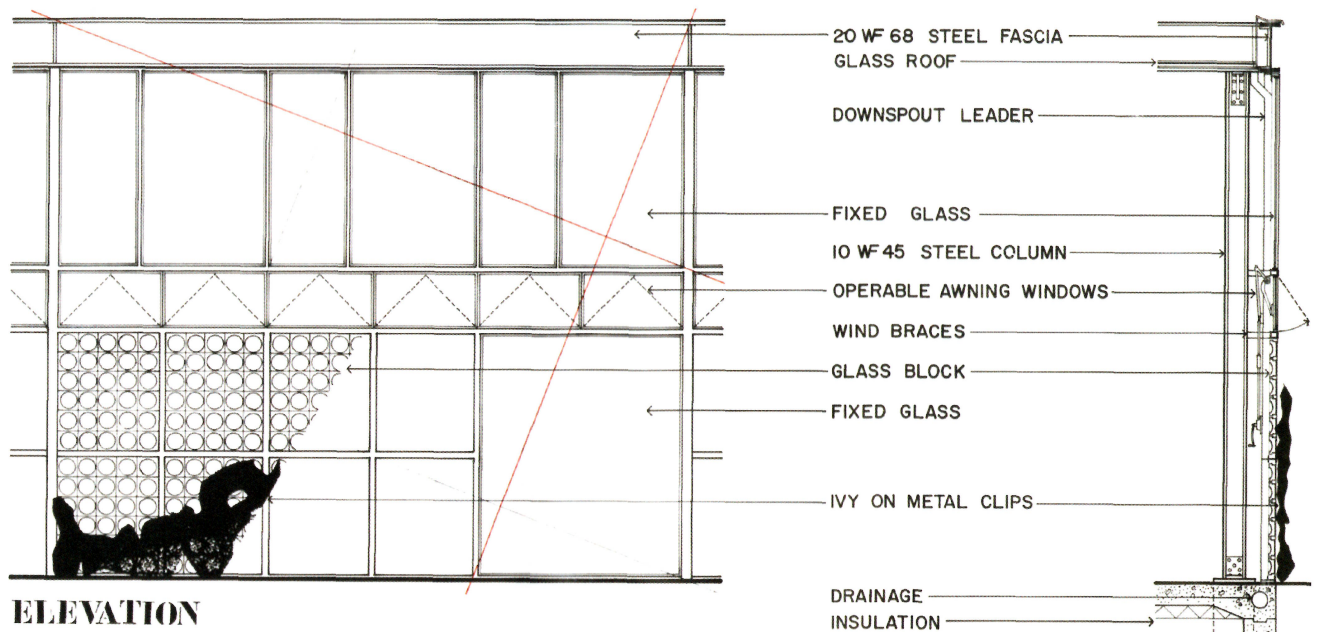


# The Mansion in the Garden – The Garden in the Mansion

By Bruce Nagel, Architect



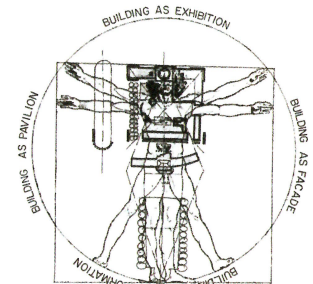
**ELEVATION**

In 1964, Leo Marx wrote a book – *The Machine in the Garden*. This book explored the idea of how contemporary culture and technology has influenced our relationship to nature. With each passing year we continue to be losing our daily relationship with nature.

Today in 2018, our world is consumed with technology, the internet and the news. It is my goal to create an environment that lets one escape this world and lets the beauty of the Hamptons and its wonderful landscape and natural light engulf you as well as engulf my architecture.

Too many architects think singularly about making the object only (the building) and too often ignore the relationship of the setting and the integration of landscape and natural light. They should be major influences on the design of a home. The majority of my clients and the weekenders arriving here every Friday evening are coming here to escape the City; they come for the beauty and the attempt at decompression that only nature and the landscape can offer. Therefore, I always attempt to integrate my architecture within the given setting and allow the landscape to shape the design

## BUILDING IN THE GARDEN



## GARDEN IN THE BUILDING

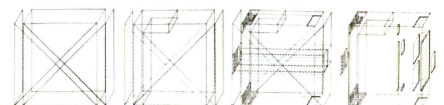


PHOTO BY NORMAN MCGRAFF



Early in my career I was the designer working with Charles Gwathmey on this home in Amagansett. We developed an interior garden (a greenhouse) to allow year-round enjoyment of nature and the beauty of plants.

both on the exterior as well as the interior.

At the architecture school at Harvard, my passion for landscape emerged. My final design project was a building for the botanical gardens in Brooklyn. My thesis was to allow the landscape (climbing vines) to overtake the glass walls allowing the building to become a landscape topiary object that one would experience both from the exterior and the interior. In the past years, this theme has never been far from my creative mind. Though I have never been able to achieve this exact concept, you will see in these examples that landscape integration has always been present in my designs.

Currently, we are beginning to see more and more homes with extensive walls of glass allowing all the beautiful light of the South Shore of Long Island into our

homes. It reminds me of the reason we have such a rich history of artists making the Hamptons their home.

From a *New York Times* article in 2014:

*Many East End artists have been drawn by the magic light, however, by day or evening. "Jackson Pollock used to love to sit on the porch and watch the sun go down." There is also a lot to do with the night sky. He would look at the stars and walk out on the*

*dark beach and see the phosphorescence in the water. In fact, one of Pollock's paintings is called "Phosphorescence" for that very reason.*

We all welcome and wish to bring into our homes the beauty of the Hamptons natural landscape and the "magic light."

In my continuing desire to integrate buildings with landscape, I have continued to develop settings where the landscape is inside the architecture.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY GILBERT MCCARRAGHER



The design of a traditional style paired with the appropriate landscape enhances the setting.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVIS GAFFGA



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PHOTOGRAPHY BY GILBERT MCCARRAGHER

Here we (working with John Pawson) carefully selected a stucco finish and color to work with the natural beach sand colors and textures.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY GILBERT MCCARRAGHER

Of course, working with the exterior landscape is the more expected approach, but having the exterior architecture and the landscape settings complement one another is the mastery.

Also, one can respect the beauty of the natural landscape and allow the architecture to co-habit without overpowering the setting. I will continue to develop my love for the beauty of the Hamptons natural landscape and my love of the 'magical light' – the real reason we are all here on the East End of Long Island. 🏠