



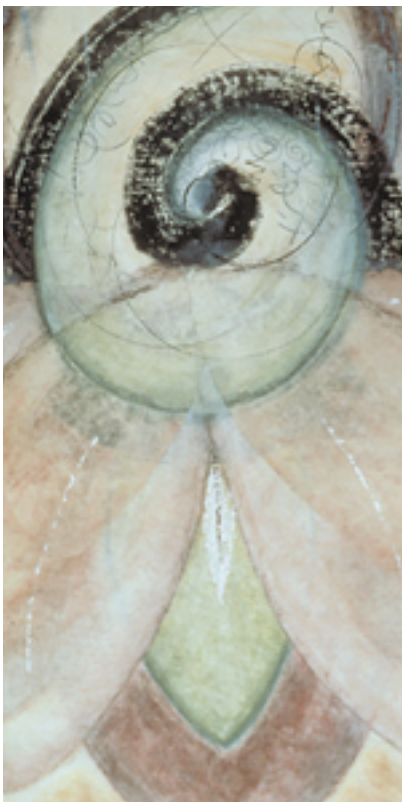
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Creating a Place to Heal

An Art Plan by Fernanda D'Agostino

Introduction

This plan is intended to help the hospital community embrace its surrounding neighbors on First Hill and Downtown Seattle, through the creation of a vibrant tapestry of urban streetscape and open spaces. The design principles described in this plan are intended to guide the design of architectural elements, landscape design, and commissioned works of art. Artworks and architectural elements will be interwoven throughout the Harborview Medical Center campus, as it continues to develop and change over the course of the next ten years. Working together, designers and artists will create spaces that are both functional and beautiful. While the medical center's staff works to heal patients, the physical environment itself will provide both comfort and inspiration to patients, their families and staff.



© Margo Thompson, 1998, *Season Songs, Garden Meditations*, Doernbecher Children's Hospital



© Photo by Susie Fitzhugh, 1997, courtesy of Harborview Medical Center Community Relations Department



© Karen Guzak, 1993, *Rooftop Garden*, Seattle



© Gayle Bard, 1998, *Green River Bend, Kent*, Regional Justice Center, Kent



© Fernanda D'Agostino, 1995, *Wishing Trees*, Pioneer Courthouse Square Portland, Oregon



© Jean Whitesavage & Nick Lyle, 1997, *Blackbirds and Gulls*, Regional Justice Center, Kent

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

Healing Greens

Green spaces around the neighborhood should create a tapestry with “connecting threads” of green along the pathways forming a consistent sense of place, and assisting in wayfinding. Themed gardens of aromatic or medicinal plants are a possibility.

The “green” at the heart of the campus should be designed by a team that includes a visual artist, and should provide for a variety of experiences, both active and contemplative. This is an opportunity to put into practice some of the research that’s been done on therapeutic landscapes. Sculpture, paving inlays, earthworks, mazes or knot gardens are all possibilities for adding a layer of intrigue to this landscape.

A small conservatory or greenhouse would be a wonderful addition to this space and could perhaps be attached to one of the buildings. A chance for neighbors or patients to participate in gardening is another possibility. Raised, accessible planters could put plantings at wheelchair level.

Use of a natural palette of materials both inside and out when practical is to be encouraged. Sensitive placement of windows in patient rooms to allow views of nature when possible and the sound of water can act as a wonderful restorative in an environment that is often noisy.

According to research, artworks that refer to the natural world can be as effective as a real landscape in helping hospitalized patients. (Barnes/Marcus, *Healing Gardens*, Chapter 2 pg.70) These works could be landscape paintings or they could be more conceptual works that sensitively use natural forms or materials.

Artists who work directly with the real landscape should be partnered with landscape architects to create “poetic spaces” within the campus and neighborhood. Inside and outside should be interwoven through the use of roof and terrace gardens, mini greenhouses at the ends of corridors, and glass walls that frame views. Pulling materials through an interior and exterior space on the ground plane, plantings, paving and views of a small pool, can help open up the experience of someone who is “shut in.”



