



DUMBARTON OAKS

RESEARCH LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

Landscape Matters: News from GLS @ Dumbarton Oaks

The Garden and Landscape Studies program at Dumbarton Oaks is pleased to share with you the following news about the past academic year and announcements regarding 2019-20 fellows, fellowship applications, forthcoming events, and new publications.

A message from Thaisa Way, Program Director of Garden and Landscape Studies:



John Beardsley, former Director of Garden and Landscape Studies at his retirement party, May 2019

This summer John Beardsley was finally able to retire, after 11 years of leadership and guidance of the Garden & Landscape Studies program at Dumbarton Oaks. While there are many accomplishments we might acknowledge, we decided to focus on the recent award to Dumbarton Oaks by the ASLA that noted John's important leadership. We quote from the nomination letters:

Thaisa Way and Ron Henderson wrote: "Under John Beardsley's leadership of the Dumbarton Oaks landscape Studies program, this inwardly facing research center—long a place associated with promising young scholars and the most respected academics writing about gardens and designed landscapes, has taken an exciting outward turn. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, Dumbarton Oaks has convened designers and scholars at the junior and senior level around the challenges of conceptualizing and making urban landscapes. From fellowships for principals of major landscape architecture firms to workshops for Ph.D candidates beginning their careers, from annual symposium to small colloquia, Beardsley has brought Dumbarton Oaks' unparalleled research facilities and scholarly reputation into dialogue the practice of designing urban landscapes during an era of climate change, social inequality and population migration, of disturbance and regeneration. As a participant in several of these events, I can attest to the impact these encounters are having on the individuals involved as well as on their trajectories as scholars, critics and designers. That bodes well as urban landscape matters are urgent; reflection as well as action are conditions for creativity and invention. I am heartened that Dumbarton Oaks has seen fit to bring these often separate activities together.

Most recently John Beardsley, Director of the Garden and Landscape Studies Program, with support from the Director of Dumbarton Oaks, Jan Ziolkowski, established the Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies that brings together landscape architects and historians to explore the rich and robust spaces of intersection and exploration in the city. The inauguration of this new program with an urban landscape focus reflects the ongoing commitment and strong leadership that Dumbarton Oaks continues to foster in the expansion and enrichment of their landscape programs in the 21st century."

Jack Sullivan noted that: "Beardsley has increased access to landscape and garden scholarship by inviting practitioners to join in the exploration and discussion of landscape history, meaning, character and transformation. He has used the garden as a canvas for visual, audible and tangible art, taking the Farrand-Bliss collaboration into new territory and new expressions of landscape art, while highlighting the original garden rooms, sculptural elements, distinctive views, and seasonal horticultural effects."

Gary Hilderbrand: "Two years ago I was honored to receive the Mellon Practicing Fellowship in Urban Landscape Studies. It's notable that this space for scholarly work by practitioners, one of only a handful, was invented by Beardsley and supported with Mellon funds precisely

because of the impacts that could be gained for practitioners who write, and for the DO community who are able to interact with design professionals on a daily basis. I treasure that productive and very special time."

Linda Jewell wrote: "Guided by Director John Beardsley, the Mellon Fellows, the Tyler Fellows, and invited guests supplemented the usual presentations on the research of GLS Fellows with urban infrastructure topics that included field trips, lectures, and colloquia on the recent history and present conditions of urban water supply, storm water, sewage treatment, urban waterways, and disenfranchised communities as well as 19th century "soft" streambank stabilization techniques by the Corps of Engineers. The discussions afterward, not only with landscape historians in the GLS program, but also with Fellows in Pre-Colombian and Byzantine Studies, provided perspectives on infrastructure and my own theater research that I would have never gained from an audience of only landscape architects."

As we bid John a rich and beautiful retirement, we acknowledge the remarkable groundwork that he has constructed, on which we expect to continue to build excellent scholarship, teaching, and inquiry.

2018-19 in review

Academic Events and Public Programs

The academic year 2018-19 will be remembered as a time of transition in Garden and Landscape Studies. John Beardsley, who has directed the program since 2008, announced his retirement, and Thaïsa Way was appointed to replace him effective July 1, 2019. Linda Lott, who has done so much to maintain and build our collection of rare books over the years, also retired; Anatole Tchikine, who has served as Assistant Program Director, was appointed curator of the rare book collection and GLS subject librarian. Jane Padelford continued in her position as program coordinator for both Garden and Landscape Studies and the department's Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies and served as a valuable source of institutional knowledge in the transitions. Taylor Johnson started as Rare Book Collection Assistant this summer.

