it evolves and changes over time.

MR: My drive to create places where people can feel immersed in the natural world probably comes from my early experiences in wild landscapes, from Central Park to the coastal wash of eastern Long Island to Wyoming and the Pacific Northwest. This is not so much a conscious strategy as a desire to capture the feelings these places inspired in me: connection to the larger natural world, a sense of well-being, happiness. In process, this makes me often suppress "design" so that people experience the landscape as their own discovery, not as something orchestrated by a designer. There are places where design can move the foreground appropriately—for instance, in a plaza, a place of artifice. But often I will use these more clearly designed moments as a foil to the larger "natural" landscape, to heighten the drama of the woodland, mountain, meadow, wetland—to underline or frame it.

My latest work focuses on ways in which people actively engage in wild landscapes—foraging in edible forests, or developing sustainable livelihoods using invasive plants such as phragmites to make products like paper. I want to make not just places for leisure but places where people feel productively engaged in natural processes. This brings the community aspect into relief as an integral part of creating or enhancing wild landscapes so that they are sustainable, not places to be cordoned off but places where humans are an important and beneficial part of the ecosystem.

RK: *Over the past decade, the profession has increasingly embraced sustainability as a central tenet of design. What is the relationship between sustainability and "wildness"?*

Native Flora Garden Extension, Brooklyn Botanical Garden, design by Darrel Morrison. Photograph by Diana L. Drake from *Beauty of the Wild.*

DM: "Wild" natural landscapes provide us our best possible models of sustainability in the landscape. They are biotically diverse; they are resilient; they are productive; they are regenerative; they are dynamic. *And* they are beautiful. Especially during stressful times, their beauty can help sustain us.

I am of course happy that "sustainability" has been identified as a goal in our planned-and-designed environment, that we are incorporating energy and water conservation as objectives in our designs, and that there is recognition of the value of native plants. These are all things we should have been doing all along, of course. And I worry that such things as "the use of native plants" can too easily become just an item to check off to gain certification of a project's sustainability.

But we should not be content with just checking all the right boxes. For example, it is not enough simply to specify a collection of native plants for a project. We need to go beyond that and work toward designing *communities* of locally native species modeled on what is found in the naturally evolving ("wild") landscape in terms of species composition and distribution patterns. These designs will be richly diverse; they will be "of the place"; they will be filled with life and movement and change over time; they will be beautiful. Interwoven into our designed landscape fabric, they will provide opportunities for people to have "an emotional connection, a heightened experience."

DK: Darrell identified an important point. Simply checking all the right boxes misses the spirit of the idea, the responsibility to be rigorous in our understanding of place and time, and the creative opportunities that come with embracing these points. Mind you, there are usually essential elements within such lists; but putting blinders on and going no further robs you of so much. We all recognize that there are checklists we need to attend to in our design process, whether they involve sustainability, or accessibility, or other contingencies. It takes effort to use them imaginatively, as a springboard to possibilities and not as the destination.

Nature comprises complex adaptive systems tied to place and time. Darrel observes this in his description of plant communities—how they are dynamic and diverse and, if properly developed, will be "of the place." We are talking about place and time for the health of naturally evolving plant communities, but they are also important in the health of human communities. I think that connection—to place and time—is one of the reasons we find natural landscapes so compelling, engaging, and restorative.

MR: I believe we need to take the concept of sustainability a step further. We need to manage wild landscapes in light of the many stresses and challenges that threaten them. Climate change is altering the land in such drastic ways. The forests of the Northeast are turning into horizontal as well as vertical landscapes: higher temperatures stress trees, so they are less able to withstand freak storms, and blowdowns leave the forest floor littered with fallen trees. The species that thrive in these new conditions are not necessarily the heritage species of oak and other hardwoods, but scrappier species that are shorter-lived and more pest-resistant.

