

# landscape architecture

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

## NATURAL WORLD RHYTHMS



**T**HIS SLEEK, MIDCENTURY modern residence, true to its era, touches the ground lightly with lightweight, open structure, inviting an earthy, grounded counterbalance for its landscape redesign. Paul Broadhurst, ASLA, of Paul R. Broadhurst + Associates, calls his redesign philosophy “contrasting clean lines with loose earthy naturalism with messy vitality.”

Close to downtown Seattle on a one-acre parcel, the site forms part of the planned Hilltop Community, known for its modern structures and its serene, off-the-grid integration of house and site. Designed by architect John Detlie in 1950, the Hilltop Residence itself is archetypical of midcentury modern residential architecture. Broadhurst designed the complementing landscape to capture two moods: shadowy introspection on the entry side and sunlit expansiveness in the social/view area on the back.

The “messy vitality” contrast shows up first on the entry side, evident in the treatment of the lush forest-floor ground plane, which is cut apart and spliced with the equally strongly expressed ground plane of custom pavers. A slow flow of water at the entry’s Wet Rock sculpture sustains the plush growth of moss and liverworts. Equally important, the entry’s ruggedly handsome, mature Douglas fir served as a starting point to connect the observer with a rhythm borrowed from the natural world, Broadhurst explains.

On the sunny south side, the spectacular views set the planting philosophy: With Mount Rainier for context, native and nonnative plants are massed for “an easy harmony, durability, and extended interest,” according to Broadhurst.

### A mindful approach brings nature back to modernity.

fine the back patio.

Broadhurst says the most challenging part of the project was “marshaling my thoughts into a message seductive and cogent enough to keep all parties involved with the project inspired and on track.” And it is the “small details with gravitas,” such as the texture of the liverworts and the moss in the front, that make him smile. He also is happy that he chose to emphasize the Douglas fir’s role in the design. “The Doug fir most likely was planted as a sapling by John Detlie, so I feel I connected to him and his intent,” he explains.

With so many modern projects reaching a turning point of “restore or replace,” can Hilltop House offer any lessons for others? Yes, says Broadhurst: If it has good bones, identify, reveal, and honor them. Make landscape the satisfying “yin” to the architecture’s “yang,” regardless if the response is natural or contemporary. “At the Hilltop Residence, context for me dictated a natural approach,” he explains. “Midcentury modern homes have big window walls for a reason, and it’s our job to lift people’s noses out of Facebook and to connect them to what’s outside.”

For more details about this project, visit [www.asla.org/2009awards/305.html](http://www.asla.org/2009awards/305.html).

**HILLTOP RESIDENCE,**  
*Seattle*  
**Paul R. Broadhurst**  
**+ Associates,**  
*Seattle*



## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN, Honor Award

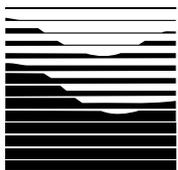
### HILLTOP RESIDENCE, Seattle

Paul R. Broadhurst + Associates, Seattle

**T**HIS PROJECT'S SLEEK, midcentury modern residence rests on the ground lightly and invites an earthy counterbalance from its landscape re-design. Facilitating privacy at the entry and maximizing mountain views from the living spaces, the slope of the building's shed roof is lowest at the carport and expands to create the tallest ceiling heights at the view windows. With sensitive siting, the house appears modest in size but in actuality is considerably larger, because the studio is tucked beneath this level. The landscape architect engaged the archi-

STEVE DUBINSKY

tecture in more meaningful dialogue by giving coherency to the hardscape and landscape and expanding the terrace area so that it now reads as an extension of adjacent interior space. Two moods were emphasized: the shady introspection of the entry and the sunlit expansiveness of the social view area. The jurors called this project "the real deal, with little inventive surprises and moves."



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Each year, the American Society of Landscape Architects' Professional Awards honor the best in landscape architecture from around the globe. Award recipients receive featured coverage in Landscape Architecture magazine and in many other design publications. The prestige of the ASLA awards program relies in large part on the high-caliber juries that are convened each year to review submissions.

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