The annual fall colloquium was devoted to the subject of "[Botanical Gardens and the Urban Future](#)." Held November 2, 2018, it was organized in conjunction with the Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies, which is intended to bring designers and scholars together to assess how urban environments came to be the way they are and how best to manage them today. The event brought together a group of historians, landscape designers, and scientists to discuss the changing role of urban botanical gardens (including arboreta) as both landscapes and research and public



Rare Book Librarian Linda Lott's retirement party, August 2019



Botanical Gardens and the Urban Future colloquium, Nov. 2018

institutions. Of particular interest was the role of design in helping botanical gardens to meet the challenge of operating as educational and community resources while maintaining their traditional focus on the preservation and study of plants. A good deal of the discussion centered on the most effective ways to communicate ideas about nature to city dwellers in an age of advanced urbanization and climate change.

The spring symposium, held May 3-4, 2019, was titled “[Landscape, Sport, Environment: The Spaces of Sport from the Early Modern Period to Today](#).”

Throughout history, organized sports and sport-like activities have had considerable impact on how we design and understand landscapes. Correspondingly, designed and pre-modern “natural” landscapes have contributed to the formation and development of new sports and cultures of movement and the body. Even within landscape and environmental histories, sport landscapes have been conspicuously absent, although some of the first such spaces were part of designed gardens, parks, cities, rural and wilderness areas. The symposium sought to address this lack of knowledge, exploring the design of different sport and recreational landscapes over time and how they have given expression to various understandings of nature and culture.



Symposium Speakers: Landscape, Sport, Environment, May 2019

Other events during the year included a three-day visit between September 24 and 27, 2018, from a design studio class at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. They were in Washington to learn about the history of Arlington Cemetery in conjunction with a proposed project to expand it, and to learn about the public design and approval process from the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital



Public Lecture by Maurice Cox, Planning Director of Detroit, Feb. 2019

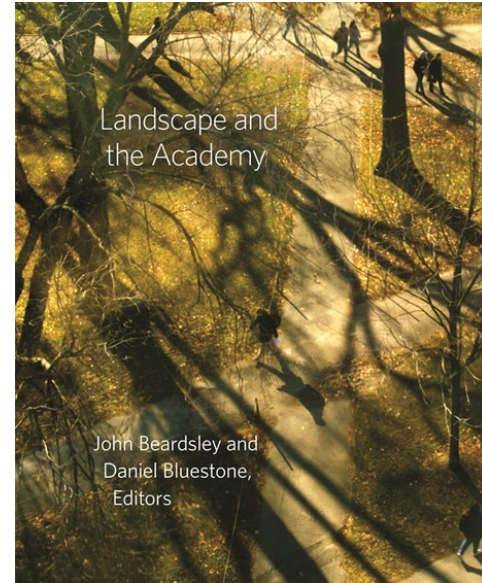
Planning Commission. Dumbarton Oaks fellows and staff participated in tours and presentations, and the GSD class was introduced to the programs and facilities of Dumbarton Oaks. On February 14, 2019, we hosted a lecture by Maurice Cox, planning director for the city of Detroit, who spoke on the way landscape improvements were being used to spur redevelopment in the city. *Outside/IN*, the two-part installation of painting and sculpture by celebrated contemporary artist Martha Jackson Jarvis that opened in April, 2018, continued into this academic year: her colorful paintings inspired by plant life stayed on view in the museum until August 19 and her wood, stone, and mosaic sculptures remained in the garden until December 16.

Scholars in residence this year included four full-year fellows and two one-term fellows, in addition to four one-term Mellon fellows and one William R. Tyler fellow.

In February and March 2019, we hosted a visiting scholar, Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, a former director of garden and landscape studies at Dumbarton Oaks and currently a professor of Landscape Architecture at Leibniz University of Hannover, where he is also a founding member of the Centre of Garden Art and Landscape Architecture, one of Leibniz University’s research centers. We also welcomed numerous short-term predoctoral residents, recipients of one-month research awards, and students who received travel awards to attend our annual colloquium and symposium.

Publications

Newly published in 2019 was *Landscape and the Academy*, the proceedings of the 2016 symposium of the same name, edited by John Beardsley and Daniel Bluestone. This volume looks beyond the central campus to the gardens, arboreta, farms, forests, biotic reserves, and far-flung environmental research stations managed by universities. In these landscapes, the university's project of fostering research and exploration is made explicit; these spaces reflect the broader research and scholarly mission of the university, its striving for understanding and enlightenment. The essays examine how and why universities have come to be responsible for so many different kinds of landscapes, as well as the role these landscapes play in academic life, pedagogy, and cultural politics today.