We need to actively manage our wild landscapes to ensure that they are not decimated but rather shift into a composition of conditions and species that will survive and thrive into the future. We can do this by integrating uses that can work with the tangles and debris, and by changing the nursery culture. Currently "sustainability" is defined as using native plants and managing stormwater responsibly. But we need to begin cultivating plants that can survive these changing conditions—and they may not only be native species but include "naturalized" plants that are exotic but not invasive. The days of ecological purism are over. These extreme times necessitate deploying the toughest, and not necessarily the most ecologically appropriate, species.

***RK:** : How do we teach young landscape architects about the "beauty of wild"? How do we encourage them to integrate this principle into their practices?*

DK: One important lesson is to help students understand the beauty of observation and the depth that it brings—not looking *at* but looking *into*.

To me, that means encouraging students to "dive into nature" and look at the smallest of details, then step back to realize their place in a larger ecosystem. This has both poetic and practical meaning. Understanding that relationship, that connection to something larger, will help ensure that some essence of the "beauty of wild" can find a home in our most constructed landscapes.

It can also lead to a lifelong fascination with nature. Years ago, my husband gave me a very fine magnifying glass. After garden chores, the highlight of my day was

taking the glass out into the garden to examine something that caught my fancy. If Mike couldn't find me, he always knew to go looking in the meadow. He would usually find me crouching down, studying a bumblebee intently working a blossom of mountain mint or admiring the tiny red tassel flowers of sweet fern. Hours pass by, seeming like minutes.

MR: Yes, I agree. I think the only way to teach anyone about the beauty of the wild is to be in the wild with them, let them go off on their own, and help them acquire enough of a language so they can read the landscape and interact with it, not just gaze on it. The language of ecology works—understanding plant communities, ecotones, water flow, soils—but also the plastic medium of topography. I was at West Point yesterday, looking at Olmsted grading that is so beautiful but also oddly . . . lumpy, to use an inelegant word. A much smaller scale than what I am used to in Central Park, for example. Then I was looking north on the Hudson from Trophy Point—that iconic Hudson River School view—and saw that the fjord of the Hudson at this point, carved by the glacier, is composed of these lumpy steep slopes, ravines, crevices that support a tremendous diversity of life. Landscape literacy—being able to understand why the landscape is the way it is—can only be achieved by being in the landscape, walking, sensing, not only looking but listening. The beauty of the wild cannot be appreciated in the abstract. I often say that I design with my feet—we can't just "design" wild places in the office. We design them or create change in them by observing, making some changes, seeing how the place adapts and shifts. Knowing that any work done in a wild place is not "done" in one season but evolves organically over time can only deepen one's sense of its beauty.

DM: I'm with you both on the importance of getting students *into* the natural landscape and immersing themselves in it. There is no substitute.

Teaching field courses has been the most rewarding (and fun) activity I've had over the years, with students in class all day, five days a week, for three weeks. Of course, the real teacher is the landscape itself, but we can facilitate the learning, using both scientific/quantitative and intuitive/artistic methods.

On the quantitative side, students learn a lot from looking closely at a sample plot, recording all the species in it and mapping their distribution on graph paper. It's amazing how much you can learn about a forest or a prairie, a bog or a meadow or granite outcrop, from doing multiple sample plots.

