



7 March 2014

Board of Trustees
American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Nomination of Oehme van Sweden & Associates for the 2014
Landscape Architecture Firm Award

Dear Trustees:

I am pleased to nominate one the most distinguished and successful firms of our generation, Oehme, van Sweden & Associates for your consideration for the 2014 Landscape Architecture Firm Award.

Established nearly 40 years ago by Wolfgang Oehme, FASLA, and James van Sweden, FASLA, the firm has garnered world-wide recognition for pioneering a green approach to landscape architecture that promotes a naturalistic planting style, highlights drought tolerant perennials, eschews the use of pesticides and focuses on a thorough understanding of native soils. Oehme van Sweden & Associates are widely credited as the creators of the New American Garden style of landscape architecture, a design style that has influenced landscape architecture firms across our nation.

The partnership of Wolfgang Oehme and James van Sweden launched in 1977 with the founding of Oehme, van Sweden Landscape Architects. Prior to that time, both Messrs. Oehme and van Sweden had training and experience in the United States and Europe. Mr. Oehme was born in Germany, where he trained and worked, before immigrating to Baltimore. Mr. van Sweden was born and trained in the United States but spent time working in the Netherlands. It was this early experience with American and European gardens, combined with their private garden and urban landscape work that became a vital influence on their future work.

The work of Messrs Oehme and van Sweden encompassed a full range of landscape design projects many of which are honored by distilled awards and published reviews. Their credits include redesign of all planting along Pennsylvania Avenue, from the US Treasury to the National Gallery in Washington DC. for the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation; the Virginia gardens of the Federal Reserve Board in Washington DC; the World War II Memorial in the National Mall in Washington DC; the

PALM BEACH

223 Sunset Avenue
Suite 150
Palm Beach, FL 33480
P: 561.659.2820
F: 561.659.2113

NEW YORK

39 Fifth Avenue
Suite 3C
New York, NY 10003
P: 212.533.2683
F: 561.659.2113



NIEVERA WILLIAMS
DESIGN

Gardens of the Great Basin at the Chicago Botanic Gardens; the National Education and Training campus for the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Shepardstown West Virginia and the United States Embassy in Kabul Afganistan, as well as numerous private residences and gardens in the United States and abroad. Van Sweden received the ASLA Design Medal in 2010.

With the passing of Mr. van Sweden in September 2013, and Mr. Oehme passing away in December 2011, three principals, Lisa E. Delplace, ASLA, Shella A. Brady, FASLA, and Eric D. Groft, FASLA, continue the firm's legacy as well as developing forward thinking contemporary and innovative landscapes from their Washington DC based office. These three principals have worked at OVS for many years and were chosen by Oehme and van Sweden to carry on their legacy.

Ms. Brady's design achievements include many of the firm's distinguished projects. Recent work includes the New Native Garden and the Azalea Garden at the New York Botanical Garden; The Corporate Headquarters and roof gardens for United Therapeutics, a biotechnology company and laboratory in Silver Spring, Maryland; and the Martin Luther King Memorial in Washington DC.

Ms. Delplace's recent accomplishments include roof terraces green roofs and vertical green screens in Washington DC, New York, and Chicago.

Other works include the sculpted shoreline of the Gardens of the Great Basin, the Plant Conservation Science Center, the Trellis Bridge and the Cove at the children's aquatic learning center at the Chicago Botanical Garden in Glencoe Illinois.

Mr. Groft's frequently published design accomplishments include numerous rooftop terraces, gardens and estates in the New York Metropolitan area such as The Ritz Carlton Residences in North Hills, New York; and the landscape surrounding the Americana at Manhasset a collection of international boutiques in Long Island's Miracle Mile.

Over the years the firm's work has garnered many awards at the local, state, and national levels from ASLA, AIA and other distinguished organizations.

The Firm's current work in progress includes The American Museum in Britain, Calverton Manor, Bath, England; The Randall School development in Washington DC; and the Monroe Street Market Development in Washington DC., proving that the firm's world-wide reputation and professionalism will continue under the leadership of its current principals.

PALM BEACH

223 Sunset Avenue
Suite 150
Palm Beach, FL 33480
P: 561.659.2820
F: 561.659.2113

NEW YORK

39 Fifth Avenue
Suite 3C
New York, NY 10003
P: 212.533.2683
F: 561.659.2113



NIEVERA WILLIAMS
DESIGN

It is timely and fitting that we recognize Oehme van Sweden & Associates with the Landscape Architecture Firm Award.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Mario Nievera ASLA

