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Outlook

There is a marvelous, direct simplicity to the words *out* and *look* set together. The order in which they join — *outlook* or *lookout* — carries subtly different meanings even though they are in some measure interchangeable. Both are used to designate a place from which to view, but otherwise their meanings diverge. *Lookout* carries connotations of wariness, its first meaning is a scout or watchman. *Outlook* becomes a point of view, a more encompassing stance towards the world. A lookout may be useful; an outlook is what we need to have.

Patrick Geddes, in creating the Outlook Tower in Edinburgh, set out to make a place that would stand for a point of view. He took over an existing camera obscura and made its physical outlook over the city a symbol for integrating knowledge about the city with an understanding of the countryside, region and world at large. Surely Edinburgh lent itself to picturesque examination, with its legacy of a craggy landscape framed by splendid rows of buildings and prickly spires, yet Geddes intended more. Through her article “Sorting in Patrick Geddes’ Lookout Tower,” Joyce Earley examines the intellectual scope that underlay Geddes’ point of view and his commitment to bringing that vision to bear on the world about him through education and action.

Alison and Peter Smithson, in their dialogue of reflections on “The Nature of Retreat,” demonstrate the intensely considered outlook that has made their architecture and their writings so provocative and influential. They trace the evolution of ideas embodied in their *Patio and Pavilion* construction first built in 1956 and reconstructed as part an exhibition that toured U.S. museums last year.

In “A Tale of Two Villages,” Ronald Lee Fleming reports on the efforts of two historic villages to retain a considered relation to the landscapes that surround them even as they are beset by the pressures of far-flung urbanization. Historic preservation advocates act here as lookouts, watching over relationships that too often escape notice and consequently disappear.

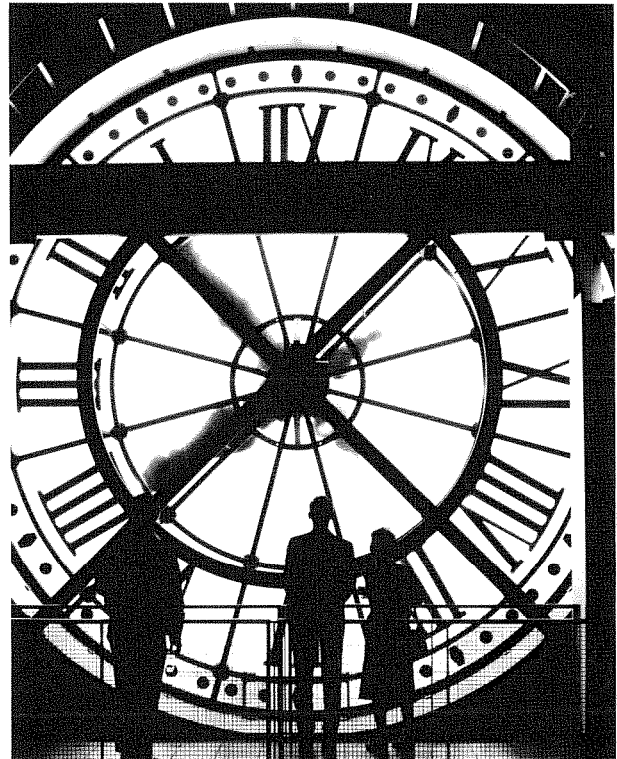
The Southwest Corridor Project in Boston is the result of relationships that did get noticed and have served, through several decades of community involvement, to bind together a disparate set of neighborhoods, government agencies and planners to create a linear park where otherwise a divisive freeway would have held sway.

John K. Bullard and Peter Clavelle, mayors who have participated in the Mayors Institute for City Design, describe the outlook of people who are firmly committed to place, to bearing responsibility for what happens in their cities. Bullard calls for careers that are committed to a specific place and Clavelle describes the achievements of a community whose political transformation we first discussed in *Places* 3:2.

The extraordinarily fertile outlook of J.B. Jackson is represented here in “The Vernacular Landscape is on the Move ... Again.” The determined eye, committed

vantage point and lucid language that characterize his writings and lectures have brought us all to see the American landscape more richly and more completely than conventional academic wisdom allowed. His first embodiment of this outlook was the creation of *Landscape* magazine, which for many years he edited and published personally. Those early issues, filled with many differing voices and startling, aberrant observations, were an important stimulus to our thinking about *Places*. They tower still in our minds.

—Donlyn Lyndon



Musee d'Orsay, Paris

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