Landscape of Culture: Permanence and Change

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LANDSCAPE OF CULTURE: PERMANENCE AND CHANGE

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Treble reeds of some
Gigantic organ,
The cry of lonely, searching birds
Cuts the mist
But never fully cleaves.
If sound were made of substance
A million paths of light
Like sunshine filtered through a
Heavily shaded window
Would rend the air

The Notes
Of lightly pounding waves,
Follow in triple time.
The rolling pebbles slip and fall
In modulated recession,
Scarce heard by the undiscerning.
This is Neptune’s music;
A drumhead service and the muffled drums
Beat on

The crescendo
Echoes from the undulated cliff
To trace a line of deep, dark sound.
A fohorn blast - a Falstaff song of opera-
(Written with impulsive feeling
But staffed by an immortal master),
Shatters the air and holds the stage,
Then fades begin the subtle wings of thought.

Keith Ingersoll
Fig. 1
Passamaquoddy Suite Collage
The cultural landscape manifests the intimate connection between man and his natural surroundings and must be understood as a product of transformation over time. Such an understanding of landscape is necessary in order to recognize cycles and interrelationships of use and ritual. Architecture constitutes an essential part of the setting for, and materialization of, these cycles within the landscape; it sustains and is sustained by the community in which it is located. At what point does the culture of a place begin, what are its confines, and how are they determined? Boundary can be a natural landscape condition which is created by water, hills, forest, or weather. It can also be applied to the built or political landscape in the form of fences or walls. This spatial zone encloses all of the elements which allow the community to sustain itself. Over time these boundaries are broken down as a result of new roadways, technologies, and the desire for efficiency. Schools, meeting halls, and grocery stores are consolidated and centralized, and people no longer work in the town in which they live. The public spaces within the landscape that previously fostered informal social interaction between people become diminished or eliminated. The spatial construct of the community has been radically changed and faces the crisis of adapting and reconstructing its identity. As conditions change and culture shifts to adapt, it is my contention that architecture has the capacity to provide an understanding of identity in times of change by regenerating the previously existing level of engagement between people and their natural environment through means of a reestablished spatial network and a materialization of informal social and spatial relationships. This materialization must address opposing forces of permanence and temporality through the construction of a project which interrelates formal and informal spaces, orienting the body in space and commanding interaction with local conditions.
How do people use, experience, relate to, and learn from the landscape in which they live?

Grand Manan Island, New Brunswick, is a resource dependent fishing community where the loss of the all-pervasive influence that the fishing industry had on local culture has limited the adaptability and flexibility of the community to react to changes over time. As centralization on the island generates ambiguity between the boundaries of the villages, there is a loss of individual rootedness in place which is gradually replaced by a more broad and generalized sense of cultural identity. The construction of a sequence within the village of Seal Cove will connect its natural boundaries, waterfront and forest, using a public archive and meeting hall as its hinge point. The sequence will begin at the waterfront, with a public park which encourages varying degrees of interaction with the landscape as the tide changes the space over time. The sequence will end at an open area in the forest which encourages informal interaction and contemplation. The public archive and meeting hall will act as a permanent and formal node and a point from which one can understand their relationship between the natural and built landscape. Each space will provide varying degrees of engagement with climate, light, and topography which will be manifested through material, and tectonic devices. It is through an architecture which engages direct sensory experience that one is able to develop an understanding of the relationship between body and place. In the harsh and variable climate of the North Atlantic, weathering must be seen as a process which enhances as it destroys. Its effects allow materials to acquire a temporal dimension which evokes memory and history of place. The boundary between building and site is softened, creating an indistinguishable connection between surface and earth and a deeper connection between the built and natural landscape.
Fig. 2
“Feeling in the Weir”
The way in which architecture can become a manifestation of culture has been widely discussed. The theory of critical regionalism as it has been defined by theorists such as Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Kenneth Frampton is one of resistance. The term critical regionalism distinguishes itself from regionalism in that it is an analysis and critique of the local which places emphasis on the idiosyncrasies or peculiarities of a place rather than placing emphasis on sentimentality or nostalgia. Established as a response to the universal design philosophies of postmodernism, critical regionalism proposed a bottom up approach which recognized the significance of social and cultural identity (Tzonis). Critical regionalism is positioned between universal civilization and local culture, removed from either extreme in order to maintain a critical perspective. Its incorporation of a region’s culture is understood in terms of physical qualities formed over time, made evident by a visible mark on the land: the geologic or agricultural history of a place. The building is then set into the land, allowing its formal qualities to be deeply influenced by this type of critical understanding of the land (Frampton).

However, there are several aspects of critical regionalism which cause it to fall short of truly grasping the culture of a place. Rather than attempting to resist globalization in order to preserve a superficial sense of local culture in relationship to form, it should be embraced as a natural evolution and transformation of the relationship between a culture and its built environment. Connection to place should be made not only through an understanding of the local light, topography and climate, but also the texture of the landscape as it has evolved over time in relation to land use, spatial relationships and circulation patterns. One may study vernacular architecture for its formal and tectonic characteristics as well as its relationship to the larger context in order to gain insight into local practices. However, the theory of critical regionalism struggles to understand the aspects of place and culture which are not formal. These informal aspects are manifested through other modes of expression such as poetry, photography, and painting, all of which have the capacity to convey the mood or atmosphere of a place. Through this subjective reading and representation of a place, cultural values are revealed.
WILD GEESE

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
For a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
Love what it loves.
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
Are moving across the landscapes,
Over the prairies and the deep trees,
The mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
Are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
The world offers itself to your imagination,
Calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting—
Over and over announcing your place
In the family of things.

