viewpoints

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Garden History and Landscape Studies at the Bard Graduate Center

# Letter from the Editors

### Virtual Villas

This fall marks the halfway point in the fulfillment of a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to the Bard Graduate Center for the development *Catena*, a digital archive of historic landscape images. It is worth reiterating here the focus of this endeavor and how its projected end differs from the mere offering of a plethora of images similar to ones already available on the Internet at no cost (as these also will be). In addition, because images are only a surrogate for reality, we hope that readers of this issue of *Viewpoints* will want to consider the significant difference between virtual and experiential understanding – between what we see on our computer screens and what we sense and comprehend when we make or visit gardens and move through them – and how these two means of knowing can be complementary.

Since landscapes are so varied in their nature and design intent, we felt that in creating *Catena* it was important to have a specific focus on a landscape type (rather than on a geographical or period unit). Because of much fine recent scholarship on the design and meaning of Italian and other types of villa gardens in recent years, we decided to assemble a body of images and scholarly exegeses related to this subject.

The value of the project lies in the creation in one place of a searchable database of images of historic villa sites that can be used for teaching in the same way that slide collections in academic

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# Visiting Italian Villas and Their Gardens

The landscape historian learns to consider place both experientially as scenery and sensation in three dimensions and intellectually in terms of a fourth dimension – time. This four-dimensional approach in which an understanding of landscape in relation to the passage of time – of all earth and human history as a non-static continuum – is fundamental to the curriculum of Garden History and Landscape Studies at the Bard Graduate Center. It is also the premise upon which the creation of the BGC's Digital Archive of Historic Landscape Sites is based. By the beginning of 2005, the first component of the archive, which has been funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, will go online with 2,000 images of approximately 60 villa gardens. With its searchable database, this image bank, available at no cost for educational and scholarly purposes, will serve teachers and students in the field of landscape history as a virtual slide library. These images, which are derived from period engravings of plans and perspectives as well as from historic and contemporary drawings and photographs, cover several periods up to the present. When those for a particular villa are combined, they constitute a palimpsest bearing the marks and erasures of time.

A group of landscape historians with individual collections of photographs and institutions with archival prints of historic villas are augmenting the content of this useful visual resource. Johanna Bauman, curator of Visual Media at the BGC, is supervising the assembly and cataloging of digital images to be placed in a database called *Catena*. She is also managing the construction of a companion website that will serve as a pedagogical supplement in which viewers will

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Restored mid-sixteenth-century ceiling fresco, Villa d'Este, depicting scenes from the Labors of Hercules, the mythological hero with whom Cardinal Ippolito d'Este is identified.This image is part of the forthcoming Digital Archive of Historic Landscape Sites.

institutions and museums traditionally have been used to teach art history. However, *Catena* differs from traditional art history image collections, which are typically single-object-based, in that it provides multiple images of sites from different perspectives, something that is essential to understanding designed landscapes since many of them are conceived in spatially complex ways with extensive projected itineraries for moving through them. Internet access to this database of landscape images means that, as our field of studies continues to grow, any professor or teacher anywhere can assemble a coherent body of images of a historic landscape for a Powerpoint presentation, the method that is, increasingly, replacing the projection of transparencies as a more versatile and convenient means of instruction.

By selecting ten sites for extended treatment among the more than 60 that are being assembled, the digital-archive user will be able to key historic images and more recent photographic ones to garden plans, thereby simulating both past and present movement through a particular landscape, something that random images pulled off the Internet cannot do. The contributions of participating scholars to the companion website that we are now building in conjunction with completing the scanning and cataloging of images (with useful keywords to facilitate their search) will further enhance the archive's pedagogical uses.

But even as we move toward completion of the project, we understand its limits. Historic villa gardens are much more than academic landscape design problems to be visualized, discussed, and decoded. First and foremost, their value lies in the forms of *sensory awareness* they evoke. Gardens demand sensitivity not only to nuances of appearance but also to subtleties of sound, scent, flavor and tactility.

Archival engravings of gardens are essentially static (sometimes partly fictional) representations at a particular moment in time, and photographs, whether taken in brilliant sunshine or in the light of late afternoon, cannot convey the bodily sensations we receive when we walk or sit in gardens at different times of day and in different seasons. At the same time, an appreciation of the long histories and transformations over time of old villa gardens and other landscapes deeply enriches our on-the-spot experience of them. It is finally this possibility of a meaningful interaction between the real and aesthetic and the virtual and academic that, in our view, makes worthwhile our considerable work and that of our generous colleagues in creating this digital archive.

We hope that readers of this issue of *Viewpoints* will see how the *knowing about* and the *knowing of* landscapes is mutually reinforcing and how the BGC's concentration in Garden History and Landscape Studies and similar programs in a growing number of other institutions is furthering that end.

*Viewpoints* is made possible by the generosity of our supporters. In this issue readers will find an envelope for contributions to Garden History and Landscape Studies at the Bard Graduate Center. Besides helping continue this publication, your gift will make possible guest faculty, lecture series, and other important forms of course enrichment and public education. Please cast your vote of appreciation for our work by responding to this appeal.

# New Course Offering

**Johanna Bauman,** curator of Visual Media at the Bard Graduate Center, has a background of scholarly accomplishments as a landscape historian in addition to her skills in the field of digital technology, supervising an extensive slide library, building academic websites, and currently overseeing the creation of *Catena*, a digital archive of historic landscape images funded in large part by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Soon Bauman will be able to draw on her previous experience as an instructor at the University of Virginia by teaching a course on medieval gardens as part of Garden History and Landscape Studies at the BGC. Her course will cover the landscape traditions of Byzantium, Western Europe, and the Islamic world during the period between 1000 and 1500.

Bauman spent her childhood years in Arlington, Virginia, and graduated from George Mason University, taking her junior-year abroad at the Albert-Ludwigs University in Freiburg, Germany, where she studied German literature and history. Subsequently, she attended the Free University in Berlin where she took a course in landscape history with the head of parks and gardens in Berlin. Bauman pursued this subject in studying for her Ph.D. at the University of Virginia in the department of Art History, where she became interested in the relationship between art theory and technology. She explored this relationship by reading ancient and medieval agricultural treatises with an eye toward understanding how these were reflected in garden design and practical horticulture. Her dissertation on the pleasure garden in Piero de' Crescenzi's thirteenth-century treatise, *Liber ruralium commodorum*, was published as the entire Summer 2002 issue of the journal *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes*. Her most recent publication is a translation in *Critical Inquiry* of "On Historical Time" by the noted art historian Erwin Panofsky.

Bauman's medieval gardens course will explore connections between the theoretical and the practical as students examine literary sources and images in manuscripts and books (there are almost no medieval gardens in existence with the exception of a few old, much-altered cloister gardens). In so doing, the class will learn a great deal about agricultural and garden practices, including the cultivation of medicinal plants, within the monastic tradition and other realms of medieval society.

# Calendar

## Fall Benefit

**Wednesday**
**September 29**
**12:00 until 2:00 p.m.**
**Woodland Fantasy: A Picnic with Gnomes in Central Park**
to benefit Garden History and Landscape Studies at the Bard Graduate Center

**Erik de Jong,** professor of Garden History, Bard Graduate Center, will speak on "Magic! The Garden Gnome and His Origin: A Tale of Friendship with Nature."

Location: The Swedish Cottage in Central Park

For further information please call 212 501-3071.

## Fall Lecture Series

**September – November**
**(Four Wednesdays)**
**The Inscribed Garden: Word, Image, and Garden in the Work of Ian Hamilton Finlay**

This series of four talks, organized by **Garden History and Landscape Studies** with the assistance of the departments of Exhibitions, Public Programs, and Development at the **Bard Graduate Center,** is generously funded by **UBS.** It explores the landscape work of Ian Hamilton Finlay

in relation to *Ian Hamilton Finlay: Works on Paper*, an exhibition sponsored by The UBS Art Gallery and curated by Pia Simig and Ann Uppington.

Location: The UBS Art Gallery, 1285 Avenue of the Americas, between 51st and 52nd Streets (September 23 through December 3, 2004)

**September 29**
**Willful Ignorance: Ian Hamilton Finlay and Contemporary Land Art**
**John Beardsley,** senior lecturer in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the Harvard Design School

**October 20**
**Inscribed Gardens**
**Douglas Chambers,** former professor in the Department of English at the University of Toronto and author of *Stonyground: The Making of a Canadian Garden*

**October 27**
**Word, Image, and Garden in the Work of Ian Hamilton Finlay**
**John Dixon Hunt,** Professor and chair of the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at the University of Pennsylvania, author, and founding editor of *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*

**November 3**
**The Garden Art of Ian Hamilton Finlay**
**Stephan Bann,** Fellow of the British Academy, professor of the History of Art at the University of Bristol in England, author, and writer of "A Description of Stonypath," the first comprehensive account of Finlay's garden in southern Scotland

Lectures: 6:00 – 7:15 p.m.
Receptions: 7:15 – 8:00 p.m.
Location: The Bard Graduate Center, 38 West 86th Street

Admission is free. Advance registration is required and is provided on a first-come, first-served basis. For further information and to register, please call 212-501-3011.

## Winter Lecture Series

**January – March 2005 (Four Tuesdays)**
**Nature and Art: The Making and Experience of Gardens Past and Present**

This series of four lectures, which is co-sponsored by the **New York Botanical Garden** and **The Bard Graduate Center,** explores the making of gardens from a historical and cultural perspective. The first two lectures will focus on gardeners throughout history and how they have created for their patrons or themselves special places in the world using the materials of nature and art and how foreign ideas and botanical discoveries have influenced their work. The second two lectures will show how an English landscape – Painshill – and an American landscape – the Hudson River Valley – serve as case studies in this regard.

