

**AWARDS
OF
EXCELLENCE
2022**

JANUARY 2023



**Yarmouth Mainstreet
Redevelopment Phase 2
Fathom Studio**

apala

Small Scale Landscapes

Yarmouth Mainstreet
Redevelopment Phase 2
Yarmouth, NS



PROJECT SUMMARY

This project re-imagines the relationship between people and their Main Street. It recognizes what makes the Town and its setting unique and highlights it for visitors and the local Community in the outdoor public realm. The regional-specific design language reinforces Yarmouth's sense of place and commitment to creating an unforgettable experience.

The new streetscape design offers a quintessential yet distinct coastal theme; the most notable being a deconstructed interpretation of lobster car structures that reference the importance of the Town's fishing heritage and most important industry. Their vibrant colours and playfulness transform the former vehicle centric and hostile pedestrian environment into a welcoming atmosphere.

The lobster car is strategically cut up into several pieces and is distributed throughout the streetscape, creating a cohesive identity for the three blocks that form the heart of the Town's developing Arts and Culture district that is anchored by the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia. When moving through the space or stopping to view the other structures, the composition is, perceptively, made whole again, creating an experience of playful discovery for people of all ages.

As the centrepieces of the new sidewalk bumpout amenity areas, the elements also

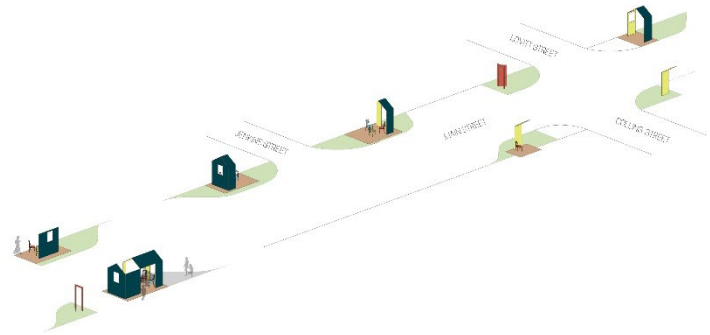


offer practical uses as photo backdrops, a bus stop, or simply small areas of shelter for pedestrians to stop and relax in the shade or out of the rain. The warm glow of the yellow interiors conveys a sense of repose and safety, especially when lit at night.

Complimentary features include colourful “kitchen party” seating, reflecting the Community’s reputation for hospitality and having a good time. Modeled after traditional wooden Nova Scotian chairs and cast in aluminum, the movable interactive furniture sits upon sturdy deck timbers that resemble the pontoon structures of the lobster cars and what might be found when walking on a local wharf. Robust planting beds feature hardy perennial species that thrive in the local coastal environment and function to manage sidewalk stormwater and excessive winter salt. The plants are intermixed with carefully arranged pieces of reclaimed granite street curb that speaks to the incredible rock formations found only minutes away at Cape Forchu.

The project has allowed for improvements toward universal accessibility, enhanced pedestrian comfort and safety, resulting in a major improvement to the appeal of downtown Yarmouth. Since re-opening to the public in the summer of 2021, businesses in the downtown core have seen increased foot traffic in the area, allowing them to thrive. Many have also been inspired to improve their own properties and have taken part in other Town-funded initiative such as the façade improvement incentive program.

This project represents a true placemaking effort that brings to life the community’s needs and desires through clever and carefully considered design details. With a population of only 6500, Yarmouth’s Main Street is an example of what other small towns across Canada can do to instill a sense of pride within their community, and drive people and business to their region and downtowns.



Award of Special Recognition

Yarmouth Mainstreet Redevelopment Phase 2

The streetscape design is seeped in a sense of place and demonstrates a unique ability to pay tribute to the past while simultaneously bringing a fun, creative and modern approach to highlighting local culture and contributing to the Town's brand. The sustainable aspects of this project were finely executed, yet in a manner that didn't dominate the design, allowing the distinct character of the Town to shine through. - APALA Jury