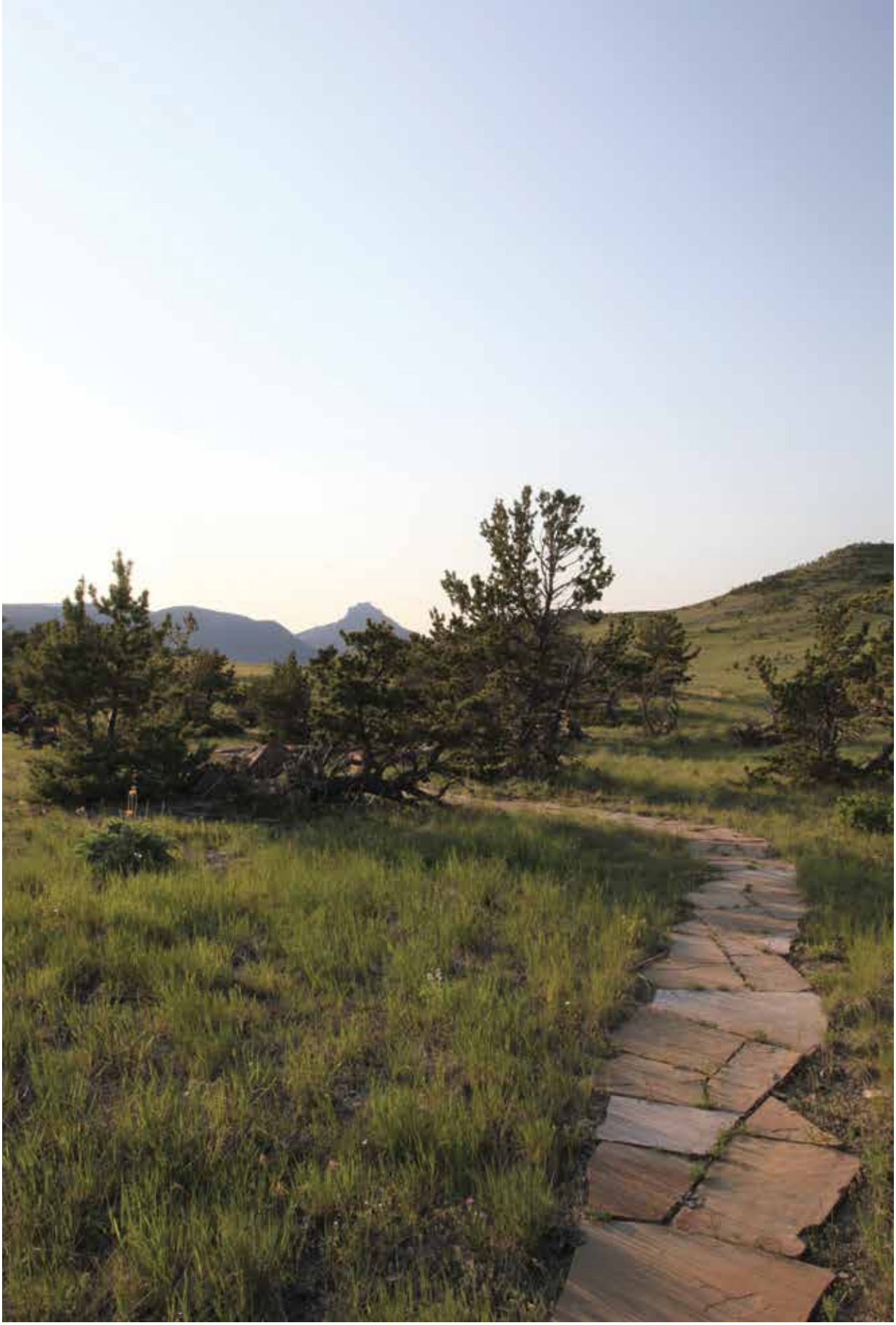
Intuitive/artistic methods include drawing individual key species and characteristic landscape scenes, trying to capture their "visual essence" by abstracting the lines, forms, colors, textures, and patterns on paper. If you observe a plant or a plant community closely enough to distill its essence in a drawing, you will remember it. Similarly, writing about what they are seeing, hearing, smelling, or feeling as they are immersed in a natural landscape will etch it vividly in memory. These memories of "wild" landscapes will inspire future designs. Because after you have experienced the richness of these places, the luminosity and the movement, the birds, butterflies, and bees in them, you can't settle for less—and shouldn't.

David Kamp, FASLA, LF, NA, is the founding principal of Dirtworks Landscape Architecture, PC. His forty-year career involving practice, teaching, writing, and advocacy has been dedicated to promoting health through design with nature. A Harvard Loeb Fellow, MacDowell Colony Fellow, and member of the National Academy of Design, Kamp has been internationally recognized through awards, publications, and documentaries.

Darrel Morrison is a renowned landscape designer and educator whose ecology-based approach has influenced generations of practitioners. He has taught ecology-based landscape design at University of Wisconsin–Madison (1969–1983) and University of Georgia (1983–2005). Morrison lived and worked in New York City from 2005 until 2015, and now lives in Madison, where he is an Honorary Faculty Associate in the Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin.

