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Motion and Emotion in C.C.L. Hirschfeld's Theory of Garden Art

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Movement, the very soul of nature.
— Theory of Garden Art (143)

In the second volume of C.C.L. Hirschfeld's *Theory of Garden Art*, there is a highly cinematic moment when a wanderer's eye sweeps across a landscape vista and, lifting above the forest, spies the top of a distant hillside where a field is being worked. It is an astonishing image: a reaper appears to be mowing the forest's canopy with his scythe (2:141). This is, of course, not a surreal event but an error of interpretation resulting from an accidental and interdependent relationship between viewer and object, in this case between a garden visitor and the sight of a distant horizon perceived beyond the garden proper. For me, Hirschfeld's magical vision recalls a captivating image in Werner Herzog's *Fitzcaraldo* where a huge boat is observed floating slowly uphill across the treetops of a tropical forest.

Although the action in *Fitzcaraldo* is carefully choreographed, the image Hirschfeld describes is coincidental: it is not part of a landscape designer's intention, nor is it sought out by the visitor. For Hirschfeld, however, that such a conjunction is both unplanned and unanticipated makes it no less charming. Indeed, the unexpectedness adds to its appeal. And both of these visions bear on this discussion because they are intimately tied to two of the most basic and multifarious aspects of a garden: the beholder's perception and the role of movement—in one case a camera lens, in the other a visitor moving through the landscape

References to *Theory of Garden Art* are of two types. If the passage is included in my published translation, a page number is given (as in the opening epigraph), referring to C.C.L. Hirschfeld, *Theory of Garden Art*, ed. and trans. Linda B. Parshall (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). If the passage is not included in my translation, a vol. no. and page no. are given, as in the first citation above (2:141), referring to the original German ed., *Theorie der Gartenkunst*, 5 vols. (Leipzig, 1779–1785); repr. in reduced facsimile, 5 vols. in 2, with intro. by Hans Foramitti (Hildesheim, Zurich, and New York: Olms, 1973 and 1985). A French ed. (trans. Friedrich de Castillon) appeared almost simultaneously with the original German: *Théorie de l'art des jardins. Traduit de l'allemand*, 5 vols. (Leipzig, 1779–85); repr. in reduced facsimile, 5 vols. in 3 (Geneva: Minkoff, 1973).

and scanning the horizon.[1] Indeed, there is movement involved in the physiology of vision itself, for scientific studies have demonstrated that, in the process of looking, the eye is far from at rest but instead "probes and gropes for meaning," whether scanning a text or a picture, or making sense out of a series of moving images.[2] Meanwhile we mentally process visual signals in the temporal space that allow us to register their meaning. What is technically known as "temporal integration," the bundling together of memories and expectations in one stretch of time,[3] makes it possible to interpret what lies before us. It is the *experience* of the landscape that causes the boat and the mower to appear and then disappear, an experience created not only by movement but by the exigencies of human perception as well. The scene as such exists in the beholder's imagination.

Hirschfeld appreciates the visual "painting" of such vistas, their gradual appearance and the process by which we fully "see" them, and he often compares natural scenes with landscape paintings, as did so many of his contemporaries. Yet, he finds gardens superior to paintings because of their potentially greater *effect*, an effect heightened by the varied elements of motion. Here the viewer's active role in apprehending and interpreting a garden must differ from responding to a static work of art. For Hirschfeld, movement in all of its manifestations is fundamental to the creation of a garden's meaning; its composition of scenic elements, its three-dimensionality, in sum the experience of the garden altogether.

Christian Cay Lorenz Hirschfeld lived from 1742 to 1792. Author of many books, he was the most recognized and influential authority on the art of gardening in continental Europe well into the early nineteenth century. He achieved his greatest fame with his five-volume *Theory of Garden Art*, published between 1779 and 1785. These handsome books, 1,300 pages in all including nearly 250 illustrations, are at once erudite and entertaining. They provided a compendium of theory and reference, description and philosophy, prose and poetry, a source of inspiration for more than a generation of readers, not just in Germany but throughout the Continent, where he was repeatedly quoted and also plagiarized.

Hirschfeld himself was not a practicing gardener but a theoretician, and questions of meaning and interpretation, of stimulus and response to nature, lay at the heart of his concerns. As a student of theology and philosophy at Halle under A. G. Baumgarten, he was steeped in the enlightened tradition of Christian Wolff, anticipating the more progressive position soon to be formulated by Karl Philipp Moritz, among others. Moritz's study of 1788, *Über die bildende Nachahmung des Schönen* (On the pictorial imitation of the beautiful), marks a turning point in eighteenth-century aesthetic theories in that he conceives of

[1] They are also bound up with the issue of perception. I am reminded of Hogarth's amusing satire on *False Perspective* (1754), where our eyes trick us into accepting as reasonable a gargantuan figure lighting his pipe on a distant hill, just one of a myriad of figures and structures that are totally out of scale. See E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, 4th ed. (London: Phaidon, 1972) 205 ff., fig. 209. Hirschfeld is not trying to deceive us, but he does enjoy the play on the perspective system.

[2] E. H. Gombrich, *The Image and the Eye*: *Further Studies in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1982), 50.

[3] Gombrich, *The Image*, 47. See also his discussion of Augustine's thoughts on time and memory, insights that Gombrich claims both Shaftesbury and Lessing would have profited from (46 ff.).

imitation as an internal process of creation rather than a mirroring of external realities. I am not claiming that Hirschfeld formulated anything so innovative but that his theory reflects a trend within German thought that was leading in the direction Moritz would set. The idea of the "natural" garden attracted Hirschfeld as it did so many thinkers of his time because it seemed to embody these new attitudes toward nature and perception. In short, the natural garden was an art form capable of absorbing and expressing the philosophical, political, and social tendencies of the age.