Landscape and the Academy, published 2019

Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies

2018-19 was the fourth year of the Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies, funded by the Mellon Foundation through their program "Architecture, Urbanism, and the Humanities," intended to foster the joint contributions that the humanities and design and planning disciplines make to understanding the processes and effects of burgeoning urbanization. In addition to the colloquium "Botanical Gardens and the Urban Future," the initiative at Dumbarton Oaks hosted a residency in September by noted contemporary Japanese designer Toru Mitani, who gave two presentations on his urban design projects. We maintained our weekly program of "[Mellon Midday Dialogues](#)" with invited speakers, including landscape practitioners and scholars who are leading urban landscape studies in new directions. We also continued outreach activities with students from Phelps Architecture, Construction, and Engineering High School, both to foster urban environmental awareness and to introduce students to potential careers in urban landscape design and management. Activities this year included a tour of the National Mall, exploring the history of national memorials, from Lincoln to Martin Luther King, in the context of contested political and racial histories.

The year ended with the fourth annual GLS Graduate Workshop, May 12-June 1, organized by Anatole Tchikine with the support of the Mellon Initiative and the collaboration of the Oaks Spring Garden



Mellon Midday Dialogue by Douglas Daly and John Mitchell from the New York Botanical Garden, Mar. 2019



Field trip with students from Phelps Architecture, Construction and Engineering High School, on the landscape design and social and cultural history of the National Mall, November 2018



Garden and Landscape Studies Graduate Workshop, with field trip to Oak Spring Garden Foundation, May 2019

Foundation. Intended to develop the field of garden and landscape studies across different disciplines and to promote the depth and breadth of future landscape scholarship, the workshop brought together early-career scholars and practitioners pursuing cross-disciplinary research on landscape-related topics. During morning sessions, participants were invited to share among themselves selected aspects of their work; afternoon discussions focused on key issues and texts in landscape history and theory, situating garden and landscape design in the context of humanities scholarship, from the idea of the Three Natures to the ecological challenges of the Anthropocene and the discourse of landscape urbanism. The program also included two study sessions in the Rare Book Reading Room at Dumbarton Oaks, site visits in the Washington

metropolitan area (including the National Mall, the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, and Meridian Hill Park), and a three-day stay at the Oak Spring Garden Foundation in Upperville, Virginia, focused on conservation biology. Participants were introduced to the ideas of ecosystem services, biodiversity conservation, riparian and grassland restoration, and regenerative agriculture, and had the opportunity to see demonstration projects at Oak Spring and the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal.

Looking Ahead to 2019-20

This year is my first as the GLS Program Director and I am thrilled to be a part of this remarkable Dumbarton Oaks team. I am also honored to note that the Urban Landscape Studies Initiative launched by John Beardsley has been renewed by the Mellon Foundation for the next three years. More on that below. While it is my first year and I will spend time learning and walking the gardens and landscape, we are already hosting a brilliant team of GLS scholars as listed below.

2019-2020 Fellowships

Fellows

- Annette Giesecke, University of Delaware, “The Afterlife of Paradise: Near Eastern Origins of the Ancient Roman Garden”
- Zeynep Kezer, Newcastle University, “Engineering Eastern Turkey: People, Place, and Power in the Upper Euphrates”
- Ann Komara, University of Colorado, Denver, “Les Promenades de Paris: Reception of Alphand’s Urban Landscapes and Treatise”
- Erika Milam, Princeton University, (Spring Term), “Slow Science: Ecological Landscapes and Their Organisms”



2019-20 Fellows

Junior Fellows

- Katherine Coty, University of Washington, “Nel Cuore di Tufo: Landscape, Stone, and Regional Identity in Sixteenth-Century Tuscany”
- Lindi Masur, University of Toronto, “Western Basin Paleoethnobotany: Food Production and Landscape Construction at the Borderlands of Algonquin and Iroquoian Territory (1300 CE)”

Project Grant

- Rabun Taylor, University of Texas at Austin, “The Aqua Traiana in Context”

The Fellows bring questions of gardens and landscapes from near (North America) and far (Turkey and the East). Furthermore, their work intersects with that of our colleagues in Byzantine and Pre-Columbian Studies making for inspiring discussions over lunch on the bowling green and within the more formal setting of our Research Reports. Dumbarton Oaks’ scholarly community reminds me of why I always wanted to be a historian and teacher.