MARY OLIVER
Fig. 3
Passamaquoddy Suite Collage
“...if background seems inappropriately modest, we should remember that in our modern use of the word it means that which underscores not only our identity and presence, but also our history.” – J.B. Jackson

To understand the role of the natural landscape in contemporary culture is to first understand its role in history. This can be discovered through the investigation of subjective representations of a place within literature, poetry, and landscape painting. In the case of Grand Manan Island, there are many examples of painting, literature, and poetry that are inspired by nature. As these modes of expression often exist as manifestations of shared cultural values of a time, it is evident that the natural landscape is a cultural symbol. The painters of the Hudson River School during the late 19th Century were concerned with representing the structure, texture, geology, and history of the natural landscape and held similar philosophical and religious beliefs. The paintings focused on discovery, exploration, and settlement of America, and alluded to the role of wilderness as a cultural asset and source of pride (Dripps 59). This newfound reverence for the natural landscape represented a transformation away from the 18th Century European view of raw nature as being ugly and repulsive (Jones). The painting, “Pettes Cove”, by Robert Swain Gifford in the 1870’s depicts the virginal wilderness of Grand Manan Island as Romantic, awe-inspiring, and dramatic. The painting shares themes similar to those of the Hudson River School as men view nature not only as a resource, but a powerful entity to be respected. The need to fish the waters around the island for survival demanded a constant and intimate understanding and relationship between man and nature.
Fig. 4
“Pettes Cove”
Robert Swain Gifford
1870’s
“The progress of human knowledge has accomplished within a century revolutions in the character and condition of the human race so beautiful and sublime as to excite in every observing mind feelings mingled with the deepest admiration and astonishment. No age has illustrated so strongly as the present the empire of mind over matter - and the ability of man to rise... above the obstacles with which nature has surrounded him...” - G. Ripley

Each painting reinforces the temporal and variable quality of the ocean through different experiential qualities of tide, wind, fog, light, waves, etc. The culture of Grand Manan Island is rooted in the ocean as it has shaped daily actions, choices, chances, restrictions, etc. Over time machinery has taken the place of direct interaction with the land and our dependency on nature becomes more difficult to see. The process of mechanization has been much slower to appear on Grand Manan as fishing has not ceased to require a close relationship with the sea. However as it begins to infiltrate the island, it is important to reestablish the roots of the island’s culture which are founded in a direct relationship to the natural landscape.
Fig. 5
“Sunrise off Grand Manan”
Paintings represented two opposing views of the relationship between man and nature. On the one hand it is peaceful and pastoral, depicting the conviction that man has the capacity to conquer the wilderness and exploit its resources. On the other hand it is wild and rigorous, a powerful force which causes struggle and terror. Through careful use of color and light, the paintings are able to convey atmosphere, mood, emotion, and sentiment. In order to achieve these effects, painters believed in the importance of direct sensory experience, spending lengthy periods of time in the wilderness sketching and observing (Jones). Landscape painting became a tool for establishing identity by defining the relationship between man and nature. The paintings of Grand Manan Island convey a delicate and subtle bond between man and nature that has been constructed as a result of the dependence on the ocean for daily survival. The feeling of controlling and conquering nature is made visible by the marks of man on the landscape often through cultivation of the land for resources. The paintings of Grand Manan Island convey a bond between man and nature which is more delicate and subtle because of the dependence on the ocean rather than the land for survival. The mark of man cannot be made permanent on the ocean and the lack of visual confirmation that exists on land reinforces the local man’s reverence for the power and awe-inspiring beauty of nature.
Upon settling in America, the task of establishing a unique cultural identity was presented. Settlers looked to the wilderness condition as a cultural and moral resource unparalleled in Europe. It was believed that the wilderness was the mode through which God communicated with man. In this regard, it was thought that Americans had a distinct moral advantage over Europeans (Nash). The literature and philosophy of 18th Century Transcendentalism believed that there was a direct relationship between the higher spiritual realm and the lower material realm. The natural world became a reflection of universal truths and mirrored the law of God (Nash). Similarly, landscape painters of the Hudson River School found inspiration in the all-pervasive presence of God in nature. Giffords painting, “Coast of Grand Manan”, conveys this sublime and supernatural quality of the landscape through the depiction of light breaking through the clouds as if it is emanating from the heavens. The cathedral-like quality of the cliffs provides a moral influence on man. The struggle imparted by the storm is a clear indication of man’s existence in a natural landscape which is out of his control and yet is the source of his survival.
Fig. 7
“Coast of Grand Manan”
Charles Henry Gifford
1890
THE CRAG OF THE CROSS

Beside the bleak coast of the northland,
Where winds with the northland keep tryst,
Amid a wild welter of waters,
An island looms out in the mist;

Forever the high tides of Fundy
Sweep past with a rush and a roar,
Forever the gulls cry their warning
When the fog wreathes the desolate shore;

Above the grey billows the cliffs frown,
Above the grim cliffs bends the sky,
But clear against cliffside and heaven,
The crag of the cross rises high.

