

The background is a textured, layered composition. It features a dark grey base with various colored shapes overlaid. On the left, there is a large, irregular shape with a reddish-brown center and a yellowish-green border. On the right, there is another similar shape, partially cut off, with a reddish-brown center and a yellowish-green border. The overall effect is that of a collage or a layered abstract painting.

Marvels of Modernism

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The Cultural Landscape Foundation

**George Eastman House International
Museum of Photography and Film**

Garden Design Magazine

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Cover Image: While Tom Fox was photographing Northern California sites for *Landslide*, the Summit Reservoir leapt out. As with the Piedmont and Estates Drive Reservoirs (the latter is one of twelve endangered *Marvels of Modernism*), these unique landscape features were commissioned in the late 1950s and early 1960s and were designed by celebrated landscape architect Robert Royston (1918-2008). This subsequent effort at Kensington dates from the 1970s, resembles a rooftop garden by Roberto Burle Marx, is clearly influenced by Royston, and is a marvel of Modernism in its own right. Copyright Tom Fox

Marvels of Modernism

**George Eastman House International
Museum of Photography and Film**
Rochester, New York

November 19, 2008 - January 5, 2009
traveling thereafter



About the Photographs

Modernism, when considered in the context of architecture and landscape architecture, is based on the interpretation of a particular site by considering functional requirements and the ways that chosen materials can best fulfill those needs. When successful, the result is a seamless melding of a building and its surroundings that appears both singular and inevitable. In much the same way, the photographer, confronted with the assignment of rendering in two dimensions that which was built for peripatetic and physical experience in three, faces a similar challenge. The equivalents of functional requirements are the assignment itself and the content it dictates, as well as such vagaries as light, weather and points of access. Today especially, photographers also have a huge vocabulary of materials to choose among, including not only camera and lens, paper surfaces and printing possibilities, but the myriad decisions of format, cropping, color and other manipulation. The photographic component of *Marvels of Modernism* shows how photographers' choices both shape and are shaped by the built landscapes they have been asked to depict. The techniques employed include such varied photographic technologies as ambrotype, pigment prints, and digital inkjet, and a variety of creative vignetting, framing and collage.

Marisol Díaz employs the conventions of straight photography to establish the apartment complex “El Monte” of Hato Rey,

Puerto Rico in its tropical environment. Her careful composition balances the building with its designed landscape, and, while black and white may initially seem a counterintuitive choice for such rich and colorful surroundings, it provides no possibility for distraction from the formal concerns of both the structure and its depiction. In contrast, Tyagen Miller presents black and white photographs in round vignettes reminiscent of the earliest Kodaks or a glimpse through a keyhole into a secret garden. His unconventional treatment of otherwise ordinary space arrests us and invites hard looking. Heather Wetzel is perhaps the most surprising. Her choice of the ambrotype, a process past its heyday before the Civil War, to capture a Late Modern architectural style that would not manifest itself until 1967 injects a curious conflation of the near and distant pasts. Process notwithstanding, Wetzel's work combines its clarity and materiality with the sensibility that Modernism today is itself somehow antique.

Sam Sweezy, Keri Pickett, Lupita Tinnen and Debra Bloomfield elect to produce the descriptive true color imagery characteristic of much architectural photography but also of contemporary photographic art. Sweezy adheres most strictly to Modernist conventions, employing compositions that emphasize the unornamented geometry and brutal functionalism of Boston City Hall Plaza. Pickett takes a similar stance in her treatment of Peavey Plaza in Minneapolis, though the people who use the park are foregrounded, in contrast to Sweezy's nearly uninhabited landscape. Tinnen depicts Fort Worth's Heritage Park as

bereft of people and somewhat forlorn. The crepuscular shadows that dominate her images suggest the park's current condition, abandoned by city government and closed to public access. Bloomfield, on the other hand, chooses against simple illustration of a site to manifest something that is both ambiguous and experiential. Her views of Estates Drive Reservoir in Oakland, California, suggest a distant site to be glimpsed through shrubbery and approached with a sense of delighted discovery. Her treatment of the Kaiser Roof Garden, also in Oakland, is similarly tantalizing. Like the New Topographics, these are in some sense pictures of nothing, that challenge the traditions of garden photography.

