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A Sense of Place

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Understanding the sense of place is a long-term, evolving project. That sense takes root in the form and character of the natural environment and of the artifacts that have been built into it, the pace and manner of change, and even in certain memorable events from the history of the particular locale.

To each place individuals and groups bring their own histories, their own expectations, their own convictions, and their own skills in reading and acting upon the environment. These qualify their potential to experience. Thus, a sense of place in the aggregate must be thought of as plural, as a collection of experiences, many of which overlap, some of which may be distinct.

Our inclination as designers and educators is to focus on the artifacts and shaped landscapes that make the physical settings for places. Our preferences are for those settings that support multiple associations, that are rich with the evidence of history, and that provide for or even invite continuing evolution to meet real or symbolic needs.

Places will endeavor to mirror the richness, the pluralism, the specificity of the best places and processes we describe. It should also make its strategic contribution to the processes of environmental change: it should foster learning, learning about places in their plenitude, learning about the processes that precede and accompany inter-

vention, and learning how to make places wonderful.

Places can flourish only if your contributions grow in number and variety. Please let us have your ideas and articles.

We wish to express our unbounded gratitude to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The NEA's acknowledgment of the idea of *Places* through a generous grant for its initiation was absolutely essential to its becoming. Equally important was the patient support of its director through the adventure of starting the journal, and through the change of leadership required by the tragic loss of Donald Appleyard.



Donlyn Lyndon



William L. Porter

Places is considering a series of articles on "Labors of Love," about stories of unsung heroes who have created special places in their communities—not through grand design but through the slow, incremental process of their own labor and with limited resources (See Hester, Randy. "Labors of Love in the Public Landscape." *Places* 1 [Fall 1983]: 18–27.). These places and types might also include people who have cared enough about a place to stop something from happening—such as the man who kept an island on Lake Winnepesaukee from being developed.

Have these "Labors of love" changed their communities in a significant way?

Send your examples of "Labors of Love" to:

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