Margie Ruddick is an independent practitioner who has forged a design language that integrates ecology and culture. Her work has received the 2013 Cooper-Hewitt National Design Award in landscape architecture; the Lewis Mumford Award from Architects, Designers and Planners for Social Responsibility; and the Rachel Carson Women in Conservation Award from the National Audubon Society. She is author of *Wild by Design: Strategies for Creating Life-Enhancing Landscapes*.

Robin Karson is executive director of LALH and author of several books about the history of American landscape architecture.



Path to council ring, Montana ranch, design by Darrel Morrison. Photograph by Carol Betsch from *Beauty of the Wild*.

Urban stepping stones and waterfall, Levi Strauss Plaza, San Francisco, design by Lawrence Halprin. Photograph by Tara C. Robinson. OPPOSITE: **Yosemite Falls.** Photograph by David Iliff / CC BY-SA 3.0.

LALH Nature and Design Fund

The need for landscape design that provides a connection to the dynamic, restorative power of nature has never been greater than it is today. In response, LALH is creating the Nature and Design Fund, with a goal of one million dollars. The new fund will support books and documentary films that illuminate the transformative principles of nature and the landscape designs they can inspire.

American landscape designers have long exulted in the richness and variety of the nation's wild beauty, from the Adirondack Mountains to Yosemite Falls. Frederick Law Olmsted and other conservation-minded designers were inspired by evidence that time in nature can calm frayed nerves, heal broken hearts, and rejuvenate failing bodies. They believed that the soundness of the republic depended on the health of its citizenry, and the native landscape had a large role to play in achieving it.

As Olmsted and other American landscape architects advocated for the protection of scenic lands, they also grappled with how to provide an experience of "wild" nature to the inhabitants of increasingly dense cities. In their work creating parks and park systems and other landscapes, they forged a nature-inspired approach to design.

Since 1992, LALH books have explored this body of work. The Nature and Design Fund will ensure that we continue and expand this critical focus. Research will not only reflect on the importance of these places to diverse populations but delve deeply into differences, setting the record straight about the realities of the forces of paternalism, geographical determinism, sexism, and racism in landscape design.

Landscapes of Exclusion (LALH, 2016), for example, explores segregation and the creation of state parks in the South during the Jim Crow era. *Marjorie Sewell Cautley, Landscape Architect for the Motor Age* (LALH, 2021) delves into the life and career of the first woman landscape architect to a design a state park.

As we expand our awareness of the diversity of experience in landscape history, future walks in the park will perhaps evoke not only thoughts of nature's healing influence but also expressions of deeper cultural insight and understanding.

To learn more about the Nature and Design Fund, visit lalh.org.

NEW

Robert Royston

REUBEN M. RAINEY AND JC MILLER

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Masters of Modern Landscape Design

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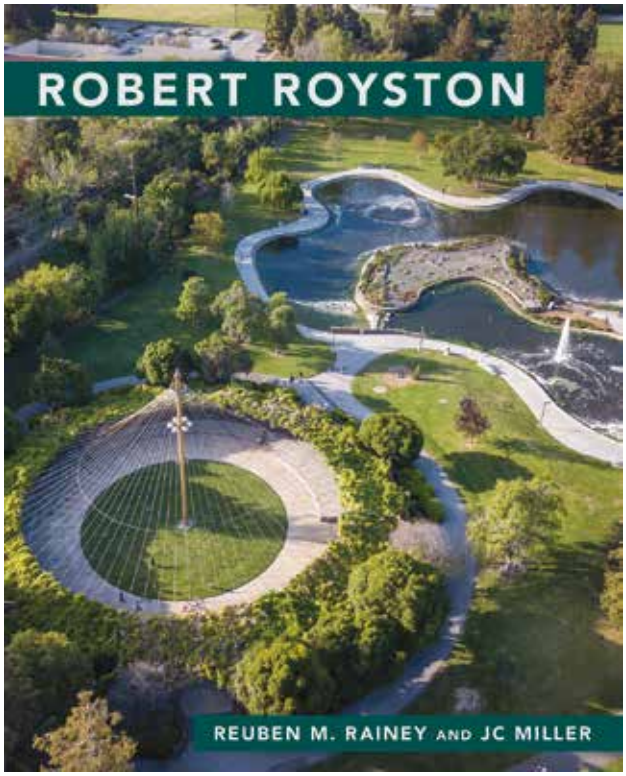


