

Miller Garden

Columbus, Indiana

Photographs by Alan Ward 1976, 1978, 1996

Notes on the Making of the Photographs

My first time photographing the Miller House was in 1976, while teaching in the Department of Architecture at Ball State University. I photographed the house, both interiors and exteriors, as part of a project documenting Indiana residential architecture initiated by my colleague and mentor Craig Kuhner. Those images are from the point of view of illustrating Eero Saarinen's design of this mid-century modern house. Craig also introduced me to the 4" X 5" view camera, the preferred format for architectural photography.

A couple of years later in 1978, I photographed the Miller Garden for the exhibition Pete Walker was putting together titled "Dan Kiley: Classicist in the Modern Landscape." I went to the site with Pete, and we met Dan in the garden. I had just graduated from Harvard GSD in landscape architecture, so I expected that Kiley would give us an elaborate theory that guided his design, something so commonly heard in design school. Kiley was remarkably concise. He said he was making a series of spaces and made the planting appear deliberate and ordered like a French Garden. It was a refreshingly simple and straightforward approach. I aimed to depict his work with its classical underpinnings and modernist spatial patterns by employing a wide-angle lens that expands the field of view, so that the trees and hedges that define spaces, overlap and interact in the design, are brought into the view. His design, consisting of a pattern of orthogonal spaces and linear elements in the landscape, was reiterated in the rectangular photographic frame, which can help to create compelling images that exploit the frame as an inherent characteristic of the medium.

I returned to the Miller Garden a third time in 1996 when I photographed it for my own book *American Designed Landscapes: A Photographic Interpretation* published by Spacemaker Press. Most of the images that were later included in other books and magazines were done at that time. The photograph of the sunrise over the east lawn (12) illustrates how attention to the frame is the fundamental editing tool of the photographer. The view was setup before sunrise with the trees, hedges and foreground shrubs aligned horizontally. To maintain the horizontal lines and include all four oak trees in the view, the camera front on the 4" X 5" view camera was shifted to the right. It was then a matter of timing to get the right exposure as the sun appeared.

The 1999 book, *The Miller Garden: Icon of Modernism* by Gary Hilderbrand, included twenty-two of my color images, which followed six of Ezra Stoller's 1958 black and white images, originally done for Eero Saarinen's firm. I met Ezra Stoller when I was a graduate student at Harvard when he gave a lecture which was attended by only a dozen or so people, which was remarkable because Stoller was already one of the legendary photographers of modern architecture. The light turnout gave me the opportunity to talk with him afterward. He was remarkably humble and generous. As I was shifting my focus from photographing buildings to landscapes, I wanted to do for landscape architecture what Ezra Stoller had done for architecture.

List of Photographs

1. Washington Street, trees and Arborvitae hedge, 1978
2. Washington Street and Arborvitae hedge, 1996
3. View north of entrance drive, 1996
4. View west of replanted Honeylocusts, 1996
5. View south to entrance drive, 1996
6. View east of tree in east lawn, 1996
7. Central opening in apple orchard, 1978
8. Oblique view of apple orchard, 1978
9. Guest house from apple orchard, 1978
10. Gate to service drive by Alexander Girard, 1978
11. East lawn with four oaks in apple orchard, 1978
12. Sunrise over east lawn, 1996
13. Original Redbud grove, 1978
14. Fountain in Redbud grove, 1976
15. Replaced fountain in replanted Redbud grove, 1996
16. Replanted Redbud grove with Crabapples, 1996
17. View to allée from dining room terrace, 1978
18. Panorama of south end of Honeylocust allée, 1996
19. View south at Honeylocust allée, 1976
20. Axial view south of Honeylocust allée, 1976
21. View to floodplain and walk at meadow edge, 1976
22. View east to house from floodplain, 1996
23. View north at Honeylocust allée, 1978
24. Panorama of south end of Honeylocust allée, 1996
25. Moore sculpture at south end of Honeylocust allée, 1978
26. View to Honeylocust allée from northwest terrace, 1978
27. Allée, Weeping Beeches and house by Saarinen, 1978
28. South lawn and path to pool, 1996
29. Pool gate by Alexander Girard, 1996
30. Pool framed by Arborvitae hedge, 1978
31. West terrace and European Weeping Beeches, 1978
32. View west from south terrace, 1996
33. North side of house and dining room terrace, 1976









