

OUR COMMON GROUND:
FINDING OUR IMAGINATION IN THE GARDEN

BY

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Abstract

Recent rhetoric in landscape architecture has illuminated the complex nature and broad scope of the discipline in such a way that augments instrumental, solutionist, and measurable modalities of practice over the imaginative.

As such, the significance of aesthetics and any criticality of nature (i.e. the gardener's realm) are often ignored and/or dismissed. In fact, many landscape architects are ill-equipped to design gardens that move us, and some practitioners may even demarcate their practice by excluding the garden completely.

This practice-led research suggests that if this is so, then the designed 'products' of landscape architecture risk presenting as reductive, commodified, privatised, and devoid of imaginative quality or repose. The research addresses these concerns by engaging landscape architecture with the realm of the garden and acts of gardening. To this end, a purpose fit and performative methodology is developed to investigate garden-essence, whatever that is shown to mean. Embedded in this approach is a broader aspiration to foreground the conception of public life that posits garden-presence as an essential component of our collective imagination. Consequently this research finds a way to approach and design landscape in kind with those often intangible aspects of gardening which afford delight, wonder, and reverence for the natural world.

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Preface

Since the beginning of time, we have expressed ourselves through the gardens we have made. They live on as records of our private beliefs and public values, good and bad (Meaning of Gardens 2).

Gardens possess a significant presence in human history. Though their symbolism and formal characteristics may differ according to geographic, historical, and cultural contexts, the impulse to build gardens - for food, medicines, display, as tributes to queens, kings or gods, and/or for aesthetic pleasure pervades throughout the majority of human existence.

The garden, in its most general sense (and thus distinguished against style, status, or power) transcends cultural boundaries in such a way that it stirs a common image. This 'commonness', which does not impart any measurable value or purpose, is embedded in the sensual aspects of our bodily existence. In our imagination, the garden brings us closer to earthly life.

Gardens, in this way, unite us, and arouse an intimacy with the natural world which is different from wilderness. The making of gardens enacts an intensified curation of scents, blooms, wisps, whirrs, and all interactions between. It is an opera of changing light, weather, growth, and decay. Each moment in and with a garden is different from the next.

The garden, in its ever-changing ways, reminds us that we are marching with time, and as such we are confronted with a sense of humility in the knowledge that a garden might precede our lodging in the world, and will hopefully succeed us after death. Gardens care not for ego, and a garden that endures is the gardener's gift to the world.

In the age of the Anthropocene, capitalism reigns as our grand compass, and resultantly our contemporary appetite for the garden is in decline as we are led to put our faith in abstract economics and certain brands of imperialism.¹ Our perceived domination of the world holds back the garden by imposing on it a fixity of nature, which aligns to an unfortunate ideology that the non-human world is under our control and exists for our consumption.² In this challenging context what is left in the garden on offer for the practice of landscape architecture? This question, something of a wondering, instigates this research undertaking.

¹ Whilst a generalised resistance to neoliberal economic reason is commonly heard, John Bellamy Foster, et al. in *The Monthly Review* point to 'a madness of economic reason' which undermines a healthy human relation to the environment and suggests that this cannot be tackled without also addressing the structure of accumulation at a global scale, which is exacerbated by the division of the world into competing nation-states.

² This sentiment appears, for example, in the commonly understood bible verse: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our own likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over all the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26).



Fig. 1.0
The Glasshouse at Kew,
London.
Stephanie Mulrooney. *Kew Gardens*. 2020. Photograph. Unsplash.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Introduction _____

1.2 Research Question _____

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How is the garden of today?



Ambient?

Private?

Inert?

Useful?

Nice,

tidy,

and green?

1.1 Introduction

Recent times have seen a shift in landscape architecture's modes of design production. Whilst landscape architects still produce plans, the means by which those expectations are fulfilled, and the conditions they play out have transformed. How does the landscape imagination involve itself in this production?

Current labour platforms evolved within the discipline under the purposes of efficiency and accountability obviate the need for thought of the *outside*. The *outside*, being a place of and for possibility, self-reflection, judgement, and even uncertainty cannot belong under this prevailing realm. This research suggests the garden offers itself as a space of the *outside*.

This research intends to provide landscape architects with the impetus to seek alternative ways of doing, by way of an *outside*, that moves beyond those which are aimed towards the delivery of a landscape 'product' – a finitude at a speculative point in time. This necessitates a line of inquiry which not only interrogates the essential character of the garden, but also our human condition of being-in and being-with the world. It is reasonably suggested, then, that landscape architects could benefit their practice by engaging with a gardener's sensibility which avoids the impulse to subdue the forces of nature and time, but instead works reciprocally with them.

Consequently, the reader of this research will encounter a trajectory of discovery in this Research Portfolio, which moves towards approaching landscape architectural practice in such a way that privileges the realm of the garden. The project takes a performative approach in response to the expanding practice of landscape architecture impacting the style by which theory is engaged. As will be shown, the research discovers by moving through three phases of design practice – *designing, making, and performing*. What follows will discuss these research phases, their iterations and testings against a set of operative criteria which evolved – and was thus co-produced within the undertaking of each design experiment.

A collection of images is entwined with this design research, and these I have opted to caption minimally because I would like the images to speak for themselves. Unless it is otherwise stated the images are my own and were created for the purpose of this research project.

1.2 Research Question

This research is guided by the question: How can garden-essence and garden-doing equip landscape architectural practice with the means to expand the condition of practice beyond instrumental, solutionist problem-solving and towards the indistinct and immeasurable reaches of our collective imagination?