Rick Hock and Christopher Rauschenberg, working on opposite sides of the country, have chosen a technique of multi-image collage that feels both whimsical and free. Hock's treatment of Rochester, New York's Manhattan Square Park shows a complex site that can be simultaneously experienced from multiple points of view. His depiction of the spare geometry of Lawrence Halprin's structure is further complicated by his inclusion of both professional murals and unplanned graffiti, firmly placing his images of Modernism in their post-Modern context of today. Similarly, Rauschenberg treats the distinctive white arches of Minoru Yamasaki's Pacific Science Center Courtyard in Seattle as the mad fantasy that they are, his collage technique imparting an impression of idiosyncratic liveliness. Similarly, he chooses both collage and panorama to interpret Herbert

Bayer's Mill Creek Canyon Earthworks in Kent, Washington, creating an emphatically horizontal and multifaceted space as well as a sense of moving through it.

The aerial photographs of Tom Fox are, perhaps, in their own category, serving as a base-line foil for the more interpretive work. Despite allowances for light, angle and distance, they are map-like in their descriptive qualities, useful if one is planning an access road or a bombing run. They probably most resemble the landscape architect's models, showing the land from a god-like perspective that obviates any notion of multi-sensual ambulatory engagement.

Because photographs so often look like truth, it is tempting to treat them as facts, and to judge photographic quality by an image's ability to present large amounts of descriptive information. The purpose of conventional landscape photography is to illustrate a place, to show, as much as possible, what viewers would see if they visited a particular architectural example. This photography should disappear; the picture should replicate reality. This project, however, is as much about photography as it is about its subjects. The photographic choices made, in technique, vantage point and printing style, are clear and constitute a lesson both in seeing and in making something to be seen.

Alison Nordström

*Curator of Photographs, George Eastman House
International Museum of Photography and Film*



Boston City Hall Plaza

Boston, Massachusetts

A wealthy enclave of Boston merchants in the 18th century, central Boston slowly deteriorated as investment in the area waned and, by the 19th century, it became the hub of cabarets and burlesque shows. In 1961, the City of Boston acquired the area and hired I.M. Pei and Partners to execute a Government Center Urban Renewal Plan. The resulting City Hall Plaza introduced Modernist architecture and landscape architecture to the heart of historic Boston, while successfully revitalizing a key locale in one of America's most iconic cities. Today, investment needs to be made in the revolutionary design or else it will deteriorate from neglect.



Sam Sweezy

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

20 x 24 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Estates Drive Reservoir

Oakland, California



Since 1966, residents of Oakland's Montclair neighborhood have enjoyed the Robert Royston-designed Estates Drive Reservoir for its tranquility and recreational value. Royston created a technologically innovative rooftop cover for the open-cut reservoir that skillfully wed Modernist abstract design and functional purpose. Today, neighbors are fighting to preserve Royston's design from East Bay Municipal Utilities District's plan to replace the existing reservoir with two large concrete water storage tanks.



Debra Bloomfield

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

19 x 19 inches

Courtesy of the artist



HERITAGE

Heritage Plaza

Heritage Park, Fort Worth, Texas

Located within Heritage Park and at the site of the city's original settlement, Heritage Plaza which was designated on the Nation's Bicentennial provides a physical link from the city's downtown to the Trinity River and a symbolic link to the city's heritage. The plaza overlooks the river from steep bluffs, which its designer, landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, considered "Fort Worth's greatest natural asset" after the river itself. Disconcertingly, the City of Fort Worth ended water flow through the park's features and, in September 2007, cut off public access. Halprin's design celebrated the pioneering vision of the city's founders, a vision that needs to be resurrected in order to restore the glory of this nationally significant landscape.



Lupita Murillo Tinnen

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

16 x 20 inches

Courtesy of the artist



Kaiser Roof Garden

Kaiser Center, Oakland, California

During the late 1950s, California industrialist Henry Kaiser hired the landscape architecture firm of Osmundson & Staley to design a garden atop the parking garage next to his company's original headquarters building in downtown Oakland. The garden opened in 1960 as the first true post-World War II rooftop garden in the U.S. The hardscape incorporated Kaiser Industries materials such as aluminum and cement, hallmarks of its many large-scale projects around the world. Today, many of those elements are aging and need maintenance, while new taller adjacent buildings surrounding the garden, have altered the garden's delicate environmental balance.