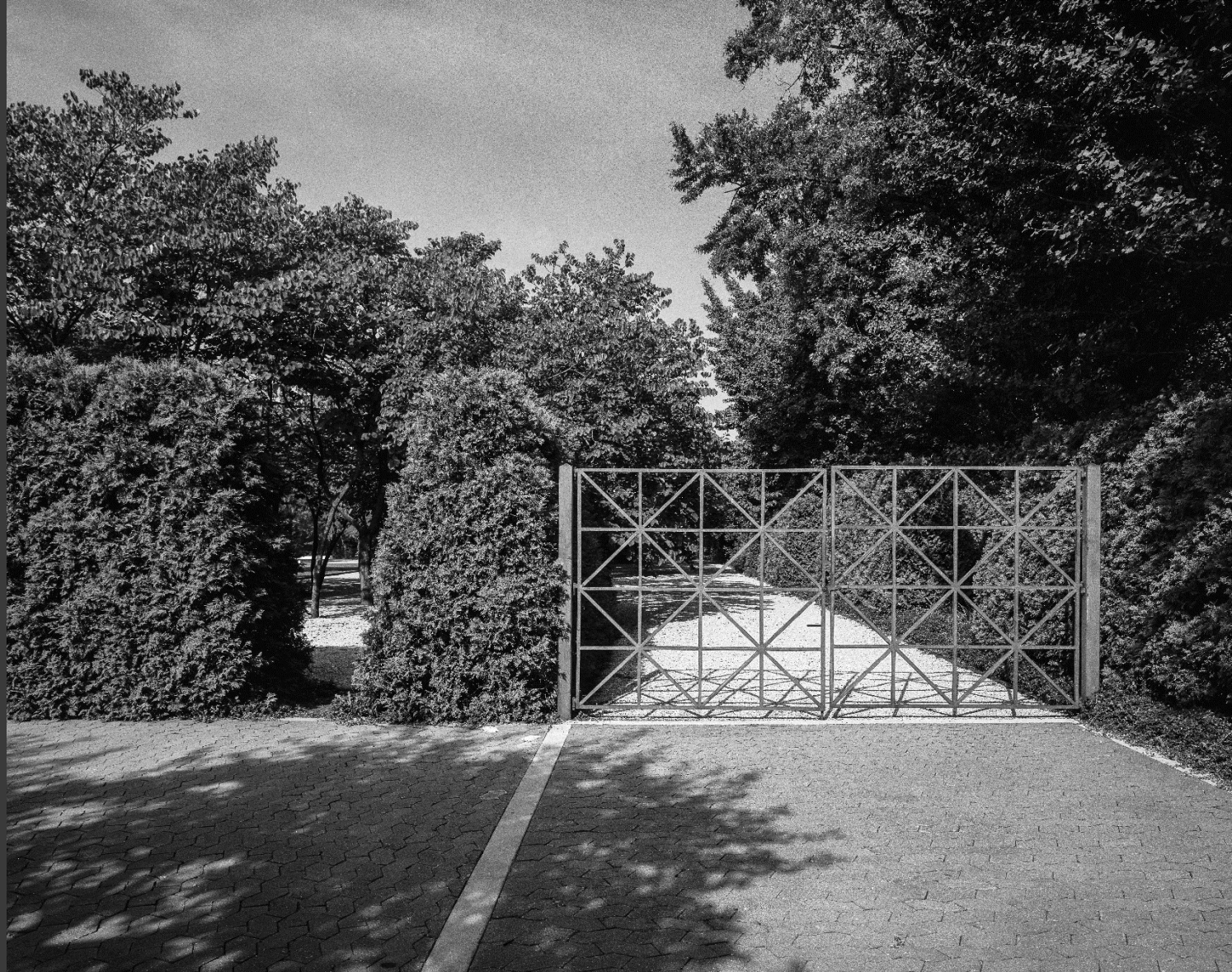


























































Notes

Selected Publication of the Photographs:

The Work of Dan Kiley: A Dialogue on Design Theory, School of Architecture, University of Virginia, 1982
Landscape Designs of Dan Kiley, Process Architecture, 1982
Robertson, Jacquelin, "Step Lightly on this Earth," *Inland Architect*, March/April 1983
Van Valkenburgh, Michael, "Two Views of Landscape Design: Dan Kiley, A. E. Bye," *Orion Nature Quarterly*, Spring 1985
Karson, Robin, "Conversation with Kiley" *Landscape Architecture*, March/April 1986
Catalogue for "Built Landscapes: Gardens in the Northeast," 1984
Walker, Peter and Melanie Simo, *Invisible Gardens: The Search for Modernism in the American Landscape*, 1994
Ward, Alan, "Trees in the Frame," *Arnoldia*, Summer 1997
Ward, Alan, *American Designed Landscapes: A Photographic Interpretation*, 1998
Hilderbrand, Gary, *The Miller Garden: Icon of Modernism*, 1999
Birnbaum, Charles, *Preserving Modern Landscape Architecture: Papers from the Wave Hill Conference*, 1999
Ward, Alan, Book Review of *Dan Kiley: The Complete Works of America's Master Landscape Architect*, *Land Forum 03*, 1999
Walker, Peter, "Editorial," *Land Forum 04*, 2000
Brown, Jane, *The Modern Garden*, 2000

Morrill, Julia, "100 Years of Landscape Architecture," *Garden Design*, April 2000
Tozer, Eliot, "The Laureate of Landscape," *Horticulture: Gardening at its Best*, December 2000
Rainey, Reuben and Marc Treib, *Dan Kiley Landscapes: The Poetry of Space*, 2009
Kuhner, Craig and Alan Ward, *American Residential Architecture: Photographs of the Evolution of Indiana Houses*, 2018

Exhibitions of the Photographs:

"Dan Kiley: Classicist in the Modern Landscape" Harvard Graduate School of Design, 1982
"Built Landscapes: Gardens in the Northeast" Harvard Graduate School of Design and circulated nationally, 1984-85
"Dan Kiley, Landscape Architect – the First Two Decades" Harvard Graduate School of Design, 1997
"In Search of Paradise" Chicago Botanical Garden, 2002
"Dan Kiley: Master Landscape Architect" Chicago Botanical Garden, 2005
"Luminous Landscapes: Photographs by Alan Ward" The National Building Museum, 2016
"American Designed Landscapes: Space and Light" Sarasota Center for Architecture, 2018

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