1.3 Project Scope, Aims, and Objectives

The domain of gardens can be at once beautiful and disorderly, palpable and fanciful, difficult and plain. This research intends to associate landscape architectural practice with this ambiguous terrain and those ongoing acts of gardening which ensure the prolonged vitality and aesthetic pleasure of the garden. In this way, 'the garden', under any typological guise or cultural expectation is left behind.

Instead, the project aspires to build an affective relationship towards gardens, signalling to a bearing in which inter-connection and co-existence are foundational. The garden, for this project, manifests as a meeting of living and inert materials, the forces of nature, and the human participant, who all contribute to its ambience in equally justifiable ways.

The significance of this bearing will be unfolded.

As may be thus far evident, the primary problem field this research grapples with is purposefully broad and indeterminate. There exists a hesitancy to categorise in this research, however as realised in early stages, a degree of definition and thus organisation in order to mobilise clear scope for the project was required. As such, and with specificity, this practice-led research seeks to respond to the following objectives:

- _ Examine the ontological assertions raised above in relation to gardening practice.
- _ Dissect the provocation that gardens have fallen out of favour in landscape architectural practice and justify their belonging.
- _ Speculate on qualities (tangible or otherwise) which contribute to the 'essence' of the garden.
- _ Explore and critique the way we 'see' gardens to hold the place of gardens in landscape architecture.
- _ Test and develop operative concepts to guide design towards garden-ness.
- _ Engage representational techniques from artistic practice which venerates biotic life and exposes its propensity as ever-shifting.

These objectives have been bullet-pointed for clarity, but it should be noted that they are not entirely distinct from one another. The overlapping character of these objectives will become more evident as the research unfolds.

1.4 Methodological Strategy: A Performative Model

Due to increasing environmental and socio-political complexity, the practice of landscape architecture is progressively demanding an expanded practice to seek new possibilities in the conception and design of landscapes. This is underscored in a recent (in this instance, of the last decade) editorial for The Journal of Landscape Architecture, which poses,

(...) an expanded understanding of landscape architecture that acknowledges its distinctiveness of vocabulary, medium and historical development, yet at the same time opens the field to new terminologies, methods and speculative advances. The contemporary critique and practice of landscape architecture is one that is relational rather than exclusionary, specific rather than general. It depends not on the acceptance of fixed categories or definitions but on their fluid, nuanced exploration (Blanchon-Caillot, et al).

This in mind, this research germinates from my own gardening habits, in conjunction with the currency of my own landscape architectural training – the question of practice as research is at stake here. The inquiry is however augmented with literature and precedent review, analysis, and critique that sharpen the works approach through design practices. These vital phases of the research will be unpacked soon, yet in the first instance it is worth emphasising that the research arises by combining these outcomes with my own observations and reflections regarding landscape architectural practice, that include my experience as a gardener.

Whilst the above research question sets forth a clear aspiration, there is intentional vagueness and a degree of generalisation within the projects problem-field. This becomes quickly apparent in the projects initial phases, where a strategy of research that detours from routes where attempt to make claim of any meaning in, of, or for the garden is pursued. *How* to approach the question, a matter of research style, is foregrounded here.

Wherein a quantitative approach would be unfit to navigate the research's indefinite problem field, the research here employs a performative approach. This approach empowers the garden and its constituents with the right of being – open, multiplicative, and unfettered by the rationale of classification. It is this unfetteredness, or openness to alternative modes of existence, ways not typologically precedented, that this project seeks. In this way this research takes up performativity in a manner that breaks with prevailing landscape architectural research to reach out to alternate realities.

In an article written for the European Journal of Women's Studies, Social Scientist Turid Markussen describes the potentiality of performative practice:

Performativity is a theory of how things – identities and other discursive effects – come into being. All research is performative, in the sense that it helps enact the real. However, performativity is not only a theory, but also a deconstructive practice, which aims to displace those effects and bring out alternative worlds. Thus, performativity opens up discursively produced effects as sites of political contest (329).

Aligning the research with a performative, deconstructive practice prompts the quest to discover something about garden-essence, garden-being, human-being, and relations. Importantly, the project is tasked to find a way to translate findings into a series of operative criteria to act as guidance for the four practice-based discovery phases of the project. These criteria are developed, engaged, and tested in the first instance through the design of a residential garden and flow through the subsequent experiments, where they will be subject to iterative refinement as new insights are revealed through the process of reflection.

It is anticipated that while the shape of the research will necessarily edge towards the research question, there will be no outcome in the form of a neat answer. Subsequently, the outcomes are suspected to resolve as a series of findings, and the potential of performative and garden practices within the practice of landscape architecture may be illuminated.

