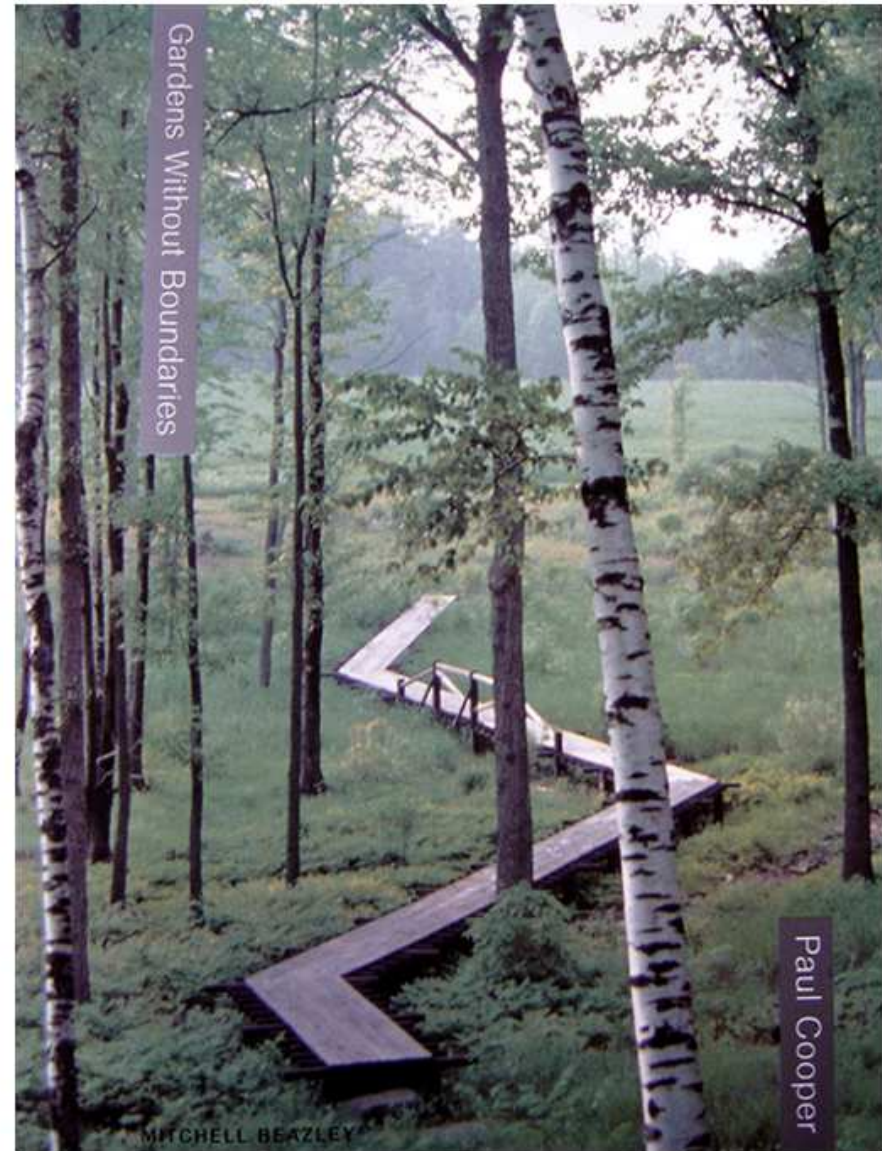


GARDENS WITHOUT BOUNDARIES
PAULA COOPER

109 110 : TERMAS DE PURITAMA

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Where the ground drops away to the north, towards the canal, it is supported on a series of stilts that eventually project it some 4.5m (15ft) above the ground. The driveway and garage block, situated 40m (130ft) from the house on the south side, are connected to the front door by a long, wooden bridge. This straight walkway continues through the house as a hallway, to emerge on the north-facing side as a raised timber pier, 14.5m (48ft) long. The structure passes through a dense group of alder trees before culminating in a viewing platform, from where steps lead down to the forest floor and the waters of the Hood Canal.

Thanks to its timber-stilt construction, Outler's house makes only minimal contact with the ground. Substantial and damaging excavation of the existing landscape for footings and foundations was not required, while the elevated walkways and decks allow its owners to be in close contact with the surrounding environment, without interfering with it.

A similar solution is used on a farm in Canada. Sweet Farm is an estate of 34.0ha (85 acres) at Eastern Townships, in Quebec. The forested area contains meadows, cliffs, and gorges. In 1994, the owners commissioned the landscape architects PLANT – Lisa Rapoport, Christopher Pommer, and Mary Tremain – to intervene and make it more usable.

The design team's intention was to highlight the existing, varied, natural and man-made features and to enable the owners to experience the subtleties of the rich environment. They discovered that the site was a mixed topography, full of relics of domestic, industrial, and agricultural life. Following a detailed survey, Rapoport and Pommer identified places and features of special interest, and they decided to link these by various types of pathway, depending on the nature of the terrain. Some paths are simply deer runs turned into tracks, while others are made of wooden "stepping-stones". Wooden walkways allow access into more boggy areas, and a pier leads visitors into a creek. In one place, a cliff-top path ends in a wooden platform that projects over the cliff edge and into the tree canopies. The paths are not intended as tourist routes to places of interest, but are simply methods of encountering the ordinary and commonplace. Some of the relics from the estate's previous life are exploited and built upon: a

A bright red wooden walkway weaves its way down through the sparse vegetation of a rugged and inhospitable landscape in Chile. Nearby is a hotel designed by architect German del Sol, who wished guests to experience the "natural beauty" of the hotel's formidable surroundings.