(Man) spendeth his life as a shadow,
And only his passing is sure;
But through all the ages unchanging,
The cross and its glory endure!
Fig. 8
Passamaquoddy Suite Collage
Reynar
Earth-based systems of belief existed historically in places such as ancient Greece and provide an example of the all-pervasive influence of the earth on spatial relationships and planning. This attitude is manifested on Grand Manan Island through the association and naming of dramatic physical forms as holy symbols, as well as poetry that directly relates natural power with sacred power. The ocean was believed to be related to the “original biblical meaning of the wilderness-as-void” (Marshall). The island condition was also seen as beneficial in protecting the values and purity of Puritan households.
Fig. 10
Postcard titled “The King”
South of Dark Harbour
1930’s

Fig. 11
Church
Seal Cove
ON A WRINKLED ROCK IN A DISTANT SEA
THREE WHITE GANNETS SAT IN THE SUN.
THEY SHOOK THE BRINE FROM THEIR FEATHERS FINE,
AND LAZILY, ONE BY ONE,
THEY SUNNILY SLEPT WHILE THE TEMPEST CREPT.

IN A PAINTED BOAT ON THE DISTANT SEA
THREE FOWLERS SAILED MERRILY ON;
THEY EACH TOOK AIM AS THEY CAME NEAR THE GAME,
AND THE GANNETS FELL ONE BY ONE,
AND FLUTTERED AND DIED, WHILE THE TEMPEST SIGHED.

THERE CAME A CLOUD ON THE DISTANT SEA,
AND A DARKNESS CAME OVER THE SUN,
AND A STORM WIND SMOTE ON THE PAINTED BOAT,
AND THE FOWLERS SANK ONE BY ONE,
DOWN, DOWN, WITH THEIR CRAFT, WHILE THE TEMPEST LAUGHED

A. M’LAUGHLIN
Fig. 12
Passamaquoddy Suite Collage
Turczyn
“Movement...involves a person changing position, moving from this grove to that clearing, for example. Obviously this is not movement of but in the landscape; it is the procession, ramble, or wandering of a perceiving subject. Still, there is the kind of movement of the landscape. Instead of distance being traversed or prospects succeeding on another, the state or completion of the landscape can vary...”

–David Leatherbarrow

The character or atmosphere of a place is a function of time and its effects on light, climate, etc. In the case of Grand Manan Island, temporality plays a crucial role in the way one experiences and understands the land as a direct result of its geographic location. The island’s location at the mouth of the Bay of Fundy makes it subject to the highest tidal swings in the world. This cyclical process has directly influenced the interface between man and nature at the water’s edge in terms of the built landscape and also types and schedules of daily social interactions. The tidal condition is not only felt at the boundary between ocean and land, but permeates deeper into the island landscape through tidal rivers and marshes. This condition of temporality is one that permits activity at certain times and prohibits it at others. In addition to the tides, the oceanic climate generates dense rifts of fog that blanket parts of the island and remain for indefinite periods of time. This situation limits visibility and creates an atmosphere of disorientation, amplified by the sensual experience of moisture on the skin and the constant noise of the fog horn. Over the course of a day, temporality can also be experienced through changing conditions of light as it is reflected off of or absorbed into variously textured and colored materials in the landscape.
Evidence of temporality on the built landscape of Grand Manan is best depicted by the fishing sheds in Seal Cove. The sheds are traditional English barns which have been propped up on stilts. This creates a specific relationship between the building and the water which changes over the course of the day. The building functions differently during high tide than during low tide because of the issue of access by water. When looking at these structures during low tide, their deep connection to and reliance on the landscape becomes evident. Structures that at one point appear to sit solitary above a desolate landscape with doors positioned 20 feet above the ground will become centers of activity and social interaction once the tide has returned.
“...if it can be granted that types of terrain give rise to plantings of various kinds, it is surely less obvious that other surface articulations, buildings, are similarly performed by the levels, geometry, and materials of their location.”
– David Leatherbarrow

In “Topographical Stories”, David Leatherbarrow poses the question: “Does (should?) substructure prestructure superstructure?”(Leatherbarrow 17). This approach to building would suggest a process in which the structure is grown out of the landscape which begins with earthwork and is followed by framework. In “Groundwork”, Robin Dripps describes the metaphor of a house as being broken down into cellar and attic as spatial constructs mediated by the ground. The cellar and attic each provide different experiential understandings of a place because of their relationship with the ground. As a space which is ‘of the ground’, the cellar is directly related to the material properties and structure of the ground and is associated with darkness and irrationality. The cellar is a space which is experienced only from one side and as such creates the sensation of boundlessness, vagueness, and disorientation. In contrast, the attic becomes a space of clarity, rationale, and perspective (Dripps). The cellar roots the building into the ground while the attic extends it towards the sky. As quoted by Leatherbarrow, Billie Tsien states that “excavation is more than a mark on the land. There’s the rootedness which happens from the cutting away, making a hole in the land, and then there is the extension that has to do with the sky and that sense of infinite escape” (Leatherbarrow 23). Juxtaposed motifs of spatial concentration and extension become a means of emphasizing the simultaneous relation between the building and its immediate site and the greater surrounding landscape. While both of these spatial motifs are necessary to relate a building to its landscape, careful attention must be paid to the condition of the ground not only as it relates vertically, but also as it moves horizontally. The ground should be manipulated in section to create a complex relationship between earth and sky which eliminates a single datum and creates a series of interrelated volumes. The condition of the envelope should embrace the sequence of movement as it approaches, moves through, and extends in space. In doing so the division between built and natural landscapes is blurred and user interaction and participation is encouraged.
Fig. 19
Ruskin
In a discussion of the role of memory and identity, John Ruskin argues that “There are two strong conquerors of the forgetfulness of the men, poetry and architecture” and between the two architecture is the “mightier in its reality” (Tzonis). Illustrations from John Ruskin’s Modern Painters depicts a close relationship between natural and built forms in which structures seem to either grow out of the landscape, or to emulate an element of the landscape. In any case, the built form is always depicted in its context and emphasizes topography, light and shadow, sequence and extension of space, etc.
Grand Manan Island, New Brunswick