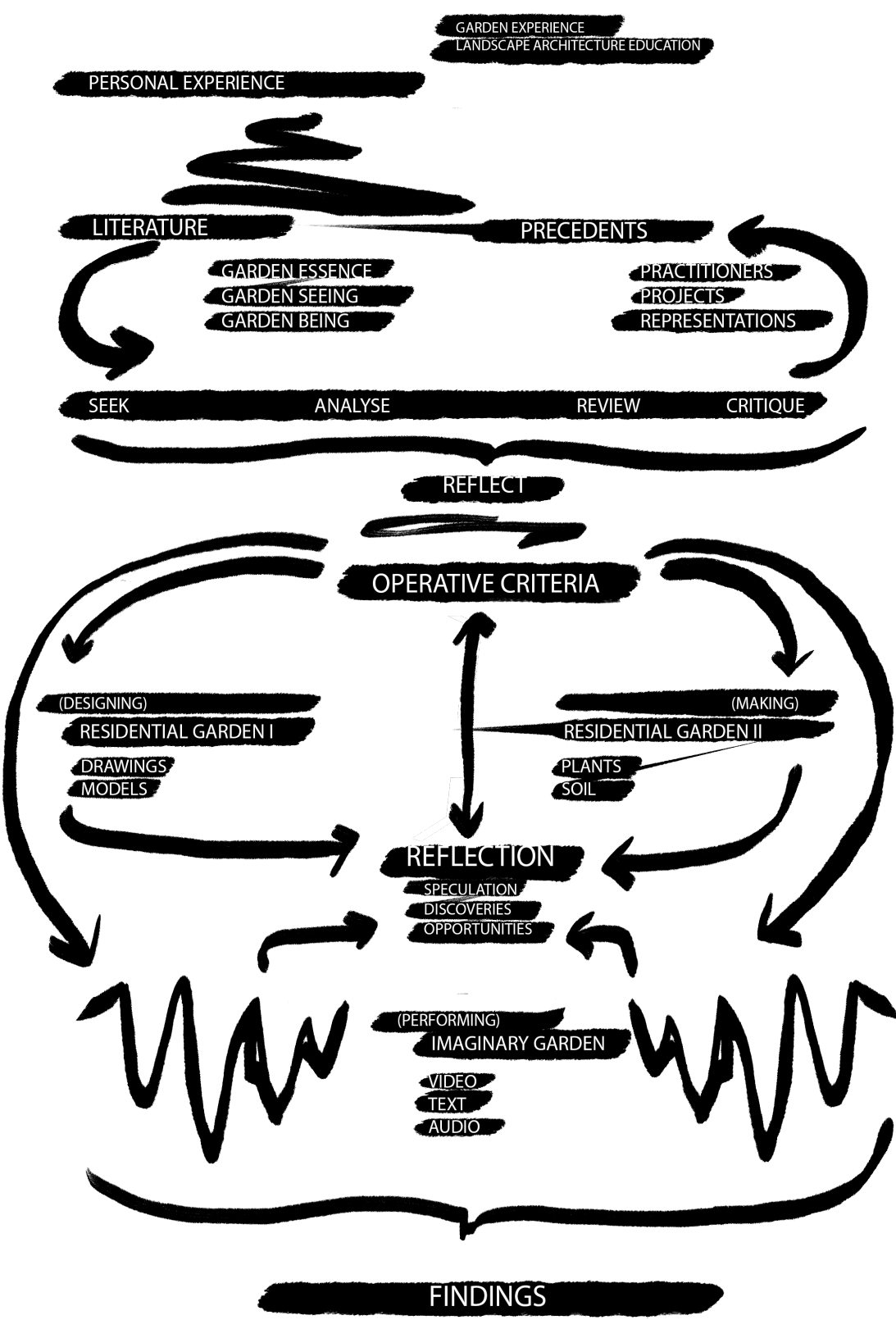


Fig. 1.2
Methodological Diagram.



Fig. 2.0

The Cells of Life,
Charles Jencks.

Allan Pollok-Morris, c/o Jupiter Artland. *The Cells of Life at Jupiter Artland*. 2018. Photograph. Wikimedia Commons.

2.0	Literature Review
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2.1 Introduction

I have organised this literature review into four categories, which revealed themselves upon review of my initial attempts to pin sources most relevant to my line of inquiry.

Initially, it was difficult to locate the right material, due to the inconspicuous field I seemed to have created for this research. However, given that I had made an early claim that instrumentalism limits imaginative landscape architectural practice, it seemed best to evidence and examine this in order to better understand the relationship between landscape architecture and gardening. Tensions became apparent within the study of discourse, which helped to direct the subsequent review sections towards looking for alternative ways of seeing the garden, whilst building the inquiry and legitimacy of atmospheric and aesthetic realms - immeasurable as they are.

In line with searching, analysing, and critiquing texts, I took an intuitive approach to sourcing imagery to sit with the emergent narrative. I quickly became aware that images within discourse, in and of themselves, were critical to the research development. Images offer instant affect, and as the following will demonstrate, I began to entangle images with what I found textually relevant so that they could *speak* to each other. I searched, analysed and critiqued these images as rigorously as I would with any text source. At times it was as though the images led me along the inquiry more powerfully than the textual source material that was rapidly accumulating.

As it turns out, before I could name it, I had already begun to take a performative approach in these early stages of structuring the style of this investigation and thus review of literature. What follows discusses key sources and is accented with moments of reflection deemed critical to the crafting of this practice-based research.

2.2 The Tension Between Landscape Architecture and Gardening

The tradition of landscape architecture arises from the tradition of gardening. However, over the course of its development as a professional and specialist endeavour, the intrinsic link between these two identities has become buried over in favour of instrumentalist tactics that centralise human values and knowledge.

Our collective reception and interpretation of landscapes over time are relationally affected. Christophe Girot¹ underscores this parallel relationship in his text *The Course of Landscape Architecture*, which correlates the transience of human action, attitudes, and belief with landscape intervention and landscape thinking in history. Framing landscape thinking and doing in accordance with the fluidity of changing world-views, Girot considers that it is insufficient to rely on models of the past and calls to question the relevance of these to the present. In particular, he identifies a contemporary tendency of designed landscape to operate under a paradigm of empiricism. This, he asserts, consequently affects our conception of nature:

This paradigm shift towards a more quantitative and scientifically guided approach to the design of nature is intrinsically ahistorical, and spells the end of a millennia-old intricate – not to say intimate – relationship between humankind and landscape. This development is worrying for, if landscape architecture can no longer rise to the challenge of imagining the next significant bond between humankind and its natural environment, it will simply disappear as an art, to the benefit of science and engineered sustainability (15).