Principal & Founder

Nievera Williams Design Incorporated

PALM BEACH

223 Sunset Avenue
Suite 150
Palm Beach, FL 33480
P: 561.659.2820
F: 561.659.2113

NEW YORK

39 Fifth Avenue
Suite 3C
New York, NY 10003
P: 212.533.2683
F: 561.659.2113

nieverawilliams.com

Oehme, van Sweden Principals



Sheila Brady, FASLA

Sheila's design achievements include many of the firm's distinguished projects. Recent work includes the New Native Garden and the Azalea Garden at New York Botanical Garden; the Corporate Headquarters and roof gardens for United Therapeutics, a biotechnology company and laboratory in Silver Spring, Maryland; The National World War II Memorial; and the Martin Luther King Memorial in Washington, DC. Sheila's award-winning private gardens are where her attention to detail and focus on ecologically responsible design is evident. Her extensive work in sensitive coastal environments in New England has been widely publicized. Sheila is a registered Landscape Architect and has been elected to the Council of Fellows of the American Society of Landscape Architects. She holds a Masters of Landscape Architecture degree from Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts from George Washington University, and studied at the Corcoran School of Art.



Lisa Delplace, ASLA

Lisa's extensive knowledge of ecological processes and her deep commitment to their artistic execution result in a strong sculptural relationship between architecture and landscape. Her recent accomplishments include roof terraces, green roofs, and vertical green screens in Washington DC, New York, and Chicago. Other works include the sculpted shoreline of the Gardens of the Great Basin, the Plant Conservation Science Center, the Trellis Bridge and the Cove at the children's aquatic learning center at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, Illinois. Ms. Delplace's planning and design accomplishments also include the University of Maryland Facilities Master Plan; the Plant Science Campus and West Collections at the Chicago Botanic Garden; a fourteen-acre United States Embassy site in Southeast Asia, a six-acre United States Embassy site in Kathmandu, Nepal, and a 500-acre National Conservation Training Center campus for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service near Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Lisa is a registered Landscape Architect and holds a Masters of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of Michigan and a Bachelor of Science degree in Park Planning and Design from Michigan State University. She is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects and Past-President of the Potomac Chapter.



Eric Groft, FASLA

Eric Groft has over 25 years of experience in residential, commercial and institutional work. Eric's frequently published design accomplishments are focused in the New York Metropolitan area. His portfolio features residential rooftop terraces, gardens and estates as well as commercial work for the Ritz-Carlton Residences, North Hills, New York and Americana at Manhasset, a collection of international boutiques along Long Island's "Miracle Mile." Mr. Groft's additional accomplishments include residential properties on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia, and academic and institutional campuses including the landscape design and perimeter security for the Federal Reserve, the U.S. Embassy in Barbados and the Alderman Quadrangle at The University of Virginia. Eric is a registered Landscape Architect and a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree with majors in geography/ environmental science from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania and a Masters of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of Virginia.