Latitude: 44.691 N
Longitude: 66.809 W
Elevation: 0-130m
Size: 1000.76km²
Population: 2600

Habitats: coniferous forest (boreal/alpine), mixed woods (boreal/alpine), scrub/shrub, native grassland, salt marshes/brackish marshes, mud or sand flats (saline), open sea, inlets/coastal features (marine), coastal cliffs/rocky shores (marine)

Land Uses: Nature conservation and research, fisheries/aquaculture, hunting, tourism/recreation

(information sourced from the IBA)
Solar Angles

Data gathered by U.S. Department of Energy and processed by Ecotect
Prevailing Wind Patterns

Data gathered by U.S. Department of Energy and processed by Ecotect
Centralization // Blurring Boundaries
The Wild Fishery

- Lobster
- Weirs
- Purse Seine
- Scallop “inside”
- Scallop “7-mile”
- Fish Dragging
- Handline, Bug. Gillnet
- Dulse
Fig. 23 - weir fishery

Fig. 24 - lobster traps

Fig. 25 - dulse

Fig. 26 - herring
Seal Cove
Dark cliffs of the island’s weather shoulder,
   Extruded, congealed, and chiseled
   In ancient glacial seas,
   Shrouded in mists,
   Rising majestic from sun-shredded,
   To pure bright skies;
You are my home and my returning place.

Blue smoke from a clump of wood-stove chimneys,
Combining with driftwood fires,
Sure tended, curing fish,
Smells of the sea and woods,
Heavy and sweet as the island’s welcome
In gentle speech;
You are my home and my returning place.
Site

major fault line
splits island geology
A damp, gray fog crept in last night,
Gently laying its soft gray wings over the island.
With it came peace,
Muffling the ever present sounds of surf upon the rocks,
Filling in the space between earth and sky,
Covering all with smoky waves of stillness.

The muted earth waited, as did all living things --
Waited, yet not impatiently,
For there was a beauty in the stillness.
As with any Beyond, facing living things,
This impenetrable offered a respite;
A time for minds with soft, gray thoughts
To share in contemplation a shapeless world,
Devoid of color, yet serenely beautiful;
A time to hear the muffled sounds of unseen birds,
While the eerie tolling of bell buoys
Blends with the fog horn’s mournful, dirgelike tones.

Frank S. Cushing
Fig. 27
Fishing Weir Study IV, Deer Island
Ennis
2010
He comes toward the rugged coast
With lighthouse gleaming tall and white
Now draped and shrouded like a ghost
Or some grey creature of the night

Swiftly he sweeps in from the sea
The nearer edge a writhing wall
A twisting mass, majestically
Before your eyes he covers all

Cooling cloud banks fill the air
Refreshing all the heated land
Droplets form on cheek and hair
As dampness settles on the land

Or ancient dragon being born
Like some sea being roused from sleep
The sounds the muttered roaring horn
And then from out the deadly deep
An island man is doubly bound,
Owing allegiance to one kingdom of the land
And another of the sea.
Too proud to bend a knee to either one,
He lives his life paying just dues to both
His mind kept wandering again.
For the measurements of late afternoon.
He drew sufficient strength.
From warming thoughts of health and love.
To bear both wintry gales and summer's breeze.
Tempered by element's intricate mysteries.
He draws a special kind of strength.
From serving both the magnificent land and sea.
full tide “spring tide”
dead tide “neap tide”
average tides
The topography and geology of Grand Manan Island has directly influenced settlement patterns and the particular way in which people have interacted with their natural landscape in order to survive. The settlement of the island is concentrated along the eastern shoreline where level land has created natural coves proving access to the ocean. Steep and treacherous cliffs coupled with a ground condition that limits the ability to collect fresh water prevented settlement on the western side of the island. The community of Seal Cove was settled around a natural cove and relied on fishing for economic survival. The town was not an international trade port and as such was not a place that fostered the exchange of ideas and goods globally, but rather, locally. The form of the cove itself provides an indication of its sense of place. The cove penetrates into the shoreline and is nearly fully enclosed by break wall and hugged tightly by the village. This creates a sense of place which is inward-facing and protective, establishing a sense of collective identity and togetherness created by boundary. Because the village grew around the cove and not around a central square, the main location of social interaction became the fishing sheds around the cove itself. Ancillary places of informal social interaction existed for women and children in the local grocery store and for men in the back room of gas stations. Major community facilities such as the church, school, and post office, were too far apart to form a strong formal node within the village. However as the fishing industry is declining and the fishing sheds around the cove stand vacant, the main location of social interaction has been lost. Additionally, the centralization of major community facilities to surrounding towns, the closure of local stores, and the establishment of chain gas stations without a back room, has all but eliminated the places of social interaction that solidify identity of culture.
Fig. 28