The first biography of the landscape architect Robert Royston (1918–2008) documents the life and work of a designer and teacher who shaped the postwar Bay Area landscape with visionary designs for public spaces. Early in his career, Royston conceived of the "landscape matrix," an interconnected system of parks, plazas, and parkways that he hoped could bring order and amenity to the rapidly developing suburbs. The ideals represented by the landscape matrix would inform his work on more than two thousand projects—landscapes as diverse as school grounds, new towns, transit corridors, and housing tracts.

As an apprentice of Thomas Church, Royston learned from a master in residential garden design, but he soon moved on to establish a partnership with Garrett Eckbo and Edward Williams and to launch an academic career at Berkeley. His experience with private gardens influenced his early public park designs, which he considered spaces for the American family—a novel concept at a time when such neighborhood parks were typically limited to playing fields and stock playground equipment. This new type of park offered not only distinct areas and activities for all ages but also easy access to the community centers, libraries, and other facilities within the landscape matrix.

Royston, Hanamoto & Mayes (today RHAA), founded by Royston in 1958, grew to become one of the nation's most influential corporate firms. Over nearly six decades of practice, Royston helped to make the Bay Area a cohesive, desirable location to live and work. He designed landscapes to benefit community members of all ages, setting a high standard of inclusivity and environmental awareness. In addition to the many beloved places Royston created, his perceptive humanism, passed down to his students, is his enduring legacy.

"Robert Royston's place in the evolution of American landscape architecture in the second half of the twentieth century is often overlooked in favor of his better-known contemporaries. This book will lead to a new understanding of his importance and a new appreciation of his contributions to contemporary landscape architecture among design students, those in professional practice, and the general public."

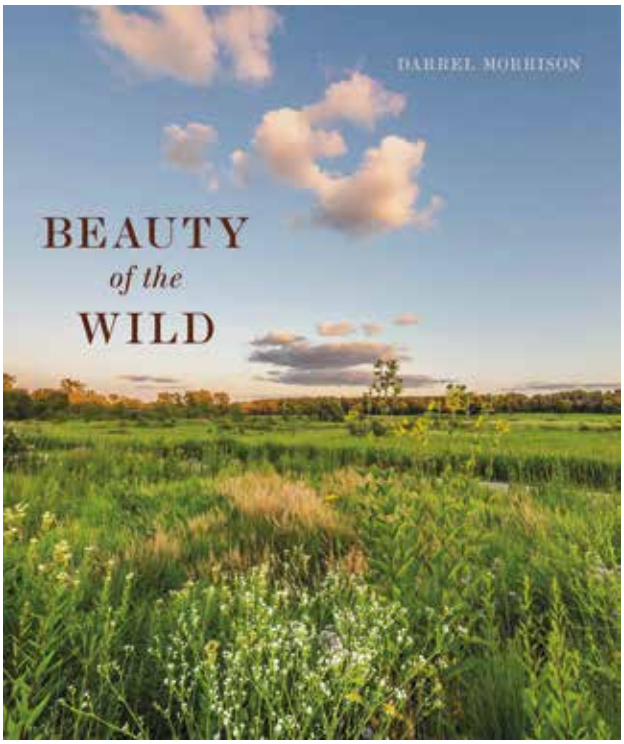
—Lake Douglas, FASLA, Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture, Louisiana State University

FORTHCOMING

Beauty of the Wild

DARREL MORRISON

Published by Library of American Landscape History



In *Beauty of the Wild,* Darrel Morrison tells stories of people and places that have nourished his career as a teacher and a designer of nature-inspired landscapes. Growing up on a small farm in southwestern Iowa, Morrison was transported by the subtle beauties of the native prairie landscape—the movement of grasses in the wind, clouds across the sky, their shadows over the plain. As a graduate student at University of Wisconsin–Madison, he encountered the Curtis Prairie, one of the first places in the world where ecological restoration was practiced. There he saw the beauty inherent in ecological diversity. At Wisconsin, too, Morrison was introduced to the land ethic of Aldo Leopold, that we have a responsibility to perpetuate the richness we have inherited in nature.