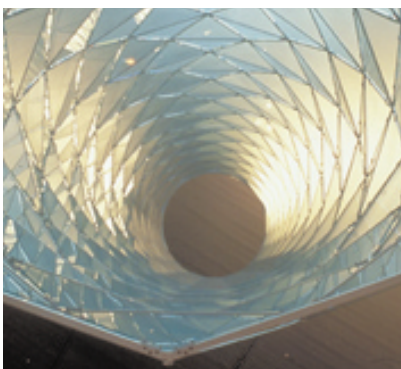
© Fernanda D'Agostino & Valerie Otani, 1999, *Bridge Between Cultures*, Seattle



© Jim Sanborn, 1994, *The Cyrillic Projector*, University of South Carolina



© Norman Courtney, 1997, *Sconce: Chapel of St. Ignatius*, Seattle University



© James Carpenter, 1997, *Shell Oculus*, Genoa Aquarium

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

Light as Inspiration

Designers should investigate both the functional and metaphorical uses of light. Thoughtful design of corner fenestration on campus buildings can function as lanterns or beacons that help visitors identify hospital buildings.

Groves of sculptural lighting could lend a higher sense of security to nighttime walks through the neighborhood. Light artists could be commissioned to create signature pieces throughout the campus or to wash buildings with glowing color after dark. Meditation rooms in particular could be focal points for putting into play the magic of projected light, art glass and other light sensitive materials. Light should also be a factor in thinking about daytime design. Buildings should be oriented and sheathed to play with shifting daylight in intriguing ways. Window placement and use of skylights and light scoops could also permit patient rooms to receive maximum light and sun. An interesting project at Doernbecher Children's Hospital featured artist-designed motifs as fritted glass window treatments, using architectural finishing dollars to add a touch of poetry to patients' rooms. Artist-designed light fixtures could also use combined art and lighting budgets to add another layer of meaning to broad areas of the hospital.

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

Wayfinding

Artworks can act as landmarks through careful siting both inside the hospital and throughout the neighborhood.

Scale should be used carefully to create both powerful landmarks and fine-grained intimate and private experiences.

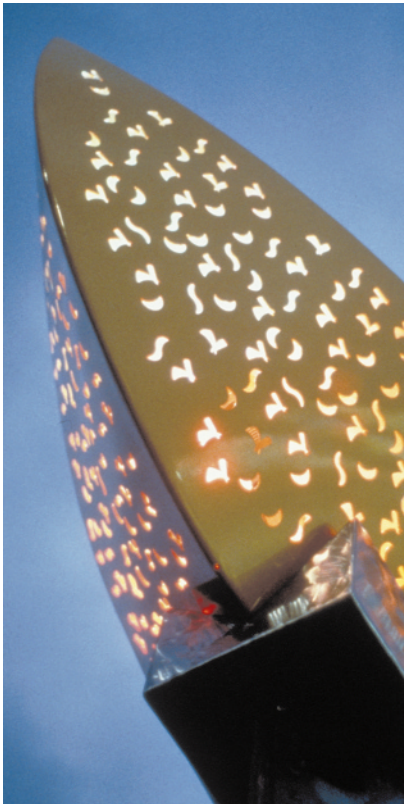
Artworks can also take on the metaphorical task of wayfinding by helping to provide for moments of contemplation and stillness, or conversely, helping give voice to some of the powerful emotions being experienced by hospital patients, staff and visitors.

Different floors of the facilities could be given distinct identifying characteristics or themes. At Doernbecher Children’s Hospital, each floor is an element: earth, sky and sea. Without being quite so literal, other visual cues could be used to help establish location. Sophisticated use of color is another obvious possibility.

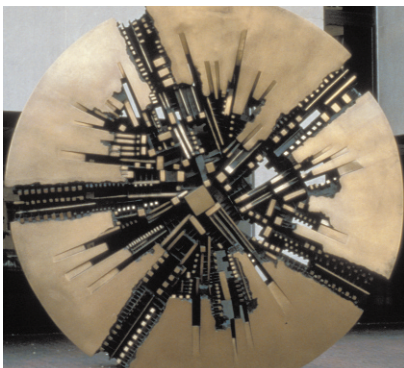
Even within the landscape, certain palette elements could be used as connecting threads that would help hospital visitors identify locations and navigate their way around the campus. While some elements of the landscape could thread their way through the neighborhood, specimen plantings, small groves, pocket gardens or water features could also act as punctuation points or landmarks. Paving inlays can enliven a pathway and turn a mundane walk into a journey.