Questions of aesthetics were deeply engaging eighteenth-century thinkers concerned not only with defining beauty but analyzing its effects. The physico-theology of the period recognized a preestablished harmony in nature as well as a human ability to apprehend its divine origin and in turn be morally improved. Thus inanimate nature became a focus of attention for the arts, both as a source and model of beauty and goodness and as a concept that included not just the external world but the subjective realm of the spirit.[4] Nature's aesthetic power was seen as the ultimate paradigm for imitation in literature and the fine arts; the landscape was imbued with new meaning.[5] Hence, the principle of imitation preoccupied contemporary debates about the new art of gardening as well. At issue was how to define the mimetic relationship between the unaffected landscape of nature and the self-conscious composition of a designed garden or park.[6]

The aesthetic debates over gardens in the eighteenth century inevitably depended on the advanced theoretical discussions of the sister arts and on the classically rooted principle of mimesis.[7] A radically new perspective had been offered by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's seminal tract *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*.[8] By contrasting the visual arts as occurring in space (their true subject being objects) with the poetic arts occurring in time (their true subject being actions), Lessing ushered in modern aesthetic theory. Al-

[4] Arthur Lovejoy was able to distinguish more than 60 different meanings for *nature* in English. See John D. Boyd, *The Function of Mimesis and Its Decline* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1968), esp. "The Changing Concept of 'Nature,' " 74 ff.

[5] See Johann Georg Sulzer, "Landschaft," in *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste in einzeln, nach alphabetischer Ordnung der Kunstwörter auf einander folgenden*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1771–74), 114–21. On 18th-century debates over mimesis and imagination in Germany, see David Morgan, "The Rise and Fall of Abstraction in Eighteenth-Century Art Theory," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 27 (1994): 449–78.

[6] As John Dixon Hunt, with a turn on Foucault, terms it, it is an art form that is "both a thing represented and a thing representing." See Hunt, "Imitation, Representation, and the Study of Garden Art," in Susan C. Scott, ed., *The Art of Interpreting* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 200.

[7] The seminal study is Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis; dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur* (Bern [1946]); trans. Willard R. Trask, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1953). For a broader approach and a survey of the historical background of the topic, see Gunter Gebauer and Christoph Wulf, *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). For a discussion of this period's misinterpretation of classical mimesis, see Boyd, *The Function of Mimesis*, esp. 109–29.

[8] Lessing, *Laokoon, oder: Über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie*, vol. 5.2 of Lessing, *Werk und Briefe, 1766–1769*, ed. Wilfried Barner (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1990), pt. 1, chap. 17; English trans. Edward Allen McCormick (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962). On Lessing's innovativeness, see Gebauer and Wulf, *Mimesis*, 186.

though Lessing does not discuss gardens, or examine the role of motion as such, his opposition of objects to actions and space to time had profound implications for eighteenth-century understanding of the new art of garden design. In this regard Lessing's concern with response, that is to say with the experiential effect of an object or action, is likewise fundamentally relevant to Hirschfeld's analysis of gardens, as is Lessing's attention to the role of the respondent in this relationship. A move into the three-dimensional, necessarily interactive world of the garden was bound to require new perspectives.

Hirschfeld knew Lessing personally, yet he neither cites him nor offers evidence in the *Theory* of having read his work. Nevertheless, given Lessing's prominence, it is difficult to imagine a philosopher of Hirschfeld's generation being entirely innocent of his most important writings. The notion of imitation is central to Hirschfeld's evaluation of the garden as an aesthetic experience in the realm of art, especially garden art, where both the matter and appearance of nature are reproduced, as well as in the educational and moral effects of that imitation on the visitor. Indeed, Hirschfeld's analysis of the interaction between the natural scene and the senses seems poised to overcome what Sir Ernst Gombrich has termed Lessing's "fatal dichotomy between space and time in art which has tangled the discussion ever since."[9]

Some of Hirschfeld's critics—and he had several—judged his approach to be too analytical, too scientific. Yet, given the Enlightenment penchant for philosophical analysis, it is hardly surprising that he, along with many other writers, not only speculated on how the elements of the natural world affect us but went on to systematize the aesthetic and psychological processes involved. The theory known as associationism, for example, held that certain experiences evoke specific corresponding emotions, which in turn elicit effects that are at once sensuous and of ethical and didactic significance.[10] Hirschfeld propounded associationist theory, and he enriched it with particular speculations of his own on the importance of movement in gardens. Like the associationists, he gave special weight to the active role of the subject who engages in a creative process involving stimulus, memory, and imagination, and he considered how a garden might be designed to intensify that engagement. The interiority of the subject, the character and function of mental images, indeed, the imagination itself, were interpreted through imitation of, and the human response to, nature.

The eighteenth century came to analyze aesthetic response by looking at the artistic object as both the result and the embodiment of a creative process and by recognizing how that process is recreated in the mind of the beholder. This is especially complex in the realm of garden art where the product (the garden) and the medium (the natural world) are in fundamental ways indistinguishable. Furthermore, the thing represented is meant to be

[9] Gombrich, *The Image*, 46.

[10] See Hirschfeld, *Theory,* 15–17 and 39. He discusses the moral power of the arts in *Von der moralischen Einwürkung der bildenden Künste* (Leipzig, 1775). Home and Whately were his major English sources for associationist theory. See Wolfgang Schepers, *Hirschfelds Theorie der Gartenkunst, 1779–1785* (Worms: Werner'sche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1980), especially the excursus on associationism, 129–35.

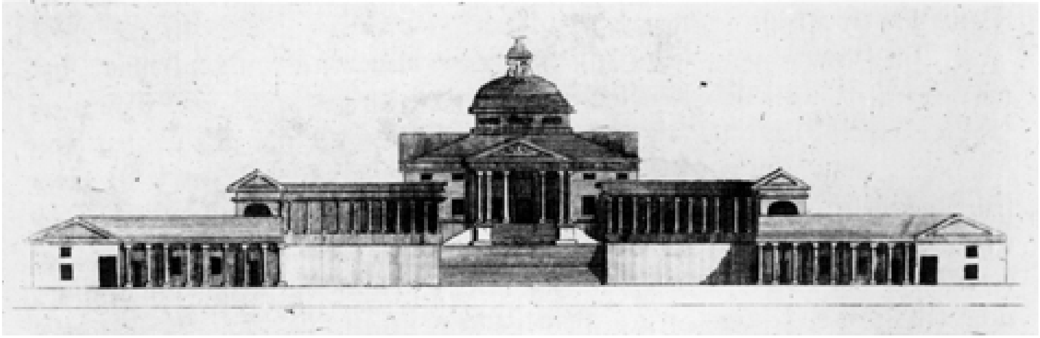
admired both passively and actively, both visually and experientially. In short, the beholder is a controlling participant in the production and reproduction of meaning. Hirschfeld's attention to the effect of a landscape drew him into contemporary aesthetic theory, as did his analyses of imitation. Yet as he defines the garden's representational function—not only in relation to nature but to the other arts as well—Hirschfeld expands on the issues of imitation and experience. Among the key concepts that emerge are the roles of motion and emotion.