AWARDS AND HONORS

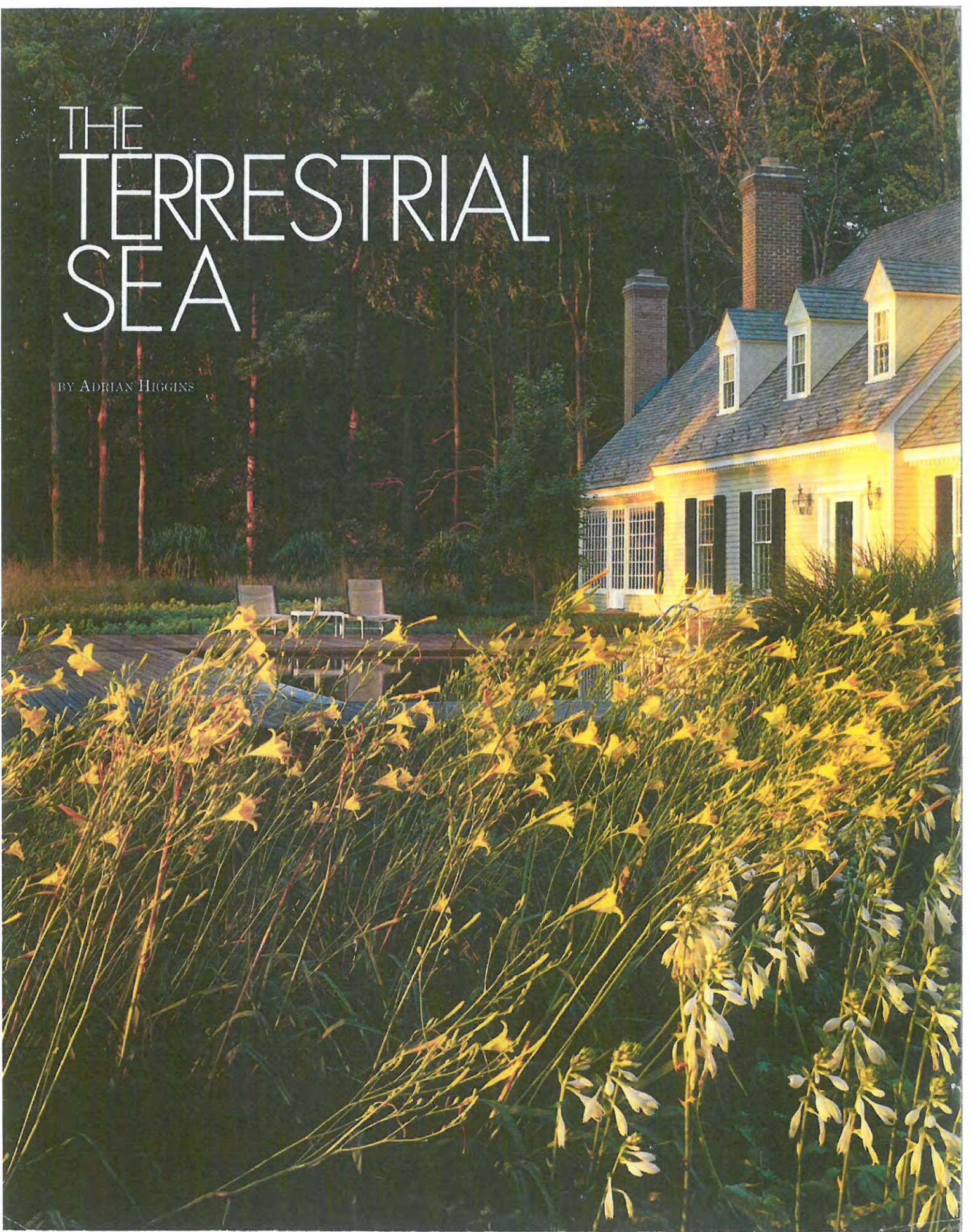
<p>THE HONOR AWARD <i>New York Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects</i> Presented to the New York Botanical Garden for OvS' design of the Native Plant Garden.</p>	2014
<p>THE WILLIAM H. WHYTE AWARD <i>Partners for Livable Communities</i> Presented to OvS to recognize those 'whose work provides a factual basis for achieving livability through empirical observations of the relationship of human beings to place.'</p>	2013
<p>AWARD OF EXCELLENCE: GREEN ROOF - INTENSIVE INSTITUTIONAL AWARD <i>Green Roofs for Healthy Cities</i> Presented to Chicago Botanic Garden for the green roof at the Donald F. and Ada L. Rice Plant Conservation Science Center in Glencoe, IL.</p>	2012
<p>AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION - RENOVATION <i>The Washington, DC Historic Preservation Office and DC Preservation League</i> Presented to the team of Oehme, van Sweden and BELL Architects for rehabilitation of the Old Naval Hospital on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.</p>	2012
<p>CHICAGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY MEDAL <i>The Chicago Horticultural Society</i> Presented to Oehme, van Sweden to recognize outstanding service of enduring benefit to The Society involving leadership, devotion and courage with regard to designs at the Chicago Botanic Garden.</p>	2011
<p>LONGHOUSE LANDSCAPE AWARD <i>LongHouse Reserve</i> Presented to Oehme, van Sweden for delivering continuous, powerful change to the American landscape throughout the last four decades.</p>	2011
<p>AWARD OF EXCELLENCE <i>The U.S. Green Building Council</i> Presented to the team of Schick Goldstein Architects and Oehme, van Sweden & Associates, for sustainable design and "green" practices at the United Therapeutics Corporation in Silver Spring, Maryland.</p>	2010
<p>THE DESIGN MEDAL <i>The American Society of Landscape Architects</i> Presented to James van Sweden for his extensive body of masterful work and establishment of the New American Garden style.</p>	2010
<p>AWARD FOR HOUSING DESIGN <i>The Boston Society of Architects</i> Presented Oehme, van Sweden & Associates for the roof garden at 3303 Water Street NW, Washington, DC.</p>	2008



WOLFGANG OEHME,
AT RIGHT, AND
JAMES VAN SWEDEN
BEGAN THEIR
PARTNERSHIP IN
THE SEVENTIES
HERE IN VAN
SWEDEN'S GARDEN.