Using characteristic roof forms on many of the buildings can help identify buildings as part of the hospital campus.

Using corner fenestration in a creative and evocative way can turn each building into a lantern, helping to create a unified identity for hospital buildings that is readily distinguishable at night.



© Clark Wiegman, 1998, Spirit Boat, West Hill Community Center



© Arnaldo Pomodoro, 1963, Grande Disco, Chicago



© Fernanda D’Agostino & Valerie Otani, 1999, Bridge Between Cultures, Seattle



© Jack Mackie, 1982, Dancer’s Series: Steps, Seattle

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

Healing Arts

Public Art planned for Harborview should provide opportunities for live arts. Storytellers, an arts cart in the children’s areas, and opportunities to hear live music are ways to expand the visual art program to include multi-disciplinary art experiences. Saint Vincent’s Hospital in Portland is just one of many hospitals where musicians play for patients. Saint Vincent’s staff reports that access to performing arts is a very effective addition to their program.

Opportunities for healing arts performances can be facilitated by programming outdoor mini-amphitheatres into the green space and by providing small multi-use presentation



© Artist in Residence, University of Washington Medical Center, Image courtesy of UWMC Art Program



Left: © Wayne Chabre, 1998, *Art Carp*, Doernbecher Children’s Hospital
Right: © Boxing H, photo by Raul Campoverde, courtesy of Cherone Wong



© Photo courtesy of Linda Severt



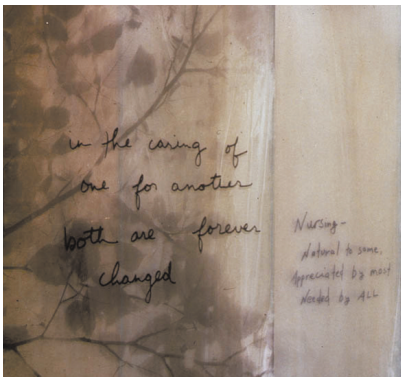
spaces within the hospital. Lobby spaces sometimes become “destinations” for long-term patients or their families and can provide a change of pace and relief from the difficult realities and monotony of the ward. A coffee cart, a flower stall, indoor plantings and again, a small multi-use space where intimate performances take place, could enhance this function. An artist-designed cart for use by art therapists or play therapists, such as Wayne Chabre’s *Art Carp* at Doernbecher Children’s Hospital, is a good example of how a public art project can enhance a patient’s experience and “healing arts”.

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

Life Stories

Interesting research is being conducted at Harborview on relationships between staff and patients and how aspects of these relationships impact the lives of patients and the survivors of patients with terminal illnesses or injuries. (See *Harborview Viewpoints*, “Breaking the Worst Possible News in the Best Possible Way”, Spring 2000, pg.6.)

Designers should seek to discover the most critical aspects of the life dramas that take place in each area of the hospital, and design spaces that support the best possible relationships.



Left: © Beliz Brother, 1997, *Touch*, Swedish Hospital, Seattle
 Right: © Brad Rude & Frank Boyden, 1998, *Goat With Cat*, Doerhenbecher Children's Hospital



For example, one of the hospital staff members that participated in the community design charette mentioned the dilemma of breaking bad news to a patient or family member. In the best-case scenario, this should be a private moment; however, because of the circumstances of some of the patients at Harborview, staff may feel uncomfortable or vulnerable in an isolated situation. Designing consulting rooms that afford privacy without putting staff at risk would be an example of responding to a Life Story at Harborview.

Another challenge of hospital life is holding onto the identity of the “healthy” person. When my mother was hospitalized with a stroke, staff at the hospital where she was being cared for treated her in a polite, but perfunctory way, until I brought a few snapshots from home and taped them to the wall. The pictures acted as conversation starters and suddenly she was a person to them. I also noticed my own stress level go down with this point of personal reference at my mother’s bedside. Designs that encourage display of personal pictures and other references are to be encouraged.

