

Enhanced Usability of The Cultural Landscape Foundation's Online *What's Out There* Database

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Principal Investigator: Charles A. Birnbaum (TCLF President and CEO)

Project_Team: Mark Oviatt, Oviatt Media (design consultant-contractor); Fionta staff (website design-contractor); Barrett Doherty (TCLF visual content director); Nord Wennerstrom (TCLF communications director)

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Executive Summary

Through a \$14,000 grant from the National Center for Preservation Training and Technology (NCPTT) Media Grants Program, The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) has successfully added a “search-export” feature to its *What's Out There* database, the nation's most comprehensive online database of cultural landscapes.

The constantly growing database, now numbering more than 2,100 site essays, 900 designer profiles, and 12,000 images, is a carefully vetted, easily navigable resource available free to the public, requiring neither a subscription nor organizational membership. With this project having successfully concluded, visitors to TCLF's website can now download search results from the database in the form of an electronic CSV (Common Separated Values) file, including the popular Excel spreadsheet. Long an attraction for researchers, educators, students, and the general public alike, the database relates several characteristics of each site, allowing searches to be filtered by type (e.g., Plaza), style (e.g., Modernist), and location (including region, city, or state). Now, users who employ the search-export feature can choose to download the filtered search results, with information listed by category, in any number of file formats. This allows users to obtain tailored lists of search results that reflect the various characteristics of the sites at the desired level of granularity. Users can also now obtain and download search results based on the designers of the sites, likewise filtered by type, style, or location. Importantly, all of the data can now be used and manipulated offline to enhance research initiatives at any depth or scale.

Introduction

The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) is a non-profit organization established in 1998 to connect people to places. TCLF's online, interactive *What's Out There* (WOT) database currently comprises more than 2,100 illustrated sites essays, 900 designer profiles, and 12,000 images. Each site essay describes the history, design, and condition of a nationally significant cultural landscape. The database is a prominent component of TCLF's website (tclf.org) and was launched in 2009 with support from the National Center for Preservation Training and Technology (NCPTT), the National Park Service, The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts Art Works program. Since its release, WOT has become an internationally recognized, authoritative source on cultural landscapes.

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New York, NY
United States
Harlem Meer

Landscape Information

Category	«	<p>Located in the northeast corner of Central Park, the Harlem Meer was constructed on what was originally part of a wetland fed by the Harlem Creek. During the nineteenth century the lake and surrounding landscapes had few amenities or paths, reflecting the still predominantly rural character of the adjacent land. As the city grew, and use of the northern park increased, the area became more urbanized. By the 1940s under the aegis of the NYC Department of Park and Recreation, a boathouse and walking paths had been added and the shoreline regularized and fenced. In the late 1980s the Central Park Conservancy began the restoration of the Harlem Meer landscape, focusing on restoring the naturalistic character of the shoreline and recreating access to the water. The shoreline work included the construction of the Dana Discovery Center, a visitor center and program space designed by Buttrick White & Burris Architects, on the site of the boathouse.</p> <p>The landscapes surrounding the Meer are diverse and offer a range of recreational opportunities and scenic experiences. The rocky bluffs overlooking the Meer to the south were the site of forts created during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Also to the south near Fifth Avenue is the Conservatory Garden, the Park's only formal garden. Today, the Dana Center, along the northern shore, offers a variety of programs and events. Just beyond the Meer to the west are the North Woods, the Park's largest woodland. The Meer was designated a National Historic Landmark along with all of Central Park in 1978.</p> <p>External Website: Harlem Meer</p>
Designed Landscape	«	
Styles	«	
Picturestyle	«	
Designed By	«	
Designed By	«	
Related Landscapes	«	
Related Landscapes	«	

Central Park

Location and Nearby Landscapes

Media Gallery

Related Content

FEATURE STORIES

WHAT'S OUT THERE WEEKEND

TCLF Events in New York – Not Too Much of a Good Thing
NEW YORK, NY
Oct 06, 2012 – Oct 07, 2012

What's Out There Weekend NYC
NEW YORK, NY
Oct 06, 2012 – Oct 07, 2012

« See all related

Sample WOT site essay, with GPS mapping, expandable Media Gallery, and Related Content

Each carefully vetted and illustrated WOT essay is written by landscape-architecture and historic-preservation professionals and educators. The essays are derived from and synthesize several resources, including nominations to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and National Historic Landmarks (NHL) programs, cultural landscape reports, oral histories, and other primary and secondary sources. The landscapes in the database are classified using a taxonomy of sixteen styles (e.g. Picturesque, Arts & Crafts, Italianate), 29 types (e.g. Public Park, Commemorative Landscape, Campus), and 46 subtypes (e.g. National Park, Rural Cemetery, Land Grant College). Each essay links to a comprehensive glossary of styles, types, and subtypes, as well as to related landscapes and biographical essays about the site's designer(s).

