Seasonal Quartet: Vermont’s Small Buildings

Design IV
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Professor Brian J. Kelly, AIA
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Antwon Javon Brown Ward
Season: Spring
Movement: Walk
Action: Recline

Season: Summer
Movement: Swim
Action: Stand

Season: Fall
Movement: Climb
Action: Sit

Season: Winter
Movement: Descend
Action: Lay
The main relationship between these four Vermont seasonal small buildings is that they are all located in Vermont, built using an exposed wooden traditional framing system, and a covered by a board & batten exterior. The underlying concept is experiencing the scenery and circulating from space to space. The element, whether it was a chair, bed, or lookout, was always placed at the end of the journey to guide the resident thru the entire building. The forms of each building have its own unique way of drawing the resident to the entrance, thru the circulation space, and arrive at the element.
Vermont’s autumn season is known for its beautiful scenery and colors. My small building is designed to allow the resident to experience autumn from a sequence of spaces. The façade of the building looks as if two buildings were placed on top of one another. More specifically, the inspiration of this look was created by combining the form of a lighthouse and the structure of a water tower. After climbing through the narrow transitional space, the resident will be greeted with an elevated desk, rolling chair, and two cabinets in a decompressive pentagon shaped space allowing 5 different views of their surroundings.
Winter

Vermont’s winter season is the most fun and exciting time of the year. With this said, this small building extends for most of the entire site in order to give the resident their own personal sledding tunnel to ride through. Depending on the directional approach, the resident will view the glass façade spanned in between square wooden columns or the board & batten siding and the entrance. When the resident enters, the back left of the space is where the tunnel begins. To the right is a coat hook and the resident’s sled. Getting a running start, the resident will be treated with a gentle sloping tunnel looking down the site, observing Vermont’s winter snow. At the end of the tunnel, there is a drop to a big comfortable bed. In this second space, the bed is against the north wall. The space will be very dim and be better suitable to sleep in when the sun goes down, setting in the west.
Spring

Vermont’s spring season is a time for rebirth and play. While looking for a look for the creek, I stumbled upon a creek that was rocky, not smooth. This is how this small building was inspired by skipping of rocks or jumping on rocks. The wood framed walls are all at the same height but the floors are at different levels. The entrance to the buildings forces you to walk up and across the span of the creek. The experience the resident gets while walking through the series of ramps and landings is a sense of adventure and excitement. Toward the end of the building, there is a small pocket door leading outside. A built-in folding chair is placed at the end of a narrow walkway over the creek. Like the previous buildings, the element is placed at the end or in the back of the second space, giving the resident a reason to experience and circulate through the entire structure.
Summer

Vermont’s summer season is a time for bathing in the sun and going for a swim. The site of this small building is taken over by a lake. Putting the building partially in the water and partially out of water was the key to a successful design and the perfect get-away shelter. Like other structures in water, the form of this building was inspired by a boat’s sail. The wind bending and curving the fabric gave the building a moving roof, seen from the ground. The 11ft 6in deep lake has a steep drop down to the bedrock, so the way of submerging the best is to dive in. The main entrance is located at the bottom of the building through a square opening with board & batten siding. When swimming up through the entrance, the resident will see their first look at the tensile fabric roofing which brings your eyes all around the building. The west side of the building has a wooden box where the resident would stand and view the rest of Vermont’s scenery. The east and west side is enclosed by a number of batten strips, allowing water to flow through the building. Also, there is a secret exit located in the wall the resident looks over.