**January 11, 2005**
**The Happiness of the Garden: Gardening as an Historic Act**
**Erik de Jong,** professor of Garden History, Bard Graduate Center, senior fellow, Garden and Landscape Studies, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, and author of *Nature and Art: Dutch Garden and Landscape Architecture 1650–1740*

**February 15, 2005**
**Travelers in the Landscape: The Influence of Italy on Garden History and Culture**
**Elizabeth Barlow Rogers,** senior fellow and founding director, Garden History and Landscape Studies, Bard Graduate Center, founding president, Central Park Conservancy, and author of *Landscape Design: A Cultural and Architectural History*

**March 8, 2005**
**Painshill: The Flowering of the English Landscape Garden**
**Mark Laird,** senior lecturer in the History of Landscape Architecture, Harvard Design School, and author of *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden: English Pleasure Grounds 1720–1800*

**March 29, 2005**
**Hudson River Landscapes: Andrew Jackson Downing, Nurseryman and Apostle of Taste**
**David Schuyler,** Shadek Professor of the Humanities and Professor of American Studies, Franklin and Marshall College, and author of *Apostle of Taste: Andrew Jackson Downing 1815–1852*

Lectures: 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Location: Christie's Board Room, 20 Rockefeller Plaza

Seating is limited so please register early. Registration will be accepted at the door only if seating is available.

Register for all four and receive a discount:
$81 NYBG members
$90 non-members
Registration fee for each lecture:
$23 NYBG members
$25 non-members
To register, please call: 212-501-3064.

# Contributors

**Ethan Carr** is a visiting professor at the Bard Graduate Center, where he teaches "Central Park: History, Management, Restoration." He is also an assistant professor of landscape architecture and regional planning at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and is the author of *Wilderness by Design: Landscape Architecture and the National Park Service* (1998).

**Elizabeth Eustis** is a doctoral candidate at the Bard Graduate Center. She serves as honorary adjunct curator at the New York Botanical Garden and is the president of the New England Wildflower Society. She teaches in the Landscape Institute of the Arnold Arboretum while writing and lecturing primarily on seventeenth-century garden prints and nineteenth-century gardening magazines.

**Patricia O'Donnell**, FASLA, AICP, a preservation landscape architect and planner, is principal of Heritage Landscapes, with offices in Charlotte, Vermont, and Norwalk, Connecticut, which she founded in 1987. Some recent projects have addressed Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, Washington Irving's Sunnyside, Pittsburgh's historic regional parks, Camden Harbor Park and Amphitheatre, and Jay Property/ Marshlands Conservancy. She is the author of numerous cultural landscape planning reports and articles in professional journals.

**Melanie Simo** is a historian of art and landscape who has held teaching positions at the Harvard Design School, Rhode Island School of Design, and Carnegie Mellon University. She is the author of several books on landscape history, including *Loudon & the Landscape: From Country Seat to Metropolis, 1783–1843* (Yale University Press, 1989), *Invisible Gardens: Search for Modernism in the American Landscape* (with Peter Walker. MIT Press, 1996), and *Forest & Garden: Traces of Wildness in a Modernizing Land, 1897–1949* (University of Virginia Press, 2003).

**Margaret Sullivan** is a freelance writer and editor. She holds an M.A. in English from Columbia University and taught for 20 years at Hunter College in the Department of English. She is chairman of the New York Committee of the Garden Club of America, president of the Southampton Historical Museum, and a trustee of Bowne House.

find interpretative information about the designs and designers of particular villas as well as the social, political, economic, and cultural contexts of villa life.

Gaining first-hand impressions from on-site observation immeasurably deepens the virtual experience of touring villas via the Internet. This past June I had the opportunity to visit and photograph several Italian villas and their gardens, including Villa Rotonda in Vicenza, Villa Medici in Fiesole, Villa Garzoni near Lucca, Villa d'Este in Tivoli, and Villa Giulia, Villa Medici, Villa Borghese, and Villa Pamphili in Rome. There I met some of the consultants and directors of restoration programs who are serving as participating scholars in the development of *Catena*.

Important to the objectives of historic villa preservation are two major American institutions: I Tatti, the Harvard Center of Renaissance Studies near Florence, and the American Academy in Rome. In these two places art history and landscape studies appear to be merging effortlessly in historic settings of special beauty and scholarly opportunity. At I Tatti I spent a pleasant afternoon with director Joseph Connors walking in the gardens created by Cecil Pinsent for Bernard Berenson in 1913. A few days later, Lester Little, the director of the American Academy in Rome, discussed with me the work of the current fellows, including that of Charles Birnbaum, the founder of the Cultural Landscape Foundation. Birnbaum is completing a project comparing, in a collage format, villa photographs taken by fellows of the Academy in the early years of the twentieth century with his own digital photos shot from the same vantage points today.

What Birnbaum's collages make graphically explicit – the combined mutability and persistence of certain landscapes over time – is something that many of us fail to fully comprehend. We operate from the evidence before our eyes, forgetting that like the rest of the physical world, old villa gardens are simply versions of previous older versions of their original states of nature and design. The slow erosion of soil and stone by wind and rain, the picturesque discoloration of sculpture by moss and lichen, the growth, death, and replanting of trees – often several times over – have successively transformed these gardens throughout their centuries of existence.

But forces other than those of nature have been at work as well. The villas that we see today as tourists are, in fact, only the latest iterations in the history of their existence. Powerful social, economic, political, and cultural trends continue to transform the landscape palimpsest and our relationship to it. Nor are these manifold changes merely local and incidental. In Italy today we visit villas as tourists of the past as well as tourists of place, spectators of lost worlds, hardly realizing the seismic shifts that have occurred in Western civilization since these villas were first built. We come to Florence to catch an echo of Lorenzo de' Medici and the flowering of humanistic art, poetry, and classical learning at his villa in Fiesole and to admire the simple, harmoniously proportioned architecture's total integration with the site, which was chosen for the spectacular views of the countryside and the distant Duomo – all these things having been achieved according to the building principles articulated in the fifteenth century by Leon Battista Alberti – only to find that this spot is a chorus of other echoes. Today, it requires a feat of historical imagination to catch the barely lingering presence of Lorenzo and his circle of humanist scholars, poets, and artists.

As a precocious only child, the future writer and marchesa of Val d'Orcia Iris Origo grew up in this same villa and played in the *bosco* above the terrace garden where her mother conversed with Berenson and other members of the Florentine Anglo-American expatriate community. In 1911, Origo's mother had rented the villa, which had been owned in the eighteenth century by Lady Orford, Horace Walpole's sister-in-law, for by then Florence had begun to exert a pull on wealthy English families, who came and stayed because of its salubrious Mediterranean warmth and artistic riches. Later, in the nineteenth century, American artists, writers, and expatriates joined them. Florence remained a home away from home for the amply leisured, aesthetically devout, and intellectually curious until World War I shook the foundations of the world of aristocratic privilege. Soon, the currents of modernism completed the work of sweeping that world away.

Villa Medici, Fiesole, with Banksia roses, lemon plants, and paulownia tree.

The atmosphere and way of life created by the Florentine social circle of Italian villa owners and their friends are embodied now only in the novels of Edith Wharton and Henry James. In Fiesole itself you find only ghosts the way you might if you walked the streets of Bloomsbury trying to catch the presence of Leonard and Virginia Woolf. Such is the way historic landscapes come down to us, and for historic preservationists, who must serve as custodians of the past as well as stewards of living landscapes, this raises interesting problems because the cultural context in which these exist has so vastly and so many times been altered.

Propelled in revolutionary ways during the last three centuries, the West has lurched rapidly away from governance systems based on the uncircumscribed power of the princes of Church and State and the vast privileges, possessions, prerogatives, and untaxed wealth of landed aristocrats to systems based on greater individual freedoms, populist values, and democratic capitalism. New technologies have found their way into old

gardens. Almost all maintenance is now machine-assisted. Once unimaginable innovations in communications and transportation have opened many garden gates to mass tourism. This and the intellectual dominance of science have created a cultural climate in which factual knowledge today counts far more than simple emotional response, making it impossible to experience landscapes in the same way that earlier generations schooled by the Romantic poets and John Ruskin once did. Hear for example, Henry James describing the Villa Medici in Rome as "perhaps on the whole the most enchanting place in Rome." With his inimitable ability to picture for us the elements of this enchantment, James goes on to say:

> The upper part called the Boschetto has an incredible, impossible charm; an upper terrace, behind locked gates, covered with a little dusky forest of evergreen oaks. Such a dim light as of a fabled, haunted place, such a soft suffusion of tender grey-green tones, such a company of gnarled and twisted little miniature trunks – dwarfs playing with each other at being giants – and such a shower of golden sparkles drifting in from the vivid west!

Although few would write with such striking hyperbole and lush fantasy today, one can still feel a Jamesian thrill walking through this *boschetto*, as I did before my meeting with Giorgio Galletti, one of the participating scholars for the BGC's Digital Archive project. Galletti, a highly respected consultant to several private owners, institutions, and government agencies undertaking landscape preservation projects, has examined archives and other evidence to determine the original grid layout of these gardens, which was obliterated when, in the 1960s, the grounds of the villa were renovated under the painter Balthus, who was then director of the French Academy. (The Villa Medici has been since 1803 the *pensione* of the fortunate winners of the presigious Prix de Rome.)

The *boschetto* of the Villa Medici in Rome.

In the charming *studiolo* Cardinal Fernando Medici built around 1580, Galletti pointed out a small fresco depicting the villa and its gardens. This, he said, was one of a series of clues used to resurrect the original design intentions for the site. "You must forget the metric system and think in terms of the unit of measurement used at the time," he told me. As we strolled along the gravel paths bordered by rectangular compartments enclosed by bay laurel hedges, he explained how these were once beds for vegetables and fruit, the sale of surplus produce being a means of generating revenue for the cardinal. Following Galletti's advice, these hedges are gradually being realigned and old axial relationships within the garden reestablished.

Villa Medici, Rome, fresco depicting original plan.