I propose to plumb the *Theory* on the subject of motion and emotion and their mimetic function: how they are perceived and experienced, and how they are deemed to affect the viewer aesthetically and morally. What emerges is a conception of garden art as a richly sensual and subjective arena of experience. It is not surprising that Hirschfeld set out to validate the status of garden design, yet his case for enthroning it above the other arts is exceptional and elaborate. Of special interest here is the fact that his sustained defense of the art of gardening rests significantly on a celebration of the ways in which the imitative power of motion sets the garden apart from other arts. In fact, Hirschfeld highlights motion along with color as one of the two basic constituents of beauty.

The garden type that Hirschfeld champions is the relatively new English garden, and he enlists an impressive array of authorities in support of it. Many of them he quotes at length, arguing for the superiority of the landscape garden over what he dismisses as the "old style," "regular," or "formal" garden with its stilted, unengaging, unnatural hierarchies and symmetries. Hirschfeld's high regard for the contribution of movement surfaces in his condemnation of formal layouts as architectural and tedious rather than natural and exciting. They are disagreeable in themselves and contradictory to the idea of a true garden, for they lack the kinds of motion he deems essential to the experience of nature. In his opinion, even proceeding through a formal garden sparks no emotive response; the visitor is only driven to depart and search out the irregular diversity of untouched nature.[11]

In keeping with this rejection of stasis *in* gardens, Hirschfeld also rejects pictorial representations *of* gardens, although he is an enthusiast when it comes to paintings of landscape. He is especially critical of the many publications that squander their illustrations on symmetrical gardens, bird's-eye views, and ground plans. Since a garden is properly experienced in space and time—an ever-changing series of scenes and effects—it cannot be captured in two dimensions. Hence garden illustrations, he argues, should be elusive and allusive, suggestive and pointing beyond themselves. Accordingly, the majority of the illustrations for *Theory* are not of gardens at all, but architectural studies (Fig. 1). The "scenes" included, many fewer in number, are depictions not of real but imagined places, often scarcely

[11] See Hirschfeld, *Theory*, 159 f. Also: "Another adverse effect of symmetry is the uniformity and tedium that are inseparable from it and are in direct opposition to a garden's character. All things, both natural and artificial, look so alike; no variety, no agreeable intrusion; everything can be surveyed at once, understood at once. The impressions quickly tire for us and lose all their power; we want to be occupied, and we find nothing to touch us further. We wrest ourselves from boredom by strolling beyond the narrowly confined area of the garden and out into the open fields, where nature may once again delight us with her particular diversity and charm" (134).

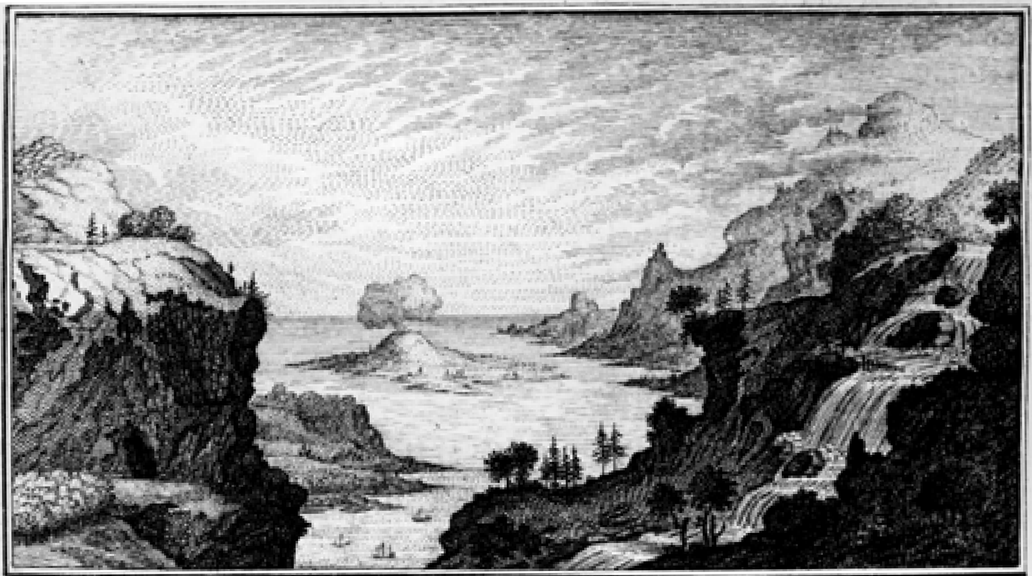


1. *Architectural study, an Italian villa by Palladio.* Theorie der Gartenkunst II, *95*

distinguishable from untouched nature, and sometimes veering toward fantasy landscapes filled with movement, for example, a volcanic eruption or a dramatic cascade (Fig. 2). Like gardens themselves, these illustrations are meant to establish a mood, to convey a notion of involvement that distinguishes garden art from all others.[12] Hirschfeld prefers images that suggest what it means to experience a garden, images that elicit a sense of the effect of a visitor's interaction with the space itself. Sometimes we see people moving through or set within a landscape—perhaps navigating a waterway on a skiff or reposing on a carefully sited chair and gazing at a distant vista or reading a book (Fig. 3). Even these scenes he judges inferior to the real thing, and he rarely refers to the illustrations in his own works. It was the beauty of the natural landscape that first drew Hirschfeld to contemplate man's relationship to nature, a process that led him from discussions of simple country living in the Swiss Alps to the goal of capturing the "genius of the place" in German gardens. His theory of gardens is ultimately a theory of direct encounter with the natural landscape.