This observation is a key motivator for this design-led inquiry, suggesting that engaging the garden with a landscape practice could be a way into future practices which ensures that art is not lost.

Why the general image of contemporary landscape architecture remains distanced from gardens and aesthetics could be approached from three angles. The first, as aforementioned, is referential to the age of enlightenment, in which the structuring of collective world views arched away from religion and folk traditions, and emphasised that the attainment of knowledge should be sourced by reason. Thus, the mobilisation of scientific methods and reductionism became central to the investigation of truth, and the accumulation of power.²

¹ Girot is a practicing landscape architect, professor and Chair of Landscape Architecture at the Department of Architecture of the ETH in Zürich.

² Rosetta Elkin directs this claim to Isabelle Stengers' *Power and Invention: Situating Science*. "Stengers describes how science is mobilized by the state and capitalist enterprise to accumulate power, arguing that professional consensus and the consolidation of expertise served to invalidate local or artisanal knowledge during the 19th century" (qtd. in Elkin 126).

The second is made visible through the lens of feminist critique, in which the invention of landscape architecture as a professional pursuit (its genesis commonly attributed to the decades following the onset of the 19th Century) is notably scarce of women.¹ Given that the systematic oppression of women was rife in these times, it is not hard to surmise that gardening - if considered as an extension of women's supposed domestic duties - might be dismissed to protect the intended stature of the landscape architecture profession.²

Harriet Patterson, who holds a significant fifty year career in American landscape architecture, notes the presence of early female practitioners in landscape and identifies a major turning point in the field:

They've been unsung and forgotten, and I just think that it was a kind of necessary purging of the profession that Ian McHarg practiced—that he brought about a huge change in the profession, which had become self-indulgent in a way and dependent on rich patrons and people who could afford gardens, and it was time for a huge change. But at the same time, these artists, I think, were lost, and their heritage was not transformed. I think [of] Ian McHarg, my reaction to Ian was that he absolutely gave the Earth a voice and a conscience to the practitioners of a profession, which really had not been a profession in a way. That gave us all a sense of responsibility for nature. But at the same time, we lost some of the artists, and I would just like to see the artists come back into the world of landscape architects. There have been a few along the way who are artists, but everything is so result-driven and measurable and scientifically important, and significant. But I think that art has a different transforming power that needs to be reinstated in our profession (qtd. in Birnbaum).

Patterson's sentiment aligns well with Girot's and with the overarching agenda for this research. Importantly, she acknowledges the positive effects that have arisen from the shift in landscape practices towards quantitatively-guided ends. In line with this, this research does not intend to suggest that solving problems is a misguided act - rather that it intends to explore the vacancy of artistic practice that it has induced.

This leads well into a third condition to situate the relationship between landscape architecture and gardening, which operates under a classist framework. In the introduction to his recent book, *Overgrown: Practices in Landscape Architecture and Gardening*, Julian Raxworthy³ provides an anecdote familiar to many in the

1 Terry L. Clements examines this claim in her essay, *Where Are the Women in Landscape Architecture?*

2 Excluding, downplaying, and undercompensating contributions made by women in other professional fields is common and ongoing. *Witches, Midwives, and Nurses: A History of Women Healers* forms a case for comparison in the medical profession.

3 Raxworthy is a researcher, teacher, and critic in the field of landscape architecture, and is a registered

fields of landscape architecture and gardening:

Landscape Architects have an ambiguous relationship with gardens. In answer to the obligatory question 'What do you do for a living?,' landscape architects know what will follow: 'Can you do my garden?' In response they will patiently explain that, really, they work on more significant, more serious things like environmental projects, open space systems, streets, and other infrastructure. In silent fury they will say to themselves: 'You can't afford me... I'm not 'just' a gardener.' (...) Being called a 'gardener' (or, worse, a 'landscaper') is an insult for a landscape architect. Landscape architects regard gardeners as amateurs or blue-collar members of the working class (1).

Raxworthy senses that landscape architecture is losing the garden on the basis of oppressive social organisation.⁴ This is a pertinent observation to harness for this design inquiry, and is expanded upon in the subsequent stages of this literature review.

The preceding possible explanations as to the underwriting of the garden presence in the field of landscape architecture share a commonality of control and perceived authority which suggests an image of the discipline as a self-important one which increasingly panders to the corporate sphere, and dismisses the unquantifiable territory of the garden. It is within this context that I ask the questions:

— How is the field able to innovate if it is hindered by perpetuating models of the past?

— How do such constraints in contemporary landscape 'production' affect our being-with-nature?

— How might the garden be a vehicle for collectivism, or form a collective being?

The authors reviewed above suggest that alternative ways of knowing and doing that look beyond the instrumental can reinvigorate landscape architectural practice by way of inviting those malleable, sensual, and aesthetically driven qualities that gardeners inherently strive to produce.

landscape architect. This particular text is a highly relevant supplement to this research.

4 John Dixon Hunt also notes: '(...) landscape architecture is fractured as a profession partly because it is obliged to divide its energies among a daunting variety of projects. Above all, it has largely lost touch with whatever conceptual or thoughtful understanding of its activities was available to earlier generations of practitioners, and it has lost touch, too, with gardens' (*Greater Perfections* xi).