Fig. 29

Fig. 30
Fig. 31
Tidal Creek, Seal Cove
The building should be considered both interrelated and dependent on the conditions of its landscape. It should reclaim the qualities that were taken in the form of texture, materiality, spatial framework, lighting, etc. as though the landscape enters into and invigorates the space. In “Topographical Stories”, David Leatherbarrow argues that both pathways and well-sited buildings conform to and accentuate the contours of the terrain through means of retaining walls and both interior and exterior circulation routes. The movement of people is crucial to their interaction with the landscape as it influences their understanding of local conditions through elements of view, surface texture, light, space, etc. as they change over distance and time. There are three major distinctions in spatial structure on Grand Manan Island: the waterfront, the village, and the forest. Each has its own associations, characteristics, and implications on social interaction. In order for one to understand relationship to a place, it is important to establish a means of orientation in space. This can be constructed through a system of focal points that represent each major spatial structure and are physically linked by circulation routes. The system as a whole is intended to give form to public spaces which promote engagement between people and their landscape in different ways and re-establish architecture which interrelates and relies on the ground.
Landscape of Culture: Sequence
The landscape spaces include a waterfront condition, a public square, and a forest or wilderness condition. The waterfront condition will create a park-like environment for informal social interaction which engages and is directly affected by the cyclical pattern of the tide. Careful attention will be paid to the particular way in which the land meets the water by playing with a series of boundaries that are constantly in flux. The edge condition will create a system of tidal pools which vary in size and are separated by gathering spaces and circulation pathways. As the tide rises and falls, the way in which one occupies and circulates within the space changes. This demands the user to be constantly aware of their environment and their relationship to this changing condition. Existing elements such as the wooden foundation of a fishing shed will be incorporated as a means of tracking or making visible the relationship between static and dynamic elements of the landscape. The village condition will incorporate a public plaza that associates with a meeting hall and public archive. The built structure will become a node of social interaction within the community that exists in relationship to and as a means of orienting man in space. The structure will be comparable to its surroundings in scale and operate interdependently with the natural landscape. This will be achieved through means of spatial extension and material use between interior and exterior, elimination of a single datum, consideration of local light and climate, etc. The forest or wilderness condition will be a clearing or void condition which encourages contemplation and self-inflection. The lack of views outward and feeling of isolation will result in a sense of disorientation, demanding the user to more intimately examine the place, engaging all of the senses. The sacred quality of the forest condition lends it to be the site of a small, non-denominational chapel. The sequence that connects each condition will be linked by a meandering cut in the ground which carries water depending on the time of the day. The sequence will periodically cross a tidal river, changing the way one moves through the site as the river fills with water. A series of small shelters will be placed at intervals throughout the site, engaging the user and the landscape in different ways.
Gaunt Trees at the rim of moor and meadow,
Bowed low with their bare arms silvered
By driving winter gales,
Guarding the sprinkled stars,
Dazzling congestion of summer daisies,
In lush green hay

Small craft in the harbor’s sheltered mooring,
Bound parallel, tight to pilings,
Await the lifting tide,
Turning of shaft and wheel,
Churn of the catch in the seine, full fish box.
On slate gray waves

In the cathedral of the maples,
The sky its dome,
The choral voices touched the chord
That links the home
Of mortals with their celestial form.

Blue smoke from a clump of wood-stove chimneys
Combining with driftwood fires,
Sure tended, curing fish,
Smells of the sea and woods,
Heavy and sweet as the island’s welcome
In gentle speech
MARK OF AN ISLANDER

An island man is doubly bound,
Owing allegiance to one kingdom of the land
And another of the sea.
Too proud to bend a knee to either one,
He lives his life paying just dues to both,
Never reaching that idyllic state
(No more than you or I)
When he has total peace.
For even as his children play about his feet,
His mind keeps one eye open
For the messengers of tide and wind.
He draws sufficient strength
From warming thoughts of hearth and loved ones
To bear both wintry glaes and icy seas.
Tempered by element’s and season’s vagaries,
He draws a special kind of strength
From serving both his masters, land and sea.

The very land he lives on is held in ocean’s grasp,
Yielding its earth and growth
To ocean’s surge and stunted winds,
And all that grow, both in and on the island’s soil
Bear marks they will proudly wear for life,
For they have met the double test,
Yet not without reward.

Look into their eyes and see the blend of joy and pain.
Shake their hands and feel their strength and pride.
Share thoughts with them
And mark their inner gentleness and depth.
Sit on their shores and listen --
Listen and learn the freedom freely given to those
Who choose to live, to work, to die, on islands of the sea.

FRANK S. CUSHING
Waterfront Tidal Park

Program: Public Park
Tidal Pools
Boardwalk
Outdoor Event Space // Seating
Public Restrooms

Maximum Area: 18,000 sq. ft.
Minimum Area: 4,680 sq. ft.
The site for the waterfront park was previously used as dock space for fishing boats. The adjacent building has played an important role in shaping the social environment of Seal Cove. Throughout history the building has changed occupancy in order to suit the needs of the village. It has been used as a warehouse, a post office, a gas station, a fire house, and is currently used as a bed and breakfast which is listed as a National Historic Site. Although the herring industry has moved out of Seal Cove and most of the buildings on the waterfront are vacant, the McGlaughlin Wharf Inn continues to thrive as a place for tourists to experience the natural phenomena and atmosphere of the cove. Seal Cove is the only village on the island which celebrates Canada Day and the Inn is the center of the festivities.
The Tides Institute

Site: 16,800 sq. ft.
Net Square Footage: 6,750 sq. ft.
Gross Square Footage: 10,125 sq. ft.

Main Program:
Meeting Hall: 2,250 sq. ft.
Gallery: 2,000 sq. ft.
Reading Room: 1,000 sq. ft.
Archive Storage: 1,000 sq. ft.