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

Life Stories

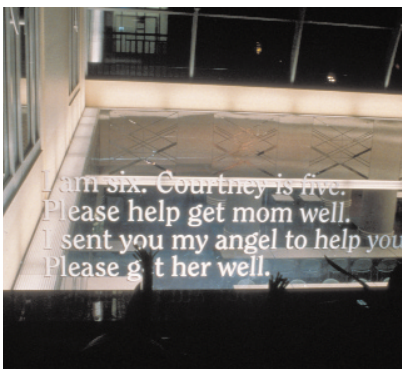
The construction of narratives is what allows us to find our way through life and to give even its most difficult moments a sense of meaning. Artworks that draw on patient's stories, such as Tad Savinar's *Keep Them Well* installation in Harborview's main lobby, tell patients the hospital recognizes their true identities and values them as whole people. Other works such as Liza vonRosenstiel's whimsical children's play environment *The Ranch* sets imaginations free. Harborview's collection of art focused on ethnic heritage acknowledges the larger "life story" of cultural heritage and identity. For many people a sense of cultural solidarity is an anchor in times of trouble, and provides a powerful spiritual balm.



© Liza VonRosenstiel, 1998, *The Ranch*, Harborview Medical Center, Seattle



© Kerry S. Coppin, 1998, *Black Child With Bow Tie*



© Tad Savinar, 1997, *Keep Them Well*, Harborview Medical Center, Seattle

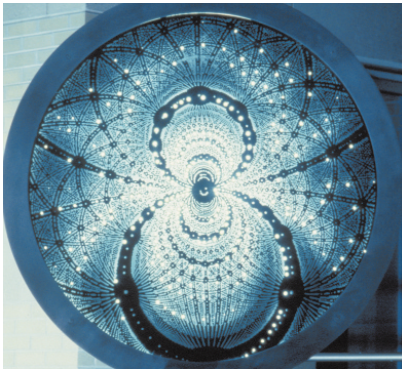


© James Leong, 1995, *1895 China Remains*

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

The Beauty of Science

Since this is a teaching hospital, celebrating scientific passion and humanitarian discovery should be part of our design program. Although the technological aspects of healing can be intimidating to patients, they also have their intriguing and even beautiful sides. Where it is possible to celebrate and reveal science we should. However, artists and designers who explore this theme should be mindful that art and design should mitigate stress and anxiety, and not intimidate patients and their families. This design principle could be expressed as beautiful lighting in the labs or handsome light boxes for the display of x-rays, for example.



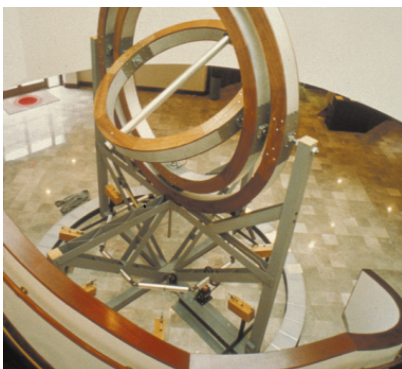
© Cliff Garten, 1995, *Genetics*, Biotechnology Center, University of Wisconsin



Left: © Hillsboro Design Team, 1998, *Flow*
Right: © Ellen Sollod, 1995, *Of Science and Faith*, Swedish Hospital, Seattle



© Linda Beaumont, 1997, *Full Circle*, Harborview Medical Center, Seattle



© Patrick Zentz, 1992, *Heliostope*, University of Nevada, Las Vegas



Harborview can also celebrate scientific and humanitarian discoveries through the commissioning of works that use scientific imagery, are based on scientific principles, or that interpret the history of science. There is a group of artists whose work is strongly influenced by science and technology. Cliff Garten's light fixtures for the University of Wisconsin's Biology Building that use the astonishing beauty of molecular biology as a source of imagery, is a good example of how artwork can reflect the work of medical researchers within the hospital setting. Patrick Zentz creates beautiful works based on scientific instruments that interpret changes in their surrounding environments as haunting, Zen-like music. Linda Beaumont's *Full Circle* terrazzo floor at Harborview works with mathematical fibonacci series and spirals in the natural world. Fernanda D'Agostino and Valerie Otani's *Flow* plaza at Portland's Westside Lightrail's Quatama Station, uses the natural world as a metaphor for the flow of ideas over the course of the History of Science.