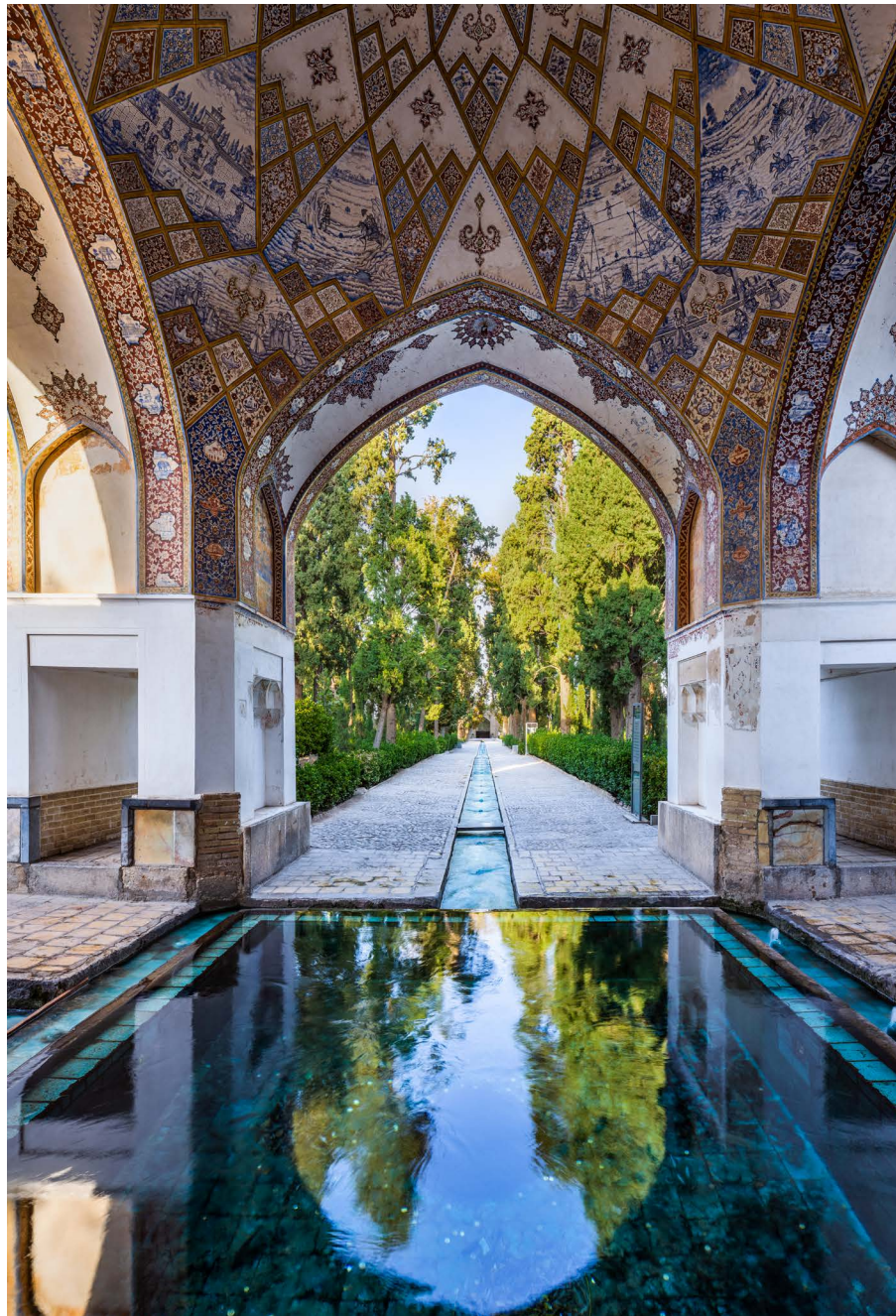


Fig. 2.1

Bagh-e Fin,
Kashan, Iran.

Amir Pashaei. *A Kushak in Fin Garden*. 2019. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.2

Gordon Dam,
Strathgordon, Australia.

JJ Harrison. *Gordon Dam, Southwest National Park, Tasmania, Australia*. 2008. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.





Fig. 2.3
Women in the Garden,
Claude Monet, 1866.

Claude Monet. *Women in the Garden*. 1866. Oil on Canvas.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.4
Two Men Contemplating the Moon,
Caspar David Friedrich, 1819-20

Caspar David Friedrich. *Two Men Contemplating the Moon*. 1819-20. Oil on Canvas.
Wikimedia Commons.





Fig. 2.5

Fredrick Law Olmstead.

John Singer Sargent. *Fredrick Law Olmstead*. 1895. Oil on Canvas. Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.6

The Gardener.

Vincent Van Gough. *The Gardener*. (More often: *Young Peasant*). 1889. Oil on Canvas. Wikimedia Commons.



2.3 Collecting Imagination

The presence of gardens in human history is ubiquitous. This being said, the particularities of singular gardens are as diverse as the cultural array that constitutes global citizenry.

Substantial typologies exist in the garden vernacular, each rooted in various criteria of locality, epoch, belief, spatiality and affection. This is confirmed by consideration to the astounding number of texts that exist in relation to gardens, which will inevitably expose such themes as: The Japanese Garden; The Wild Garden; The French Formal Garden; The Italian Renaissance Garden; The English Landscape Garden; The Enclosed Garden; The Modern Garden – and so on. Interestingly, contemporary garden classification imparts a preference for measurable, anthropocentric expressions of a garden's purpose. Consider, for example: The Edible Garden; The Community Garden; The Victory Garden; The Therapeutic Garden; The Rain Garden; or even The Beer Garden. The disposition of these latter typologies suggest a popular belief that gardens should have utility. By inference, this utility implicates the garden in varying degrees of surreptitious modes of exploitation and extraction.

