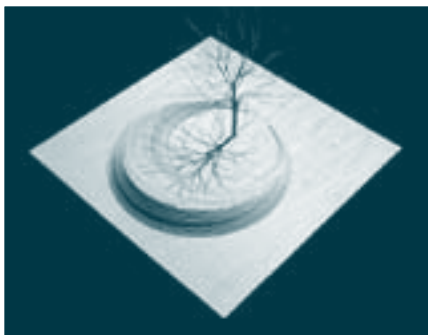


LIMELIGHT

BY DAVID MEYER

HONORING A HERO TREE AT ENGLAND'S NATIONAL ARBORETUM

Winner of an international competition, *Limelight*, a temporary installation, was conceived to celebrate one of England's beloved champion trees at Westonbirt Arboretum.



This page, top: A bird's eye view of the installation in early summer.

Above: A basswood model of the design, illustrating the simple earthwork surrounding the champion tree.

Facing page, top: A detail view of the interior of the installation, showing late afternoon light and shadows.

Left: The axial view of the installation from the front in late summer, when the meadow has grown out and a path has been mowed that draws one into the installation. Photo Credit: Unknown

Right: A visitor enjoys the solitude while gazing up at the sculptural structure of the tree.

All photos except where noted: David Meyer



Meyer + Silberberg created an earthen “medallion” that calls people to the tree and then provides them with a perfect spot to sit in admiration of the country’s grandest sycamore maple.

The idea called for a gesture that would complement the tree without detracting from it. It felt like we were not so much creating a landscape as revealing one. That informed our decision to create the form using nothing but dirt, grass and light. The design exemplifies two ideals that are central to my studio and teaching. First, the importance of

concept, and second, the importance of mindful execution.

Limelight quickly became the talk of the festival and the design received the “Visitor’s Choice” award — high praise from the most passionate gardeners in the world. ^{FW}

David Meyer is an adjunct professor of landscape architecture and environmental planning at the UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design. He is co-founder of Meyer + Silberberg Land Architects in Berkeley.