Like some other art historians whose professional commitments have carried them into the field of landscape restoration, Alberta Campitelli, the chief official overseeing historic properties, parks, and public museums within the municipal government of Rome, has developed a sound working knowledge of botanical science. The gardens flanking the grand casino of the Villa Borghese, which once displayed Cardinal Scipio Borghese's collection of rare bulbs, exotic plants, and simples had fallen into a state of extreme neglect. Old plant lists and the kind of archival botanical research that Lucia Tongiorgio Tomasi, another participating scholar in the BGC's Digital Archive project, has done to significantly advance understanding of the contents of historic Italian villa gardens helped Campitelli and her colleagues to re-create the *concept* of these gardens as botanical showcases. Conceived as *giardini segreti* – secret gardens – they were enclosed by high walls extending from the facade of the villa. Now only an iron-rail fence exists in place of the walls, and Campiteli does not wish, as some historic preservation purists might, to have the old walls replicated, inasmuch as this would prevent the public from viewing the gardens.

Her office wall has, framed, the proclamation of 1903 announcing the opening of Villa Borghese to the public after the Church had turned its administration over to the State, at which time the extensive gardens became Rome's principal municipal park and the villa's casino a museum where the public can now enjoy Cardinal Borghese's superb collection of ancient sculpture and Baroque masterpieces by Bernini. Campitelli recently oversaw the renovation of the museum's opulent interiors with their walls of richly veined multicolored marbles and ceilings of trompe l'oeil frescoes depicting allegorical dramas. So popular are these splendidly restored galleries that visitors are issued tickets for specified two-hour time slots to prevent overcrowding.

On the grounds outside, I saw that, since my last visit a few years ago, in addition to the two enclosed gardens flanking the museum, the parterre garden, the twin aviaries, and the Meridiana (or sundial tower) had been carefully restored. Copies of Bernini's large herms depicting the garden gods Bacchus and Pomona (the originals are now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City) preside over gravel walks and clipped hedges of box. Children splash water from a central fountain basin. For Campitelli, as for me, there was obvious pleasure in the sight of Roman citizens enjoying the villa's gardens as a green respite from the noisy streets.

As one of the great seventeenth-century papal villas, Villa Borghese occupied an enormous *vigna*, or suburban estate, that Scipione Caffarelli, nephew of Pope Paul V (formerly Cardinal Camillo Borghese), and his family acquired following the pope's election in 1605. Beyond the gardens immediately surrounding the museum, the park is a much-altered version of the Borghese Gardens as they existed before 1903. Only landscape scholars can trace the outlines of the gardens' three *recinti*, or precincts,

Fresco of a vine-clad pergola in the *studiolo*, Villa Medici, Rome. Like the ancient Romans, who painted frescoes that were illusionistic extensions of their gardens, patrons of such Renaissance villas as the Villa Giulia and the Villa Medici in Rome commissioned trompe l'oeil frescoes of garden structures adorned with flowers, vines, and birds.

which segregated the part reserved for private family use from the *boschetti*, which on certain days could be visited by the public, and the part that served as a game park. Now the gardens are all one recreational landscape – Rome's "Central Park" – in which you can see the traces of later landscape-design enthusiasms, such as the English-style lake, and institutional additions, such as a zoo and a modern art museum. Recently, a Shakespeare theater, built in imitation of the original Globe Theater on London's South Bank, was added. In such ways does the river of culture wash over old landscapes, removing some things and leaving in place the varied deposits of time.

At Villa La Gamberaia, Professor Patricia Osmond, one of the participating scholars in the Digital Archive project, has researched several epochs of that villa's history. Like other Tuscan villas, it is more intimate in scale, domestically allied, and wedded to its agrarian surroundings than the grand Renaissance and Baroque villas in and around Rome. Osmond's analyses of her findings, which were published in a recent issue of *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes*, make it possible to view La Gamberaia in layers: the originally simple and then later embellished Tuscan farmhouse of the Gambarelli family; the possibly rebuilt house of 1610, when the property was owned by Zenobi Lapi; the villa after it achieved more or less the present garden layout in the first half of the eighteenth century, when it was owned by the Capponi family; as the imaginatively redesigned early-twentieth-century gardens in which Princess Ghyka, sister of Queen Natalia of Serbia, substituted pools of water for the then existing parterre beds; as a charred ruin after German officers headquartered there set fire to their maps following the Allied invasion at the end of World War II; and now, again, as a smiling series of green rooms in which statues of putti are half hidden in mounds of clipped box foliage. As Osmond spread her photographs of Princess Ghyka's drawings out on the stone table in the center of the garden along with the photographs taken in the early part of the twentieth century, I could see how similar yet how altered La Gamberaia is since the days when Florence harbored a colony of expatriates and when large private incomes and low prevailing wages made it possible to have 20 gardeners rather than two.

Yet, under the respectful hand of Luigi Zalum, its present owner, La Gamberaia is still a magical spot, perhaps even more so than in 1904 when Edith Wharton extolled it as "probably the most perfect example in Italy of great effect on a small scale." The survival through the vicissitudes of history of anything so fragile and ephemeral as a garden is truly remarkable, and the future of such landscape loveliness is a legitimate cause for concern. The art of landscape salvation is not simple and cannot follow to the letter prescribed formulas or guidelines, although these may serve a useful function. Wharton's *Italian Villas and Their Gardens*, published in 1904 when industrial America was enjoying its Gilded Age, looked at the same villa landscapes I saw on my recent journey through northern Italy. But she viewed them romantically, aesthetically, and with a yearning to import their graceful charm to the harsher light of America. Now we try to see them still as objects of beauty, but also, as scholars and preservationists, we seek to know and interpret them as multilayered documents of social and design history. Our restoration efforts are necessarily circumscribed by politics and practicality. I am happy to believe that – thanks to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, and the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, as well as to the teachers and students in Garden History and Landscape Studies at the Bard Graduate Center and the participating scholars we have assembled as colleagues to create *Catena* – the work of historic landscape preservation is becoming more nuanced and cognizant of the fourth dimension: time. – EBR

# Garden History and Landscape Studies Student Steven Whitesell

**Steven Whitesell,** now entering his second year as an M.A. candidate in Garden History and Landscape Studies at the Bard Graduate Center, is a landscape architect licensed in both New York and Connecticut and has been employed by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation for over 14 years. Having earned a B.F.A. and a B.L.A. from the Rhode Island School of Design, Whitesell was attracted to the program at the BGC because it combined garden and landscape history with several of his other interests, which include contemporary art and the decorative arts.

As a child Whitesell absorbed his family's love of nineteenth-century American furniture, and with his parents and four siblings, he often visited historic house museums. His father was a consultant to the Henry Ford Museum in Michigan, and his sister worked at the museum as a tour guide. While a student in the program of landscape architecture at the Rhode Island School of Design, Whitesell took courses in garden and landscape history and gained a knowledge of significant practitioners and their work. However, he credits Garden History and Landscape Studies at the BGC with introducing him to the contextual aspects of landscape history, including the literary sources and the material and cultural theories that ground it within the humanities.

Because Whitesell works in the Borough of Queens at the Olmsted Center, the Design and Construction Division of the New York City Department of Parks, and lives in nearby Kew Garden Hills, it is logical that he would become interested in the history of the area as the birthplace of commercial horticulture in this country. The French Huguenots, settling there in 1685, introduced new plants (the lady apple [*Syzygium suborbiculare*] and the bell or pound pear [*Pyrus communis*] among them) as

well as horticultural methods of growing plant material in what we know today as nurseries. The French successfully traded and bartered trees and plants. But it was an Englishman, Robert Prince, a descendant of Governor Thomas Prince of the Plymouth Colony, who came with his son William to the area and established America's first commercial nursery in 1737. Between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries, the area became the site of many rival nurseries.

The Parsons family, highly respected Quakers, established their Flushing nursery in 1838. It covered 95 acres and employed upward of 60 men. Fruit trees were in great demand as the country developed westward, and the nurseries prospered. By 1847, Samuel Bowne Parsons had traveled extensively, collecting ornamental shrubs and trees for American gardens, including the first pink-flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida var. rubra*) and the weeping European beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Pendula'). A specimen of the latter, which still stands on the site of the old nursery, is the progenitor of all weeping beeches in America and many others worldwide. On a trip to Europe in 1858, Parsons assisted Frederick Law Olmsted in his purchases of plant material for the new Central Park.

While the history of the Prince and the Parsons nurseries is central to Whitesell's research, the Bowne name may be of equal importance in the history of Flushing. In the mid-seventeenth century, John Bowne, a Quaker, built a home – the oldest house in Queens – which still stands at 37th Avenue and Bowne Street adjacent to Kissena Park, the site of the former Parsons Nursery.

Bowne's story is pivotal in the history of colonial religious freedom and is one of the contributing factors to the American Constitution's later separation of Church and State. On December 27, 1657, the freeholders of Flushing formally protested Governor Peter Stuyvesant's ban on worship by denominations other than the Dutch Reformed Church. (The Flushing Remonstrance is recognized as the first declaration of religious tolerance in American history.) Soon after, when John Bowne allowed his fellow Quakers to worship in his new home, Stuyvesant had him arrested and deported to Holland. Upon his arrival there, Bowne appealed to the governing body of the colony and persuaded it to overrule Stuyvesant and permit religious freedom in the colony.

The Bowne House, with its important collection of Early American furniture, has been closed to the public for several years while undergoing major restoration. The structure and the grounds (which contain remnants of a Quaker Cross Garden) recently have become part of the Historic House Trust of New York City.