Throughout, Hirschfeld pursues the theme of motion and emotion from a variety of perspectives. His categories range widely from the actual movement of elements within a garden, such as the play of light on water or a cow wading through tall grass, to the transitory, gradual motion of changing seasons and times of day. There is an implied movement that can be achieved in the flow of a garden layout. The illusion of movement is in the sculpture of a figure in action, and finally there is the movement of a visitor's body, and the eye within it, through a garden. He suggests that motion is perceived through the senses of smell, hearing, and touch, and he maintains that the garden artist can actualize or heighten all these sensual, visible, and virtual movements, thereby significantly heightening the garden's

[12] Esp. 172–73, where Hirschfeld analyzes the differences among the visual arts, poetry, and gardens, often sounding quite similar to Lessing's *Laocoön* essay. On garden *ekphrasis*, see also John Dixon Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 199. Hirschfeld's attitude recalls Whately, one of his primary models, whose book is proudly "illustrated by descriptions" only. *Observations on Modern Gardening: Illustrated by Descriptions* (London, 1770); facsimile ed. by Hunt (New York: Garland, 1982).



2. *A scene by Johann Heinrich Brandt.* Theorie I, *221*

3. *A scene by Johann Heinrich Brandt.* Theorie I, *230*

affective power. "Through all these gateways [that is, through the senses], the beauties of the landscape and the comforts of nature pour into the mind. The impression an object makes on one sense can be strengthened by the movement of another. When several senses agree, they enhance the object even more" (151).

Let us consider some of these proposals more closely. Hirschfeld calls upon the garden artist, wherever possible, to "find a spot in his garden with animated views (*vues mouvantes*) of the surrounding area: views of villages, hills, fields, and meadows, where herds graze and the farmer labors; of lakes and rivers enlivened by sailing vessels and fishermen; of distant country roads scattered with walking figures" (160). Movement is in itself beautiful, he claims, for it contains two essential elements: variety and change, since "nothing is more refreshing than the movement of landscape elements; the loveliest tree acquires additional charm when a soft breeze plays in its leaves"(160). Indeed, some features of the landscape are deemed problematic, or worse, if they are not in motion; water is the most obvious, being animation itself when in movement, contemptible and foul when stagnant.[13]

Hirschfeld enlists movement not just through the obvious motion of landscape elements themselves but also in the slower transitions brought on by seasonal and diurnal change, the progress of time, motions that can be not only observed but also read metaphorically. He mentions the flourishing and fading of plants, the less observable but real modifications that occur in the land or its vegetation over long periods, and the vicissitudes of weather. All of these contribute to the animation and vivacity of the garden as it is apprehended.

A landscape designer, like a painter, can also create illusions of movement. One method Hirschfeld suggests is the serpentine line, something that he finds in nature's model.

> An interrelation of rural scenes is never more charming than when it is animated by movement. Both landscape painter and garden artist can achieve this effect partly through employment of the serpentine line, a lesson to be learned from observing nature. . . . Hogarth's Line of Beauty . . . is too brilliantly visible in the forms and outlines of the landscape to be mistaken; it is thus taught by nature. It is characteristic of mobility, just as the straight line is part of immobility. Its effect is, finally, something that neither the painter nor the garden artist can afford to lose. (142–43)

He even envisions ways in which statues or monuments, though static, can contribute motion to a garden by depicting figures in action. He encourages images that show process, for example, personifications of the virtues at work or a portrait of someone doing something. These he finds especially inspirational for public gardens (408).[14]

Hirschfeld provides intriguing examples of implied or illusory movement in creative

[13] On water, see 95–96, 180–81, 185, 196, 232–51, and 1: 206. On other kinds of movement, see the index to *Theory*.

[14] See also Hirschfeld, *Von der moralischen Einwürkung*, 39 ff., where he praises the genius of Pietro da Cortona's decorations for Archduke Ferdinand's palace in Florence, all of which depict virtuous *acts*.

partnership with real movement (which he compares with the allusions to and illusions of movement that are required in painting or sculpture).[15] He rhapsodizes on the pleasures of walking through a grove of tall, shady trees—planted at irregular intervals, of course. And again we see him playing with tricks of perspective, as he describes the "pleasant spectacle" of strollers dispersing themselves among the advancing and retreating trunks, so that "the trees themselves seem to be in movement."[16] Here, reminiscent of the mower spied atop the trees, real movement creates an illusion that heightens the experience of the viewer, making her see in a new way.

Of course a garden is not just something to be looked at, or for that matter read, nor is its movement something the visitor only *sees*; rather, Hirschfeld conceives of the garden as a spatial creation to be moved through. Given his interest in motion and effect, it is hardly surprising that the *Theory* should include so many descriptions of garden visits. As Lessing appreciated, an account of an experience brings a scene to life in a way that an inventory of visual (or even sensory) elements cannot. Beyond narrating visits in the conventional manner and quoting such accounts, Hirschfeld theorizes on why and how movement is an essential part of one's engagement with a landscape.

> A park or very large garden requires a landscape of many different regions: valleys, hills, hollows, mountains, gentle slopes, and precipitous inclines, everything richly alternating. Where the ground offers such variety, vistas proliferate of themselves; it is one thing from the heights, another from the depths; each step leads to a new situation, a new painting, however immobile the objects. Scenes disappear and reappear; new ones envelop the old; locales continually change. You climb, and the horizon expands on all sides; you see regions subside and fade away as you go higher; the blue dome of the sky stretches out to immensity, and at its edge the light of day pales in the hazy distance; amazement and admiration fill the soul. Gentler emotions take their place as you descend again to lower elevations. The sky itself seems to shrink back; at least part of its loveliness retreats behind the ascending land; slopes lead to meadows, woodlands, and lakes. (205)

From such passages, we learn that movement through a garden defines the experience for Hirschfeld. Also, the landscape itself is rhetorically personified and seems to move of its own accord. Note the many active verbs: the sky "shrinks" back, the loveliness "retreats," scenes "disappear" and "envelop" each other, the land "rises," slopes "lead" us on. Furthermore, a direct relationship between physical movement and the ability of the various landscape elements affects our feelings. In this way Hirschfeld links motion to its aesthetic correlative, *e*-motion, the basic affective element in his aesthetics. For him the garden's ultimate purpose is to move us as nature does, to touch the soul and heart. It is motion that

[15] See, for instance, 139 f.