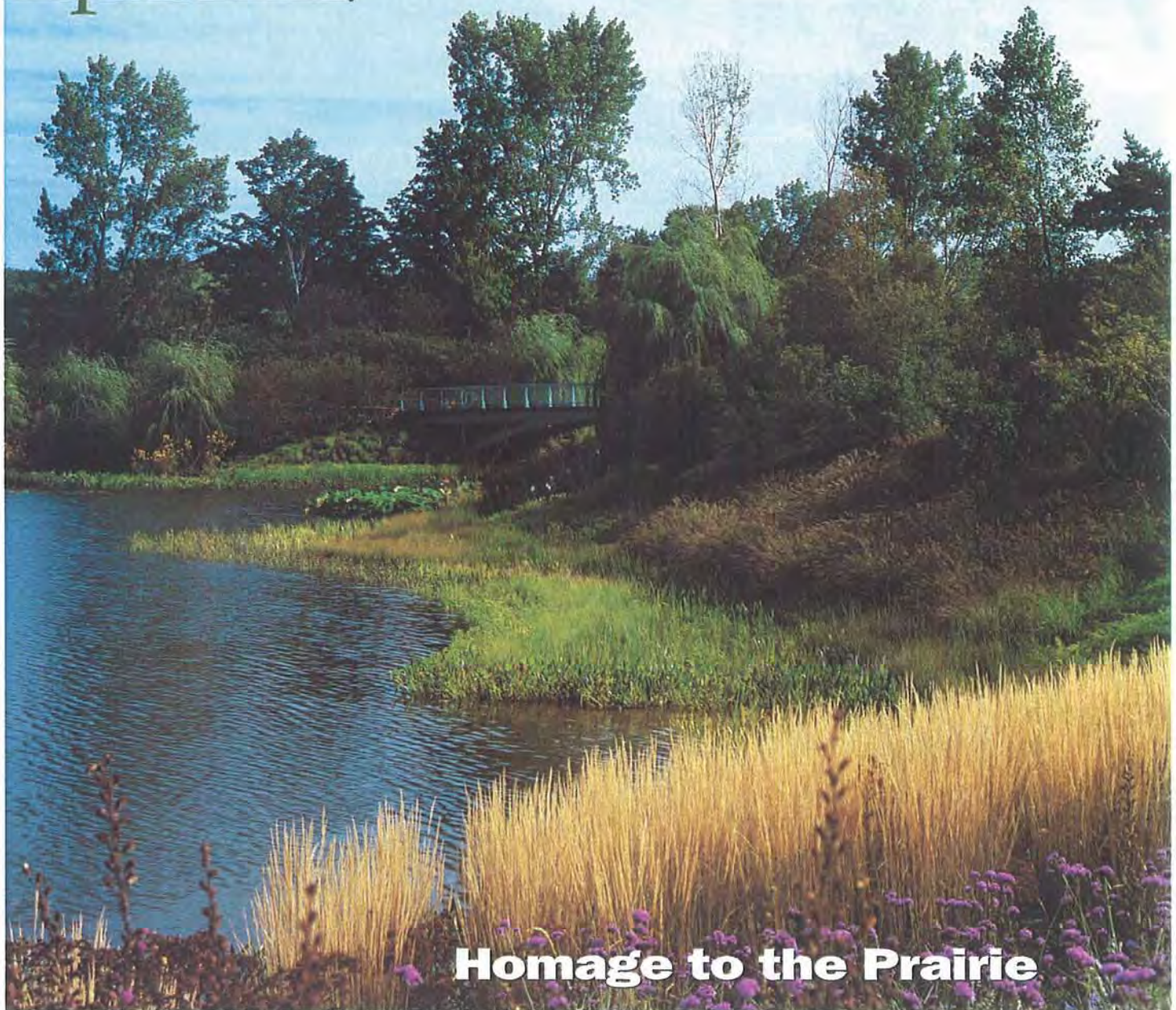
THE TERRESTRIAL SEA

BY ADRIAN HIGGINS





With the West River and Chesapeake Bay beyond, a 32-square-foot herb, vegetable and cutting garden unfolds behind a white picket fence.



Homage to the Prairie

Indigenous Midwestern landscapes are not unlike a tissue paper collage: The blurred edges of grasses and forbs are the shaded folds that undulate as they move. These plants elicit emotions and, as designers, we attempt to capture their essence and replicate their drama, rhythm, repetition, and tension. The resulting landscapes are a profusion of color, texture, and form. Like a mosaic, they are marvelous both in their intricate detail and their compositional whole.

Such was the inspiration for the gardens of the Great Basin at the Chicago Botanic Garden (CBG): to pay homage to this great Midwestern landscape legacy.

Oehme, van Sweden & Associates' "New American Garden" style uses calculated planting design to capture the sweep of indigenous American landscapes. Here's how it worked at the Chicago Botanic Garden.