Launching the second term of our Mellon project, we are focused on Democracy and the Urban Landscape: Race, Identity, and Difference. Over the past four years, the initial [Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies](#) at Dumbarton Oaks has brought designers, urban theorists, and historians into conversation with anthropologists and geographers to explore narratives of urban history writ broadly. The Initiative has advanced historical understanding of urban landscapes and strengthened the contributions of landscape and environmental history to the broader humanities. In addition to innovative programs and events, the first phase has produced publications on such topics as the resilience of river cities and the physical, social, and political relations between the production of food and urban settlements. It has also resulted in new educational programming at Dumbarton Oaks to help high-school students in the District increase literacy in landscape and environmental history. In this second phase, the Urban Landscape Initiative will produce and disseminate scholarship that reframes the narratives of landscape history through a deeper inquiry into the legacies of race, identity, and difference as they shape the practice of democracy. By examining how violence and inequality have been inscribed into the urban landscape, the initiative seeks to contribute to the kind of inclusive dialogue required to nurture a dynamic democracy and address legacies of neglect and marginalization. As the premier research center for landscape history in the United States, located in the highly significant civic landscape of Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks is well placed to enhance and expand the field of urban humanities through fellowships, scholarly and educational programs, publications, and exhibitions. In October we welcomed Caroline Miller as Program Assistant for the Mellon Urban Landscape Initiative who will be collaborating on various initiatives including the Midday Dialogues.

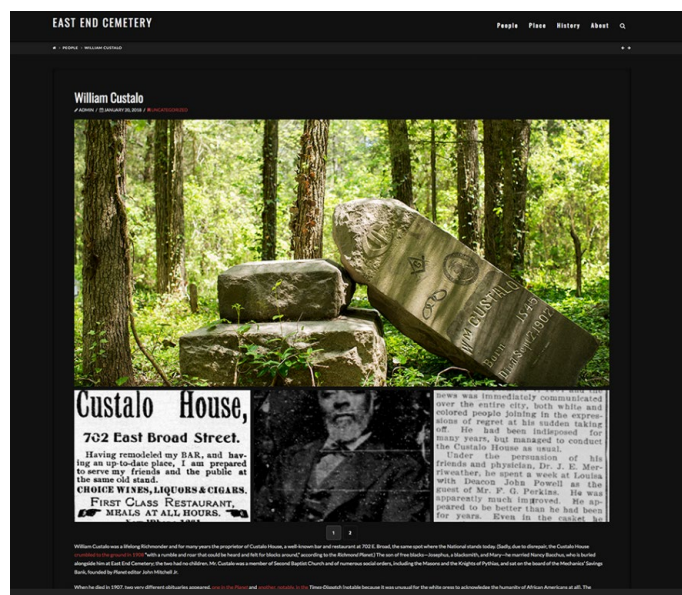


Mellon Advisory Board, Fall 2019

This year we will be hosting a series of Midday Dialogues as well as a number of conversations that build on the democracy theme. Our Fall Colloquium, “Interpreting Landscapes of Enslavement” is one such

conversation for which historians, scholars, and interpreters from Monticello, Montpelier, and Whitney Plantation shared their approaches, scholarship, and lessons in sharing this work with the public. The afternoon featured faculty from three universities that are tackling their own legacies of slavery in different ways, members of the Universities Studying Slavery initiative. In the spring we will host the annual symposium “[Spatial Inequalities and Segregation in the Urban Landscape](#)” scheduled for May 8 to 9, 2020, highlighting the traces of segregation and resistance in the urban landscapes. We received 68 submissions for this symposium reflecting significant interest in the questions posed. Join us if you can; registration will open in March. Currently enrolled graduate students and undergraduate juniors and seniors wishing to attend the symposium may apply for the [Bliss Symposium Award](#).

It is an honor and pleasure to be here at Dumbarton Oaks, and I look forward to seeing you here. Let me know when you are able to visit.



East End Cemetery [website](#) created by Brian Palmer, a Project Grant recipient who photographed an abandoned African American burial ground near Richmond, VA. This screen grab is a page for William Custalo (1845-1907), a man born free who became a prominent restaurateur, bank officer, and civic leader in Richmond.

Fellowship and Project Grant applications and deadlines

Dumbarton Oaks continues to offer [residential fellowships](#) in three areas of study, Byzantine Studies, Pre-Columbian Studies, and Garden and Landscape Studies, to scholars from around the world. In selecting fellows, the Garden and Landscape Studies program seeks a balance between historical research and investigations of current practice, between inquiries at the scale of the garden and those addressing larger landscapes. The program invites consideration of all aspects of this interdisciplinary and international field;

applicants are encouraged to consider topics from a variety of perspectives. Dumbarton Oaks also offers a limited number of [project grants](#), intended to support primary research of a specific site. Project grants may be used

for a broad array of initiatives, including field research, site analysis, botanical surveys, heritage conservation and restoration planning, with the goal of promoting the preservation and understanding of historic gardens and other significant designed landscapes. The deadline for all residential fellowships and project grants is **November 1, 2019**.

In addition, Dumbarton Oaks offers [one-month non-residential awards](#) to researchers and [short-term predoctoral residencies](#) to advanced graduate students, the deadlines of which may be found on the website.



Student Colloquium Award recipients, November 2018