When the trustees of Bowne House offered Whitesell an internship – a requirement for all M.A. candidates at the BGC – he was given an opportunity to work with a trustee, Ronald G. ("Chuck") Wade, a horticulturist and former executive director of the Queens Botanic Garden. Wade has taught horticulture at John Bowne High School in Flushing since 1984 and is active in the Queens Historical Society. At the 2004 Historic Plant Symposium at Monticello in August, Wade spoke on "The Prince Nursery of Flushing, Long Island," and on October 25, 2004, he will make a presentation at the Flushing Town Hall entitled "Encounters with America's Premier Nurseries and Botanical Gardens." Working with Wade will afford Whitesell opportunities to continue to conduct research on the Prince and Parsons nurseries and their role in American horticulture. As a result, new facts may come to light that will advance our knowledge and understanding of the contribution of nineteenth-century nurserymen to landscape history. – Margaret Sullivan

Undoubtedly he most widely disseminated of Parson's imports was the great Weeping Beech (*Fagis sylvatica* 'Pendula'), memorialized at Weeping Beech Park on 37th Street, between Bowne Street and Parsons Boulevard. The "grandmother" of all the weeping beeches in American graveyards began life in 1847 as a cutting in a flower pot carried back to Flushing from a rare plant expedition to Belgium. When it died in 1998, the tree stood more than 30 feet tall and was surrounded by a circle of offspring that had grown from its outer roots. Today the tree is a stump, but its offspring still flourish around it. Courtesy of City of New York Parks & Recreation
Caption text and photograph by Benjamin Swett

# Books and Exhibitions

## The Flowering Amazon: Paintings by Margaret Mee from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

New York Botanical Garden,
The William D. Rondina and Giovanni Foroni LoFaro Gallery of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library
April 23–August 8, 2004

Aechmea Rodriguesiana, watercolor by Margaret Mee.

The name Margaret Ursula Mee (1909–1988) is familiar to anyone with an interest in botanical art, but few are aware of the courage she displayed and her importance as a botanical explorer and conservationist. A recent exhibition at the newly opened gallery in the LuEsther T. Mertz Library of the New York Botanical Garden puts her remarkable career in perspective.

As an art student in post-war London, Mee painted with a highly accomplished realism. In 1952, at mid-life, after moving to Brazil with her husband, she turned her talents to botanical illustration. In 1956, inspired by the local flora, she made the first of 15 journeys in a dugout canoe along the Amazon River and its tributaries. Over the next 32 years, braving disease, broken bones, and near drowning, Mee discovered various botanical species (nine of which were named after her) and produced hundreds of plant and animal portraits based on direct and detailed observation. The modernist landscape designer and artist, Roberto Burle Marx, along with other influential Brazilians, recognized her exceptional skills both as a botanist and a painter.

With more than 50,000 identified plant species, Amazonia is the largest and most botanically rich complex of tropical ecosystems on earth. However, construction of the Trans-Amazon Highway in the 1960s abruptly increased the vulnerability of this region to development. When widespread deforestation began in the 1970s, Mee became a pioneering conservationist. In concert with Marx, she zealously defended the increasingly embattled

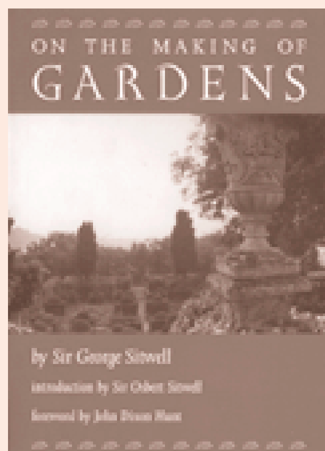
Brazilian rain forests and their Amerindian inhabitants. As her environmental concerns grew, she began to set many of her botanical studies in natural habitats.

After decades of surviving extraordinarily difficult conditions in the Amazon, and while still at the peak of her career, Mee perished in a car accident in England. Following her death, the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew raised funds to purchase many of her paintings, as well as her sketchbooks and diaries. The diaries have been published and her works exhibited, but this traveling exhibition, which originated at Kew, is one of the first efforts to bring a representative selection of her work to North America.

Curator Ruth L. A. Stiff has taken the opportunity to juxtapose Mee's gouache paintings with the spontaneous drawings in her sketchbooks. She introduces the paintings and drawings with a display of implements used by Mee in her travels: from brushes and palette to the lenses and notebooks of a botanist. A presentation of the nineteenth-century explorations of the Amazon by Richard Spruce, an original contributor to Kew's Museum of Economic Botany, and Karl Friedrich Philipp von Martius, originator of the thirty-volume *Flora Brasilensis*, sets the stage for Margaret Mee's life work. The selection of Mee's fine botanical art culminates with a case dedicated to the Amazon Moonflower (*Selenicereus wittii*), an ephemeral night-blooming cactus-flower that Mee, after a two-decade pursuit, finally witnessed six months before her death. Its florescence and her all-night vigil to witness its few hours of bloom are presented in a brief video loop that records the opening of the flower and Mee's sketching of it by torchlight. – Elizabeth Eustis

**On the Making of Gardens**
**by Sir George Sitwell**
**with an introduction**
**by Sir Osbert Sitwell and**
**foreword by John Dixon Hunt**
(Boston: David R. Godine, Publisher, 2003)

***Paths of Desire: The Passions of a Suburban Gardener***
**by Dominique Browning**
(New York: Scribner, 2004)




The word aesthete has acquired, beyond its original definition of one who cultivates an unusually high sensitivity to beauty, a pejorative meaning, implying a person whose passion for beauty in art and nature is excessive and affected. Indeed, the word beauty has become suspect, having been polarized by the advocates of modernism who promoted functionality and technological innovation as superior values. This modernist ideal – the twentieth-century aesthetic (yes, anti-aestheticism is itself an aesthetic) – valued the progressive future and discredited the historical past. For all forms of art, this has had the effect of eliminating what is ornamental and symbolic, which has struck a particularly severe blow to the art of landscape design. Today, with few exceptions, the poetical potential of sculpture as an integral, symbolically significant element in garden design has been abandoned. Instead, landscape architects create gardens as showcases for artworks that are meant to be regarded in formal, conceptual, or political terms. In addition, in many twentieth- and twenty-first-century gardens, the rich resources of the plant kingdom are underutilized. David Godine is thus to be commended for bringing out the four-times previously republished but largely forgotten minor classic *On the Making of Gardens* by Sir George Sitwell, a book in which the intentions of the author are from first to last aesthetic.

Who was Sir George Sitwell (1860–1943)? In a 1951 edition of his book, his son Sir Osbert (1892–1969), in what is perhaps one of the most unfilial introductions ever written, describes him as a neurasthenic whose recuperative sojourn in Italy bore fruit in an excessively researched, overly romantic period piece that failed to win sufficient readers to become commercially successful. Somewhat churlishly, Sir Osbert sets about a post-mortem settlement of old scores, portraying his father as often misguided, easily irritated, and overly broad in his interests to the point of leaving many projects unfinished, including his own garden at Renishaw, the ancestral home in Yorkshire. He concedes, however, with regard to *On the Making of Gardens*, that his father "knew what he was talking about, having observed, noted and practiced" and that "whatever may be judged of the achievement [this one book] was wholly realized down to the last comma and final full stop."

Writing his introduction to *On the Making of Gardens* 42 years after its publication of in 1909, Sir Osbert viewed that lost golden age, "the days of good King Edward" – when British aristocrats still took for granted the assumption of privilege and the possession of leisure – from a historical perspective in which two world wars, the sinking sun of Empire, and restructured policies of taxation had made the upper-class aesthete's creed seem quaintly irrelevant. Nevertheless, the attention that Sir George gives to analyzing old Italian gardens should be of interest to the garden historian today. In the process, he draws on a wide and deep reading of contemporary works on psychology by William James (1842–1910) and Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) as well as the works of John Ruskin (1819–1900), whose monumental *Modern Painters* was a vast primer of aesthetics for Sitwell and his generation.

It is true, as John Dixon Hunt points out in his foreword, that Sitwell does not discuss "the role of ideas or the topic of meaning in gardens, which we know was a prime constituent of Renaissance design." But this defect has subsequently been remedied by the kind of garden history scholarship pioneered by David Coffin at Princeton as well as by Hunt himself, who has admirably advanced the field for the past 30 years. Coffin's books on the great gardens of Papal Rome, including one on the Villa d'Este, and recent books by Claudia Lazarro, Mirka Benes, Dianne Harris, and Tracy Ehrlich have interpreted the rich iconographies and underlying messages of Italian gardens. Sitwell cannot be faulted for not doing what they have since done with the benefit of archival research and close examination of historic engravings, for his method and objective were different. His study of Italian gardens was conducted on the spot and based entirely on his own firsthand observations.

After obtaining permission from the owner of a garden, Sitwell – accompanied by his servant, Henry Moat, who was equipped with a wicker picnic box and had the demeanor and physique of a bodyguard – would sit for hours on a portable air cushion in some shady spot making notes, a green-lined sun umbrella on the ground beside him. Nor was his intention merely to distill the aspect and mood of the more than 300 gardens he visited throughout Italy. The title of his book – *On the Making of Gardens* – suggests a different aim: "namely, that of influencing the newly recovered art of garden design." In no sense is it a how-to-replicate book; instead, Sitwell seeks to articulate landscape

design *principles* derived from analyzing old Italian gardens. His book thus was intended to help contemporaries create beautiful and lasting gardens of their own. More than this, he wanted to articulate the emotions these old gardens evoke, emotions based on the psychology of sensory perception. His book is therefore an analytical essay describing the ingredients that constitute "garden magic." He hoped that it would be influential in the manner of Francis Bacon's 1625 essay "On Gardens."

This was no small ambition. Although some will find Sitwell's prose too fervid, its sonorities, arresting insights, and obvious passion for the subject make it eminently readable today. British garden writers often have demonstrated a bent toward the polemical, and Sitwell is no exception. In the eighteenth century, there were fiery debates initiated by the theorists of the Picturesque who challenged Humphrey Repton's professed continuance of Capability Brown's landscape style. Closer to Sitwell's time, the feud between William Robinson and Reginald Blomfield over the respective merits of the preeminently horticultural garden versus the essentially architectural garden was still raging. Sitwell was anti-Brown and also anti-Picturesque and definitely on the side of Blomfield's argument for a return to an older, more formal garden style that had been enthusiastically swept away by eighteenth-century Augustan aristocrats and nineteenth-century Victorian garden-makers and their followers on the Continent. However, he was not, like some previous polemicists, vitriolic.