[16] See 415. Elsewhere (2:36), Hirschfeld describes the pleasure of seeing people walk among clumps of trees and how each group of strollers creates a dramatic scene for the others as they seem to scatter themselves among the trees "like lovers." He also describes how islands can appear to be moving along with the water (100–101).

leads to this subjective response. For him motion and emotion are indivisible and in a certain way are synonymous. They are not only figuratively and morally bound but are also joined in linguistic kinship. In his time the noun *Bewegung* meant both *motion* and *emotion*, as the verb *bewegen* meant both *to move physically* and *to touch emotionally*.[17] This ambiguity is also present in English and other Indo-European languages: *emotion—ex-movere*, in Latin, or even more suggestively, *ecstasy—ek-stásis*, in Greek. Hirschfeld seems to be playing with the double entendre, using the words in ways that leave them essentially equivocal. Certainly his emphasis on feeling and imagination, on subjective reality, and, of course, on nature's loveliness, looks forward to central issues in the Romantic movement. To move through and be moved by perfected nature is the new mimesis.

The roles of movement and emotion in aesthetics had by no means gone unobserved before Hirschfeld. Johann Georg Sulzer, his precursor in German garden aesthetics, cites movement as an important factor in a new hierarchy of the arts, and he devotes several pages of his *General Theory of the Fine Arts* to the subject. Here Sulzer distinguishes the elements of space and time as fundamental to the way in which motion can create beauty. Like Hirschfeld, he conceives of the resulting whole (*das Ganze*) as a unity (*eine Einheit*) of multifarious parts bound together by motion. It is in this unified whole that beauty is finally realized. Sulzer also uses *Bewegung* to express the apprehension of this beauty by the mind, citing "movements of the mind" and "movements of the disposition," namely "emotions," as essential to mental actions.[18] Sulzer makes these observations in relation to the visual arts, and more briefly to music and dance, where he grants the observer the role of becoming the progenitor and locus of the unity in beauty. However, his aesthetic does not include the physical engagement of the observer. In Sulzer's scheme the observer participates by looking, listening, thinking, and by exercising the imagination. Even in his relatively lengthy analyses of garden art and of landscape,[19] Sulzer does not discuss physical motion.

A number of other contemporary philosophers consider the aesthetic role of movement but generally confine their discussion to the visual arts: they do not extend the principle to gardening. The German aesthetician Christian Ludwig von Hagedorn wrote *Betrachtungen über die Mahlerey* (Observations on painting) and was cited by Hirschfeld.[20] Claude-Henri Watelet, whose *Dictionnaire des arts de peinture, sculpture et graveur* contains an entry on movement, does not refer to gardens.[21] However, his earlier small book was devoted to his own garden, *Le Moulin Joli*, and in it he describes the effects of motion in ways that

[17] Indeed, this verb is included in Hirschfeld's two general laws of garden art and in the basic principle underlying them: "A garden can move the imagination and senses powerfully, more powerfully than can an area whose beauty comes from nature alone" (148).

[18] See the entry on "Bewegung," in Sulzer, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*.

[19] Although in Germany the role of movement was not a major topic, there was widespread interest in gardens. Goethe, Schiller, and Kant each discussed them.

[20] Hirschfeld does not, however, refer to his discussion of movement. See Hagedorn, *Betrachtungen über die Mahlerey* (Leipzig, 1762), pt. 2, XLI, "Von der Bewegung."

[21] Claude-Henri Watelet and P. Charles Lévesque, *Dictionnaire des arts de peinture, sculpture et graveur* (Paris: Prault, 1792), vol. 3, "Mouvement."

seem clearly to have inspired Hirschfeld.[22] The *Theory* also mentions English forerunners who relate the emotions to novelty and change, each of which we might now interpret as a kind of movement, although this is not how they were discussed at the time.[23]

Much of Hirschfeld's aesthetics is indebted to accepted Enlightenment thinking; indeed, in part his book reads like a compilation of prevailing views. On the subject of garden design he drew from the writings of English theorists, particularly Thomas Whately, Henry Home, and Horace Walpole; among German intellectuals he claims only Sulzer as an inspiration.[24] Yet among all of them the attention he gives to motion is exceptional. This is underscored in his handling of another conventional debate, namely the argument over the hierarchy of different art forms.[25] Traditionally the case was presented as an allegorical competition or *paragone* among poetry, painting, and architecture. It is highly unusual to find gardening included,[26] yet Hirschfeld not only accepts the garden as a competitor but, not surprisingly, grants it the prize. The garden's defining ability to embody and inspire motion is precisely what he finds surpasses all other arts: painting is restricted to the mere illusion of

[22] See Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins* (Paris, 1774; repr., Geneva: Minkoff, 1972), 98–99 and 109–10. Hirschfeld admired this work and includes two quotations from it in the *Theory*, although not these passages. He refers obliquely to the first (139), and the phrase I have chosen for this essay's epigraph, "Movement, the very soul of nature" (143), is close to Watelet's "Le mouvement, cet esprit de la Nature" (109).

[23] Addison, for instance, whose ideas he comes close to. Cf., e.g., Addison with Hirschfeld (164): "A forest is not new to us, yet clothed in the young foliage of springtime, it assumes the charm of the new. A rose is nothing new to us, yet how delightful the first breaking bud that we find on a stem. The objects we see before us each day are also daily changed by nature, and through their novelty the objects retain an alluring power." See *The Spectator*, no. 412 (Mon., 23 June 1712), 542.

Hirschfeld refers to other theorists who acknowledge a connection between movement and feeling, although he criticizes them for belittling the power of garden art, and he quotes Home's dismissive comment, "The emotions raised by [garden] art, are at best so faint, that every artifice should be used to give them their utmost strength," *Elements of Criticism*, chap. 8, 374–75. The "emotional view of gardening" was a crucial part of Hirschfeld's theory. See Christopher Hussey, *The Picturesque: Studies in a Point of View* (London and New York: Putnam, 1927 and 1967), 160.

[24] He also names Joseph Addison, William Chambers, and Joseph Heely. See the intro. to Hirschfeld, *Theory*. Hirschfeld knew Lessing personally and certainly read other German writers widely, but he does not cite any others in the *Theory*.

[25] It is noteworthy that Hirschfeld does not include the theater in his discussions, an artistic genre often compared to garden design, and one in which movement through time and space plays an essential role. Neither does he include music, often seen as the most mimetic of the arts after literature. Kant includes the art of landscape gardening as a subcategory of painting. *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J. H. Bernard (New York: Hafner, 1951), para. 51, 167. In England it was not until Humphry Repton that the landscape garden was so highly ranked among the arts.

