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MATERIALS



## Minding the Marble

*Design Workshop reconstructs Herbert Bayer's modernist landscape assemblage.*

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The restoration of Herbert Bayer's *Marble Garden* demanded what Richard Shaw, FASLA, describes as "forensic reconstruction." A principal in Design Workshop's Aspen, Colorado, office, Shaw led a team of landscape architects, preservation consultants, and marble specialists to restore the renowned Bauhaus designer's sculpture, a collection of geometric white marble pieces built in 1955 on the Aspen Institute campus.

Without documentation of the installation process, the team relied on original drawings, photographs, and video interviews to guide the restoration. "Bayer did change his mind," says Lissa Ballinger, the executive director of the institute's Resnick

Center for Herbert Bayer Studies. "What we ended up using as the definitive time period was not how he set it up originally but a video that was [made] in the '70s where he's walking through the *Marble Garden* with another artist."

The marble pieces were cleaned and the sculpture's concrete foundation replaced, complete with marble aggregate that matches the original. Because crushed stone was no longer available at the diameter Bayer originally specified, Shaw and his team hand-sifted crushed marble to get the correct, smaller-diameter stone. The project received a special Citation for Art Preservation from Docomomo US this year. ●

**ABOVE**  
Restoring *Marble Garden* didn't necessarily mean returning the work to its original form.