



SLAM

DESIGNING THE SOUTHWEST
SOUTHWICK LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL MEMO
Volume 2, Issue 3, September 2008



The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."
Benjamin Franklin

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AROUND THE WORLD- BY: NICOLETTE FISK

When I was first asked to write an article for this month's SLAM I had no idea what to write. Naturally, I turned to landscape architecture publications for inspiration. What I found was a lot of interesting ideas and projects from around the world, but nothing really seemed to translate to the Las Vegas Valley. Therefore, with this month's issue I thought it best to introduce inspirational projects from around the world.

First we are traveling to São Paulo, Brazil, where a former prison was transformed into a park. São Paulo's population density is off the charts! 10 million people live in 579 square miles, which calculates to about 17,271 people per square mile! In comparison, Las Vegas has a population density of approximately 4,222 people per square mile. So I think it's safe to say São Paulo was in desperate need of open space.



Parque da Juventude, Youth Park, is about 59 acres, and took six years to complete. The park is fully equipped with sports facilities, rest areas, exhibit buildings, and massive amounts of open space where concerts and festivals are often held.

The image shows the remains of a partially constructed prison building. Instead of tearing it down, Rosa Grena Kliass, the landscape architect, uniquely designed a board walk through the half constructed building to utilize it as a pergola. Vines and overgrown tree canopies create a uniquely shaded microclimate for park spectators.

Stay tuned, we are headed to China next.

SOUTHERN HILLS HOSPITAL

Southern Hills Hospital is a state-of-the-art hospital located in the fast growing southwest portion of the Las Vegas Valley. The look and colors of the desert southwest architecture, designed by KGA Architects, is accented with red sandstone. A desert plant palette is also accompanied by stone sculptures to help tie the landscape to the architecture. Stone pillars, from a local quarry, line the main entrance road in graduating heights to help promote movement along the drive. Palm tree accents are spaced rhythmically adjacent to the stone sculptures directing the motorist to the main entrance. Palo Verde, Desert Willow and Angelita Daisy flanking each side of the road provide a spectacular flower color display. The porte-cochere is accented with formal rows of Agave, Deer Grass and Palm trees.



The landscape was designed to be viewed both from ground level as well as the upper story recovery rooms. From a top down perspective, patients and guests realize that the plants are arranged in curvilinear patterns. The interlocking patterns of Texas Ranger, Dalea and Deer Grass are punctuated with irregularly spaced Mesquite trees. There is also an outdoor patient area that utilizes shading from the building as well as strategically placed trees to create an inviting outdoor room. This area provides both patients as well as hospital staff a relaxing space and change in scenery from a typical hospital setting. The overall effect is a soft, soothing landscape that aids in the recovery process for patients.

FAVORITE FAUNA:

RHOPALOSTYLIS SAPIDA - NIKAU PALM



As I hinted at last month, this month's plant turns out to be the only palm native to New Zealand.

The Nikau Palm (*Rhopalostylis sapida*) caught the attention of Bill Russo during his travels around New Zealand. It is the world's most southerly growing palm, occurring naturally as far as 44 degrees south of the equator (the state of Maine

sits at 44 degrees north of the equator). Growing as tall as 30ft. with purple flowers and edible red fruits that can take almost a year to ripen; the Nikau Palm is found most commonly on the North Island. Bill noted that it was neat to see a palm so far south and that they strongly affect the character of the forests they occupy. While they are prized by collectors don't expect to see them in your local nursery as they are not suited for our dry climate.

Up next month is a great architectural plant that you can use in your own backyard.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH



BRANCHING OUT
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
SARAH NABER