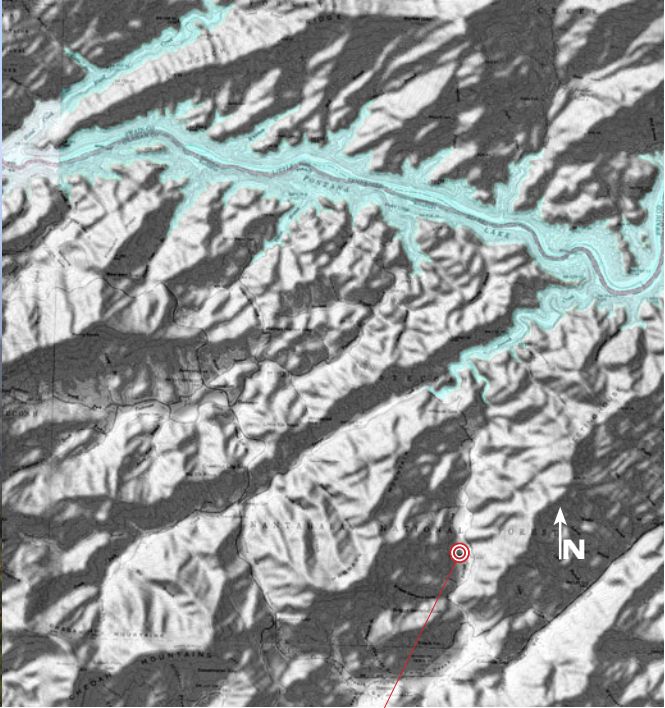


AIA BLUERIDGE 2010 DESIGN AWARDS: AWARD OF EXCELLENCE



Bee Global Studio and Gallery

Bee Global Studio and Gallery, a new facility for Bee Global, a candle and lantern making company adjacent to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and situated in a long N/S valley along the Stecoah Creek drainage in the Western North Carolina mountains, is a project that explores the relationship between a contemporary live/work lifestyle and the cultural and geographical nuances of the region.

The third in a series of projects on the site, the Studio Gallery extends a formal and material exploration begun in two preceding projects:

Tree Bridge

Work Shed



IMAGES [above, left to right] 1. Creek and Fall color on site.

2. Tree Bridge was built in one weekend. The Bridge was sited in an area where there was a dying tree leaning across the river. The tree, badly damaged in a storm, was simply felled across the river. The top was shaved flat with a chainsaw and attached planks. The path falls into the crotch of the tree with a light frame and back to earth.

3. Work Shed is a small out-building constructed in one week. The building attempts to merge with the landscape through a simple extended vernacular using locally milled lumber, familiar materials, and big roof planes following the slope of the land. The shed combines work and storage space with rest and reflection space.

The way of making on the site fell into accord with the ideals of the business, rural lifestyle, and philosophy. It was essential that the new structures and site as a whole were grown over time, rather than developed rapidly, and that this new building could be a space where children could be raised, alongside candle making and public retail. The projects, each built by the Bee Global, were part of creating a material and building knowledge, direct and of the place, and reach a particular maturity in the Studio and Gallery.

PROGRAM: The challenge was to create an inexpensive, simply assembled structure that would be inviting, and yet balance the privacy needed in a Live/Work space. The plan is arranged to clearly distinguish the two main bodies of the program: Gallery and Studio. The Gallery is oriented east/west and thrust towards the road to demarcate the entrance and become a bridge into the site. The Studio, Office and Inventory are oriented north/south to anchor the building on the slope and create a threshold between the public upper garden and the private lower gardens and house site of the 70 acre compound.

SITE: Sited above flood level and below the state road, the building is tucked into a fold in the site, creating productive wildflower gardens both above and below the structure. The narrow valley creates an elevated east and west horizon and a contour which is a natural 'offset' of the creek and creates the distinct and terraced zones of public garden-building-garden-creek.



CONSTRUCTION: A modest budget of 50.00/sq. ft. and a need to erect the volume on a pace to stay in sync with a production schedule tied to the seasons of wildflowers, bees, and holiday economics, SIPS panels made regionally were used along with locally milled wood sourced from Pine Beetle destroyed trees. The SIPS panels enabled not only a quick erection of the volume, but provided temperature control essential in the beeswax candle and lantern making process. Almost a direct corollary to foam core, a scale study model was used on site to aid the layout and erection of the panels.