Debra Bloomfield

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

16 x 20 inches

Courtesy of the artist





Lake Elizabeth

Allegheny Commons, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Created as a part of Pittsburgh's 1967 urban renewal project, John Ormsbee Simonds' Lake Elizabeth sits within the city's oldest mapped parkland, Allegheny Commons. Sadly, this Modernist gem has suffered from neglect and accrued deferred maintenance. However, a new preservation master plan promises to renew important design elements in Allegheny Commons, spanning the picturesque to the present, including Lake Elizabeth.

Heather F. Wetzel

2008

Ambrotype

5 ½ x 4 ¼ inches

Courtesy of the artist



Manhattan Square Park

Rochester, New York

Lawrence Halprin, the designer of the FDR Memorial in Washington, D.C., designed and executed the plans for Manhattan Square Park as part of downtown Rochester's urban renewal efforts of the early 1970s. Remarkably, all the elements of Halprin's original plan – the amphitheater plaza, space-frame, berm garden, and promenade- remain intact, and recent renovations of the play area and skating rink have increased public attention. Nonetheless, to prevent damage and loss of the park's unique elements, improvements *must* be made with an understanding of the park's significant design.



Rick McKee Hock

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

14 x 30 inches

14 x 36 inches

16 x 46 inches

Courtesy of the artist



Kidney-shaped pools, boomerang curves, floating cantilevered decks, and adventure playgrounds became familiar design elements.

Experimental and innovative, these garden and landscape designs sought to meld Modern forms and classic sensibilities by utilizing revolutionary new materials and subdued transitions between indoors and outdoors, yet they have often been misunderstood and underappreciated.



Mill Creek Canyon Earthworks

Kent, Washington

Herbert Bayer combined aesthetics and functionality in his design for the Mill Creek Canyon Earthworks, a fascinating and celebrated work of “environmental art” composed of a series of mounds and excavated concentric circles that collect stormwater from the Mill Creek Canyon. Today, environmental factors including increased runoff and contaminated stormwater related to nearby fisheries threaten the site’s integrity.



Christopher Rauschenberg

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

13 x 19 inches

Courtesy of the artist





Tyagan Miller

Digital Inkjet Print

15 x 15 inches

Courtesy of the artist



Miller Garden

Columbus, Indiana

The Miller House and Garden, designated a National Historic Landmark in 2000, exemplify Modernism. Architects Eero Saarinen and Kevin Roche, interior designer Alexander Girard, and landscape architect Dan Kiley, working closely with their clients, unified the landscape and the home's interior through orderly and highly structured elements with an emphasis on orthogonal geometry. Considered to be Kiley's masterwork residential commission, he planned the property on an axis defined by an allée of honey locust trees that extend to the limits of the property. With proper stewardship and endowment, the Miller House and Garden will stand as an icon of Modernism for future generations.



El Monte

Hato Rey, Puerto Rico

El Monte (Spanish for “The Knoll”), a post-World War II urban renewal apartment complex in Hato Rey, Puerto Rico, is an underappreciated and forgotten jewel. The site plan, featuring landscape and gardens designed by Hideo Sasaki and Hunter Randolph, provides a seamless continuum between the public and private realms, with a mix of native and exotic tropical flora. Though El Monte established landscape architecture as the nexus of Modernism in the Caribbean, its own iconic landscape and the people who created it have yet to be recognized for their local, regional, and potentially international importance.

Marisol Díaz

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

20 x 24 inches

Courtesy of the artist







Christopher Rauschenberg

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

13 x 19 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Pacific Science Center Courtyard

Seattle, Washington

Minoru Yamasaki designed the courtyard of the U.S. Science Pavilion, now the Pacific Science Center, for the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle, Washington. For the courtyard, Yamasaki, architect of the World Trade Center Towers, incorporated white "wedding cake" courtyard walls, white sculpted arches, and concrete platforms "floating" in serene reflection pools to create an abstractly classical and distinct space. Yamasaki's design features ornate formations of cast concrete and high-tech materials that are decorated with a Modern-Gothic motif. Unfortunately, this internationally significant courtyard – the only remaining outdoor space designed for the fair – today lacks funds for much needed repair and maintenance.