For more than six decades, Morrison has drawn inspiration from the varied landscapes of his life—from the Iowa prairie to Texas prickly pear scrub to the maple-beech-hemlock forests of Door County, Wisconsin, to the banks of the Oconee River in Piedmont Georgia. He has been guided as well by the teachings of Jens Jensen, who believed that we can't successfully copy nature, but we can get a theme from it and use key species to evoke that essential feeling.

In native plant gardens at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum, the New York Botanical Garden, and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Morrison has blended communities of native plants in distillations of regional prairies, woodlands, bogs, and coastal meadows. At Storm King Art Center in the Hudson Highlands, his landscapes capture the essence of upstate New York meadows. These ever-evolving compositions were designed to reintroduce diversity, natural processes, and naturally occurring patterns—the "beauty of the wild"—into the landscape.

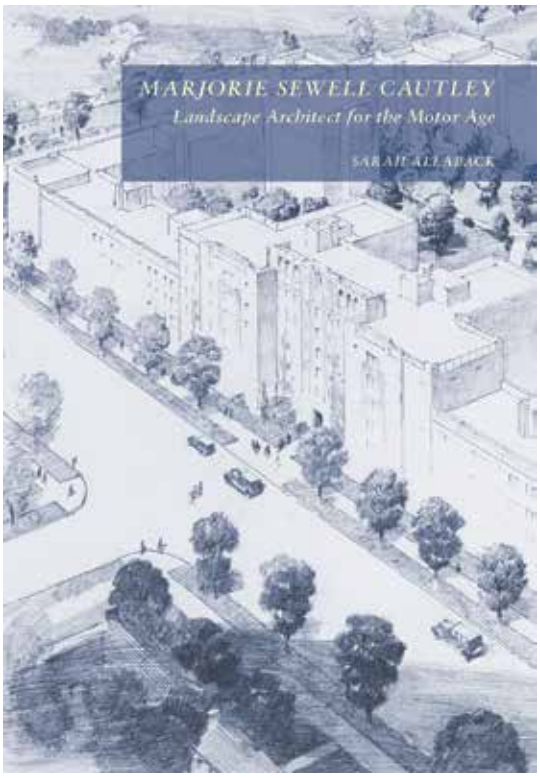
For Morrison, however, there is also a deeper motivation for designing these landscapes. Strongly influenced by Aldo Leopold's observation that people start to appreciate nature initially through its pretty elements, he explains: "From admiring individual plants within a big composition, you can move to starting to see patterns, and then this leads to starting to think about processes that have led to the patterns. It is a progression. You start to think more about why things are where they are, and how you can perpetuate that, and even deeper, you really start to think about protecting, preserving, and restoring these qualities in the landscapes we are responsible for."

FORTHCOMING

Marjorie Sewell Cautley, Landscape Architect for the Motor Age

SARAH ALLABACK

Published by Library of American Landscape History



Marjorie Sewell Cautley (1891–1954) was the first woman landscape architect to design state parks, the first to plan the landscape of a federally funded housing project, and the first to lecture in a university city planning department. In her absorbing biography, Sarah Allaback illuminates the life and work of this remarkable practitioner. Delving into diaries, scrapbooks, correspondence, and Cautley's wide-ranging writings and analyzing the projects—including unprecedented work on New Hampshire state parks—Allaback weaves the story of a woman who transcended both social and professional boundaries to create humane living spaces at one of the most transformative times in American history—the introduction of the automobile into mainstream public life.