IMAGES [above] 1-5. Tilting up of panels on control slab. [below] 6. Stacking panels to create openings. 7. Contouring of the garden to reveal the entry. 8. Many of the rural barns and outbuildings in the surrounding area create openings by 'leaving out' material rather than cutting it out. We borrowed this language and scaled it to the SIPS panel, shown here in the north east corner of the gallery. 9w. The SIPS panels slip past and rest on each other, signaling the break between studio and gallery along with a check-out desk that extends the panel language in plywood.





IMAGES [above, top down, L to R]

1. Gallery entry EAST ELEVATION. 2. NORTH ELEVATION with the path to the gallery to the left, and the enclosed, light-protected inventory and shipping to the right. 3. The WEST ELEVATION with the light-protected inventory to the left, folding in to become a private outdoor porch. 4. The SOUTH ELEVATION layers the two program elements and recalls the Work Shed. 5. The south west corner of the building is the primary work space, with a workbench running along its length and overlooking the private deck, lower gardens and creek. A low roof creates the private outdoor covered porch and shades the work area from the low western sun before it dips below the mountains.

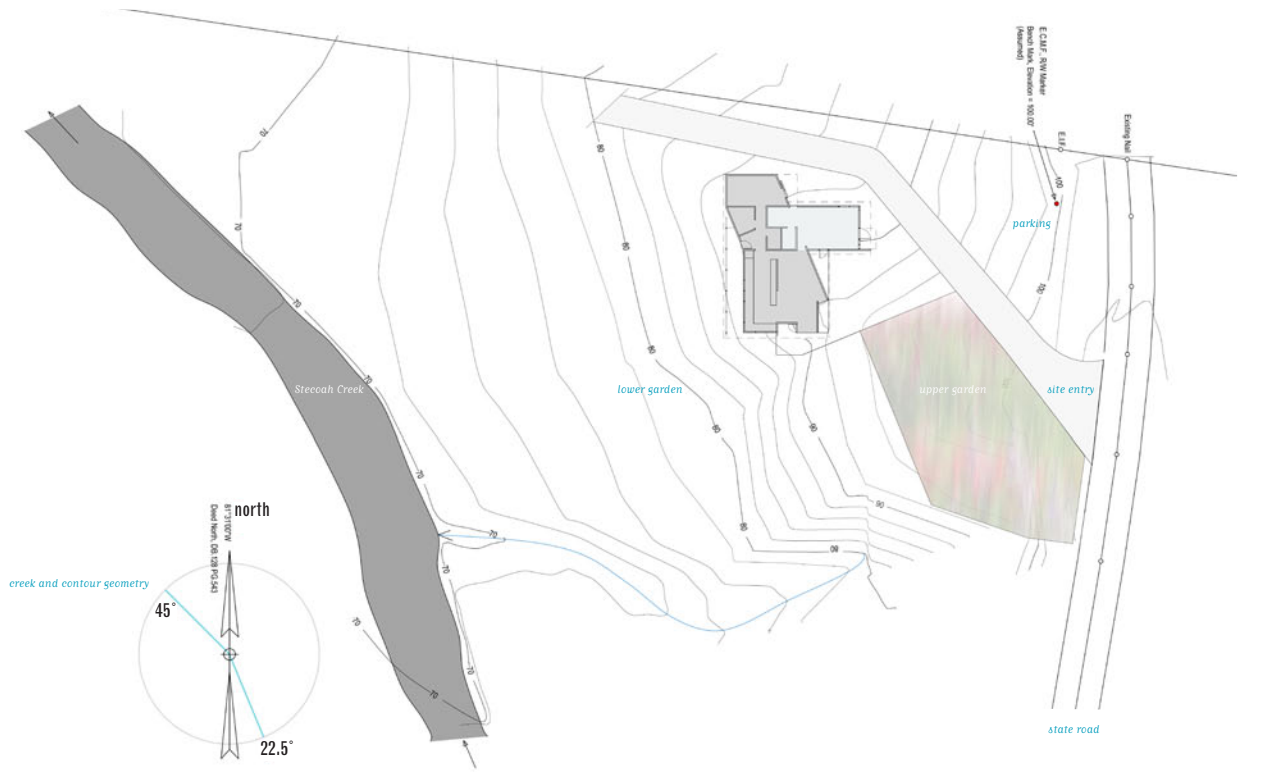
IMAGE [right] From the gardens above the site, the studio work space yields to the gallery which rises up and peeks above the flowers, forming a beacon for visitors.

Project Completion: 2006

Project Design:

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SITE PLAN