Service Program:
Offices: 5 at 100 sq. ft. each
Bathrooms
Storage
Parking
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupancy</th>
<th>Floor Area (sq. ft.) / Occupant</th>
<th># Of Occupants</th>
<th>Net Square Footage</th>
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<td>Assembly:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>150</td>
<td>2,250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Archive Storage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offices</td>
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**Total:**

- Net Square Footage: 6,750
- Multiplier: 1.5
- Gross Square Footage: 10,125
Chapel
Site: 400 sq. ft.
Program:
Nondenomenational chapel

Wilderness Park
Site: 4,000 sq. ft.
civic plaza

draw bridge

lighthouse

loggia

tide measuring apparatus

beacon

high tide

low tide
Precedents:

1. Gigon and Guyer
   Kalkriese Archaeological Museum Park

2. Carlo Scarpa
   Querini Stampalia Foundation

3. Le Corbusier
   La Villa Savoye

4. Villa Lante

5. Pathway to the Acropolis

6. Carlo Scarpa
   Monument to the Female Resistance Fighter

7. George Trackas
   Beacon Waterfront

8. Steven Holl
   Chapel of St. Ignatius

9. Peter Zumthor
   St. Benedict's Chapel

10. Leslie Elkins and James Turrell
    Live Oak Meeting Hall

11. Lawrence Halprin
    Ira Keller Fountain

12. Alvar Aalto
    Saynatsalo Town Hall

13. Raffaele Cavadini
    Municipal Buildings
Gigon and Guyer  
Kalkriese Archaeological Museum Park

This archeological museum park by Gigon and Guyer attempts to recreate the experience of the Battle of Varo in 9AD during which the Germans defeated the Romans. In order to create this experiential quality, a major sequence is introduced with meanders the length of the site and connects the museum structure through an excavation and out the rear of the site. This pathway is delineated not only by a paving pattern, but is guided by a corrugated steel wall. This wall creates a boundary between field and forest conditions on the site but is crossed by a gridded network of secondary paths which lead to small pavilions in the landscape. Each pavilion is focused on enhancing singular perceptions such as sight, sound, light, etc. Cor-ten steel is used throughout the project, linking the built forms together.
Scarpa’s intervention and remodelling of the Querini Stampalia establishes a sequence which connects the city, the canal, the interior space, and the garden. This sequence is highlighted by water, light, floor treatment, and views through the various spaces. Material treatments signify moments of transition between the spaces within the sequence. This project establishes a direct relationship with its context by allowing water from the canal to penetrate into the lower level of the atrium which acts as a collection tank during floods.
La Villa Savoye
Le Corbusier

The Villa Savoye incorporates a promenade, or sequence of movement, which is organized around a central axis. This axis moves vertically throughout the house along a ramp and has a clearly defined beginning and end. The user is able to stray from the promenade freely, but is always brought back to it. The promenade begins in shadow beneath a low overhang and becomes lighter as it moves up in section, culminating at an open courtyard. Although the promenade physically ends at the window onto the landscape, spatial extension through the window creates a phenomenological connection between the user, the Villa Savoye, and the surrounding landscape (Parsons).
1. entry

2. ramp

3. view from living room to garden terrace

4. ramp

5. solarium: window onto landscape
The Villa Lante consists of both a garden and a park representing contrasting ideas of nature vs. design. The garden is made up of three terraced levels constructed with retaining walls, ordered, and regularized. The park landscape is left in its natural state and is organized by long diagonal pathways rather than a grid pattern. Both utilize water as focal points or nodes within the sequence.
1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5.

primary axis
hierarchy
geometric order
constructed

secondary axes
no hierarchy
"random" order
"natural"

Boundary Condition

Fig. 54
Fig. 55
Fig. 56
Fig. 57
Fig. 58
Pathway to the Acropolis

The footpath represents the importance of respecting the genius loci through an organizational system which is not based on a grid, but on the natural way one climbs a slope. The varying patterns and materials create an experience which engages the senses and changes with conditions of light and weather.
Carlo Scarpa
Monument to the Female Resistance Fighter, Venice
Fig. 64

Fig. 65

Fig. 66

Fig. 67

George Trackas
Beacon, New York
Steven Holl  
Chapel of St. Ignatius

This chapel contains a series of spatial volumes, each with its own quality of light which relates to program. The volumes are carefully oriented and each have a unique color. The use of beeswax gives the interior a tactile quality which engages the senses.
Peter Zumthor
St. Benedict’s Chapel

The interior of the chapel is simple in form but strategies of material layering and juxtaposition used in combination with light entering the space from above creates a surreal sensual experience that changes throughout the course of the day. The tectonic qualities allow the framework to stand seemingly unattached to the walls and the floor to float off of the ground.
Leslie Elkins and James Turrell
Live Oak Meeting Hall, Houston

The interior meeting hall space is organized around a central skylight which frames the sky as it changes throughout the day. In addition to framing an exterior condition, the skylight establishes a means of tracking the sunlight and shadow as it moves across the floor. This skylight creates a vertical spatial connection between the built structure itself and the surrounding environment.
Lawrence Halprin  
Ira Keller Fountain, Portland

The participatory fountain creates a playful environment which promotes direct interaction. The fountain displays the effects of material weathering over time and is enhanced in areas where water moves over its surfaces. The stepped condition mimics topography and becomes steps when the fountain is dry. Its use is temperature dependent allowing it to transform throughout the seasons.
Alvar Aalto
Saynatsalo Town Hall, Finland

The project achieves a sense of community and belonging through its spatial organization. Various buildings (municipal offices, council chamber, library, official’s residences) are organized around a central courtyard which is elevated above the surrounding landscape. Attention is paid to views and lighting conditions. Materials are left in a natural state: dark red brick, wood, copper.
Raffaele Cavadini
Municipal Buildings

This project is broken up into three small areas within the town of Iragna: a funeral chapel, a town hall, and a market which are related to public open spaces. Iragna is a town which is located in a traditional granite-quarrying area. The small scale of the chapel and town hall relate to scale of the surrounding buildings and local stone was used to integrate the project into the site.