The eldest of three daughters in a peripatetic naval family, Cautley experienced an unusually unfettered life as a child. A year living in Guam left her with lifelong memories of great natural beauty and respect for the inexplicable forces of nature. The death of her mother when she was ten and of her father three years later deepened her sense of self-reliance. Exceptionally creative, Cautley found in the profession of landscape architecture more than a means to support herself.

Launching her practice in 1920, Cautley envisioned engaging landscapes to suit postwar "affordable" housing, and spaces for enjoying the outdoors. As a teenager, Cautley had witnessed the first mass-produced automobiles being driven down the streets of Brooklyn; less than two decades later, she designed the landscape of Radburn, New Jersey, a "town for the motor age." Later in her career, Cautley designed parks to accommodate the increase in recreational travel and public gardens intended to improve middle-class American life. Raised in the Progressive Era, she approached all of her projects with a sense of profound social responsibility.

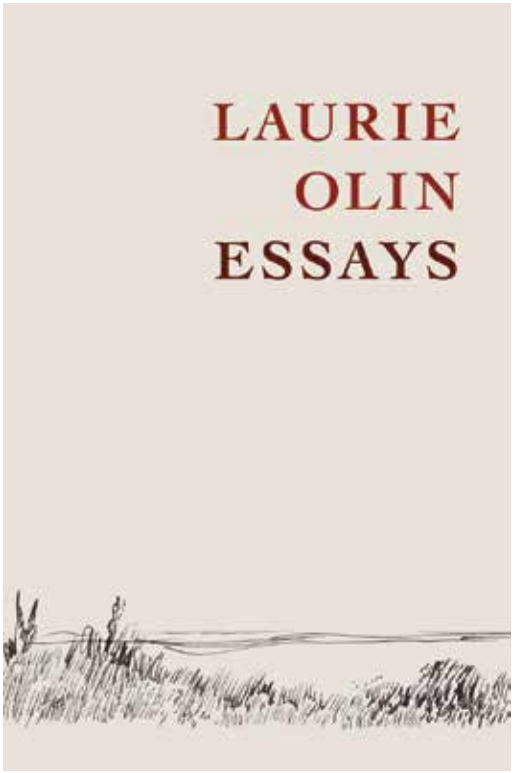
The hundreds of snapshots Cautley took of her commissions help identify the fragments of her projects that remain, from residential gardens to affordable housing projects to state parks—places that reflect the environmentally sensitive design practices landscape practitioners strive for today.

FORTHCOMING

Laurie Olin: Essays

LAURIE OLIN

Published by Library of American Landscape History

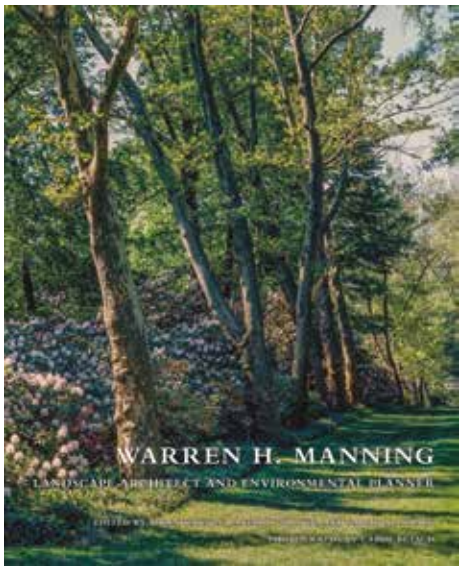


One of the most influential landscape architects in practice today, Laurie Olin has created designs for the Washington Monument grounds and the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., Bryant Park in New York City, and many other iconic landscapes. More recent projects include the AIA award-winning Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, Apple Park in Cupertino, and Simon and Helen Director Park in Portland, Oregon. All of these works were realized under the auspices of OLIN, the firm he cofounded.