Residential Landscapes

Art Belongs in the Garden

Halifax, NS

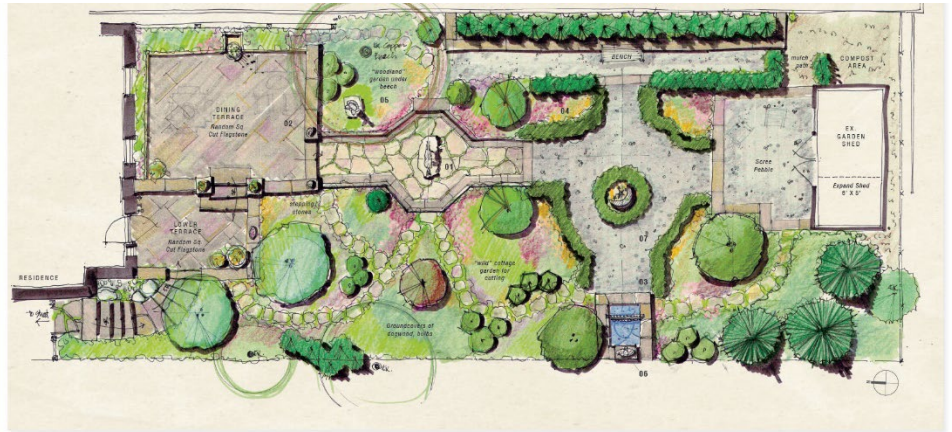


PROJECT SUMMARY

Originally created for the Cunard family in 1835, this heritage property in Halifax, is located on Morris Street— a block settled by wealthy merchants in the 1700s. The long garden plots of these colonial homes functioned to serve and support the activities of daily living of the time. In our cities today, density often outweighs the luxury of greenspace, leaving this remnant historic property wedged between high-rises. The plot has been minimized in size but maximized in its visual accessibility by overlooking apartment dwellers. When current homeowners, one a landscape painter and the other an avid perennialist, sought to transform their garden, they understood the parallax: for themselves, an immersive garden retreat to host their sculpture collection; and for others viewing from above, a work of art.

To many, art is an imperative socio-cultural element of humanity, important to mental wellbeing, a tool for reflection and interaction. Improving accessibility to art and nature challenged both homeowners and landscape architect: to create a transformative garden that could achieve all goals. Landscape architect and homeowners understood that a garden as much as art is to be created and enjoyed as part of daily living. Art belongs in the garden, the garden is art.

During design, each sculpture began to tell its tale, woven into various intimate spaces and immersed in a riot of plants. The garden became a sculpture itself:



large enough and perforated enough to allow strolling, private enough to enjoy personal time and yet open enough to capture glimmers of open sky in a canyon of high-rises, whilst simultaneously being viewed by them. Materiality and integration of varying levels enabled the owners to use the garden comfortably - be it a quiet morning coffee alone or often-scheduled garden tours with multitudes. Peach and warm ochre granite was specifically chosen for walls and paving to generate a brightening glow on foggy gray days, lighting strategically invited one's eye into the gardening all seasons, stone steps from parking above connect directly to the lower kitchen door historically used by servants, which in turn carefully ascend to the dining terrace.

Axial views from kitchen are at the lowest level while the dining room windows above focus on the Fafard sculpture – framed by a low stone curb and walk. Drainage through permeable surfaces draining to dry wells ensure the gardens support myriads of bulbs, perennials, and trees. At 20 years old, this garden creates a legacy of collaboration between sophisticated owners and Landscape Architect.

Early in their careers, all recognized the value of their professions and power of art to uplift, delight, and inspire – even trading paintings for landscape design services. A symbiosis results with sculptural forms and art are imbedded in everyday experiences: home and garden are united in their function. This reveals the cultural value of rehabilitating this downtown heritage property – elevating the conversation of art, nature, and beauty – a complex yet elegant solution of respite and delight.



A timeless design that blurs the lines between 'art and landscape' and 'client and designer', weaving creative pursuits into a greater microcosm of art you could easily forget is encapsulated within a city. The project is also significant given the maturation of the unchanged design over a period of two decades. – APALA Jury

Planning and Analysis

First Light Residential School

Survivors Memorial Garden

Master Plan

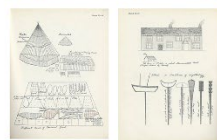
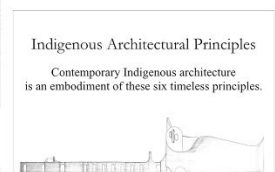
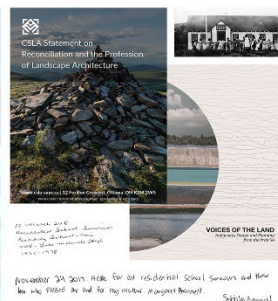
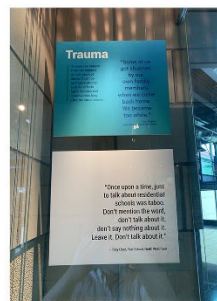
St. John's, NL