Allen criticizes practices of critical regionalism as being only superficially engaged with issues of cultural identity and primarily preoccupied with formal issues. Allen advocates for a regional architecture which focuses on performance and an architecture which enables the social interactions of a culture (should be spatially based). We understand our identity based on our behavior and our behavior is based on the place/culture from which we come – “reflexive”. How can we disrupt/challenge cultural norms?


Alofsin discusses a variation of critical regionalism which focuses on direct experience, social life and the use of tectonic strategies reminiscent of regionalism in order to create a more humanistic architecture. Constructive regionalism speaks to the individual but searches for the universal. Alofsin places emphasis on climate, terrain, etc. but also on tectonic construction and modernist vocabulary in search for an architectural form. However, critical regionalism denounced modernism as an intellectual and abstract technique that results in placelessness.


Bhabha discusses the interstitial space as the place where two opposing identities meet creating an overlapping condition of displacement and difference. It is in this interstitial space where the negotiation of cultural hybridities can produce something new. Bhabha discusses the potential for circulation routes to act as interstitial space where movement promotes interaction and cultural hybridity. He says: “The bridge gathers as a passage that crosses”. Identity becomes performative, constantly re-evaluating and re-defining itself in a world of travel and migration. Bhabha states that culture is unconsciously lived.


Canizaro discusses the development of critical regionalism throughout history, its definitions and variations. Canizaro addresses the theory of critical regionalism as one containing many contradictions: resistance/response, imitation/invention, tradition/modernity. He also introduces the questions about and criticisms
of the theory. These include the question of authenticity through experience and participation, the degree of “outsidedness” of the profession and the need to introduce multiple perspectives in order to prevent a superficial understanding of culture, national romanticism and the need to separate myth from reality, and historicism’s tendency for regression.


Cassidy criticizes the tendency for critical regionalism to use abstraction. He believes in experiential design which requires a direct relationship with the land and culture. Regional practices can act as a basis from which to design regional architecture. He discusses “reflexive” regionalism: an architecture of awareness and time that does not present itself as already regional. It is concerned with the habitation of space over the use of local materials and forms and discusses the need to examine the regional scale to find spatial relationships, circulation routes, patterns of settlement, etc. (how is the land used?) The building becomes regional over time.


Dripps argues for the importance of a deep understanding of the structure of the ground in order to create an architecture which connects and relates to it. By creating a metaphorical reading of the spaces of a house, Dripps describes the experiential differences between spaces below ground vs. above ground which result from a varied relationship to the surrounding landscape. She discusses the temporal quality of the landscape and the repetitive cycles which establish a phenomenal pattern that cannot be objectified. She describes the work of the Hudson River School painters of the late 19th Century and their ability to represent the structure, texture, and atmosphere of a place. She also discusses the sacred connotations of landscape.


Eggener argues against Frampton’s use of Luis Barragan’s architecture as one of resistance. He argues that Barragan is an architect of the global economy and his architecture attempted to evoke the image of an “imaginary regal Mexican past”. Does critically regional architecture perform the same way for foreigners and locals? The theory gets caught up in opposition in search for its identity and does not have any references from which to construct culturally significant architecture.

Ferber presents a collection of the 19th Century landscape paintings of the Hudson River School. Ferber describes landscape painting as a tool for mapping the development of culture in America and discusses a search for identity and finding its definition in the established relationships between man and landscape. The Hudson River School is one that embodies a culmination of ideas on nature, culture, and history and attempts to strike a balance between wilderness and progress.


Frampton defines critical regionalism as self-conscious design which reflects cultural identity, methods of place-making, tectonic building techniques, environmental characteristics and tactile experiences. Frampton places critical regionalism between local tradition and globalized modern culture to act as a mediator between the two.

Grand Manan Museum and Archive

The Grand Manan Museum and Archive provided information about the island’s history, geneology, geology, land use and distribution, poetry, songs, etc.


Gussow uses the poet Richard Wiber’s definition of place as “a fusion of human and natural order and a peculiar window on the whole” (7). He describes the goal of the artist to capture the mood from a specific vantage point. Gussow presents a survey of art including landscape paintings of the Hudson River School as well as 20th Century artwork which gives up direct representation in favor of personal interpretations of feeling and thought.


Hill discusses recent work in ecology which looks at the landscape in terms of a composition of shifting nodes of interaction which are created by changing temporal relationships.
This website provides information concerning the geographic location and various habitat classifications that exist on Grand Manan Island.


Jackson proposes a series of definitions for the word landscape. He breaks the word down into land, a space which is defined through boundaries (not necessarily fences or walls), and scape, a composition of collective aspects of the environment. Jackson recognizes that the word landscape does not only pertain to the natural environment, but also to the organization of a man made system. “…landscape is not a natural feature of the environment but a synthetic space, a man-made system of spaces superimposed on the face of the land functioning and evolving not according to natural laws but to serve a community”. Landscape can be comprehended at a glance. How can we define spaces according to cultural attributes?