Parkmerced

San Francisco, California

Parkmerced was designed as “a city within a city” by architect Leonard Schultze and Associates with planning and landscape architecture by Thomas D. Church with Robert Royston. Its revolutionary site plan artfully melds individual housing units on pie-shaped blocks, vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and a large central circle covered by a lush tree canopy. Today, it is one of this country’s four remaining examples of large-scale, post-World War II urban planning. Unfortunately, there are numerous threats to the design, including plans by San Francisco State University and a private developer to subdivide the property, and recent re-planting and redesign of its historic traffic circles.

Tom Fox

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

16 x 20 inches

Courtesy of the artist







Keri Pickett

2008

Digital Inkjet Print

20 x 24 inches

Courtesy of the artist

Peavey Plaza

Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, Minnesota

During the successful urban renewal projects of the 1960s, the city of Minneapolis hired landscape architect M. Paul Friedberg to design Peavey Plaza to connect with Nicollet Mall, the city's new downtown pedestrian mall. While the plaza was designed as a "front yard" for the Minnesota Orchestra's new concert hall, Peavey Plaza became an urban oasis for downtown inhabitants. Waterfalls absorbed city noise and small garden "rooms," delineated by groves of honey locusts, created a sense of human intimacy that softened the Modern, angular surfaces. Today, pressure to further develop downtown threatens the survival of Peavey Plaza. The public needs to understand the site's significance, or else it will see the plaza's original Modernist design destroyed.

About the Artists

Debra Bloomfield (American, b. 1952)

San Francisco Bay Area photographer Debra Bloomfield received both her Bachelor and Master of Arts from San Francisco State University. Her large-scale, color photographs depict breathtaking scenes of North American landscapes. Bloomfield's work can be found in many public and private collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England; the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. In 1992, she received the James D. Phelan Art Award in Photography.

Marisol Díaz (American, b. 1978)

Marisol Díaz was born and raised in the Bronx, New York. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in photography in 2002 from City College of the City University of New York. As a freelance photographer, her clients include *The Bronx Times*, Bronx Council on the Arts, The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx Opera Company, and Coca-Cola as well as several media outlets. She has curated and participated in exhibitions throughout New York. Díaz is the Program Director for En Foco, a non-profit organization that helps promote photographers of color. She currently splits her time between New York and Puerto Rico.

Tom Fox (American, b. 1946)

Tom Fox is the head photographer and a Principal at the planning and landscape design firm SWA Group. In his landscape photography, he seeks to represent the intent of the designer through his camera lens. His photography has been honored with several notable

awards including the Merit of Excellence from the Brooks Institute of Photography and the American Society of Landscape Architects' Excellence in Landscape Architectural Photography Award.

Rick McKee Hock (American, b. 1947)

Rick Hock is Director of Exhibitions and Program Design at George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film in Rochester, New York. He has organized several major exhibitions such as "Seeing the Unseen: Dr. Harold E. Edgerton and the Wonders of Strobe Alley" and "The Pencil of Nature: Photography's Trace and Transformation." He is the recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships and his photographic work is held in several major collections including The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Tyagan Miller (American, b. 1952)

Since 1992, Tyagan Miller has produced photo essays on race, religion, at-risk youth, aging, migrant labor, vexed landscapes, combat veterans, and post-traumatic stress disorder. In 2000, he published *Twilight in Arcadia* which chronicles a year of tobacco farming in southern Indiana from the perspective of the undocumented migrant workers. More recently, *Covenant* (February 2007), interprets the life of an inner-city, African American church congregation. Seventy images from the project were exhibited in a one-man show at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. From 1998 to 2005, Miller was the Riley Lecturer at the Indiana University School of Journalism in Bloomington.

Keri Pickett (American, b. 1959)

Freelance photographer Keri Pickett has produced three books, the most recent of which *Saving Body & Soul*, *The Mission of Mary Jo Copeland*, was published in 2004. She has received fellowships from the Bush, Jerome, McKnight, and Target Foundations as well as the National Endowment for the Arts. Pickett's work has appeared in *Life*, *Time*, and *People* magazines and numerous public and private collections including Philadelphia Museum of Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Woodstock Center of Photography; and Museet for Fotokunst, Denmark.

Christopher Rauschenberg (American, b. 1951)

Christopher Rauschenberg has practiced photographic art since 1957 and has a Bachelor of Arts in photography from Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. From 1982 to 1996, he taught art and photography at Marylhurst College (now Marylhurst University) in Lake Oswego, Oregon, and he has photographed in North and South America, Eastern and Western Europe, and throughout Asia. With eighty solo shows and three monographs, he has most recently spent several years rephotographing Eugene Atget's images of Paris from 1890 and 1927. Rauschenberg is a co-founder of Portland's photography festival, Photolucida, formerly Photo Americas.