In a time when only a few well-chosen black-and-white photographs were interleaved among the pages of a book and color-illustrated coffee-table volumes did not exist, Sitwell used words to paint landscape pictures and describe the sensory impact of gardens on the human mind. Like his contemporaries, Edith Wharton and Henry James, who also used their formidable descriptive powers to analyze the visual components of the Italian landscape and its effects upon the foreign viewer, Sitwell is a prose stylist. His three favorite gardens are the Villa d'Este in Tivoli, the Villa Lante in Bagnaia, and the Giusti Garden in Verona, and his descriptions of them are literary tours de force. In addition to describing the composite characteristics by which these gardens achieve, in his opinion, a state of total perfection, he analyzes the successful elements of many others up and down the Italian peninsula.

With Sitwell as our guide in the Giusti Garden, we pass from bright sunshine to cool shade and toil up a steep slope, resting at each level terrace to gaze at the increasingly broad views of garden, city, and distant landscape. This verbal tour is marked by a keen sensibility born of deeply experienced sensory observation mixed with literary allusion. He can also encapsulate the essence of "garden magic" in a single vivid sentence. At Caprarola, for instance, he finds worth admiring only the upper garden of the Barchetto "in the giant guard of sylvan divinities, playing, quarreling, laughing the long centuries away, which rise from the wall of the topmost terrace against the blue distance of an immeasurable amphitheatre walled in by far-off hills." Although we may not praise it with the same extravagant emotion, Cardinal Odorado Farnese's woodland retreat touches in us a responsive chord, and we, too, find ourselves awed by the mysterious synthesis of art and nature in a timeless work of landscape design.

Sitwell did not, as Wharton had done in *Italian Villas and their Gardens* published five years earlier, simply describe with able pen a series of Italian gardens and the mood produced by leaping fountains, purling cascades, still pools, sentinel cypresses, moss-and-lichen-covered stone, and hoary sculptures of mythological deities. Instead, he drew upon his voluminous reading in the then new field of psychology to discern the relationship between Mind and Landscape. Like his mentors, Spencer and James, he is in a proto-Jungian way attempting to probe the unconscious and understand the alchemy of perception. And, anticipating the philosophers of phenomenology, he wants to grasp the nature of space and place in terms of memory and sensory awareness. He shows by his own example how gardens should be experienced with alertness to the messages received by reverie and active employment of all five senses.

The same gardens that were conceived in the Renaissance as encoded itineraries of humanism and statements of power have the ability to enchant and impress long after the fascination with the recovered antique past and the authority wielded by the great princes of the Church and City-State have ceased to matter. This is so because they were still in the early twentieth century, when Sitwell wrote (and even more so now in our country-and-city-destroying automobile age), green sanctuaries, realms of calm, places where, mind at rest, one can notice such sights as the undersides of light-struck leaves; discern the varied music of murmuring, splashing, and dripping water; feel the touch of cool stone surfaces; smell the scent of sun-warmed hedges of box, resinous pine, and flowering lime trees; and savor food eaten outdoors. (Food is perhaps enjoyed more mindfully in nature, the primary source of all human nourishment, and the pleasure of outdoor dining in villa gardens on summer evenings was not lost on the ancient Roman consul Lucculus at Frascati or on Cardinal Gambara at Villa Lante and Cardinal d'Este at his villa in Tivoli.)

In Sitwell's admittedly romantic view, it is the ability of these gardens to conjure in us personal, collective, and fictional memory that make them so much more psychologically potent than later gardens from which the essential spirit as well as the representations of the old mythological, symbolical gods have vanished.

The mute past, especially if it extends over many centuries, is a source of mystery that feeds the imagination. Time, then, is a sixth sense as well as a fourth dimension. Sitwell likens a true garden to an opera by Wagner in which several arts are employed in dramatic unity and the setting is one of a distant, myth-and-magic-impregnated primordial time. Beyond its ability to stimulate deep unconscious forces of hidden memory, "time is a wayward traveler," and in the garden it may pause and confer a sense of immortality on the attentive soul and receptive mind because, as Sitwell explains:

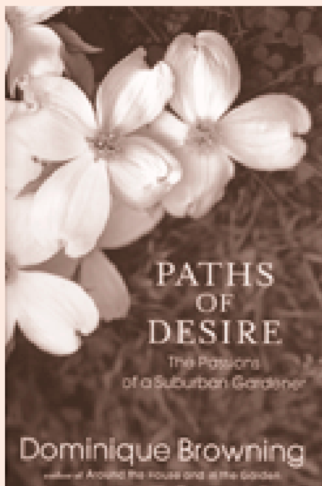
> In contemplation of the recurring miracle of spring and of that eternal stream of life which is ever flowing before our eyes, we may find that it stands for something more – one of the three things the Greek philosopher thought it lawful to pray for, hope to the dying; for along the thread of time and consciousness the individual is never severed from the race.

Discovering a poetics of gardens is difficult, particularly in those gardens that have become tourist destinations or public parks, but it is still possible today. In our fast-paced, gregarious, sports-minded culture the pleasures of the garden aesthete will seem laughable to some. Why shouldn't the contemplative garden stroller be forced to bow before the popular desire

for more lively forms of recreation and entertainment? Mixed with the contemporary culture of consumerist democracy, which has made the leisured life and unhurried travel enjoyed by aristocrats such as Sitwell obsolete, is the undeniable commercial motive on the part of both private and public owners to make ends meet, something that is necessary for the continuance of their gardens. Today, Renishaw, the Italianate garden that grew from Sitwell's imagination, hosts coach tour groups and school parties as well as a variety of events, including plant and craft fairs and an Easter egg hunt.

Yet, even if we cannot aspire to achieve the resonant antiquity of the great villa gardens of 400 years ago, Sitwell's observations and design principles still may inspire the creator of today's version of the *hortus conclusus* in weaving together elements of ordered expectation and delightful surprise, in considering the effects of leaf-filtered light and rippling or reflecting water, in understanding the expressive power of natural stone and the sculptural and painterly properties of plants, and in enlarging the garden's space with borrowed views of town and country. His book also may liberate the latent aesthete in park visitors and garden tourists and encourage them to find a quiet, agreeable spot in which to give way to their own psychological impulse to let mind and body connect with the forces of nature and the power of landscape art.

But how, we might ask, can one sustain such an idea at a time when so much seems to be going wrong with the world? Today, habitat-rich rainforests are being bulldozed out of existence, and many cities have sacrificed their once-handsome downtowns to a diffuse and formless urban metastasis. Dominique Browning does not have an explanation for why, in the face of ecological destruction and metropolitan ills, nurturing a small piece of the planet matters, but in *Paths of Desire: The Passions of a Suburban Gardener* she demonstrates her faith that it does, at least on an individual, personal level. Unlike Sitwell, she has no ample ancestral estate, so it is on less than half an acre in suburbia – that middle landscape of small house lots, squabbling neighbors, rebellious teenagers, and pilfering animals – that she coaxes a problem-ridden property into becoming a *hortus conclusus*.




For Browning, like Sitwell, is romantic by nature. She understands the importance of sitting quietly on a movable chair, studying her garden-to-be from multiple perspectives with an attentive eye, registering her psychological responses to the way in which "the genius of the place" slowly reveals itself. She listened to this landscape as it began to speak to her the language of aesthetics, summoning a latent beauty that was hers to realize. But not without many trials and missteps along the way, for her paths of desire were tortuous and fraught with the difficulties that beset the owner of a charming but deteriorated, cash-draining old house and a site with stony soil, too much shade, unsightly views of neighboring backyards, and ailing trees.

Overcoming obstacles and persisting in spite of frustrating setbacks are the stuff of comedy as well as of moral heroism. Browning, who is a talented writer and editor (she has been the editor in chief of *House and Garden* since 1995), is adept at the genre of personal garden writing built on a learning-from-mistakes-with-the-help-of-bemused-experts approach, of which Michael Pollan, author of *A Place of My Own: The Education of an Amateur Builder*, *Second Nature*, and *Botany of Desire*, is currently the undisputed master. She knows what Pollan knows: that the self-made garden is the only deeply satisfying one. Although she is a postfeminist who values both career opportunity and domesticity, she is no Martha Stewart, who makes homemaking and gardening look deceptively easy. She knows there are few simple solutions in gardening or in life and that the trials of both are as unending as the joys.

Browning's literary long suit is vulnerability. It is the vulnerability of a single mother without a dependable man in her life, helpless (perhaps more helpless for narrative effect than is actually the case) in the face of a collapsing retaining wall, rotten roof, eroded driveway, and unpleasant neighbors. (They clearly do not share her aesthetic approach to landscape, which includes the two-way benefits of borrowed scenery.) She thus sets herself up as the protagonist of a drama in which the other actors have role-defining names: the True Love, whose attentions are frustratingly intermittent; the Helpful Men, who include Leonard, the can-do nurseryman and Mr. Fix-It, and Bob, the affable, instructive arborist; and the creativity-liberating Artist. Then there are the Boys, her teenage sons Alex and Theo, who see no redeeming value in the conversion of their childhood backyard playground into their mother's garden refuge, especially when they are called upon to lend a hand. Finally, there are the Three Graces – Caroline, Bonni, and Zoe – the sympathetic female friends to whom the book is dedicated.

Browning began her project of creating a garden following the collapse of a retaining wall due to a mudslide caused by a builder who rerouted a neighbor's stormwater drainage into her yard. Hesitantly at first, she challenged herself to go beyond repair and to improve and fashion into a unified landscape composition the property's several parts – the Old Garden (a bedraggled front yard), the Back Forty (the ignored woods away from the immediate environs of the house), and the Back Bed (the single sunny border where her first tentative efforts as a gardener had begun but then had been obliterated by the breached and fallen retaining wall).

