

Cultural Daily

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Summering: to the water's edge

Maurice Amiel · Wednesday, August 14th, 2019

By degrees

To go from the patio of a great classic pile to the rushing St Lawrence river, a transition by degrees is necessary to “ritualize” the approach and allow the senses to gradually adapt, from architectural to natural scale and environment.



Way to the water's edge from the doorstep

As the above image shows these degrees do step down two grassy slopes that have been paved, rustically at first to become simply crushed stone walkways, further down, to where the bench is located along the tree line.

Beyond that point the water's edge is suggested by the remains of a stone retaining wall, then delimited by a newer concrete one high enough to allow one to sit on it with dangling feet clearing the rushing water ... as shown below and in the feature image.



Sitting at the water's edge retaining wall

At some point along the river a low handrail, anchored in the concrete retaining wall, becomes a back rest for quietly viewing the immensity of the river.



Sitting alone gazing at the river

At other points, the water's edge is reachable through shrubs and low tree branches, to remind one of the natural state of things, but for the rambling stone remains of the first retaining wall and for the sharp outline of the newer concrete one.



Evoking the natural state of the water's edge

The contrast between the two retaining walls is clearly delineated in the next image, where one can begin to feel the unsettling presence of the powerful river flow.



Feeling the draw of the river's current

Eventually, lifting one's eyes to the sky, the primeval scene of rain-bearing clouds over the rolling river, is offered as climax to getting to the water's edge ... another, sepia rendered, summering experience!



The awesomeness of it all

Credit all photos to Maurice Amiel

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