Jones provides an explanation of the Hudson River School as part of the Romantic Movement in America made up of a group of artists having a love for nature, and similar philosophies and religious values. He breaks down the movement into five basic categories: nature as peaceful and pastoral vs. wilderness and struggle, the acceptance of emotion and sentiment, the conviction of man’s capability to turn wilderness into farmstead, gothic treatment of cleared land, and spirit of wonderment and questioning.


Leatherbarrow argues for an architecture which achieves harmony with the topographical landscape. He discusses topics such as garden follies, the temple as a site for healing, the genius of a place, existential space, architectural enclosure, visual contemplation and bodily comprehension as ways of understanding architecture, etc.


In Topological Stories, Leatherbarrow discusses various strategies of operating on the landscape. He argues that the built form should look as if it has grown out of the landscape and that a well-sited building will accentuate
the topographical/material conditions of the terrain. Elaboration, insertion, and collaboration are offered as methods of relating a building to its natural environment.


This book contains a variety of precedents that can be understood as products of the theory of critical regionalism.


Marshall discusses the cultural history of Grand Manan Island and the formation of societal relationships based on the fishing industry, family lineage, etc. Marshall discusses the transformation of the fishing industry as a result of globalization and its effects on issues of community and cultural identity. Contains maps, images, and explanatory diagrams.


Marx discusses the pastoral ideal of American life, its role as a cultural symbol, and its permeation into literature by authors such as Thoreau, Hawthorne, and Melville. He discusses the “Machine in the Garden” motif and the associations attributed to the natural vs. the artificial landscape. He discusses the role of the garden as reconciliation between natural and artificial and the machine as a symbol of man’s conquest of nature and progress. There is a realization that the pastoral ideal is unattainable and exists only in literature and other artwork.


Meyer discusses site as being a sensual and temporal experience which finds meaning in cultural, historical, and ecological references. She references the garden debates of the 1890’s between the formal/architectural garden and the informal/wild garden.

Moore, Steven A. “Technology, Place, and Nonmodern Regionalism.” Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition. New York:
Moore discusses technology as a spatial construct because it establishes a network based on human knowledge, human practices, and non-human resources. Moore argues for the need to rethink sustainability as a practice rooted in place. Because each society creates unique social spaces based on the way in which they establish the interface between technology and nature. He organizes his propositions into a series of points similarly to Frampton.


Mostafavi and Leatherbarrow describe the various effects of weathering on materials based on properties such as porosity, size, degree of projection, etc. Weathering should be anticipated by the architect and considered as a process which enhances a building over time, adding to it, and revealing its hidden layers. Mostafavi and Leatherbarrow discuss the effects of weathering on the relationship between architecture and site, varying degrees of rustication or finish, material thickness, degree of exposure, and the juxtaposition of materials.


Nash describes the role of wilderness in the formation of American cultural identity upon being granted freedom from Britain. Wilderness was seen as a cultural asset which represented a moral advantage of America over Europe because of its direct connection to God.


Norberg-Schulz discusses the structure of a place as determined by its ‘space’ (three dimensional organization) and its ‘character’ (general atmosphere as a function of time). He discusses the elements of landmark, path, edge, and district as being necessary in orienting man in space and helping him identify with his environment. He discusses the role of water and forest as well as scales of spaces and variations of surface materials in determining the spatial properties and character of a place.


Pallasmaa argues for the importance of a tactile and sensuous architecture which engages the body with its environment. This can be achieved through surface and material choices. Pallasmaa argues that architecture can be experienced through interaction and encounter and that it does not need to be visual. Architecture
should be participatory and emotional.


Pallasmaa discusses the increasing bias towards the visual in contemporary society and superficial sense of connectedness we have with the world. He discusses the role of the body as the locus of perception, thought and consciousness from which we construct memory and imagination. An architecture of vision, seen through snapshots, does not reveal the spatial quality of the built form. Pallasmaa argues that modern architecture has lost its experiential depth by suppressing other senses which allow our bodies to experience and understand our surroundings.


Parsons provides a images and description of the promenade in the Villa Savoye.


Ricoeur is cited by Frampton in his discussion of critical regionalism because of his statement that regional cultures do not have the ability to absorb modern civilization and must become products of a world culture. Ricoeur discusses the impact of industrialization, globalization, new technologies, etc. on local culture. Ricoeur also discusses the benefits of universal civilization- improved health, access to food and water (not addressed by Frampton). He believes that universal civilization erodes the sense of unique identity in relation to place which helps people understand themselves in relation to other cultural regions.


Seamon and Mugerauer have compiled a series of articles which address the bond between language and environment, the transformation of cultural value placed on the wilderness condition throughout history, the relationship between place, body, and situation, ways of interpreting urban structure, and topography as a sacred condition.

Service New Brunswick provides a series of autoCAD basemaps which include information including property lines, roads, and river networks.


Tzonis and Lefaivre were first to coin the term “critical regionalism” as a response to the problem of universal culture and seek to combat placelessness and loss of local culture.
IMAGES


Figures 28-32. Grand Manan Island Museum and Archive


Figures 64-67. “Dia Art Foundation - George Trakas, Beacon Point.” Dia Art Foundation - Dia. Web. 07


Figure 76. McCown, Ken. “Seattle Freeway Park In and Over Fountain | Flickr - Photo Sharing!” Welcome to Flickr - Photo Sharing. Web. 07 Dec. 2011.