An online Media Gallery (with up to ten images and, in some cases, video clips that link to more than 500 oral history segments) is also linked to each essay, illustrating the site and conveying its character-defining features. The site's location is displayed on a map, which also locates other nearby landscapes in the database. The database is searchable using any combination of criteria, including geographic locale (city, state, or region), type, style, designer, and site name. In addition to being featured prominently on TCLF's website, the database is also optimized for handheld devices and utilizes the user's GPS information to display all landscapes within a customizable radius of the user's location.

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1922 - 2014
Conrad Hamerman

Pioneer Information

Related Landscapes

- Longwood Gardens
- Longwood Gardens-Cascade Garden

Born in Genoa, Italy, Hamerman grew up in Switzerland and Brazil. He arrived in the United States in the 1940s and studied architecture and planning at Cornell University, graduating in 1954 with a B.S. in land planning. Hamerman practiced landscape architecture in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 1954 to 1955, working in the offices of artist and landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx and of Belcher Associates. He returned to the United States and was employed by several landscape architecture firms from 1955 to 1959, including Joseph Gargano & Associates (where he met and mentored fellow Cornell alumnus M. Paul Friedberg), Bye & Herrmann, Clarke & Rapuano, and Leo Novick, Landscape Architects.

In 1959 Hamerman was awarded a ten-year Fulbright Fellowship and a study grant from the Italian government (the "King's Grant"), which allowed him to pursue an in-depth study of Italian Renaissance art, architecture, and gardens. Between 1967 and 1986, he taught, lectured, critiqued, and directed programs at Cornell University, the Longwood Gardens Graduate Program, the University of Delaware, the City College of New York, and the Harvard Graduate School of Design. He also operated his own landscape architecture practice, Conrad Hamerman Landscape Architecture, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, designing estate and residential gardens in the United States, Switzerland, and Brazil, including the Stream Garden at Ashland Hollow, the residence of William and Nancy Frederick near Wilmington, Delaware.

Beginning in 1963, Hamerman acted as the U.S. representative for Burle Marx, spending much time and energy bringing recognition to the artist and his work. His collaborations with Burle Marx included the design for an interior garden for the Branner Exhibit at the Germantown Museum in Philadelphia; the Cascade Garden at Longwood Gardens by Kennett Square, Pennsylvania; the Kentucky Botanical Gardens in Louisville; and The Oleta River State Park and Biscayne Boulevard in Miami, Florida. Hamerman was named a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 2006 at the age of 84. He passed away due to complications due to a heart attack on September 14, 2014.

Media Gallery

Related Content

PIONEER
Roberto Burle Marx

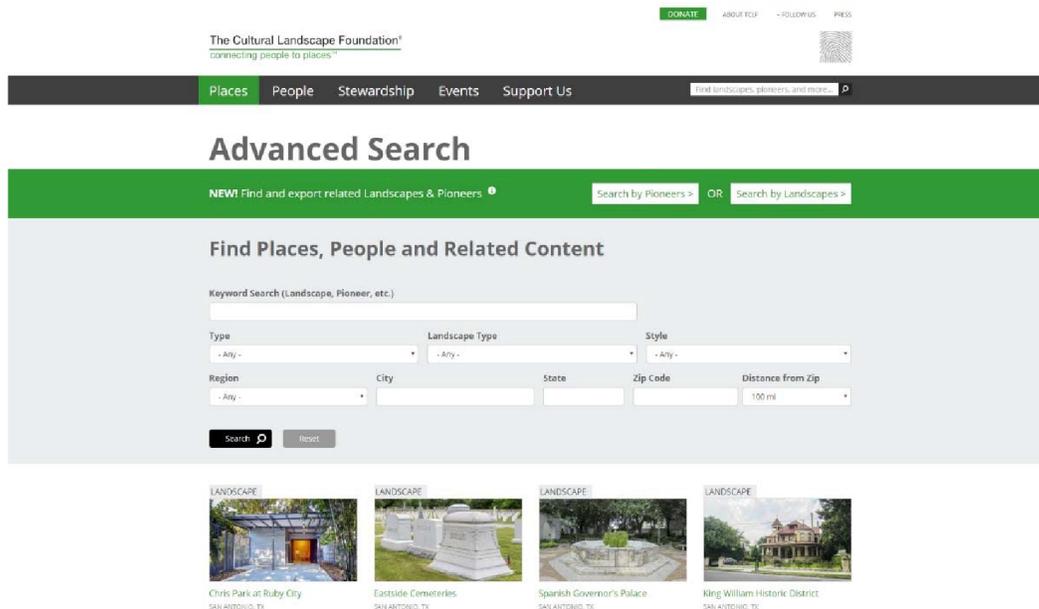
PIONEER
M. Paul Friedberg

LANDSCAPE
Longwood Gardens
KENNETT SQUARE, PA

» See all related

Sample biographical essay on a designer (i.e., a Pioneer), with Media Gallery and Related Content