[26] The figure of gardening does compete in La Fontaine's "Le Songe de Vaux," a fragmentary work of the late 17th century, but she loses, condemned by the judges for her changeableness, her movement, the very qualities that Hirschfeld so admires; see *Oeuvres diverses*, ed. Pierre Clarac (Paris: Gallimard, 1958). Nicolas Fouquet commissioned the "Songe de Vaux" in honor of this spectacular garden. "Le Songe de Vaux" was published in separate fragments between 1665 and 1671, with a "complete" edition of the still fragmentary work appearing in 1729. I have found no evidence that Hirschfeld was familiar with this piece. For an interesting discussion of Vaux and Versailles and Fontaine's rendering of them, see Claire Goldstein, "Two Poems, Two Gardens, Two Masters of the Grand Siècle," *Word & Image* 14 (1998): 306–15. See also Hirschfeld, *Theory*, 18 ff.

movement; architecture and sculpture move only through the movement of the beholder and are rarely capable of the illusion of movement. In contrasting garden art and architecture he compares the challenges and goals facing each artist, insisting that a garden artist must take a different path than the architect, that his work must engage the observer "little by little" and over a long period, arguments that sound reminiscent of Lessing (132–33). As for the rivalry with painting, Hirschfeld often praises gardens for their picturesqueness, but the qualities he finds most distinctive are those that differentiate the two art forms. First of all, a well-designed garden is like a medley of the pictorial arts; it does not merely contain the beauty and power of nature that landscape painters try to capture, but it can encompass the subject matter and action of history painting. He further holds that garden art touches all the senses, affecting us not just by representing action, but by embodying it.[27] How then, he asks, could the art that not only suggests movement, offers perceived movement, is itself filled with movement, and involves the viewer in all levels of movement, be anything but superior? The interaction between garden and visitor is essentially dramatic, readily supplying the gamut of emotions that Diderot required of a great painting: "[T]ouch me, surprise me, tear me apart; make me thrill, weep, tremble, make me indignant; then restore me, if you can."[28] For Hirschfeld a great landscape garden aroused all these extreme emotions and the gentler ones; it definitely had restorative powers as well.

> None of the mimetic arts is more entwined with nature herself, which is to say more natural, than the art of gardens. Here the portrayal is merged with the actual. Movement is not merely perceived as suggestion but truly felt. Water, which in a landscape painting is animated only through reflections, offers the pleasure of its presence through sight and sound. The eye is offered colors glowing or shimmering with a luster, gaiety, and warmth unrivaled by the magical power of any Titian. The gradual experience of garden scenes offers more protracted and entertaining pleasure than the most lovely and detailed landscape painting, which the eye can quickly encompass. (145)[29]

[27] In the Albertian tradition "the human body *in action* was the best picture of the human soul; and the representation of action and passion was therefore felt to provide, if not a sure means of reaching the soul of the beholder, at any rate a pictorial resource of potentially enormous efficacy which the painter could neglect only at his peril." Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholding in the Age of Diderot* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 75.

[28] "Touche-moi, étonne-moi, déchire-moi; fais-moi tressaillir, pleurer, frémir, m'indigner díabord; tu récréeras mes yeux après, si tu peux" (translation mine). From *Essais,* 714; quoted in Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality*, 79.

[29] One of Hirschfeld's sentences here is close to Whately's at the opening of *Observations*. Hirschfeld (145): "On the strength of these comparisons of the two arts, it is easy to see that at base the art of gardening is as superior to landscape painting as nature is to a copy." Whately (1): "Gardening . . . is as superior to landskip painting, as a reality to a representation," Hirschfeld's argument is much more elaborate (143): "Yet the landscape painter gives his works the appearance of movement and life through other more obvious means as well, through the staffage of figures, cow pastures, fountains, buildings, and ruins; through everything that announces or suggests the presence of mankind; through the effect of wind in trees and upon stretches of water, through frothy waterfalls. The garden artist can bring movement, the very soul of nature, into his work by almost the same means, with the important advantage that in his case everything becomes a reality."

In comparison with landscape paintings Hirschfeld finds what he calls the "progressive movement"[30] of a garden much more engaging than the illusory movement achievable in two dimensions. He also points to the power of a garden designer to offer the visitor multiple points of view, which can themselves be explored in different combinations, eliciting "a sequence of emotions that emerge spontaneously, affording the mind more pleasure than even the masterpieces of a Saftleven or an Elsheimer can impart" (146). Of course, neither the garden artist nor the visitor can control all aspects of nature's beauty, especially those ephemeral ones like scudding clouds, rainbows, and the like.[31] Neither is a garden designer able to specify absolute positions or describe precisely how various elements relate to each other, but Hirschfeld sees this as a creative advantage. And a garden's naturalness also makes it universal: no special training or education is required before one can take pleasure in it.[32] The teleological relationship between the human soul and nature is potentially heightened in a well-designed landscape garden. Here the visitor can experience in concentrated form the unity in multiplicity that cannot be expressed by rules, nor seen in forms, but which nevertheless exists in nature. Importantly, this unity is apprehended by the observer who walks—most often alone—along her own original path, absorbing and responding to the garden's scenes.

Thus for Hirschfeld movement and feeling are inextricably linked in a relationship more reciprocal than linear. The relationship is also multidimensional. We have seen motion

[30] He uses the expression *fortschreitende Bewegung* here to distinguish it from *emotion*, a use of *Bewegung* that appears at the end of the sentence.

[31] "To be sure, both have not only definite boundaries, where their essential differences are evident, but also particular places where one art demonstrates a greater ease or power and the other must take second place. There is much that eludes the gardener's art: the beauties of clouds and rainbows, the delightful apparitions at sunrise and sunset, the effects of light upon rocks and mountains, the grace of fortuitous brightening and darkening, the gentle charm of hazy distances, and the like. He cannot, as the painter can, capture these in an illusion; he must simply wait for them as generous gifts of nature toward the improvement of his work. Such events are the property of the painter, not of the garden artist. However much power a painter can infuse into his works through the depiction of engaging moments, just as much is lost to the garden artist. In painting, the landscape seems to be there only because of the action represented; in garden art, the landscape is without action and exists for its own sake. To add more life and interest, Watelet suggests that pantomimes be shown next to temples, altars, and triumphal arches, with appropriate costumes that would mimic ceremonial offerings or dances. If this seems overly far-fetched and too removed from the character of a garden, then it might be more fitting to put on Arcadian activities and festivals. Yet such spectacles, however much they liven things up, can only be produced at certain times; they can only be occasional, not constant, elements. Canvas willingly accepts whatever compositions the painter's fantasy can devise. The garden artist, however, is often limited by the unruliness of the ground, the resistance of the site and its features in the region where he is building. He cannot be the dictator everywhere. He cannot create with the freedom or ease of a landscape painter. Often he must simply follow nature and let himself be led by what she has fashioned.