PROJECT SUMMARY

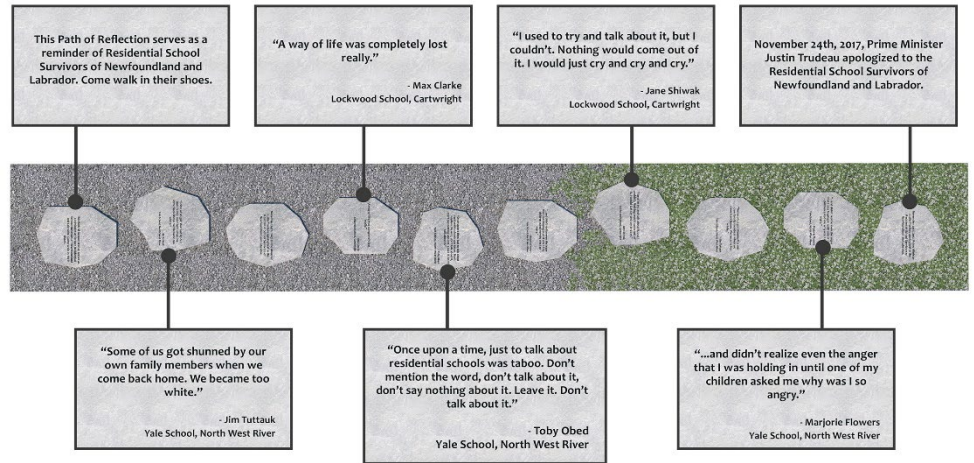
When asked to complete a master plan for a residential school survivors memorial garden, we were excited, yet apprehensive. We've watched the residential school situation in Canada unfold with the deepest empathy for those impacted, however, as a non-Indigenous landscape architecture firm, we immediately felt the gravity of what was being asked of us. How do we translate such a tragedy which we know nothing about firsthand? How do we ensure the memorial appropriately reflects the experiences of those it is designed to honour? We knew we had work to do. We participated in Indigenous Cultural Diversity Training; scoured museums and archives; researched our role as designers when working with Indigenous communities; and studied the work of Indigenous designers. We shared our findings with a steering committee of Elders and Survivors, who were inspired by the sincerity of our efforts to research, learn, and understand. We were on our path toward reconciliation and would continue together, with the committee, as we developed a shared vision for the memorial garden.

The committee wanted a space where people could "walk in our shoes." Users would learn about the impact of residential schools, but this needed to be balanced to ensure the experience



wasn't sombre; while the Survivors had experienced tragic events, the garden also needed to celebrate their strength, courage, and tenacity to reclaim the cultural elements that were taken away. Every element of the garden's design speaks to this message. The entrance passes through a confined space at the rear of the building demarcated by stones with Survivor quotes. It's a space that feels somewhat uncomfortable and restricted, an experience not dissimilar to that of the Survivors. Upon entering the garden, the views open and the feeling of restriction lifts. The grey stone underfoot transitions to green and the mood changes to a feeling of relief and optimism; a metaphor for the experience of leaving an uncomfortable place such as a residential school.

The garden itself is where the message shifts to one of perseverance. Its design is rich with imagery that celebrates Indigenous histories, cultures, and experiences. The softscape is mass-planted with native plants, "messy" like the landscapes of Newfoundland and Labrador. Raw materials are favoured; wood, stone, and corten steel, chosen because it becomes stronger with age, much like a residential school survivor. Standing proud in the middle of a garden is a structure supported by seven pillars, each representing a residential school in NL. They support a trellis-like structure that defines a multifunctional gathering space. It is designed to resemble an Inuit drum, an important cultural symbol. At the centre of the space is a corten steel fire bowl filled with Labradorite, a native mineral and connection to the ancestral lands of Labrador. Fire is an important cultural element used for ceremony and an appropriate focal point for the garden. We feel that this project illustrates how landscape architecture can engage Indigenous communities not only to envision meaningful outdoor spaces, but also as a medium for reconciliation.



First Light lays important groundwork for how landscape architects in our region can approach the delicate process of reconciliation with humility and receptiveness to Indigenous communities and trauma survivors. - APALA Jury