Sam Sweezy (American, b.1946)

Sam Sweezy has worked professionally as a photographer for over 25 years. Between 1991 and 1995, he collaborated on an ethnographic study of Armenian history and beliefs seen through culture, craft, and

ritual. The resulting book, *Armenian Folk Arts, Culture and Identity*, was published by Indiana University Press (2001). In 2002, Sweezy was a fellow at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in Florida. He has a Bachelor of Science in Communication (film studies) from Boston University. His work on the Panama Canal Zone was recently exhibited at the 8th Panama Art Biennial.

Lupita Murillo Tinnen (American, b. 1976)

Lupita Tinnen was born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas. The focus of her artwork is the cultural issues of the Mexican immigrant community in Fort Worth. Tinnen's work has been exhibited in numerous exhibitions both at the regional and national level. Most recently, her work was shown at the Dallas Center for Contemporary Art in the exhibition "Click Chicks" and she was an artist in residence at the Center for Photography at Woodstock. She currently resides in Plano, Texas, and is a professor of photography at Collin College.

Heather F. Wetzel (American, b.1973)

Heather Wetzel teaches at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. She is the founder of the Historic Photographic Process Initiative at Visual Studies Workshop (VSW) in Rochester, New York, and teaches graduate courses in 19th and early 20th century photographic processes. Additionally, Wetzel is co-founder of *the laboratorium*, an organization dedicated to the advancement, dissemination, promotion, and exploration of historic photographic processes, film and book arts. Wetzel learned wet-plate collodion from France Scully Osterman and Mark Osterman while earning her Master of Fine Art at VSW. Working predominantly with wet-plate collodion, her work has been exhibited internationally.



George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film

Established on the estate of Kodak founder George Eastman in 1947, George Eastman House is the world's oldest photography museum. The museum has an unparalleled collection of 400,000 photographs from 14,000 photographers dating from daguerreotypes to digital; 16,000 items of camera technology; 28,000 motion picture titles and 3.5 million publicity stills and posters; and one of the world's most comprehensive libraries of photographic books, manuscripts, and journals. The museum offers leading graduate and post-graduate programs in photograph and film preservation in modern archives adjacent to the National Historic Landmark home and gardens. The museum is a member of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta. The landscape surrounding the museum is being carefully restored, conserved, and interpreted for the public by staff, volunteers, and docents as it relates both historically and horticulturally to George Eastman.

GARDEN
DESIGN

Garden Design Magazine

Garden Design is the only consumer publication covering the best in exterior design for those who are passionate about the pleasures, style and function of residential outdoor spaces. Through exquisite photography and a welcoming yet savvy voice, *Garden Design* presents innovative exterior decor and landscape design, fresh ideas for entertaining in the garden and new products for outdoor living.

The Cultural Landscape Foundation's 2008 *Landslide: Marvels of Modernism*

The movement toward Modernism in American landscape design trailed its introduction in other fields. However, the combination of increased exposure to European design during World War II and the economic expansion that led to massive postwar development across the country became a catalyst to implementing Modern design into newly built public and private spaces.

Kidney-shaped pools, boomerang curves, floating cantilevered decks, and adventure playgrounds became familiar design elements. Experimental and innovative, these garden and landscape designs sought to meld Modern forms and classic sensibilities by utilizing revolutionary new materials and subdued transitions between indoors and outdoors, yet they have often been misunderstood and underappreciated.

In order to highlight these innovative designs, the 2008 *Landslide: Marvels of Modernism* calls attention to our diverse and unique postwar garden and landscape heritage. Issued annually, the *Landslide* feature focuses attention on culturally significant landscapes and landscape features at risk for alteration or destruction. This year's theme seeks to highlight significant Modern designs in hopes of raising public awareness of the import of design elements from the recent past.



The Cultural Landscape Foundation

The Cultural Landscape Foundation, established in 1998, is the only not-for-profit foundation in America dedicated to increasing the public's awareness of the important legacy of cultural landscapes and to helping save them for the future.

learn more www.tclf.org/landslide



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