There is plenty of research that examines typological gardens. However, for the purpose of this research, the garden will be considered beneath any epistemic of type or typology. How then, does the garden in its general sense situate itself in our collective consciousness? Such a question could be approached by searching for an essential definition.

John Dixon Hunt, an expert landscape historian and theorist who holds a particular interest for the garden, offers the following in a chapter from *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, aptly titled 'What on Earth is a Garden?'

A garden will normally be out-of-doors, a relatively small space of ground (relative, usually, to accompanying buildings or topographical surroundings). The specific area of the garden will be deliberately related through various means to the locality in which it is set. (...) The garden will [yet] be distinguished in various ways from the adjacent territories in which it is set. Either it will have some precise boundary, or it will be set apart by the greater extent, scope, and variety of its design and internal organisation; more usually, both will serve to designate its space and its actual or implied enclosure. A combination of inorganic and organic materials are strategically invoked for a variety of usually interrelated reasons – practical, social, spiritual, aesthetic – all of which will be explicit or implicit expressions or performances of their local culture. (...) Given the fundamental contribution of time to the being of a garden, it not only exists in but also takes its special character from four dimensions (15).

Heavily abridged, it can be surmised that Hunt defines the garden in overlapping terms pertaining to spatiality, locality, materiality, function, time, and culture. His method of approach to this end appears to arise by extracting like qualities among gardens in history. Although his description stirs an agreeable image of garden-ness in our minds, a closer interrogation signals the elusive nature of the garden – take for example, the paradoxical scenario in which a garden invokes the territory that it nests in,¹ yet at the same time is set apart from it. Of additional interest to my own working definition of a garden is the suggestion that garden materials perform, and that the ‘being’ of the garden entails temporal as well as material inputs.

It is clear that attempting to define the garden raises debate and points to the slippery nature of the gardens of our imagination - although it is difficult to define the being of the garden in words, it is not so difficult to imagine it. Perhaps, then, we might get closer to the idea of garden-essence by considering it against what it is not. The concept of the three natures, wherein third nature encompasses the garden, should be useful to this approach.

The term ‘third nature’ is attributed to the 16th Century works of Bartolomeo Taegio and Jacopo Bonafido, who appear to have coined the term independently of one another, but are united in responding to Cicero’s descriptions of landscape in which he suggests a second nature to describe agricultural and cultural landscapes.

We sow corn, we plant trees, we fertilise the soil by irrigation, we dam the rivers and direct them where we want. In short, by means of our hands we try to create as it were a second nature within the natural world (qtd. in *Greater Perfections* 33).

If first nature embodies unmediated nature, then it follows that second nature would manifest as working and infrastructural landscapes which are engaged with program, and production. However, the concept of second nature does not suffice to encompass those qualities of a garden which exist in addition to the functional, or supersede function entirely. Third nature, then, must also incorporate landscapes which have an artistic sentiment. As such, the garden takes on a certain kind of holism in our imagination, as compared to, say, an agricultural landscape.

This is not to say that a landscape which is directed by utility is incapable of additionally imparting some kind of subjective significance (consider the romantic connotations of an orchard)² - rather, concepts of value which pre-empt the hands that shape a landscape affect its qualification under the above regime. In the case of a garden – as being something apart from the orchard described – its intent to encapsulate beauty is its highest objective, and therein lies its charm. The question of utility, program, function, purpose, and so on – is thus relegated to incidence.

¹ Hunt describes this as acting through the application of indigenous plant materials, representation/ association to the wider landscape, and expression of the character of the site (genius loci).

² The same could be said for the urban gardening trend.

To find a collective image for the being of the garden, which has so far been examined in terms of its parts, as well as in relation to what it is not, this line of thought should be supplemented by some consideration to the imagination itself, of which meaning is an adjacent production.

There exists an abundance of debate as to whether gardens possess meaning, and if they do, what those meanings could be. *The Meaning of Gardens* is a compelling compendium on this topic, which frames the garden as ‘a place, and idea, and an action’; and ‘an ecology of thoughts, spaces, activities, and symbols’ (2). These offerings elicit some further embellishments for my own working definition. In the first instance is the fact the garden requires action (as in *garden^{ing}*), and, further to this, that the garden is an entity of interrelations. And although this research has no intention of interpreting the meanings of gardens - if there are any – it must be said that if there were only one image of the garden which has prevailed over human history, it is surely that which considers the paradisiacal, or utopic. Utopia, of course, is an imaginary place which is founded on abstract, subjective concepts of goodness, beauty, and perfection. If a garden represents a utopic realm, then it also represents a miniaturised version of the world that we wish to inhabit.

The endeavour to reveal something of the essence of the garden has proven laborious, and still I have found no way of defining it without flaw. Therefore, I am left with the sense that the garden cannot be defined, yet it performs to our imagination in a common way. Perhaps herein lies another reason as to why gardens are often separated from landscape architecture – because they are difficult to define, they are too unruly for the disciplinary confines of landscape architectures solutionist trajectories to accommodate.



Fig. 2.7

Sagano Bamboo Forest,
Arashiyama, Kyoto.