Although the WOT database has always been easily accessible and navigable online, the search results were not exportable. This meant that while users could query the database, they could not obtain the data in a form that could be manipulated to further aid in research initiatives. With the grant from the NCPTT Media Grants Program, TCLF has successfully added a search-export feature to the database, enabling users to access and manipulate the data offline to enhance research initiatives at any depth or scale.



Landing page presenting the new search-export functionality (green ribbon inserted into the Advanced Search feature)

Methodology

TCLF worked with the information-technology company Fionta (which had recently absorbed Freeflow Digital, a consulting company that TCLF had worked with on an extensive website redesign) to assess, design, and implement the new search-export functionality for the WOT database. After initially scoping of the project, Fionta built the new functionality to integrate with the database's extant Advanced Search feature. The new functionality was staged and extensively tested before finally launching in late September 2018. Oviatt Media, a firm specializing in graphic, web-based design, consulted on the visual interface between the new functionality and TCLF's existing website.

Results / Conclusions

Upon launching the new search-export functionality, users who employ the database's Advanced Search feature can choose to download the filtered results, with information listed by category, in any number of file formats. This allows users to obtain tailored lists of search results that reflect the various characteristics of the landscapes at the desired level of granularity. For example, users can export a list of landscapes from the database by style (e.g., all Modernist landscapes or all Modernist landscapes in Florida) or by typology (e.g., all public parks or all public parks in Florida); or they can export the search results after further filtering the characteristics of both type and style (e.g., all Modernist public parks in Florida). Conversely, users can also obtain and download search results based on the designers (or Pioneers) of the landscapes, also filtered by type, style, or location (e.g., all Modernist landscapes designed by Daniel Kiley in Dallas, Texas). As with searches ordered by landscape, the results of searches ordered by Pioneer are displayed on-screen with the option to "Export CSV," which then renders the list of results for download in a file format chosen by the user.

Static help text and scroll-over prompts have been established to aid the user in obtaining the best search results.

TCLF announced the launch of the new search-export functionality and the source of its funding in a feature story, which was posted on the organization's website, included in its e-newsletter, and further disseminated via social media. Moreover, the new functionality has already begun to be featured in lectures and presentations by TCLF's president around the country.

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Find and Export Pioneers and their Landscapes

Use the fields below to search and export Pioneers and their related Landscapes. Searches can be filtered by the type, style, and/or location of the related Landscapes. Use the "Export Results" button to export the search results in the form of a CSV file.

Keyword Search (name of the Pioneer)
Kiley

Landscape Type: Any Style: Any Region: Any

City: State: Zip Code: Distance from Zip: 100 mi

Search [magnifying glass icon] [Reset]

Showing 1 - 16 of 61

Pioneer First Name	Pioneer Last Name	Landscape Name	Landscape Style	Landscape Type	Location
Daniel	Kiley	Agnes R. Katz Plaza	Modernist	Plaza	701 Park Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15222 United States
Daniel	Kiley	Archdiocese Chancery and Residence	Modernist	Institutional Grounds, Religious Institution	210 Summit Avenue St. Paul, MN 55102 United States
Daniel	Kiley	Art Institute of Chicago, South Garden	Modernist	Institutional Grounds, Cultural Institution, Plaza	110 East Jackson Drive Chicago, IL 60603 United States
Daniel	Kiley	Banneker Park - Tenth Street Overlook	Modernist	Plaza	Banneker Park Washington, DC 20024 United States
Daniel	Kiley	Belle Isle Park	Picturesque, Beaux-Arts / Neoclassical	Public Park, Large Municipal Park	East Jefferson Avenue & E Grand Blvd Detroit, MI 48207 United States
Daniel	Kiley	Capitol Park - DC	Modernist	Public Park, Greens / Commons / Squares, Suburb	301 G St SW Washington, DC 20024 United States
Daniel	Kiley	Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception	Modernist	Institutional Grounds, Religious Institution	20 Pine Street Burlington, VT United States
Daniel	Kiley	Chicago Botanic Garden	Modernist, Picturesque	Botanical Garden	Chicago Botanic Garden Glencoe, IL 60022 United States

Export CSV [down arrow icon]

Sample on-screen search results for landscapes designed by Daniel Kiley; the "Export CSV" button (circled in red, above) converts the list to one of several exported file types (e.g., an Excel spreadsheet)