

## Masqu'A.R.C.A.D.

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Masqu'A.R.C.A.D. is a theatre camp located on an old farmstead in the Eastern Townships. It offers summer classes for youth age seven to seventeen. Its director asked for a protected practise area in the open fields to accommodate a group of students and teachers, and to serve as a stage set during public performances.

Following the spirit of the place, the project, nicknamed the "Chameleon," borrows the traditional forms of the barn. It is positioned at the intersection of a small clearing and an open field, 150m from the farmstead. One approaches the site along a narrow path which, through a predetermined scenography, choreographs the visitor's gradual discovery of the pavilion.

Because the construction budget was ridiculously low, we used recycled materials such as old barn wood and windows. The old materials are always framed or visually detached from the new structure, making a surreal collage of surfaces, textures, and impressions.

The Chameleon is made of movable parts that the actors can use to create a particular stage set. The side walls are composed of 6 frames that can swing inside the stage to become scenic walls, or outward to become wings. The back wall is composed of a mosaic of recycled windows. In the middle, two wooden panels covered with cedar shingles (named with affection the "French Fry Stand") can be opened to frame the actors and the scene. The front wall acts as a theatre curtain. Pieces of canvas are stretched between four wood frames. The curtain opens like an accordion.

Spectators can sit outside the pavilion and move around it to follow the scenes, or they can sit inside while the actors open the appropriate door to frame their scene.

The project will be completed in May 1997.



