

Landscape Matters: News from GLS @ Dumbarton Oaks

The Garden and Landscape Studies program at Dumbarton Oaks is pleased to share with you the following announcements regarding new appointments, 2008-09 fellows, fellowship applications, lectures, our upcoming symposium, and new publications.

New Director of Studies

John Beardsley has joined Dumbarton Oaks as Director of Garden and Landscape Studies. He is also a Senior Lecturer at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, where he has taught history and theory in the department of Landscape Architecture since 1998. A writer and exhibition curator, he has published widely on land art, vernacular art, and contemporary design. His books include *Earthworks and Beyond: Contemporary Art in the Landscape* (4th edition, 2006) and *Gardens of Revelation: Environments by Visionary Artists* (1995); his exhibitions include "The Quilts of Gee's Bend" (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2002); "Hispanic Art in the United States: Thirty Contemporary Painters and Sculptors" (MFAH 1987); and "Black Folk Art in America, 1930-1980" (Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1982).

New Senior Fellows

The Senior Fellows committee advises the Director of Dumbarton Oaks on all aspects of research and collection development in garden and landscape studies at Dumbarton Oaks; committee members serve three-year terms. This year, Stephen Bann, former Chair of the Senior Fellows, and Erik De Jong have rotated off the committee; they have been replaced by Dorothée Imbert and Mark Laird. Kenneth Helphand is the new Chair. The other Senior Fellows are Nurhan Atasoy, Diana Balmori, and Richard E. Strassberg.

2008-09 Fellows in Garden and Landscape Studies

The following fellows will be in residence at Dumbarton Oaks in the 2008-09 academic year:

María del Carmen Magaz, Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, Summer Fellow
Public Space: Development of Garden and Park Conservation Practices, Current Debates and Laws

Mahvash Alemi, Rome, Italy, Fellow
Safavid Gardens as the Representation of their World and Culture

Eric MacDonald, University of Georgia, Fellow
The Art which Mends Nature: the Contributions of 'Garden and Forest' to the History of American Environmentalism

Nina Gerlach, Ruprecht Karl University Heidelberg, Junior Fellow
The Garden as Film Backdrop: Construction of Cinematic Garden Space

Jennifer Raab, Yale University, Junior Fellow
The Language of Landscape: Frederic Church and the Culture of Detail in Nineteenth-Century America

Stephen Bann, C.B.E., Fellow of the British Academy, University of Bristol, The Beatrix Farrand Distinguished Fellow

Ian Hamilton Finlay and the Creation of the Garden at Stonypath/Little Sparta

Forthcoming Lecture: October 1, 2008, Prof. Kongjian Yu

The first lecture in the fall term will be given in the newly-renovated Music Room at 5:30 on Wednesday, October 1, 2008, by Kongjian Yu, one of the most prominent contemporary landscape designers in China. Founder and Dean of the Graduate School of Landscape Architecture at Peking University, he is also founder and president of Turenscape, one of the first and largest private landscape architecture and urban design firms in China. He received his Doctor of Design degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 1995. Dr. Yu's lecture, "The New Vernacular: Redefining Urbanity in Contemporary China," will challenge the homogenization and globalization of China's urban landscape, proposing instead a contemporary design based on vernacular—and sustainable—cultural and horticultural values.

Reservations are required. Please RSVP by September 30th to: Landscape@doaks.org or 202-339-6460.

Spring Symposium, May 8-9 2009

The Interlacing of Words and Things in Gardens and Landscapes: Beyond Nature and Culture

Organized by Beatrix Farrand Distinguished Fellow Stephen Bann

Over recent decades, debates about environmentalism, global warming and its consequences for life have triggered a questioning of the opposition between nature and culture. This has become particularly obvious in discussions among landscape architects and anthropologists. Yet there is little in common between these two areas of debate. Landscape architects tend to be concerned with ways of devising new roles for humans in the transformation of a natural world shared to a great extent with non-humans, thus endorsing the embeddedness of nature and culture, but perhaps falling short in the criticism of these dualistic concepts. Anthropologists have been largely concerned with describing and understanding the perspectives of non-Western peoples without seeking to impose the implicit dualities of nature/culture, emotion/reason, practice/ideology, mundane/ritual, sacred/profane, cosmos/society.

In this symposium, we attempt to bring these two areas of debate closer by proposing new modes for the description and understanding of gardens, whether in the context of history or in the present – as they have been, or are, experienced by those who make and use them across many different areas of the world.