The kind of garden that Browning ultimately created following the period she calls the Winter of Last Daydreams was the product of obsession. Garden images captured her night as well as her daydreams, and these were reinforced by childhood recollections and somatic memory – the potent, because unconscious, bodily memory of place and "what the earth is supposed to feel like under your feet." This was her winter of discarded fears and uncertainties accompanied by hidden growth. As spring approached she began to design not on paper but on the land, arranging and rearranging long nylon cords of different colors as she delineated the shapes of beds, two defined patches of lawn, and paths of desire – those routes we instinctively use when navigating a campus, a park, or a garden as "our own footsteps etch our desires into the ground." When she was done, with some helpful criticism from Leonard and the knowledge she had gained earlier from studying the garden's sight-

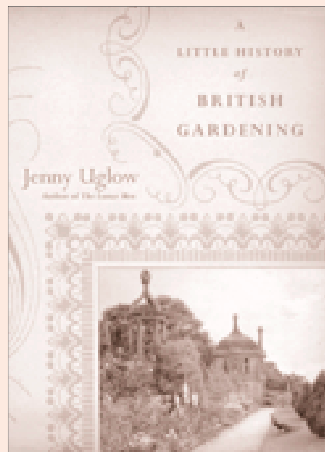
lines from several angles as she moved her lawn chair from one place to another, she was ready to place more permanent garden furniture in spots where it would be pleasant to sit and read or ruminate. Yet, experiencing the transit from open lawn to shady woodland and the variation in scenes as one moved through the garden was important, too. Therefore, she needed to configure the ground plane, defining beds for shrubbery in a way that would connect its several parts physically as well as visually. As Browning puts it, she likes "a wandering sort of garden" but one in which all the parts cohere.

Nor was she afraid to use some eccentric ornamental features within her garden. These might be eye-catching items from a yard sale, such as two upended stone dragons supporting a tiny tabletop suitable for drinks, or gifts from friends, such as a small Buddha or a pair of gnome-like garden sculptures verging on kitsch. But, if these were placed in just the right spot, they acquired an endearing charm. This kind of ornament is, of course, a far cry from the stone sculptures of mythological deities that inhabit the old villa gardens Sitwell describes, but they, too, have meaningful associations of a personal nature.

Finally, what both Sitwell and Browning impart is the notion that a good garden is ultimately a testament of love. It is about deeply felt place-making of the kind that roots a person in a landscape in which accreted memory gives meaning to the rest of life, making our solitary journey richer. It is also about hope and renewal because, as every gardener knows, a garden is never finished and there is always next spring. – EBR

**_A Little History of British Gardening_**
**by Jenny Uglow**
(New York: North Point Press/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004)

**_English Pleasure Gardens_**
**by Rose Standish Nichols**
**with a new introduction**
**by Judith B. Tankard**
(Boston: David R. Godine, Publisher, 2003)




A history that stretches from prehistoric times to the present is bound to contain a few periods treated with a broad brush – as in Jenny Uglow's *A Little History of British Gardening*. "More settled ways of life began around 2000 BC and by 1200 BC the ancient wildwood had already diminished," she writes, without much evidence at hand. But soon the sources accumulate, and even a plant list or a ledger can offer valuable clues. Writing for pleasure and driven by curiosity, she would simply like to know more about the gardens and people of times past and perhaps answer a question or two posed by a friend.

The author of books on William Hogarth, Elizabeth Gaskell, and George Eliot, Uglow seems most at home in the past few centuries. More than half of this history is devoted to the years from 1702 to the present – years when evidence of gardens in literature, paintings, engravings, and other documents is most abundant. Uglow draws on her own memories, as well. "When I was thirteen my family moved from the bleak Cumbrian coast to Dorset," she writes, "and I was astounded at its velvety overflowing greens, its almost suffocating lushness. The garden summed up storybook Victoriana." Her closing pages touch on issues of the twenty-first century, including global warming: "The leaves on the oak trees are opening earlier; the aphids are coming sooner and there are more of them."

Rose Standish Nichols covers a somewhat shorter period – from the time of the Romans in Britain (with glimpses of gardens in Egypt, Assyria, Persia, and Greece) to "Modern Gardens," circa 1900. As in Uglow's history, England is the geographical focus. At the same time, Nichols draws freely from the traditions of Italy and France as well, from antiquity through the late eighteenth century. Pliny and Varro, Raphael and Vignola, Le Nôtre and Rousseau all appear in this account of English pleasure gardens, along with Chaucer, John Evelyn, and other British writers, ending with Reginald Blomfield, Gertrude Jekyll, and their contemporaries. Long quotations abound, but the text is fairly brief (in this edition, 275 pages, densely illustrated).

As Judith Tankard explains in the introduction, Nichols was, among other things, a professional designer of gardens. All the drawings not taken from archives and old books are by Nichols's own hand – delightful drawings, revealing a designer's understanding of textures and spatial relations. This is, in short, not an inclusive history of gardens but a designer's history, a record of significant details. What Nichols liked, she wrote about. What she disliked is absent or unillustrated in *English Pleasure Gardens* – a fact better appreciated after reading Uglow's *Little History of British Gardening*.

"The driest of the lists bring a vanished world to life," Uglow comments before mentioning items in the account books of a Cistercian monk in Hampshire, circa 1260 C.E. Manure carts, garden gloves, forks, spades, buckets, and sieves all help to sketch in the gardening world of Medieval England, along with lists of vegetables sold, gallons of honey produced, and vats of cider stored. Black-and -white illustrations appear on nearly every page of this book, and colorplates fill the signatures, but some aspects of garden history only can be conveyed in words. From Anglo-Saxon England – a warlike period around the tenth century C.E., when Christianity had not yet entirely taken hold – comes a charm, or magic recipe, for making unpromising land fruitful:

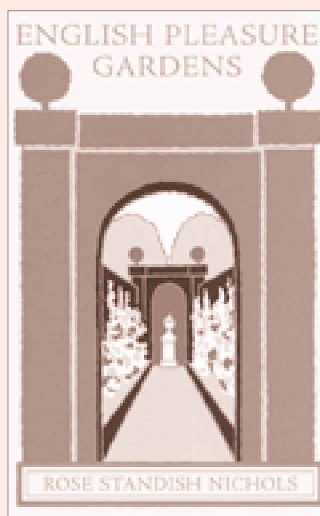
> Take by night, before it dawns, four turfs from the four corners of the plot, and make a note of where they belonged. Then take oil and honey and yeast, and milk from each beast that is on the land, and a portion of each type of tree that is growing on the land, apart from the harder woods, and a portion of each nameable plant, excepting buckbean only, and then apply holy water and let it drip thrice on the underside of the turf and say then these words: grow, and multiply, and fill the earth.

This charm, a remnant from the so-called Dark Ages, is like a piece of a broken chain, part of a long tradition of using and caring for the land that Uglow has set out to retrieve. It is a tradition of gardening among the rich and the poor, the famous and the obscure, the exquisite and the commonplace. Others have traced the same tradition, with more or less emphasis on aesthetic, social, or environmental factors. And Uglow acknowledges her well-known predecessors, including Miles Hadfield, Geoffrey and Susan Jellicoe, Penelope Hobhouse, and Christopher Thacker. Many readers have on their shelves books by these and other writers. Now, as popular and scholarly monographs continue to appear, do we really need yet another history of

British gardening? I believe we do.

While most of these histories feature fairly large, well-maintained country places, all products of sophisticated taste in design and planting, Uglow's *Little History* offers a remarkably wide range of British gardens and the people who worked in them, lingered in them, wrote or sketched or painted in them, amassed their treasured collections there, or planted vegetables there during times of war and depression. She quotes from familiar sources – the *Roman de la Rose*, translated by Chaucer in the fourteenth century, and Lutyens's inscription on the tombstone of Gertrude Jekyll – as well as from lesser known works, including Thomas Tusser's *Hundred Good Points of Husbandry* (1557), and passages from Charles Dickens, George Orwell, and Robert Louis Stevenson. One photograph is entitled "Londoners in a back garden during the Blitz, 1940." In another, "The new Mughal gardens in Bradford, 2003," smiling, dark-eyed children dressed in traditional silks and cottons from India stand by a little jet of water above a pool or runnel – a hint that the British gardening tradition is growing wider still.

For the uninitiated, Uglow's *Little History* could offer an engaging introduction to the history of gardening in Britain – or gardening anywhere – for we all know some otherwise well-informed person who has no idea that there is such a thing as garden history. But beware. This book, published in 2004 by Chatto & Windus in Great Britain, could have been better served by the copy editor. Some lapses of attention are peculiar; the names of John and Jane Loudon, for instance, are repeatedly (but not consistently) misspelled. And yet how many histories of gardening read so gracefully, so little like a survey? Uglow writes with equal enthusiasm of Christopher Lloyd's gardens at Great Dixter and of a garden by the sea at Dungeness created by the ailing filmmaker and author Derek Jarman. Within sight of a vast power station and a few shacks, his blazing red poppies run freely among upright stumps, sticks, clay pots, old kettles, pebbles, wild grasses, and sea lavender – a bit of color amid the chaos. "Yet Jarman's garden speaks to nearly everyone," Uglow writes: "in her late eighties my mother spent hours there, gazing out across the English Channel, invigorated by this challenge to emptiness and death."




Moving on to *English Pleasure Gardens* by Rose Standish Nichols, we enter a more rarefied world where anything garish or jarring remains unseen. It is the dawn of the twentieth century. Gardeners have access to a wealth of plants from around the world, and the craft of horticulture has been perfected. But the *art* of gardening has not kept pace, according to Nichols. "In fact," she writes, "until within the last few years it has gone backward rather than forward in England, ever since the period of the Italian Renaissance."

This bold indictment, appearing at the outset of Nichols's first book, disarms a reader who might question the leap from Chapter 9, "Eighteenth-Century Extremes" (on the work of Brown, Repton, the Marquis de Girardin, Carmontelle, and others) to Chapter 10, "Modern Gardens" (on William Robinson, T. H. Mawson, Reginald Blomfield, F. Inigo Thomas, Gertrude Jekyll, and others). Were any pleasure gardens created in England between, say, 1820 and 1870? Of course. But Nichols would have dismissed some without a word; others she discusses under the heading "Italian Villa Gardens" in Chapter 8. Apparently what mattered to Nichols, the designer, was not when, exactly, some particular garden or garden feature was created but its form – and the tradition to which that form could be traced.

