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Equal Time

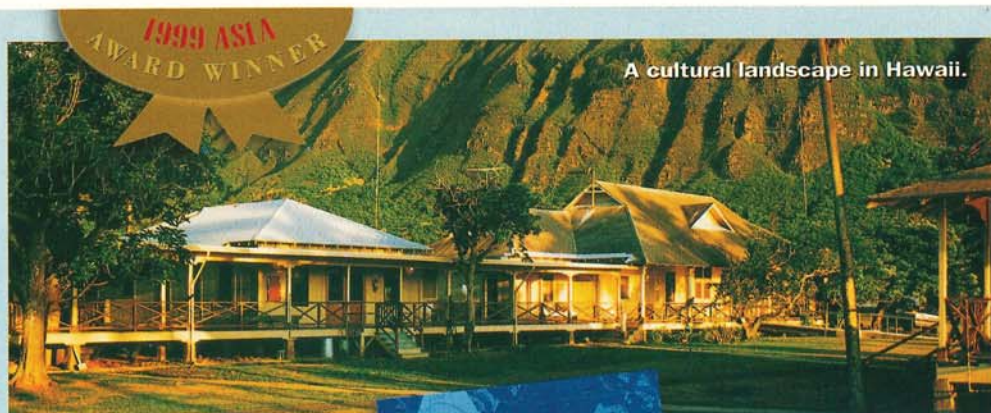
At the Helm

WOMEN TAKE CHARGE OF THE LANDSCAPE PROFESSION

Since the days of Beatrix Farrand, Florence Yoch, and Ellen Biddle Shipman, ever-increasing numbers of women have worked to advance the profession of landscape architecture. Their presence at the lectern, boardroom, and drafting table is commonplace. Yet in a hundred years of existence, ASLA has had only five women presidents. Most would agree that more women need to be encouraged into leadership roles.

That is why this is an extraordinary year for the profession—and an important one for all women considering a future in landscape architecture. Women are at the helms of nearly all the major landscape-related societies. Janice Schach, FASLA, is well into her term as ASLA president; Joanne Westphal, ASLA, is president of the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA); Lucille “Lu Gay” Lanier is heading up the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB); and Cecelia Paine, ASLA, FCSLA, has just assumed the presidency of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA). Debra Mitchell, FASLA, is expected to become president of the Landscape Architecture Foundation (whose executive director is Susan Everett, FASLA) this year as well.

“We’re building a critical mass of women that we hadn’t had before,” says Schach, “and with that comes leadership of women in a number of firms as well as nationally.” Throughout her presidency, Schach, a professor of landscape architecture at the University of Kentucky,



Trade Secrets

Reporting the Cultural Landscape

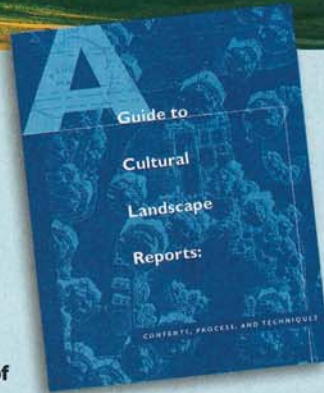
A GUIDE FOR LAND MANAGERS

If you are charged with restoring a section of a historic farmstead in a national park, or preserving the fragile landscape of an ancient Native American pueblo, your landscape architecture training might take you only so far. The site could already possess a cultural landscape report (CLR) to guide its management, but more than likely, you might be tasked with creating one from scratch. A new guide from the National Park Service (NPS) can clarify the process.

The material accomplishes three main objectives: 1) to illustrate the purpose of a CLR and how it is used, 2) to define the content, process, and format of such a report, and 3) to provide technical information about the process. The main document, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, and Techniques*, provides a complete overview of the CLR process, including a model outline and discussion of site histories, existing conditions, analysis, and treatment.

The package also features *Landscape Lines*, a new collection of technical documents about cultural landscape research and treatment. The initial set of fourteen documents includes subjects such as graphic documentation guidelines, geophysical survey techniques, and compliance with preservation law. Rounding out the package are appendices that provide general reference materials.

“The cultural landscape program is one of the newest programs in the Park Service, beginning in the early 1980s and becoming formalized in the 1990s,” says Robert R. Page, ASLA, manager of the NPS Cultural Landscape



Program and one of the guide’s three coauthors (with Cathy A. Gilbert and Susan A. Dolan). “As a new program, the need for technical assistance to ensure the protection of these resources was great. [The CLR] is the basic tool for identifying

the most appropriate treatment and use of a cultural landscape.”

Although the guide was designed specifically for NPS managers, it is quite useful for others doing similar work. A wide range of land managers provided input into the documents—including contractors, academics, and preservationists.

Page notes that, while the guide is widely applicable, managers must be careful not to simply copy the CLR outline. “It’s not meant to be a prescriptive cookbook,” he says. “Because of the nature of these resources—and they are so diverse—you really need the professionals who judge how the guide should be interpreted and applied to an individual project. A CLR might address a comprehensive restoration of an entire landscape; that requires an exhaustive level of research. In other cases a CLR might address the stabilization of a portion of a landscape or an individual feature, requiring research focused on that portion or feature.”

The overall package garnered an ASLA award in communications last year. The ASLA jury considered it a “very well-done methodology” that would offer a consistency of approach and still allow interpretation.