Gardens are obviously the result of a selection of plants, objects and animals for intentional reasons, that has led in turn to the transformation of those plants, objects and animals; that is to say, they have become liable to be appropriated for the purposes of human communication, and become representations in poetry, imagery, religion and myth. So, if we temporarily bracket off the categories relating to nature and culture in the Western world, the description of gardens challenges us to rediscover the categories that were involved in constituting them as representations, and to track the distinctions from which such meanings have developed. The processes by which the human groups involved in making gardens have interacted with their environment have always been diverse in the extreme. Gardens offer the opportunity to review the many different modalities of transforming the world in which we live and act.

Preliminary Program:

Mahvash Alemi, Dumbarton Oaks

Things seen in the garden of Shah Tahmasp in the Words of the poet and painter of his court

Malcolm Andrews, Rutherford College, University of Kent

'Capturing the Scene': Painting, Gardening and Writing the Landscape

Frederick Asher, Art History, University of Minnesota

Unseen Gardens: Landscape of the Indian Temple

Stephen Bann, University of Bristol

'Little fields Long Horizons': the poetic prelude to Ian Hamilton Finlay's gardens

Patricia Díaz Cayeros, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, U.N.A.M., México.

Garden as threshold in 18th century New Spain: Puebla 's cathedral hortus conclusus'

Jeanette Favrot Peterson, University of California, Santa Barbara

The New World as Paradise Garden: From Metaphor to Lived Reality

Stanislaus Fung, University of New South Wales

The Animation of Buildings and Rocks: Rhetorical Order and Design Thinking in Four Chinese Texts on Gardens

Ann Kuttner, University of Pennsylvania

Rooting a Community: Social Order and the Urban Embrace of Natural Environment in Republican and Augustan Rome

Giorgio Mangani, University of Bergamo

The landscape-garden of Marche region and the building of identity

Henry Power, University of Exeter

Virgil, Nun Appleton and the poetic landscape of the English Civil War

Xin Wu, Dumbarton Oaks

The Paired-quatrain by ZHU Xi and ZHANG Shi: Poetic Dialogues in Landscape and Gardens

For further information, please contact Shannon Leahy at Landscape@doaks.org or 202-339-6460

Fellowship applications and deadlines

Dumbarton Oaks offers residential fellowships in three areas of study: Byzantine Studies, Pre-Columbian Studies, and Garden and Landscape Studies; opportunities include Academic Year Fellowships, Academic Year Junior Fellowships, Summer Fellowships, and Short-Term Pre-Doctoral Residencies. Application deadlines are November 1.

This year, Dumbarton Oaks is offering a new research opportunity: One-Month Post-Doctoral Stipends; deadlines are October 15 for projects carried out January to June, and February 15 for projects carried out July to December. Short-term Pre-Doctoral Residencies are now available for up to four weeks. Complete details on fellowship terms and application procedures are available at <http://www.doaks.org/research/>.

In selecting fellows, the Garden and Landscape Studies program at Dumbarton Oaks 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. Additional information for applicants in garden and landscape studies is available at http://www.doaks.org/research/info_gal_fellowship.html.

New procedures for submitting applications online have been instituted; please check the Dumbarton Oaks website at http://www.doaks.org/research/fellowship_application.html.

Recent Publications

The following books have recently been published by Dumbarton Oaks for the Garden and Landscape Studies program:

Xin Wu, *Patricia Johanson's House and Garden Commission: Re-construction of Modernity*, 2008

Michel Conan, ed., *Gardens and Imagination: Cultural History and Agency*, 2008

Michel Conan and Chen Wangheng, eds., *Gardens, City Life and Culture: A World Tour*, 2008

Michel Conan and Jeffrey Quilter, eds., *Gardens and Cultural Change: A Pan-American Perspective*, 2008

Michel Conan, ed., *Middle East Garden Traditions: Unity and Diversity; Questions, Methods and Resources in a Multicultural Perspective*, 2007

Michel Conan, ed., *Sacred Gardens and Landscapes: Ritual and Agency*, 2007

Michel Conan, ed., *Contemporary Garden Aesthetics: Creation and Interpretation*, 2007

Michel Conan and W. John Kress, eds., *Botanical Progress, Horticultural Innovation and Cultural Change*, 2007

Michel Conan, ed., *Performance and Appropriation: Profane Rituals in Gardens and Landscapes*, 2007

For a full list of Garden and Landscape titles from Dumbarton Oaks and for information on ordering the books, go to

http://www.doaks.org/research/garden_landscape/doaks_gal_publications.html.