BY SHEILA BRADY, ASLA, AND LISA E. DELPLACE, ASLA

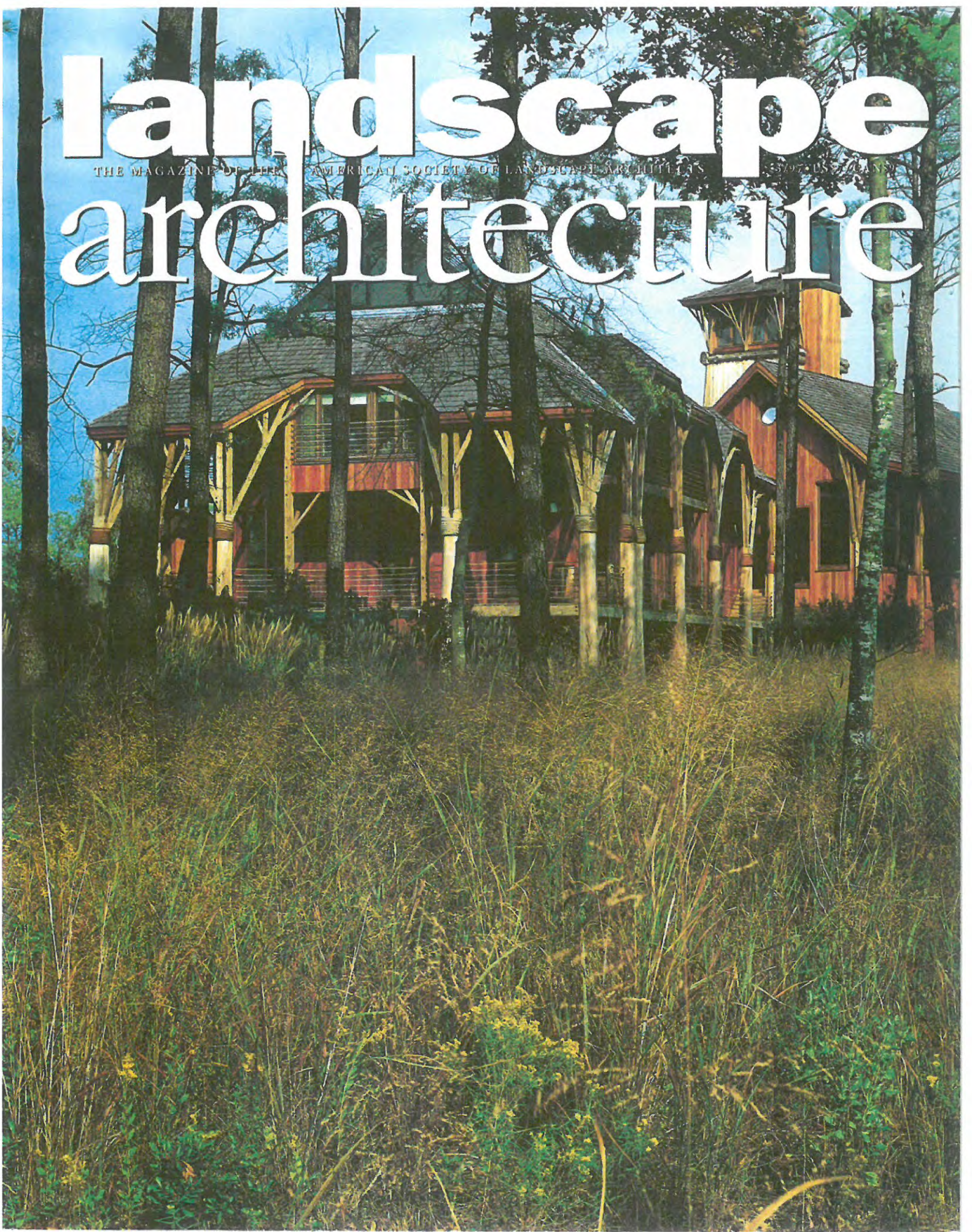
We were charged with creating gardens that showcase both native and cultivated species in ways that educate visitors about plants, planting design, and plant combinations. The gardens of the Great Basin must succeed both independently and as part of the greater collection of gardens at the CBG.

The fundamental site features that drove the overall design of

The blending of colors and textures allows for fluid movement between the aquatic and terrestrial zones.

landscape architecture

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS 597 U.S. DOLLARS





Contents

MARCH 1997 VOLUME 87 NUMBER 3

A teahouse graces the wetlands forest of a 3,500-acre East Coast retreat. • 64

F E A T U R E S

Marsh's Edge 64

Wolfgang Oehme and James van Sweden of Oehme, van Sweden, & Associates in Washington, D.C., integrate a hunting lodge and its outbuildings into a 3,500-acre wetlands landscape using the design aesthetics of what is being called "the new American garden." **By Jane Brown Gillette**

Team Leader 74

Fort Lauderdale-based Edward D. Stone, Jr., leads a firm of experienced professionals who have proven that landscape architects are not only the best designers and planners but also quite frequently the best leaders for many a project. **By Jane Brown Gillette**

River on Tap 80

The first, and perhaps only, dried-up natural riverbed to be transformed into an Olympic whitewater venue, Tennessee's Ocoee River has been a proving ground for the design, construction, and managerial talents of landscape architects. **By J. William Thompson**

