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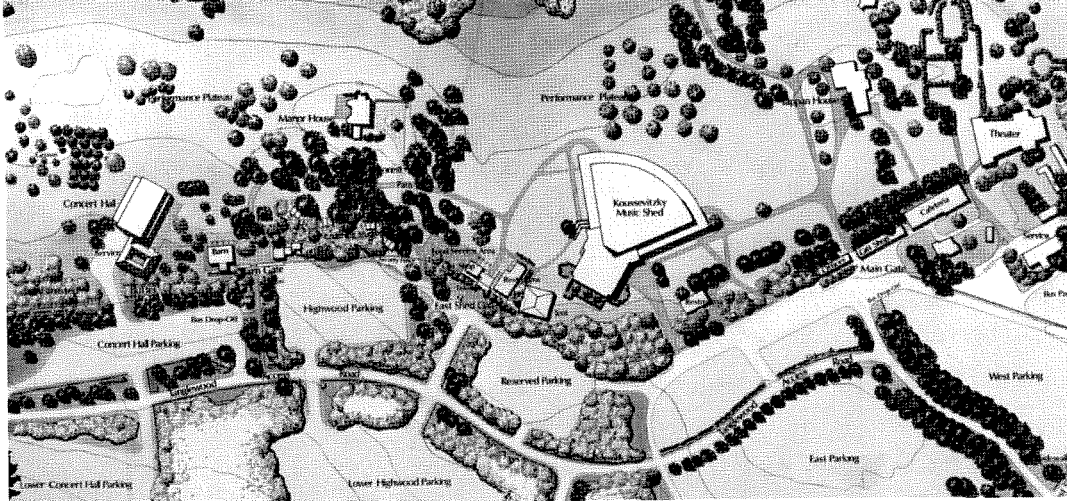
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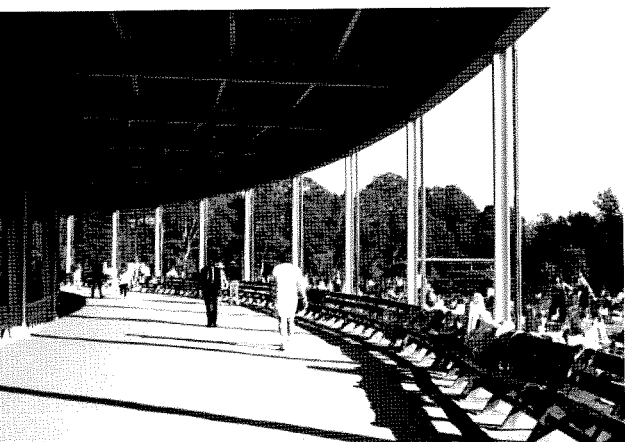


Catharine A. Verhulst
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Thematic Development of a Landscape



left: Preliminary master plan, proposed prior to the design and construction of the buildings and landscape. Photo: Catharine A. Verhulst