But the landscape painter and the garden artist do find common ground in more than one respect. Both find in nature's landscapes an endless variety of locations, elements, and characters; both need above all to observe and to select" (139).

[32] "Our taste for sculpture, painting, and architecture is mostly very limited; in these areas people must learn before they can admire. And taking pleasure in such works becomes engrossing only after a certain amount of time and attention is devoted to them. Yet the charms of a well-designed garden are accessible to the expert or novice without instruction or explanation. The effect of garden art is immediate, its power universal" (149).

informing (or conjuring) emotional responses, and there can be no doubt that emotions transfer meaning to the landscape of motion. Emotions are heightened by the interplay of the senses, by the synesthesia of nature's offerings. This is evident in his inventories of seasonal bounty, foliage, fruits, berries, flowers evoking the pleasures of sight, taste, smell.[33] Hearing is engaged as well—the crunch of leaves underfoot, the roar of wind, the calls of migrating birds; all contribute to the atmosphere's kinetic power, and all arise from and imply movement.[34] Hirschfeld shows these movements touching our senses as well as our inner feelings. Part of the movement of the external world, they serve to move our hearts and minds, and they allude to and represent the movement of time—both of the seasons and of life itself. They stir memory and expectation, and we in turn invest them with personal meaning. Hirschfeld was not above invoking such metaphors in his praise of a garden's expressiveness:

> Yet life is nothing but a spectacle of flowers; everything resides in movement—burgeoning, flowering, fading, and sprouting anew. Late summer, too, even the autumn of our lives, has flowers of its own, those that bloom longer and more vigorously than spring's fleeting children. Happy is he who knows how to discover the blossoms that accompany each of life's seasons! Happy the man who, sheltered from the storms of the world, enjoys his evening in a restful flower garden and, in his wisdom, revives what the slow fading of fancy has left to wilt! (403–4)

He is explicit about the power of these effects: "[F]or through the progress of growth, through the changes of seasons and storms, through the movements of clouds and water, through the passing presence of birds and insects, through thousands of small happenstances affecting regions and views, a garden boasts a multiplicity of phenomena that can never become tedious, can never fail to delight" (149). For Hirschfeld the heightened emotion that results from this animated, moving spectacle can be accessible to any sensitive human being, anyone receptive to the *outer* senses and able to collect and retain impressions in the memory, and be touched by fancy and "create inner emotions" (171).

In his opinion, then, a major goal of the garden artist is not only to choose scenes that evoke these feelings but also to arrange and combine them to ensure that "a harmonious sequence of different emotions" will result (147–48). The power of engagement in any aesthetic experience was something that Hirschfeld felt could at least be partly quantified

[33] See 4:160 or another synesthetic scene: "Almost nowhere else does nature harmonize her delights more than [in flower gardens]. The purity and softness of color in a hyacinth, balsam, lupine, or mallow; the delicate shadings in the great variety of pinks; the mixing and merging of various muted colors in some tulips; the sweet, delicate, caressing, invigorating, and inspirational fragrances of so many flowers—all this nourishes and sustains the sensation of sweetness that fills the soul with pleasurable satisfaction, with a magical rapture that language cannot express" (404).

[34] "Some Woodland Scenes" (220–26) has myriad romantic elements, including a sunset, insects buzzing, and even a *Waldhorn*, a French horn, actually a "modern" instrument at the time. The synesthesia is reminiscent of Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. See Hirschfeld, *Theory*, 37 f. It is interesting to note that Goethe knew Sulzer and refers to him in *Werther*. See Goethe, *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, ed. by Katharina Mommsen and Richard A. Koc (New York: Suhrkamp, 1987), 8.

through associationist principles already discussed. His analysis of these relationships sounds fairly mechanical at times, prompting Goethe to mock him for being an "anatomist" of nature, for carving up stimulus and response into a dry, scientific system. Yet his views reflect other aspects of Enlightenment aesthetics as well, especially the emphasis on subjectivity. Hirschfeld may have granted different forms fairly specific powers, but he did not see these forms *an sich* as bearers of beauty, or of meaning.[35] For him a landscape's beauty and power arose from the multiplicity of scenes and elements, but it was their combination that was decisive. Furthermore, this aesthetic unity may be suggested by the garden design, but it is realized only in the mind of the beholder.

Here again we see Hirschfeld's attention to memory and imagination, themselves ways of moving through space and time. He describes the process of reflection as "the rare art of turning inside ourselves" (360), and interiority is also implicit in the German terms for memory (*Erinnerung*, to put something inside oneself) and imagination (*Einbildungskraft*, the power to form or shape something inside oneself). He extends the metaphor by describing how we turn within ourselves and discover there what he calls "a labyrinth of events," as well as "the slippery path of life" that beckons us to proceed toward the future (360). Meaning comes through the interaction of memory and expectation, and, of course, through movement. For Hirschfeld the walk through life has many parallels with a garden walk. In fact, by the turn of the century the taking of walks had gained the attention of popular philosophers in Germany. A study published in 1802, for example, *Die Spatziergänge oder die Kunst spatzieren zu gehen* (Walking, or the art of taking walks), recognized walking as a spiritual activity, and its goal the ethical betterment of the walker.[36]

I turn now to one final metaphor: the garden as text and, in Hirschfeld's case, the text as garden.[37] Like the ideas embedded in a text, the elements of a garden are not absolute, a fact that augments rather than hinders their suggestive power. As in a text, one comes upon them sequentially, and to make a whole out of their variety and multiplicity (two of Hirschfeld's favorite words) requires active work on the part of the memory, the senses, and the imagination. The entire picture is never there all at once but, like a text, constantly evolves in time. Since a garden's multidimensionality and intertextuality allow it both to be and to suggest at the same time, no one moment can contain its meaning. A garden must be

[35] Many of these ideas were in the air and certainly influenced Hirschfeld, although he makes no direct reference to many sources that seem obvious to us, such as English sensualism or Leibniz. Both Locke and Hume—likewise not cited by Hirschfeld—had already rejected the doctrine of innate ideas and thus helped turn epistemological attention to the production of *Erkenntnis* in the act of perception. Kant (1790) too saw knowledge arising from sensation and perfected by reflection. See Michael Gamper, *Die Natur ist republikanisch: Zu den ästhetischen, anthropologischen und politischen Konzepten der deutschen Gartenliteratur im 18. Jahrhundert* (Würzburg: Königshausen and Neumann, 1998), 174.

