

1:2004

SIX AUSPICIOUS SIGNS of the SACRED LANDSCAPE

Evolving thoughts on the sacred landscapes: a theory of spatial organizing principles, physical properties constituting such a place, designed or natural. This particular text was included in the submission to the Interfaith Sacred Space Design Competition as the basis for the design proposal. Previously presented in a more abbreviated format, the intention is to expand the text to include examples of special places visited, with photos and sketches, into a publishable book.

making my way through woods of the Canadian Shield, granite country, billion year - old primal basement rock. on paths climbing higher, asking **THE QUESTION: What spatial organizing principles welcome and unite people from differing cultures and disciplines, inviting all without distinction nor prejudice –**

surmounting the bold linear rustic moss-covered ridges high above the bay, emerging pockets of hemlock, pine and oak standing out from the surrounding landscape called to me and I heard them say – ‘Look no further for a design language to describe sacred space. Here are the **SIX AUSPICIOUS SIGNS of the SACRED LANDSCAPE in which all will find comfort –**

being of Favourable Context –

this place of refuge, nestled in the embrace of the landscape
embodies balance and harmony of the universe
accepting gifts offered by earth oceans skies
sited to absorb auspicious life forces and mitigate negative ones –
Seek these meeting grounds for spiritual renewal.

it is Contained –

distinct form in space distinct space surrounded by form
precious as a jewel, facets radiating all directions
unique simple beautiful
silence cradled by soundlight cradled by night –
Point to its presence, a sanctuary carried in your heart.

it is Coherent –

defined and organized to help the spiritual journey make sense, with
gateway.... upon arrival, shed fear at the door,
enclosure.... take refuge, leave busy-ness + confusion outside,
paths.... focus on guided, directed movement –
Slowly, slowly, every step is a prayer.

it is Composed –

an intentional arrangement of form and space
in nature’s lyrics.... flora earth water fire wind space
and architecture’s scores.... ordering principles visual balance sacred geometry
patterns, features and operations of nature tell a story –
LOOK pay attention awaken the Mind and open the Heart.

with Clarity –

a simple format, to cultivate concentration and insight
pointing to less in order to see more
with unwavering attention to just one thing,
single story in one design vocabulary –
Be present.... be mindful.... in each moment.

an artistic expression of Contemplation –

poetic image of profound wisdom and compassion,
pure abode of the Divine,
unique dialect of subtle design....
mandala pure land paradise nature breath God silence
Overwhelmed by the glory of omniscience
how will you inhabit this Divine Sacred Space –