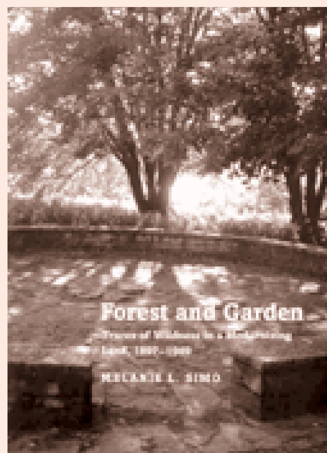
Until recently Rose Standish Nichols (1872–1960) has generally been known by association with other people. Rose's mother was the sister of Augustus Saint-Gaudens's wife. Rose's youngest sister married Arthur A. Shurcliff, once an apprentice in the Olmsted office. Rose's friends among the artists, writers, and designers of Cornish, New Hampshire, included Charles Platt – her mentor in garden design. In her master's thesis on the writings of Rose Standish Nichols (Dartmouth College, 1989), Margery P. Trumbull reintroduced the little-known "Miss Nichols," but the thesis was not published. Now, with Tankard's concise introduction to *English Pleasure Gardens*, along with other biographical sketches in print, Nichols will become better known – and not for garden design alone.

At a time when most women did not seek professional careers, Nichols studied both architecture and garden design at MIT. While living with the Saint-Gaudens family in New York she studied under the architect Thomas Hastings of Carrère and Hastings. In the Chicago area, Nichols worked on residential garden designs with the architects Howard Van Doren Shaw and David Adler and with the landscape architect Jens Jensen. When the managing editor of *McClure's Magazine*, Willa Cather, planned to publish some of the correspondence of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Nichols edited the letters and wrote an introduction. Her friends included several "Henry James Americans" (Jane Brown's phrase), such as Isabella Stewart Gardner, Bernard Berenson, the Cornish circle, and James himself. Other friends and colleagues were activists, including Jane Addams of Hull House in Chicago and leaders in the movement for women's suffrage. In Cornish, along with First Lady Edith Wilson and a few other women, Nichols founded "A League of Small Nations" some time before President Woodrow Wilson proposed *his* League of Nations. In Boston, Nichols served as a director of both the Cooperative Building Association and the Boston Society of Decorative Art.

Today, the home where Rose Standish Nichols lived since the age of eight is the Nichols House Museum; the address is 55 Mount Vernon Street on Beacon Hill in Boston. The Nichols family home in Cornish is also open to the public in summer; formerly known as "Mastlands," with a stone-walled garden that Rose designed, it is now the Cornish Colony Gallery and Museum. (See Alma M. Gilbert and Judith B. Tankard, *A Place of Beauty: The Artists and Gardens of the Cornish Colony*, 2000.) And in Milwaukee, a water cascade that Nichols designed for the Lloyd R. Smith residence now forms part of the Villa Terrace Museum of Decorative Arts. Inevitably, these houses and gardens will have changed somewhat, and yet a visit might reveal something of Nichols's affinity for classic form, understated, "rather like a rosebud about to unfold," as Trumbull put it. Better yet, read *English Pleasure Gardens* and see how one designer worked her way through centuries of tradition that she meant to carry on.

– Melanie Simo

***Forest and Garden: Traces of Wildness in a Modernizing Land, 1897–1949***
**by Melanie L. Simo**
(Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2003)




Between 1888 and 1897, *Garden and Forest* magazine documented a remarkable period of shifting attitudes and sensibilities toward the American landscape.[1] Published weekly by Charles Sprague Sargent, director of the Arnold Arboretum in Boston, the magazine combined articles and information in related fields of interest that today are often Balkanized by their own professional organizations and university departments. In the pages of *Garden and Forest*, Sargent and his editor, William A. Stiles, juxtaposed reports on scenic preservation efforts and botanical research with descriptions of contemporary landscape design and aesthetic theory. Foresters, landscape gardeners, and horticulturists made common cause and, notably in one case, spoke with a single voice: Sargent himself engaged in all three practices and extolled the value of interdisciplinary inquiry. Landscape gardening, for example, was not to be limited to the "planting of flower-beds and of ornamental shrubs," but was a "broad and catholic art…as useful in the preservation of the Yosemite Valley or the scenery of Niagara as it is in planning a pastoral park or the grounds about a country house."[2] This editorial tradition was rooted in the nineteenth-century periodicals of J. C. Loudon and A. J. Downing; *Garden and Forest* exhorted its readers to expand the aesthetic sensibilities developed working on their own "home grounds" and to become advocates for the preservation of landscape beauty wherever it was found, from their own neighborhoods to remote public lands.

Melanie Simo's interesting and erudite book takes its title and its point of departure from *Garden and Forest*. Her inquiries begin in 1897, when the magazine ceased publication following the death of Stiles. Frederick Law Olmsted had ended his professional activities two years earlier, and a new era was beginning in which writers and artists created new responses to and representations of the American landscape, and scientists, landscape architects, and foresters struggled to develop and organize their professional theories and practices.

Simo reassembles the strains of scientific, literary, and artistic endeavor that were joined during the first half of the twentieth century in related efforts to define and elevate what remained of "wildness" in North America. Before there was anything as organized as a "wilderness" movement, nature writers, landscape architects, painters, and scientists had already constructed a cultural basis for describing and appreciating the vanishing traces of a world that was succumbing to twentieth-century technology and population levels. To document and analyze this profoundly diverse phenomenon, Simo wisely eschews comprehensive "analytical or theoretical frameworks" and avoids current debates over wilderness designations and the management of public lands. She structures the discussion as a series of narrative chapters from which certain themes emerge: "A growing awareness of conflict… between natural processes and the processes of civilization…; trends towards the professionalization of a body of knowledge, values, and purposes…; a growing appreciation for small remnants of once-wild lands…; at the same time, a growing desire to preserve vast tracts of wilderness."

The history of the idea of wilderness and the movement to preserve it have generated a considerable amount of literature over the last 20 years (much of which the author discusses in this book). But Simo's unique point of view as a historian gives her work its own special insight. The author of the most important histories of post–World War II American landscape design, Simo also is a Loudon scholar and the author of a 1988 book on that nineteenth-century British landscape gardener.[3] Her historical research made her aware, she notes, of a "gap in time" in the history of American landscape architecture. The nineteenth-century career of Frederick Law Olmsted was well appreciated, and Simo's own work on postwar modernism led to a better understanding of the recent past; but the intervening years – a time of "critical transition in American history," generally – were not well understood by landscape historians. As she studied the generation of American landscape designers who "for one reason or another resisted or ignored the modern movement" in the early twentieth century, she noticed that this older generation retained "affiliations with horticulturists, geologists, foresters, and painters of the old school."

She also noticed the passion with which two prominent members of that group, Henry Vincent Hubbard and Theodora Kimball, described the "blind destructive forces of man's enterprise," and the need for modern people to "find something in wild nature…to fulfill and complete their being." Simo's interest in the history of professional landscape architecture between the 1890s and the 1940s brought her to other key figures, such as Frank A. Waugh and Arthur H. Carhart, landscape architects who crossed disciplines (into horticulture and forestry, respectively) and who developed influential theory and management plans for the preservation of "native landscapes" and "wilderness." The history of American landscape architecture during these crucial decades before the widespread adoption of modernist theory and practice, it turns out, figured prominently in the development of American attitudes and ideas toward the value of preserving wild places. Carhart's collaboration with forester Aldo Leopold in the early 1920s to develop the U.S. Forest Service "wilderness" land-use designation is well known, but Simo also uncovers an older and broader strain of professional thinking. She discusses the influence of Harvard scientist Nathaniel Southgate Shaler in the 1890s, for example, on a second generation of landscape architects that included Charles Eliot and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. Shaler was dean of the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard during this critical period, where he influenced the formation of Harvard professional degree programs in both landscape architecture

[1] The magazine is accessible online through a joint effort by the Library of Congress, the Arnold Arboretum, and the University of Michigan's "Making of America" project (http://www.loc.gov/preserv/prd/gardfor/gfhome.html).

[2] *Garden and Forest* (May 19, 1897): 192.

[3] See: Peter Walker and Melanie Simo, *Invisible Gardens: The Search for Modernism in the American Landscape* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996); Melanie L. Simo, *100 Years of Landscape Architecture: Some Patterns of a Century* (Washington, D.C.: ASLA Press, 1999); idem, *The Coalescing of Different Forces and Ideas: A History of Landscape Architecture at Harvard, 1900–1999* (Cambridge: Harvard University Graduate School of Design, 2000); and idem, *Loudon & the Landscape: From Country Seat to Metropolis, 1783–1843* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

and forestry. The author of *Man and Earth* (1905), he was able to "institutionalize his environmental values, which were basically social values as well."

Simo's insights into this period of American landscape architecture, especially as regards its early relationship to the appreciation of wilderness values, are important conclusions. She is not as interested in "institutional or general views," however, as much as in "personal feelings and perceptions of the land, its uses, its beauty, its fate." And it is in the retrieval of these personal perceptions that the book makes its most significant and original contributions. Part One is organized as a series of evocations of landscape types: desert, prairie, and forested mountains, for example. Simo surveys the nature writers, poets, painters, and other artists of the period who generated the sensibilities that necessarily preceded appreciation, and therefore preservation, of wild places. Rutgers art history professor John C. Van Dyke and best-selling author Mary Austin, for instance, created a cultural phenomenon with *The Desert* (1901) and *Land of Little Rain* (1903), respectively. The desert was seen not only as beautiful but restorative of human health, especially for lung diseases. When Aldo Leopold became interested in the arid lands of New Mexico in 1909, he moved, as Simo notes, "beyond issues of human health to consider the health of the land." He later described the remote Chihuahua Sierra as the "healthiest" land he had ever seen: the idea of ecological health was equated with "aboriginal condition," free of any (apparent) human influence. The definition of "unspoiled wilderness" as a "healthy organism" (and other places, therefore, as "sick land") would be as influential and pervasive as Leopold's "land ethic," itself. The development of an aesthetic of desert beauty and the association of the desert with human health, however, prefigured Leopold's understanding of the ecological health of desert wilderness.