[36] By Karl Gottlob Schelle (Leipzig: Martini, 1802). On the cultural history of walking in this period, see Gudrun M. König, *Eine Kulturgeschichte des Spaziergangs: Spuren einer bürgerlichen Praktik, 1780–1850* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996). See also Gamper, *Die Natur ist republikanisch,* 182–88 and 197 ff. See also Angelika Wellmann, *Der Spaziergang: Stationen eines poetischen Codes* (Würzburg: Königshausen and Neumann, 1991).

[37] See Hunt, *Greater Perfections*, chap. 6, "Gardens in Word and Image."

engaged. Recall Lessing's description of the famous Laocoön group. The sculptor, Lessing argues, needed to choose the single moment that would best encapsulate the narrative and suggest Laocoön's agony; by depicting not the climactic but the "fruitful" moment, the moment most full of promise, he has succeeded, allowing the tragic figure's horrible cry to remain latent, its potency forever undiminished. Only through the potentiality contained in the frozen, not-yet-climactic moment, can the visual arts approach the suggestiveness of a temporal art form. For Hirschfeld, however, a garden, like a text, can accompany us *through* the experience, can engage us to approach from various perspectives—a garden can intimate, cajole, but leave us to shape the response.

Hirschfeld's descriptions are, of course, texts, but texts that conjure up sequential encounters with the natural world. As he describes the piling up of impressions, there is an acceptance of the veracity of feeling and sensation independent of understanding and reason, as well as a promise of transcendental, Platonic understanding.

> The spirit becomes content, the mind alert, feelings more gentle and refined. The entire being seems more alive and strives more eagerly and successfully to achieve its fullest potential. Certainly most people underestimate the effects of lovely country and garden scenes on man's imagination and sensibility. Our fancy, nourished by these, will not linger in the depths, among inanimate objects; it will learn to rise aloft, to fly easily from one series of new images to the next, until it soars beyond the familiar forms into a contemplation of original beauty and greatness, in raptures infinitely more sublime than those caused by the ordinary impressions of nature upon our senses. (150)

According to Plato's epistemology, every stage of imitation is one step further removed from the truth. However, because a garden imitates in the medium of the imitated, it short-circuits one critical step in this regression. This is a clever if facile rationale for the superiority of garden art. The passage above demonstrates that for Hirschfeld the process of appreciating a garden is itself a kind of movement, a sweeping journey through one's own feelings, a synthesizing process of remembering and moving beyond. The garden visitor recreates not so much a topographic whole as a subjective engagement that leads to an awareness of metaphysical truth.

> In this way of thinking, the art of gardening becomes a philosophy of nature's various elements, of their power and effect on man, and of ways to intensify their impression upon us. That is to say, garden art is not called upon merely to amuse the outer senses but to brighten the inner spirit, to enrich our fantasy, and to refine our feelings. It enhances our capacity for taste and our appreciation of art, and it engages our creative spirit where it has thus far had little effect, thereby ennobling the works of nature and improving this planet that is our temporary dwelling place. (149)

For Hirschfeld a garden was a near divine thing—"a school of wisdom, a philosophy of nature." Yet he never actually made a garden himself. He wrote about them. And he

knew that many in his audience would never create a garden or visit any of the landscapes he describes. By moving the locus of value to the beholder, by emphasizing subjectivity and experience, he allows the garden visitor and, indeed, the garden reader to do so. For Hirschfeld a text need not just amplify but could take the place of actual experience. Thus he gave his readers five lengthy volumes encompassing several genres—prose, poetry, history, philosophy, travel description, and illustration—a work that is part objective reportage and part subjective effusion. Hirschfeld wrote more extensively on gardens than any of his predecessors. Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that he had more to say about movement than anyone before him. This is not because he was an acute analytical thinker or particularly original. Rather, his insights, some profound, arose from the task that he set himself and the encyclopedic strategy he adopted to do it justice.

I suggest that Hirschfeld intended his text to lead the reader through an imagined world, to emulate the affective power of moving through the natural landscape, touching the fancy in a comparable away. Certain of his contemporaries defined ideas as remembered things and considered them less forceful than the actuality of present objects.[38] Does Hirschfeld agree? He seems to take both sides of the argument, for he offers an impassioned plea for the ability of nature, especially when shaped by artifice, to move us more than the other arts; but his *Theory* is above all a paean to the role of the imagination in determining human perception.

For many of the emerging bourgeoisie of the eighteenth century, reading was the next best thing to experiencing something firsthand; indeed, the armchair was often the preferred mode of "travel." Certainly Hirschfeld intended his book to be a contribution to German literary culture; and although his own artistic product was not a garden but a text, for him the ultimate goal of both was the *experience*, the *effect*, that resulted from the encounter with and movement through the choreographed, natural world on the one hand and the printed book on the other. The connection between walking and writing—the progress through a series of ideas—has a long history from Plato to Montaigne[39] and onward to Lessing. In an age of reading, the reader becomes the wanderer in the garden, and by this means mimesis is both achieved and deconstructed.[40]

[38] Henry Home, for instance, ranks vision above language; see Home, *Elements of Criticism*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: Kincaid and Bell, 1762; repr. 1967), 66.

[39] See Wellmann, *Der Spaziergang*, 13–18, etc.

[40] Like Hogarth's line of beauty, Hirschfeld's prose leads us along a meandering path. Hogarth's narrative paintings were themselves meant to be read sequentially, even from left to right. See Murray Roston, *Changing Perspectives in Literature and the Visual Arts, 1650–1820* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 171.