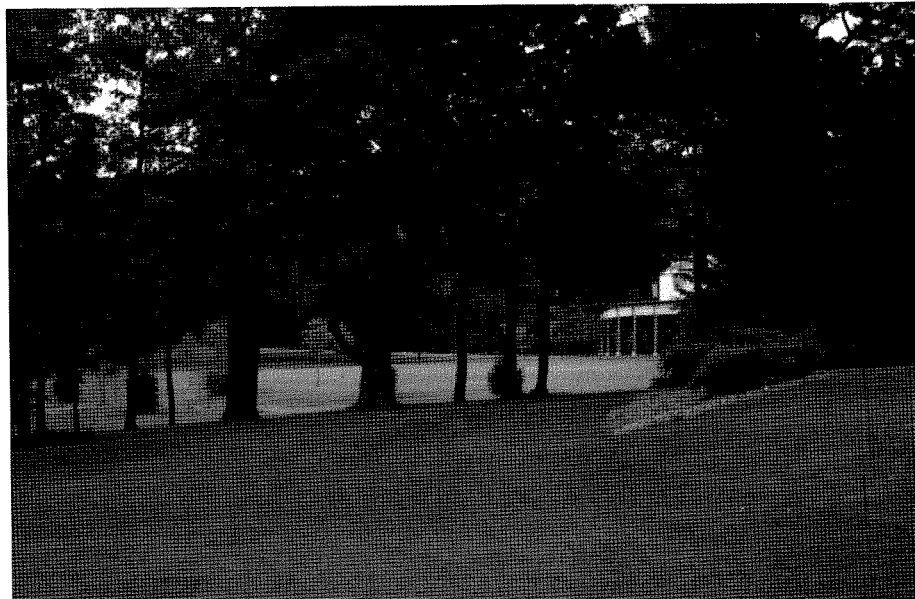


Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, recently doubled its size by buying an adjacent property. The challenge was to create a larger Tanglewood that retained the feeling and spirit of the original, smaller landscape.

Continuity with history was important as well, a history that began with Eliel Saarinen's sketches for a center for the performing arts. He proposed an idealized landscape designed in a neoclassical manner, but what the trustees wanted was "just a shed." The large Performance Shed was designed and constructed by a local engineer based on Saarinen's sketches.

The layout of the original property, as well as the newly acquired property, was focused on the manor houses, sited in each property at the highest point and commanding the best view of the Stockbridge Bowl and the hills beyond. The landscape retained its natural character, with minimal intervention: only a few straight paths, most moving with the contours in soft curves, and no axial relationships.

Other buildings were built for rehearsal and performance. These were sheds also, built in a Scandinavian style, typically asymmetrical and placed at the edges of the great lawn that surrounded the manor house (the most notable of these was the theater-concert hall, designed by Eero Saarinen). They all declared their purposes simply, and they merged with adjacent



landscape elements to create subtle interruptions in a continuous defining edge of the Tanglewood precinct (the exception to the naturalistic edge was the main gate, also by Eero Saarinen, which picked up on one of the strong straight defining edges of his father's original sketch.)

The effect was to create a sharply defined linear zone, reinforced with a linear planting of evergreens, through which one entered the inner landscape, emphasizing the transition from the outer world of travel and arrival. The extraordinary lawn and the view of the Stockbridge Bowl coupled with these buildings to form the vivid and memorable place of Tanglewood that afforded extraordinary and memorable experiences of music.

Our work proceeded from our perceptions of the place, and it was carried out in close association over a period of several years with the Tanglewood administration and staff, and with the client committee. Because the new property was at the same elevation as the original, we proposed to extend the lawn continuously into the new property, creating what we termed the Performance Plateau.

bottom left: The porch and plantings for the food and beverage booth provide a separation from the audience seated on the lawn. The curve of the porch suggests an active conversation with the Music Shed's curved arcade. Photo: Catharine A. Verhulst

bottom right: An existing parking area east of the Music Shed was eliminated and the lawn was elevated, by moving 10,000 cubic yards of fill from the site of Ozawa Hall, to improve the connection between the Tappan and Highwood Estates. Photo: Catharine A. Verhulst



above: The Music Shed restroom building incorporates both ventilating clerestory awning windows and fixed clerestory glazing. Rafters and trusses are left exposed.



above right: Canopies of the Tanglewood Cafe stretch over the eating area and to the lawn. The building is framed by trees at its back and sides.

right: Clerestory and high vertical windows offer natural ventilation for the Rehearsal Hall. Studs, beams and rafters are exposed, providing acoustics that are well suited for soloists and for small and large ensembles. The sliding doors are open and face the Performance Path.



bottom right: Rehearsal Hall opens and is parallel to the Performance Plateau and Path. One of several new buildings that reinforce the edge of the Tanglewood campus, it also forms its own place by being inserted among the mature trees of the former Highwood Estate.



Photos: Catharine A. Verhulst

Although we had to extend the Tanglewood precinct, we broke it into subsections in order that the new and larger territory be accessible without being obvious; we wished to achieve continuity and a sense of unity without an increase in scale. We reinforced the edges of the property in order to guarantee a clear transition from outside the performance areas into that memorable place of Tanglewood.

New buildings were to be built in ways that would merge with the landscape at the edges of the inner precinct. We proposed a site, on the new property opposite the existing Theater Concert Hall, for what

would be the Ozawa Concert Hall. This site afforded flexibility for the use of the new campus by allowing for simultaneous performances and rehearsals while minimizing acoustical competition.