When Mark Simon, FAIA, of Centerbrook Architects in Essex, Connecticut, was contacted by a client who wanted a hunting lodge built in the midst of wetlands, he knew he had his work cut out for him. "It's very difficult," he says, "to place a house in a natural environment; it's even harder if you can't dig down, if it's all muck. The house has to stick up out of the site, and that makes it harder to integrate the house into the landscape." His problem was shared, on a larger scale, by landscape architects Wolfgang Oehme, FASLA, and James van Sweden, FASLA, whose task was to integrate the man-made areas of the estate into what van Sweden calls "this magnificent thirty-five hundred acres of flat wetland landscape." They wanted to do this "in the most natural manner possible and yet give it pizzazz and glamour." Washington, D.C.-based Oehme, van Sweden, & Associates came to the project at the recommendation of the late Lester Collins, who felt that his own style of landscape architecture was too formal for the project. "He felt," says van Sweden, "that it needed our very planterly approach." Increasingly well-known for what is sometimes called "the new American garden," the firm specializes in sensitive plantings—generally the work of Oehme—that take their structure from hardscapes carefully designed by van Sweden. Their designs invariably invite the term "naturalistic."

Simon solved his architectural problem by patterning the lodge, which "is in the spirit of the classic Adirondack great camp," after the landscape of vertical pines, "so that it would blend into them." Columns of native white oak, which is both durable and water-resistant, branch out at the top in a treelike fashion to support overhangs and balconies. They seem to rise—although they do not—from a freshwater pond. (They rest on pilings near the edge of the man-made pond.) From a distance the branches seem to be natural sticks. They are not. Rather, they are constructed of structural lumber; "and that," says Simon, "makes a wry statement that this is a man-made object in a natural landscape and it can never be natural. We're not God. We're men."

THE HUNTING lodge—described by the architect as resembling a bird with large flapping wings—rises from the man-made pond; Miscanthus and Lysimachia edge the near bank, while a reclaimed wetland meadow rises from the far bank.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JAMES VAN SWEDEN

*For a 3,500-acre
integrate
that stretch to*



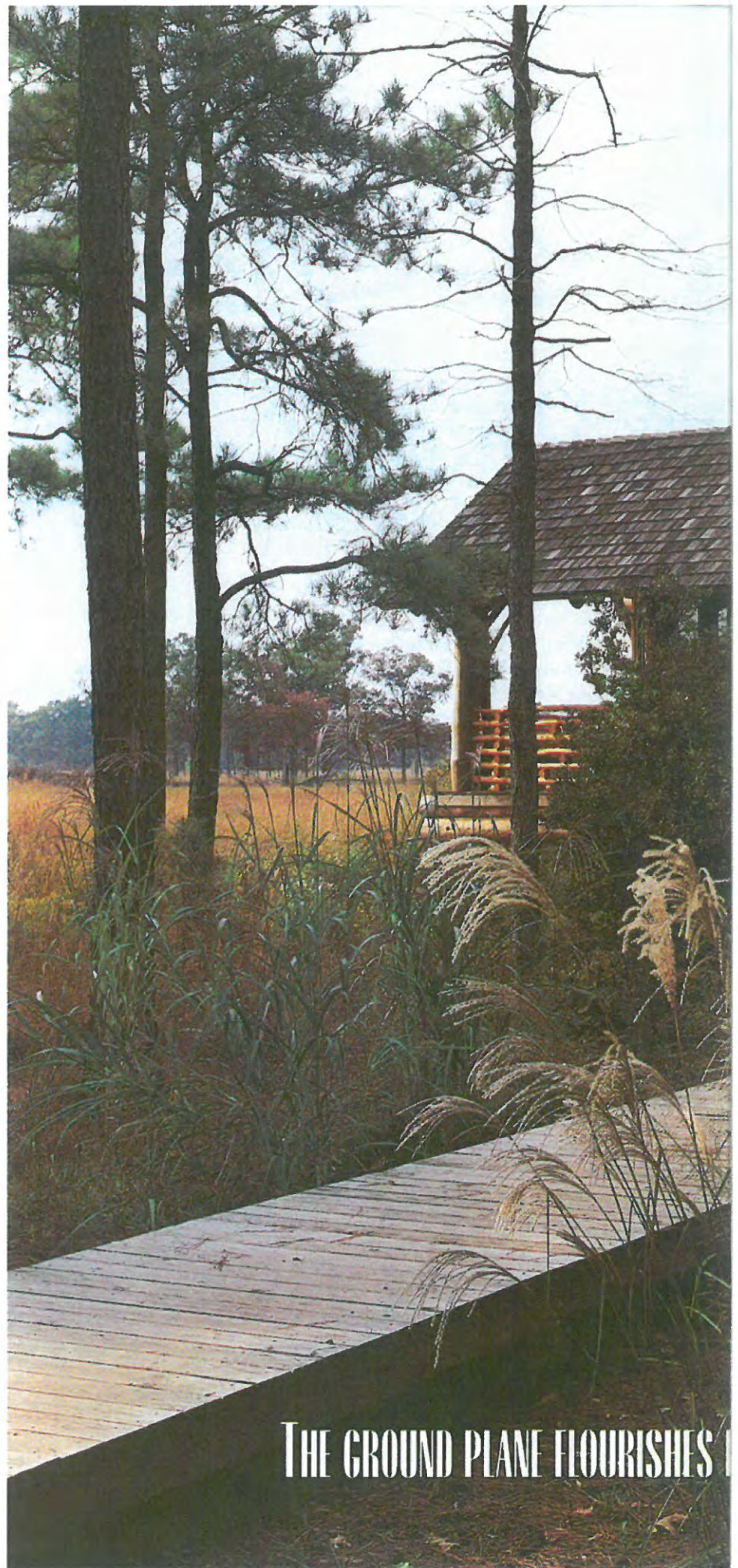
aesthetic qualities, their tolerance for harsh growing conditions, and their ability to satisfy the client's strong desire for seasonal interest (he visits the estate most frequently during the autumn, winter, and spring). What results is not so much a meadow as the image of a meadow with the large, bold strikes of color and texture typical of Oehme, van Sweden's work. It includes fountain grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides*), black-eyed Susans



