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Sheldon House [The Inhabited Landscape: An Exhibition]

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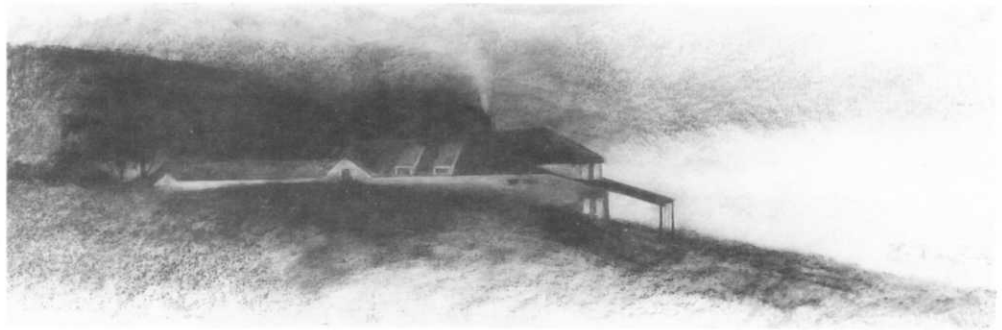
1988-01-15

Peer reviewed

Sheldon House

Jury Comments

The Sheldon House is a classic example of reciprocity. Sited on the brow of a hill, it claims its site, and its color, massing, materials and scale are all reminiscent of the regional rural vernacular. The house enfronts a panoramic agricultural landscape, and its porch and generous second-story bay respond to the sweeping prospect. Here we have literally a pastoral landscape, since this is a working sheep farm. Farms like this were carved out of the natural forests that once dominated New England; a piece of forest remains behind the house. It and the gracefully rolling hills of glaciated terrain have a timeless quality characteristic of agricultural landscapes in which human beings and the landscape coexist in a mutually sustaining bond without either one dominating the other.



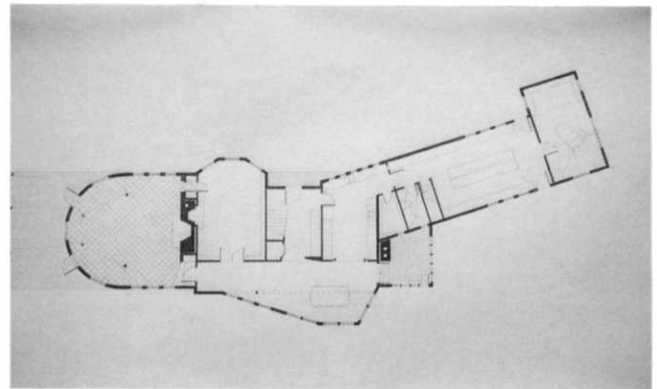
A

Architect's Statement

*Sheldon House,
Shelburne, Vermont*

This house stretches out long and narrow on a landscape of gently undulating meadowland near the shore of Lake Champlain. There is a slight twist at the midsection of its vast length where it alters course and, led by its curved front (the living room) and its hooded brow (the master bedroom), heads off, sliding between two bulges in the topography, directly towards the nearest view of the lake. If you are sitting in the music room in the "tail" end of the house, you can see up its entire bending length to the curve under the porch roof and the sense is that you are being pulled through the landscape at a considerable velocity.

The charcoal drawing shows this house as perhaps I most like to see it—hissing steam, sliding taut and somewhat streamlined, moving along under its own power through a dark smoldering landscape.



B



C

A Sheldon House
Charcoal drawing by Turner
Brooks

B Sheldon House, plan

C Sheldon House
Photographs by Turner Brooks