Paths would bind the whole together and at the same time reveal landscape and buildings through their



campus, as well as the presence of the past, through repeating elements, relationships and orientations of existing and new buildings. Their asymmetrical design calls for visual completion by elements outside the buildings, emphasizing place-making rather than object-making. A variety of porches create a sense of

left: The skylight for the gift shop runs parallel with the fence line. It also is part of the exterior roof above the loggia, the shop's primary entrance.



right: The gift shop rafters and trusses are exposed. Three walls of the shop have clerestory windows and fully-glazed doors. The roof slopes very gently and drains water to a single point.

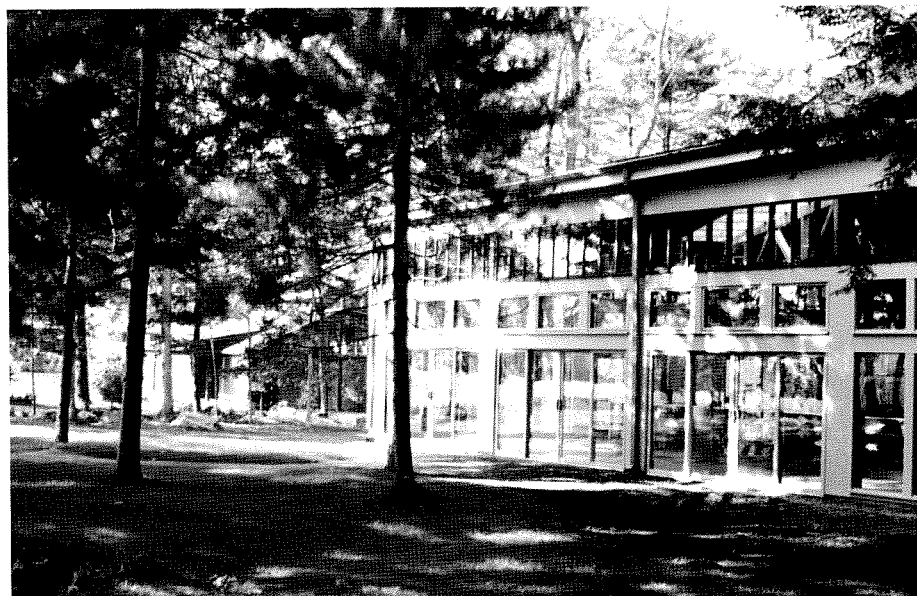
Photos: Catharine A. Verhulst

movement with and against with the contours of the land and through careful opening and control of vistas and views. Outside the performance areas, we deployed parking and access roads to reinforce the new shape of the Tanglewood campus, to give easy access to the existing and new parts of the property, to create a clear organization for arrival and parking, and to increase the safety of pedestrian circulation.

Our project included eleven new buildings, three building renovations, new roads, parking lots and paths plus several re-grading projects for extending the campus lawn — the Performance Plateau. We also coordinated all work for installation of major utilities: water, sewer, electric and telephone lines, drainage and irrigation lines. Finally, tree and shrub planing, combined with wildflowers and cultivated flowering beds, completed the work.

Distinctive new places include two major entrance gates, a new café and commissary kitchen, a new restroom facility for the Music Shed, a chamber music rehearsal studio, a percussion rehearsal studio and new locations and facilities for the Tanglewood Tent Club and Hawthorne Special Events Tent. A new Performance Path links the original Shed with the new Ozawa Concert Hall, which was designed by William Rawn and Associates.

Most of the buildings are background buildings, albeit with some identifiable design features. They are designed to foreground activity, and to create a sense of place. They insure continuity throughout the



invitation and accommodation; and they insure an active conversation among buildings, as well as with landscape features that surround them.

These characteristics, combined with gently sloped roofs, exposed columns and open truss work, clerestories, vertical board and batten skins, declare a recognizable and unifying design fabric that stands in deliberate contrast with the manor houses, but in sympathy with the original built and natural landscape of Tanglewood.

above: The gift shop forms a reflective and transparent edge near the entrance gate. Photo: Catharine A. Verhulst