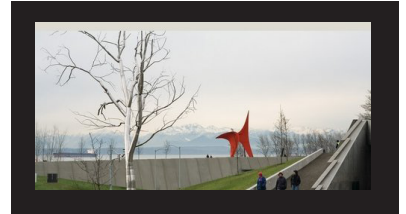


Olympic Sculpture Park

WEISS/MANFREDI, Architecture, Landscape, Urbanism (Lead)
Charles Anderson Landscape Architecture
Client: Seattle Art Museum



Above: Symbolic sculpture in the park.
Photo by Paul Warchol

Left: Olympic Sculpture Park opening day.
Photo by Benjamin Ben-schneider

If you are a design/planning student, you will be impressed when you walk in Olympic Sculpture park. The whole park is perfectly coherent, both visually and topographically.

The park features a 2,200-foot Z-shaped crushed stone path through a series of outdoor sculpture “galleries.” Its gradual descent from the pavilion to the water’s edge zig-zags to focus on three radically different views.

The first stretch connects the pavilion to a point suspended over Elliott Avenue, focusing on views of the Olympic Mountains and Elliott Bay. The path’s second leg, directly aligned with Mt Rainier, provides views to the city and port. The final stretch descends from the BNSF railroad bridge to the new beach. This continuous path connects a series of distinct landscapes and settings for art. The three emblematic landscapes are: the Valley, an archetypal evergreen landscape of the Northwest; the Grove, with deciduous trees adaptable to the urban environment; and the Shore, a waterfront setting shaped by wind and saltwater and including aquatic terraces that form a regenerative underwater landscape for fish and wildlife. As one traverses this path, views are directed north toward the sea and mountains and then south toward the city and port. Throughout the park, seemingly parallel lines converge, accentuating the laws of perspective to suggest infinite distances.

Moreover, the design film also took care of the local fragile species- salmon. They used a three-level-seawall to deal with habitat restoration.

Design features:

Coherent

- Z-path feature made whole park
- Small scale landscapes in beautiful details

Landscape subjects

- The Valley
- The Grove
- The Meadow
- The Shore

Functioning Ecosystem

- Land restoration
- Brownfield re-development (polluted site to a clean park)
- Salmon habitat restoration

Native plantings

Sustainable design strategies



Coherence

Coherent (continuous and constructed landscape for art-- design vision)

- Z-path feature made whole park, crossing two major transportation corridors (highway and train lines), have no edge (don't even feel roadway interception- it bridges but does not hide the infrastructure lines)

- "meadow" landscapes create "fenceless" edge

Small scale landscapes (4 distinct landscapes) so when you walk, you focus on the elements, such as grass, soft textured trees, art installations (surprise feature)

- Landscape subjects

From the project's beginning, a major goal was to integrate native plants and sculptured soils to create natural drainage on the site. To that end, dense native vegetation now helps retain rainfall above the soil surface. Native plants are the most visible part of the restoration effort and re-establish a landscape progression from upland to shoreline in four distinct precincts: Valley, Grove, Meadows and Shore.

The Valley – evergreen forest

The Grove – forest of aspen, understory of current and iris – reflects changing seasons

The Meadow – grasses and wildflowers

The Shore – created beach, tidal garden features, kelp, algae and other intertidal-zone plants



Above: Aerial photo by benjamin benschneider

Functioning Ecosystem- A New Green Space

Restoring the land: Brownfield re-development

- Once a polluted industrial site(UNOCAL fuel storage and distribution facility), now a restored land via soil remediation.

- The park's "restorative engineering" introduces a three-foot-thick layer of engi-



neered soil that reduces runoff quantity beyond that of normal soil, which allows rainfall to percolate and drain out to Elliott Bay. This engineered soil replicates the site condition before urban development and prevents draining water from needing treatment as stormwater runoff. Plantings of dense tree canopies, understory vegetation and ground covers contribute to the retention of rainfall above the soil surface. This design also reintroduces habitat complexity to the site by restoring the original topography, which creates microclimates and offers more diversity for plant and animal life.

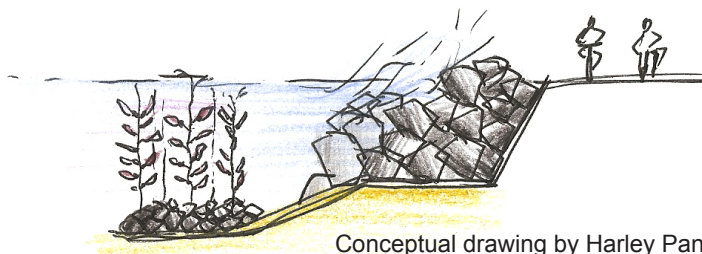


Above: aerial of site before construction photo by Benjamin Benschneider

Restoring the Shoreline

Salmon habitat restoration – sloped seawall (3-level underwater slope)

- 1st level- large rocks to break waves
- 2nd level- flat “bench” to recreate an intertidal zone
- Lower level covered with small rocks to attract sea life and large kelp.