Casey Yee. *Native bamboo forest, in Arashiyama, Japan*. 2009. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.8

Jardín Etnobotánico de Oaxaca,
Oaxaca, Mexico.

Rod Waddington. *Cactus Fortress, Oaxaca*. 2012. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.





Fig. 2.9
 Victory Garden Movement,
 1941-45.
 Unknown. *Shoot to Kill - Protect Your Victory Garden*. 1941-45. Print.
 Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.10
 Gardens of Versailles,
 c. 1690.
 Pierre Lepautre. *Plan general de la Ville et du Château de Versailles*. c. 1690. Print.
 Wikimedia Commons.

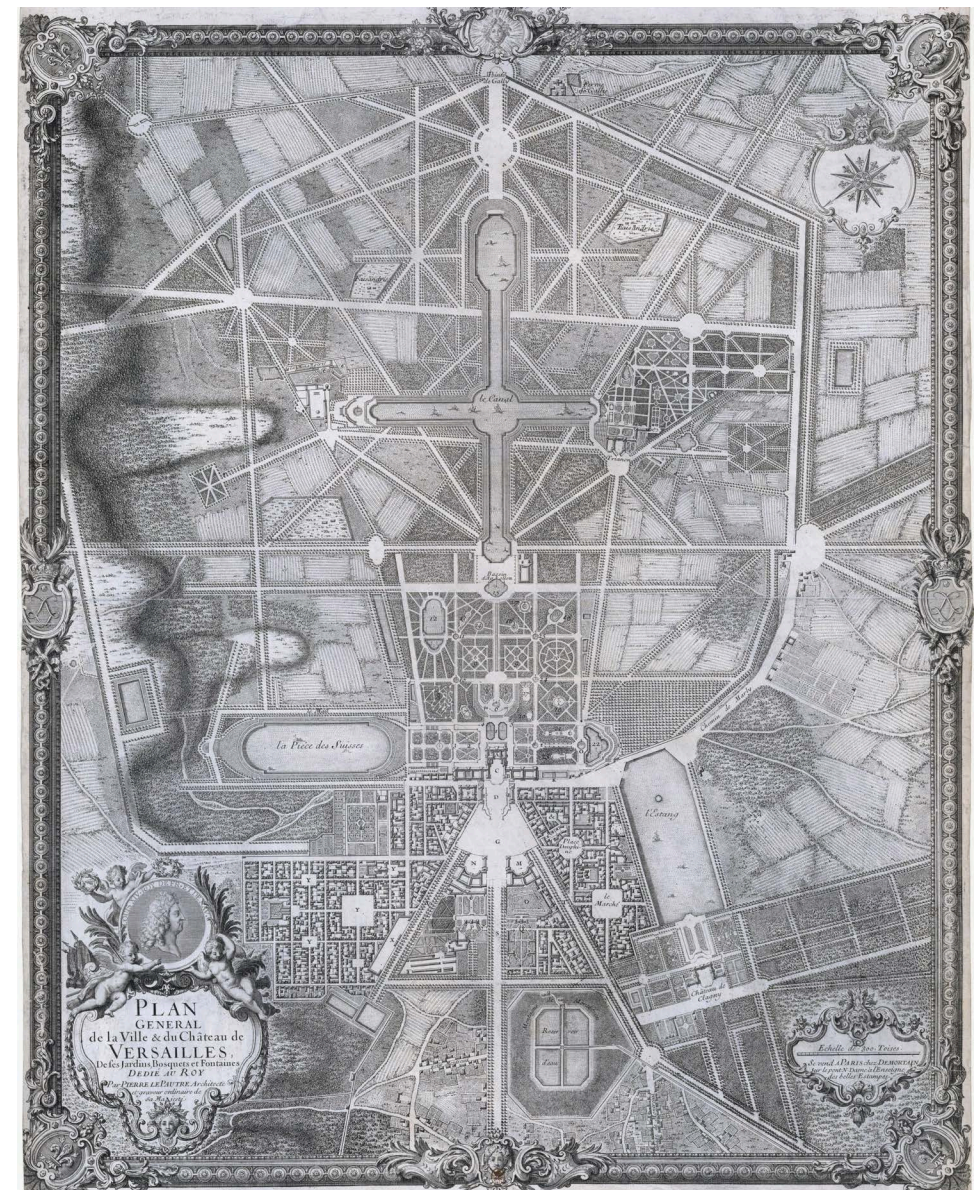




Fig. 2.11

Moor House and Red House Farm,
Bedlington, England.

Peter Clark. *View of Moor House and Red House Farm*. 1990. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.12

Francisco Pignatari Residence,
São Paulo, Brazil.

Kevin Kiliss. *Fotografia do Parque Burle Marx*. 2018. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.



2.4 Becoming Flat

The question is not what you look at, but what you see (Henry David Thoreau, qtd. in Specq 399).

Ontology is the philosophical study of being. It studies the nature of things, their existence, and reality. The ontological world of the garden is pertinent to this research in its pursuit to discover something about garden-essence and the garden-imagination, and responds to the issues that have been raised so far in relation to imbalanced power dynamics and the wearying assumptions that arise out of adherence to a singular brand of knowledge. Furthermore, an ontological assessment of the garden should lead to some discernment around the question raised in section 2.2: *How might the garden be a vehicle for collectivism, or form a collective being?*

Advocates of what has been termed ‘flat’ ontology¹ seek to subjugate patterns of organisation which give rise to hierarchies that are seen to reinforce asymmetric power and patterns of marginalisation. Regardless of ‘who’ is centralised in such scenarios – divine, human, or otherwise – a flat ontology offers an alternative image of the world in which all objects, regardless of scale, relations, or properties, are made equal. Under this paradigm, the means of realism shift how we know, to how things *are*. A state of realism that embodies authenticity, then, depends on decentralising the human from the web of relations that constitute the universe.