RUSTIC BENCHES lend pizzazz to the allée of twelve-to-sixteen-inch-caliper sycamores, top; close to the buildings plantings are more elaborately detailed, above.

(*Rudbeckia fulgida* 'Goldstrum' and *Rudbeckia maxima*), gooseneck (*Lysimachia clethroides*), *Helianthus angustifolia*, *Physostegia virginiana*, and several species of aster. The firm has also designed such touches as a private garden for the caretaker's cottage and a horse-watering trough (as yet unimplemented).

The road was embellished with groups of trees and plantings that screen it from the tidal marsh



THE GROUND PLANE FLOURISHES



THE GUISE OF AN ORNAMENTAL WOODLAND MEADOW.

to the west—saving those views to open out from the lodge—while offering visitors a series of “plant scenes” as they travel the mile-long route to the lodge. For example, at one point a long broken row of red maples mingles with bayberry, sparkelberry, maiden grass (*Miscanthus sinensis* ‘Rotsilber’), and Japanese butterbur (*Petasites japonicus*). As the road nears the lodge it crosses a bridge that appears to span a creek feeding into the fresh-



A BOARDWALK leads to a teahouse near the lodge, left; strollers in the wetland forest behind the house may encounter this bear, top; the gateway also boasts white oak columns, above.

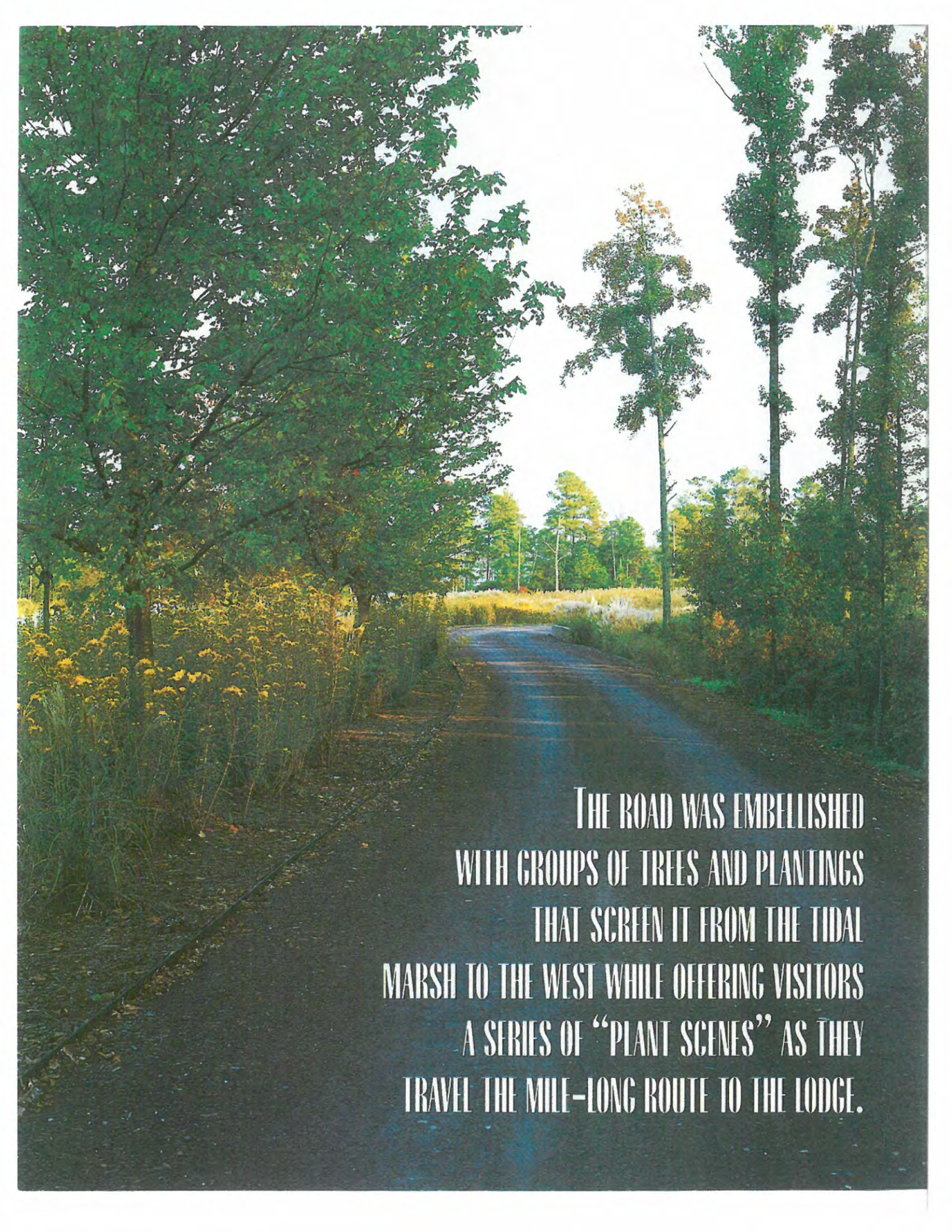
water pond. Actually the bridge is a dam that barricades the man-made freshwater pond from a saltwater tidal inlet.