The guide and *Landscape Lines* are available for \$28 from the Government Printing Office, Order No. 024-005-01187-1; call 202-512-1800. (The appendices are not included, but a list of contact information to obtain them is provided.)

COURTESY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Schach



Westphal



Paine



has worked to encourage more communication among women in the profession.

“What you’re seeing is the culmination of a number of factors coming to play in the workplace that allow women to assume greater leadership roles,” says Westphal, an associate professor of landscape architecture at Michigan State. “Women are particularly good at taking care of details. They see the big picture

the way men do, [but] every once in a while you need that detail person to come in and tie up all the loose ends.” As CELA president, Westphal plans to lead an extensive strategic planning effort.

“It does make a difference to have women in leadership roles,” says Paine, a landscape architecture professor at the University of Guelph, Ontario. “It makes it that much easier for the next set of women to be leaders. It opens the doors. People see other people doing it, and it seems more natural.” As president of CSLA, Paine will work to encourage all facets of the membership—from all over Canada—to get involved.

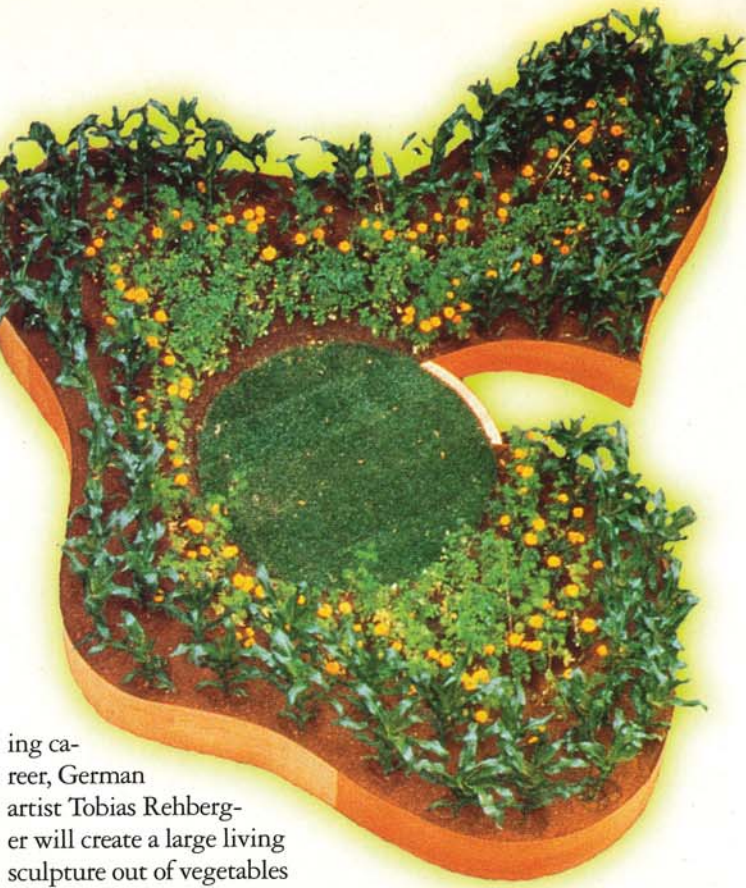
Not all glass ceilings have been smashed, however. Of the women in the profession, the number of minorities—especially African-Americans—is still abominably low. This phenomenon of women in power is certainly welcome, but it is only the beginning.

Green Space

Getting Your Veggies

AN INSTALLATION OF PLANTS BY TOBIAS REHBERGER

This summer, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago will be host to a backyard garden on a grand scale. In one of the most ambitious presentations of his burgeon-



ing career, German artist Tobias Rehberger will create a large living sculpture out of vegetables and herbs.

The MCA exhibit is designed to make dynamic use of the museum’s architectural space. Rehberger’s installation will feature circular patches and walking paths that will create abstract swashes of color through the use of various plants. More than twenty species will be planted along the museum’s front plaza and staircase, through the second-floor lobby and atrium, and out onto the terrace at the back of the museum. Plants will include purple sage, parsley, Swiss chard, thyme, fennel, and sunflower.

Rehberger is best known for creating works of art that study the gray areas between fine art and design, says associate curator Dominic Molon. The MCA exhibit is a larger version of an exhibition staged at the Berkeley Art Museum last year.

MCA is working with landscape architects—Scott Byron,

Rehberger will create a “living sculpture” of vegetables and herbs.

ASLA, of Chicago, and the firm of Marvin Hermann and Associates—to construct the piece. Planters will be, on average, nineteen inches high to accommodate the proper amount of soil and a drainage system. Pathways will be raised to a height of eight to ten inches to avoid creating too much of a barrier between plants and visitors who might want to take a closer look.

And this is allowed. The exhibit is somewhat experimental, Molon says, offering an opportunity to judge human nature. Will visitors treat the work as art and keep their distance, or will they actually lean over to sniff the basil or pluck a strawberry?

The installation opens on July 1 and closes September 2. For more information, call MCA at 312-280-2660 or visit www.mcachicago.org.

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• IN OTHER WORDS •

“Good design can release humankind from its neurotic relationship to absurd acts of destruction and aim it toward a destiny that is far more ‘realistic’ and enduring. The urge to create beauty is an untapped power, and it exists in commerce as well as society.”

—PAUL HAWKEN,
The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability
(HarperBusiness, 1994)