Olin is also a thoughtful and persuasive writer, and here, for the first time, a selection of his work has been assembled for readers of varying backgrounds. The collection includes articles, lectures, and essays spanning more than three decades and a wide range of subjects, illustrated with a small selection of his fine drawings. The volume begins with "Form, Meaning, and Expression in Landscape Architecture" (1988), a piece that was written as a corrective to what Olin saw as "the utilitarian emphasis of our curriculum, and the field, at the time." Olin's view of landscape architecture as an art—"albeit a useful one"—emerges as a theme throughout the volume, as does his sense of the reflexive nature of making this, or any, art.

As a young man, Olin studied civil engineering at the University of Alaska and pursued architecture at the University of Washington, where Richard Haag stimulated his interest in landscape and the poet Theodore Roethke encouraged his literary skills. He discovered his calling while working on a series of essays and drawings about the English landscape which brought together art history, architectural history, geography, ecology, and economic and agricultural history. Teaching posts at the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard brought him into contact with students and a wide network of colleagues who proved stimulating. Through a long and distinguished career that has produced many successful built works and notable books, Olin has enlivened the field with his humanistic perspective and his multivalent approach to urban design.

Olin is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, and a recipient of the 1998 Award in Architecture from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and of the 2011 American Society of Landscape Architects Medal, the society's most prestigious award for a landscape architect. In 2012 he received the National Medal of Arts, the highest lifetime achievement award for artists and designers given by the President of the United States. Among his most recent books are *Be Seated* (2018) and *France Sketchbooks* (2020).



Warren H. Manning, Landscape Architect and Environmental Planner

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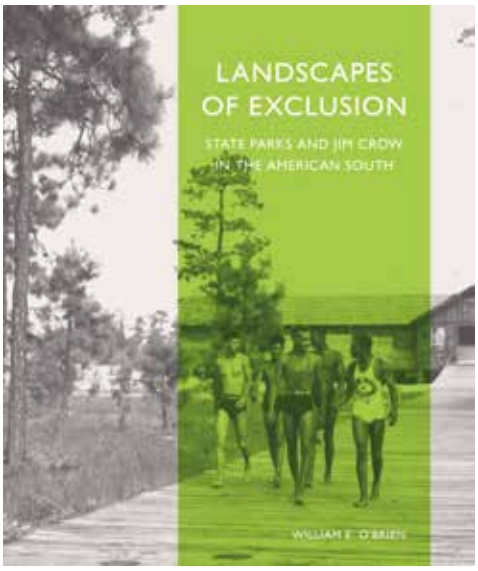

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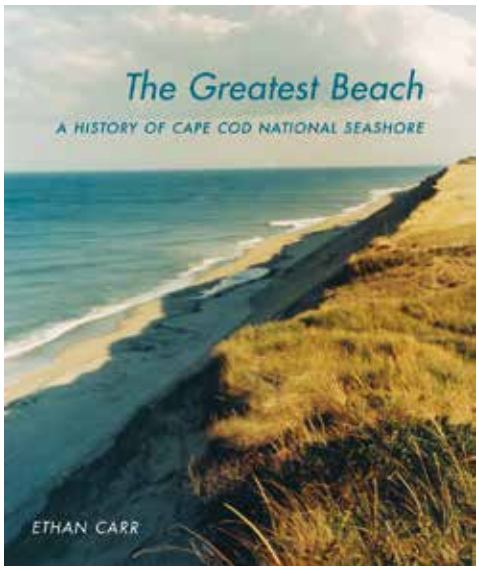

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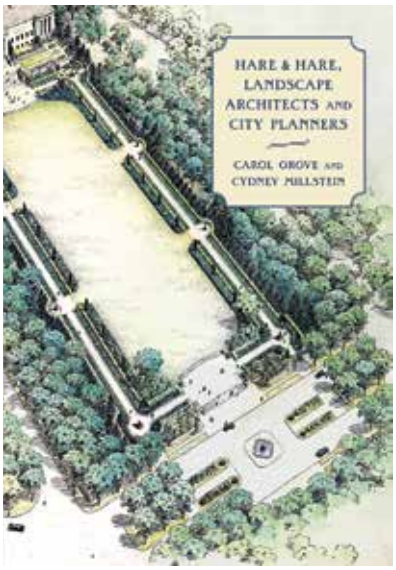

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