The hospital should also consider commissioning some artworks that would primarily be viewed by staff and that reflect their knowledge base and unique concerns.

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

Conclusion, The Collaborative Process

The art and design principles described in this art plan are intended to dovetail and overlap with the project design principles put forth in the campus master plan and community design charette process developed by NBBJ Architects. As the project evolves and further research is done with the community, Harborview patients and staff, additional principles may emerge and some of these may grow and change. Collaboration and openness to the ideas and experiences of all participants is the design principle that is fundamental to all of the others.



© Photo by Katie McCarthy, courtesy of Harborview Medical Center Community Relations Department



Left: © Jay Kohn, 1981, *Camille's Pond*
Right: © Sonya Ishii & Jim Hirschfield, 1998, *Meditation Room*, Doernbecher Children's Hospital



As designers and artists work to integrate healing environments and artwork into the medical center's campus, they should be mindful that this is a very unique place. Harborview is a county hospital, a teaching and research institution, a regional trauma and burn center, and the primary health care provider for the poor and disenfranchised populations in the community. Patients, families and staff at Harborview are often facing extreme, life-altering situations and medical emergencies.

Harborview embraces its mission of treating all people, regardless of economic status or cultural background, with exceptional care. Artists need to make a conscientious effort to understand Harborview – its patients, staff and services – and put their own creative expertise to the task of supporting its work.

Art and Architecture : Common Design Principles

Executive Summary

Healing Gardens

- Use landscaping sensitively to humanize both campus and interior hospital environments.
- Include artists as major collaborators on hospital open spaces and plazas.
- Use landscape to unify the campus and as connecting threads that aid in wayfinding.
- When possible use natural materials in hospital interiors.
- Orient patient room windows and beds for views to the outdoors.
- Use terraced gardens, roof gardens, mini greenhouses and vine covered walls and trellises to give patients, staff and visitors as much access to the natural world as possible.
- Use landscape-based art to alleviate stress where exterior views are not available, include both representational work and sensitively created conceptual and abstract work.

Light as Inspiration

- Orient buildings to take maximum advantage of daylight.
- Use light scoops, skylights, atriums and oculae to bring light into interior spaces.
- Use transparent or reflective materials, as appropriate, to play with available daylight.
- Use “groves of light” as campus art installations.
- Use projected light and/or imagery in vandal resistant and climate sensitive artworks.
- Commission artists to create unique interior and exterior light fixtures using architectural finish budgets to augment art dollars.
- Commission video artists to create unique video works to play in surgical waiting areas where insensitive, daytime TV shows can create emotional dissonance for families and patients during stressful events.
- Use light as an element in a meditation room designed by an artist/architect team.

Wayfinding

- Site artworks at critical intersections and nodes around the campus and within the facilities to aid in patient and visitor orientation.
- Commission both landmark scale works and those that foster intimate, private moments.
- Use corner fenestration as “beacons” and campus task lighting as an art opportunity to enhance lighting’s role in wayfinding.
- Consider the metaphorical aspect of wayfinding by commissioning works of art that aide patients, staff and visitors in finding their ways through the psychological maze of facing illness and trauma.

Healing Arts

- Find ways to include live performance as a part of Harborview's art program; use musicians, storytellers, dancers and puppeteers to lighten days for patients and their families.
- Design open spaces and lobbies with multi-use spaces that can accommodate live performances.

Life Stories

- Commission works that recognize the power of the narrative to help people find meaning in difficult situations.
- Draw directly on the experiences of staff and patients for text based narrative projects.
- Recognize the diversity of cultures that make up Harborview's population and reflect their group stories.
- Create works of art and spaces that allow children to create their own stories through play and imagination.
- Design facilities with a sensitivity to the typical daily dramas of a given space.
- Provide opportunities for staff and families to be reminded of the individuality of patients and the lives they led prior to the accident or illness that brought them to Harborview.

The Beauty of Science

- Celebrate scientific and humanitarian discoveries through the commissioning of works that use scientific imagery, are based on scientific principles, or that interpret the history of science.
- Avoid anatomical or other disturbing imagery.
- As appropriate, design beautiful labs and other areas most frequently used by staff; consider commissioning some artworks that would primarily be viewed by staff and that reflect their knowledge base and unique concerns.

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