With regard to the prairie, Simo introduces the landscape architect and preservationist Jens Jensen by first discussing the writing of Emerson Hough and Willa Cather. Literature again complements early-twentieth-century environmental thought, and Simo establishes needed literary and artistic contexts for scientific and advocacy efforts. She also notes certain concentrations of writers, poets, and designers in the San Francisco Bay area, including poet Charles Keeler and architect Bernard Maybeck, who particularly influenced the development of a wilderness aesthetic. Another group was centered in and around New York and Boston and represented a continuation of Olmstedian thought and sensibilities in the early twentieth century, as expressed, for example, in Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer's *Art Out of Doors* (1893), a book that was based partly on articles she published in *Garden and Forest*. Some of the writers Simo presents, such as John Burroughs and Charles Keeler, are well-known today; others, such as Donald Culross Peattie and Edwin Way Teale, have become relatively obscure. Nonetheless, they all shaped the sensibilities of preservationists and even scientists, and Simo goes a long way in the rediscovery of their roles.

Part Two of the book is a more chronological account in which she emphasizes the professional activities of landscape architects, park managers, scientists, and wilderness advocates of her period. She rightly begins with Frederick Law Olmsted's advice at the end of his active life to his son, Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. More than any other Olmsted apprentice, the younger Olmsted attempted to adapt his father's ideas and professional practice to the purposes of twentieth-century preservation, especially in the national park system. Olmsted, Jr., influenced the National Park Service beginning in 1916, when he drafted the key portions of the legislation creating it. The agency remained imbued with essentially Olmstedian ideals through the 1950s, when the crushing effects of mass automotive tourism fatally undermined the goal of preserving landscapes "unimpaired" for the purpose of public "enjoyment." Simo follows the complementary trajectories of professional forestry, planning, and ecological science, noting the degree to which intellectual hybridization still occurred among them. While her accounts of the life and work of well-known figures, such as Lewis Mumford, Bob Marshall, and Benton MacKaye, are available in more detail elsewhere, they are recounted here with the additional context of less known contemporaries, such as Henry Hazlitt Kopman, whose *Wild Acres* (1946) was an ecological portrait of New Orleans, or drama critic Walter Pritchard Eaton, whose columns in the *Berkshire Eagle* in the 1940s advocated the preservation of the fast-disappearing countryside of western New England. Better known authors, including Sarah Orne Jewett and Edith Wharton, are examined anew in light of their contemporary appreciation of American landscapes and their use of those landscapes as literary motifs.

Simo successfully establishes at least some of the broader cultural foundations of the growing and diverse sensibility that, in the post–World War II period, coalesced as the modern environmental movement. Her period ends with the publication of Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac* in 1949, arguably the first and still most pertinent manifesto of environmental ethics. Jens Jensen published *The Clearing*, his ruminations on the midwestern landscape and landscape design, the same year. Both works were influenced by the development of the ecological sciences by individuals such as Henry C. Cowles at the University of Chicago and by regional groups, including the Friends of Our Native Landscape, that advocated the preservation of ecologically significant areas. The concern for "native" plants and landscapes characterized the midwestern landscape designs of Jensen, O. C. Simonds, and Elsa Rehmann, as well as local preservation efforts, which increasingly were based on ecological as well as scenic criteria. Leopold's landmark essays grew out of a world in which science, scenic preservation, horticulture, and landscape architecture were still intertwined among midwesterners who shared a growing concern for the continued health of what little "wildness" had survived the previous decades of modernization and growth.

Simo's excursions are peripatetic but purposeful. The half century covered, she notes, "was not known for the active defense of wilderness in the United States, apart from the efforts of a few individuals and organizations, rowing against the current of a modernizing, urbanizing society that was increasingly dependent on the findings of science and the advances of technology." Organized "wilderness" preservation would come later, notably when Congress enacted the 1964 Wilderness Act. But Simo chooses her examples well and finds the threads that bind these individuals and organizations and their works. Many of these common themes were presaged in the pages of *Garden and Forest* magazine by a remarkable (and remarkably diverse) group of contributors. Simo's apt inspiration for a starting point has resulted in a valuable interdisciplinary exploration into how a broad range of cultural figures constructed and valued the traces of "wildness" that they saw receding around them in the twentieth century. – Ethan Carr

# Remembering Daniel Urban Kiley and His Works

Dan Kiley's name is legendary in Vermont, both within and outside the design professions. Eleven years ago, my spouse, Jim Donovan, and I found our place, a scenic west Charlotte former dairy farm, and settled in the town where Dan Kiley and his family had lived for decades. My remembrances of the highly regarded landscape architect are rooted here and in my experiences of his works beyond Vermont.

Our town, about 1,600 households, and the surrounding Burlington region is a neighborly place, and I encountered Dan casually on several occasions. In person, Dan was lively, pulsing with kinetic energy, his white hair seemingly electrified. He spoke tersely, and his clear eyes observed everything around him. Once, Dan and his wife Anne were at the local woodstove store and we discussed stoves, wood, and heating performance; on town meeting day Dan was in line with us to vote, and we exchanged greetings; on a few early morning flights to see clients we talked briefly about where we were headed. When my office was researching a local historic district for a mutual client, we enjoyed a jovial, interesting lunch with Dan, Anne, and son Deedle Kiley across Lake Champlain.

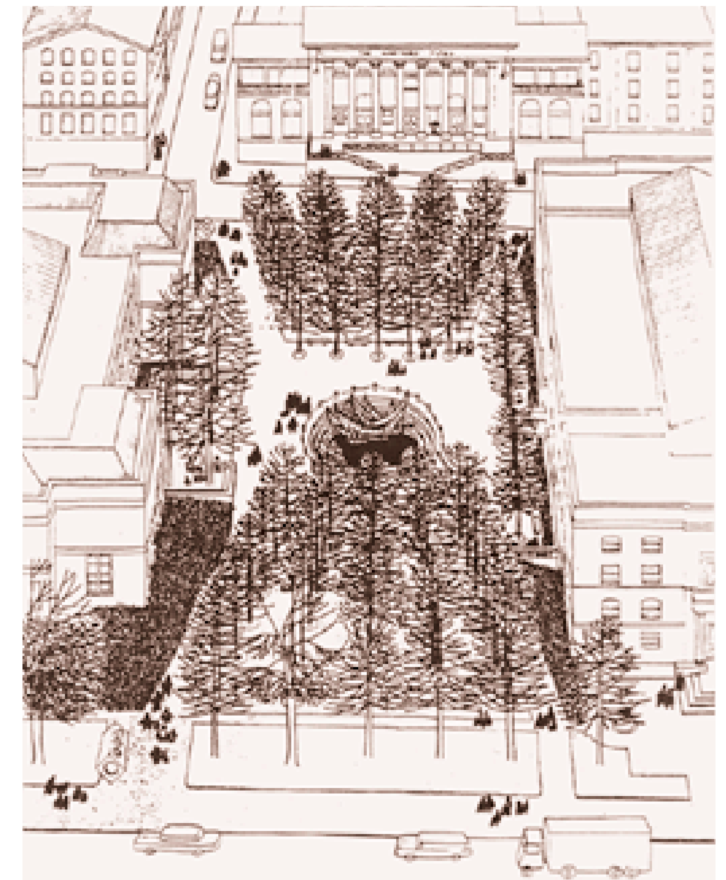
In 1992, my office developed a comprehensive plan for the system of 32 parks in Hartford, Connecticut. One of these was the Alfred E. Burr Memorial Sculpture Court, which had been designed by the Kiley firm in 1968–70 and constructed in the early 1970s. Although in some disrepair and poised for significant changes, this urban plaza demonstrates Dan's clarity and ingenuity as a landscape architect. The 1.7-acre space between the Atheneum and City Hall had as its focus a stepped white marble fountain on the center axis and an Alexander Calder sculpture beside it. Dark slate paving was underlain with heating elements to melt snow (not functioning now). Two groves of London plane trees formed an inward-warped grid focused on an oval fountain (also not functioning). The ground plane under the trees was decomposed granite around marble tree rings, providing contrasting color and texture and requiring little maintenance. Locust and gingko trees and yew shrubs screened adjacent building facades. The open space around the fountain and sculpture and the dappled light under the open canopy of the groves provided a plaza interior of artistic character and refinement. Yet these trees were being cut as construction was getting under way. We mourned the current taste that signaled disregard of the integrity of the original Kiley design.

I had the opportunity to observe and study the grounds of the St. Louis Arch in the early 1980s when, belatedly, additional elements of Kiley's original collaboration with Eero Saarinen were under construction. More recently, I lectured on the evolution of American estate design and design principles using six examples, including the Miller Garden in Columbus, Indiana, designed by the Office of Dan Kiley. Afterward, I led a tour of the Miller Garden for the symposium group, pointing out how Kiley's landscape design worked in conjunction with the house design by Saarinen as well as with the Alexander Girard interiors.

Currently, in my role as a founding board member of the Cultural Landscape Foundation, I am supporting CLF's efforts to fund an interactive computer-based learning segment of "Cultural Landscapes as Classrooms." This initiative focuses on two modern gardens: Kiley's Miller Garden and Thomas Church's Donnell Garden.

As a part of the Wave Hill/Cultural Landscape Foundation/National Park Service symposium, "Preserving Modern Landscape Architecture," in April of 2002 (proceedings pending 2004, Cultural Landscape Foundation), I attempted to explain the spatial organization and character of Kiley's design for the Lincoln Center Plaza in New York. Like many other people, I am dismayed at the prospect that this major work of modernist landscape design will be compromised by the proposed plan for the plaza's renovation, which fails to reinstate the Kiley work.

As Dan Kiley's productive career has ended, closing a significant chapter in modern landscape architecture, the mission of understanding and preserving his reputation must continue. It is my hope that the profession will widely recognize, document, preserve, and celebrate his legacy as a modern master of landscape architecture in the years to come.
– Patricia O'Donnell



Burr Sculpture Court, drawn by Office of Dan Kiley, 1970s.

**The Bard Graduate Center**
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# [viewpoints]


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