Conceptual drawing by Harley Pan

A key part of SAM’s original vision was to restore the shoreline to a pre-urban state and create nearshore habitat, providing refuge and foraging grounds for juvenile chinook salmon migrating from the Green/Duwamish River. The park accomplished these goals by relocating riprap rock from the shoreline to develop a pocket beach with native shoreline plantings. By creating a shallow subtidal habitat bench, SAM stabilized the weakened seawall and improved the salmon habitat in the Puget Sound estuary.

Timeline

1910
UNOCAL (Union Oil Company of California) establishes a petroleum transfer and distribution facility on what later becomes the Olympic Sculpture Park.

1911–1934
Seattle constructs a waterfront seawall from Washington to Broad streets.

1975–1999
UNOCAL ceases petroleum operations at the future Olympic Sculpture Park site and closes and spends 10 years on cleanup efforts.

1999
SAM, in collaboration with the Trust for Public Land, raises \$16.5 million in private funding for the purchase of the UNOCAL site. Jon and Mary Shirley pledge to endow the park’s operations ensuring it is open and free to everyone, and help name the park.

2001
Out of 52 designers from around the world, Weiss/Manfredi Architects of New York is selected as Lead Designer for the park.

2002
Weiss/Manfredi unveil the park’s design and model on May 14.

2004
92,986 cubic yards of dirt is removed from the site of (continues on Page 5)



Native plantings



Above: Tree with white bark serves as a part of sculpture in the park. Photo by Paul Warchol

Native plants symbolizing a evergreen forest most typical of the lowland coastal region

- Tall conifers- fir, cedar and hemlock
- Living examples of ancient trees once native to Washington- ginko and majestic metasequoia (Dawn redwood)
- Flowering shrubs and trees associated with moist conditions
- Flowering perennials, groundcovers and ferns define forest edges and pathways.

Sustainable design strategies

Capture and re-use of rainwater on site

Public Recreation

- Pedestrian Boardwalk created stronger visual and physical connection to Puget Sound
- Art and design as public realm- not typical relationship of art inside the museum

Below: Joggers in the park. Photo by Paul Warchol





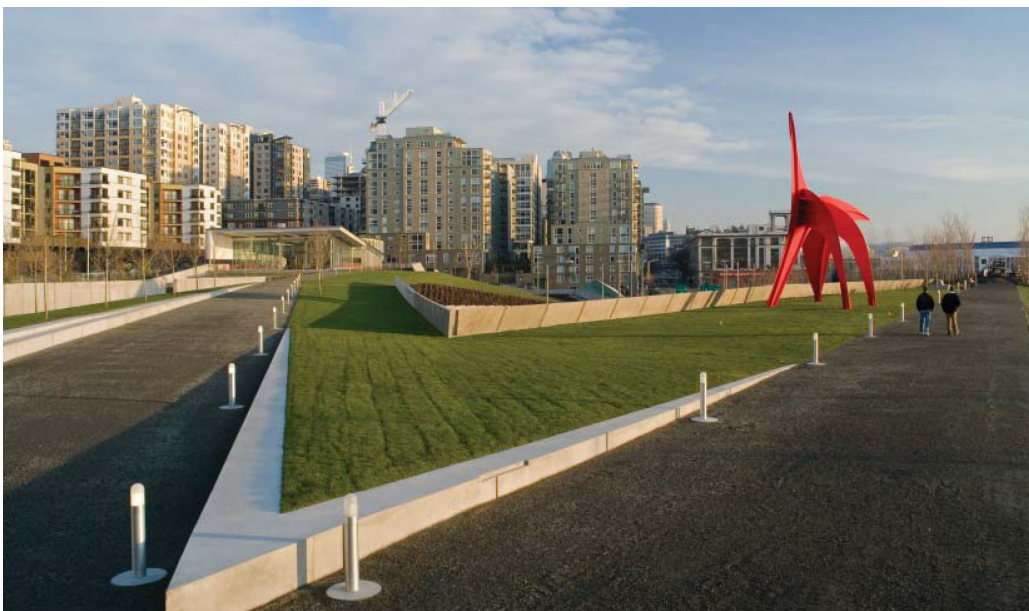
Olympic Sculpture Park

Connection

- Connection to city
Geometry focuses on views
- Connection to Waterfront
The “Grove” landscape defines parks transition from city to shore, contrast to “valley’s” continuously green backdrop, dry landscape typical of east cascade mountain range, and dry coastal sites in the Puget sound region.
- Connection to Water
- The “Shore” landscape, creation of a Beach, provided public access-in hopes to generate public interest in Puget Sound’s unique shoreline ecosystem.
- Natural developed tidal gardens



above: BNSF bridge within the park. Photo by Benjamin Benschneider



above: the constant change of interesting view within the park. Photo by Weiss/Manfredi film

SAM’s downtown museum expansion project, and is transported to the park for use as recycled fill.

2005
In the summer, construction of the Olympic Sculpture Park begins.

2006
Park construction and art installation are substantially completed.

2007
The Olympic Sculpture Park opens to the public on Jan. 20