The edges of the man-made pond are planted with such water-loving plants as sweet flag (*Acorus calamus variegatus*), flowering rush (*Butomus unbellatus*), wild calla (*Calla palustris*), marsh marigold (*Calcha palustris*), yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*),

*East Coast retreat, Oehme, van Sweden, & Associates
a hunting lodge and its associated buildings and roads into wetlands
the horizon.* **BY JANE BROWN GILLETTE**



MARSH'S EDGE

A paved road winds through a lush landscape. On the left, there are large, leafy trees and tall stalks of yellow wildflowers. On the right, there are more trees, some with yellowing leaves. In the distance, a marshy area with tall grasses is visible under a bright sky. The road is the central focus, leading the viewer's eye into the scene.

THE ROAD WAS EMBELLISHED
WITH GROUPS OF TREES AND PLANTINGS
THAT SCREEN IT FROM THE TIDAL
MARSH TO THE WEST WHILE OFFERING VISITORS
A SERIES OF “PLANT SCENES” AS THEY
TRAVEL THE MILE-LONG ROUTE TO THE LODGE.

**NATIVE OR NATURALIZED PERENNIAL WILDFLOWERS, GRASSES,
AND SEDGES COMMON TO THE NORTHEAST WERE PLANTED TO STABILIZE
DISTURBED AREAS AND BLEND INTO THE EXISTING VEGETATION.**



Oehme, van Sweden & Associates, Inc.
Landscape Architects
800 G Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003
202.546.7575
www.ovsla.com

There have been very few dynamic duos. There was Barman and Robin—and there's Jim and Wolfgang." This affectionate salute was H. Marc Cathey's initial response to a recent request for comment on the partnership of Wolfgang Oehme, FASLA, and James van Sweden, FASLA, of Washington, D.C. Cathey is the president emeritus of the American Horticultural Society and was the first to describe the work of Oehme, van Sweden, & Associates as embodying "the new American garden." The term has stuck, perhaps because it is so fitting. An Oehme and van Sweden garden conveys many of the qualities and preferences that define late-twentieth-century America.

During an era when it seems commonplace to see a president of the United States jogging through Washington's formal avenues in gym clothes Oehme and van Sweden introduced a casual, exuberant approach promising easy maintenance. The effect looks spontaneous and unplanned but in fact is carefully crafted. It is bold yet soft, subtle, serene. Its simple sweeping forms can be appreciated from a speeding car, yet unlike the typical suburban garden, which reveals itself in a single glance, a landscape by Oehme, van Sweden, & Associates is layered and more complex than is evident at first glance. And, like fast-paced American life itself, the firm's gardens are in a constant state of transformation and self-renewal. They change with the time of day and with the season, having replaced neatly clipped foundation plantings, manicured lawns, tidy hedges, and elaborately patterned flower beds with lush, natural plantings. "We say, 'Anybody can do spring. You throw out bulbs and get big fireworks,'" says van Sweden. "It's fall and winter that are difficult. The new American garden is fabulous in the winter. Winter isn't dead. We say it's a dry bouquet."

To create their painterly signature Oehme and van Sweden group shrubs loosely, as though scatter-shot. They situate the occasional tree strategically to frame views and

The lush landscapes of Wolfgang Oehme and James van Sweden—landscapes of drama year-round—lend new texture and definition to the American garden.

Men For All Seasons

BY ANDREA
OPPENHEIMER
DEAN

Landscape Architecture
July 1997

PHOTOGRAPH BY SKIP BROWN