The implication that all objects are equal in the garden requires some interrogation of the ‘object’ itself.² Ontologically flat thinking explodes the idea of an object so that even abstract feelings or imaginary things have the same right of being as any other object. Therefore, no object is more a subject than any other, and the idea of subject consequently dissolves into a variation of an object itself.³ The absence of subject in the garden nullifies any belief of the garden being *for* anyone or anything, and instead suggests that, as an object composed of an array of even more objects, that all of the pieces of a garden relate together for the macro-object of the garden. To put this idea in more human terms, consider the commonly held idea ‘the garden is for me’ as compared to the subject-less alternative ‘I am a piece of this garden’.

Bruno Latour, a French philosopher, anthropologist, and sociologist, is well known for disengaging the subject/object division. He asks,

1 Coined by Michael DeLanda in his book, *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy*.
2 Alternatively referred to as a ‘thing’ – for example in the works of Timothy Morton or Ian Bogost.
3 This feels somewhat related to the Buddhist idea of ‘not-self’.

Why always replace one commander with another? Why not recognise once and for all (...) that action is slightly overtaken by what it acts upon; that it drifts through translation; that an experiment is an event which offers slightly more than its inputs; that chains of mediations are not the same thing as an effortless passage from cause to effect; that there is no such thing as the imposition of categories upon a formless matter; and that, in the realm of techniques, no one is in command – not because technology is in command, but because, truly, no one, and nothing at all, is in command, not even an anonymous field of force? To be in command, or to master, is a property of neither humans, nor nonhumans, nor even of God (qtd. in Miller 21).

The collapse of command and mastery in the garden offers this research an insight into the garden which has its own life - as a collective being - and says something of the difference between looking and seeing. To see the garden requires acknowledging that the garden *is* – i.e. the garden has its own mode of existence. Its *being* makes it matter, and seeing attentively can reward with meaning and nuance. This discovery should assist in mobilising the design practice in the phased experiments of this research by adapting to an ontologically flat model which foregrounds openness, equity, and collectivity.

With this in mind, it could be said that ontological discourse is entwined with the political dimension. If equality becomes an established premise for acting in the world, then a garden may appear as a democracy, where the notion of citizenship extends to the lives of plants and animals, as well as to the forces of weather and time. In his essay *The Meaninglessness of Gardens*, John Ferrari⁴ considers the garden in such socio-political terms, and from the point of view of its plant lives:

What justifies the comparison between gardening and politics is rather the claim with which I began: that the elements of the gardening art are lives – the lives of plants. (...) Both the gardener and the politician organise lives. The garden is a society of plants, a society established, maintained, cared for, and ruled over by its gardener (35).

In his garden-as-society, Ferrari suggests a monarchy. However, in line with my research question, I would suggest that the gardener or landscape architect (or anybody, for that matter) is welcome to define their own position in the garden. In this way, their roles could suggest anything between dictator and ordinary citizen. Under the guidance of a flat ontology of the garden, it is suggested that the uptake of the latter position could be an appropriate way to test design methods which perform this alternate world view within the garden.

The possible ontological flattening of human forces in the garden as an alternative

⁴ Ferrari's subject matter spans ancient philosophy, aesthetic, ancient poetics and rhetoric, and philosophical aesthetics. He is associated with the Department of Classics, UC, Berkeley.

to command and mastery is alluded to in Rosetta Elkin's⁵ critical essay *Plant Life: The Practice of Working Together*. She writes,

Today, common procedures and attitudes toward plant life are entrenched in the methods that are sanctioned by expertise and calculation, including carbon offsetting calculations, greening initiatives, afforestation, and other environmental do-goodisms that paradoxically proliferate at the expense of plant life. Such strategies engage the familiar protocols of designers, who tend to shrink at the authority (and impenetrability) of scientific discourses and therefore promote resolutions based on already established metrics. It is precisely this translation of trust, in science and in problem solving, that is at the heart of all formal aesthetic practises, and of the design professions in particular. As a consequence, the field of science tends to discourage the sensuous, articulate, and communicative subject, further constraining any possibility of interdisciplinary or collective practice. Even today, plant life is analysed as a fixed backdrop against human and animal intentions. Whether through use or expertise, the project of pacifying plants strengthens human authority. One practice exploits the plant itself, the other, knowledge of the plant (126).

This observation addresses the research's concern surrounding the strict adherence of landscape architectural practice to instrumental methods. As such, the research calls for experimentation with an imagined flattening of the actors involved in the garden assemblage, so that all materials and events as they arise can be considered as acceptable means of realist expression and agency. The design-work, then, should adopt a consideration of gardening which avoids abuses of power and promotes a spirit of humility in which the agencies of things are honoured in their equality of significance.

⁵ Elkin is a researcher and Assistant Professor in landscape architecture at the Harvard University Centre for the Environment. Her research interests include infrastructure, plant ecology, and more-than-human geographies.



Fig. 2.13

Noli me Tangere,
Lambert Sustris, 1548-60.

Lambert Sustris. *Noli me tangere*. 1548-60. Oil on Canvas.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.14

Garden Gathering,
Iranian Tile Panel, 1640-50.

Unknown. *Garden Gathering*. 1640-50. Painted Tile.
Wikimedia Commons.



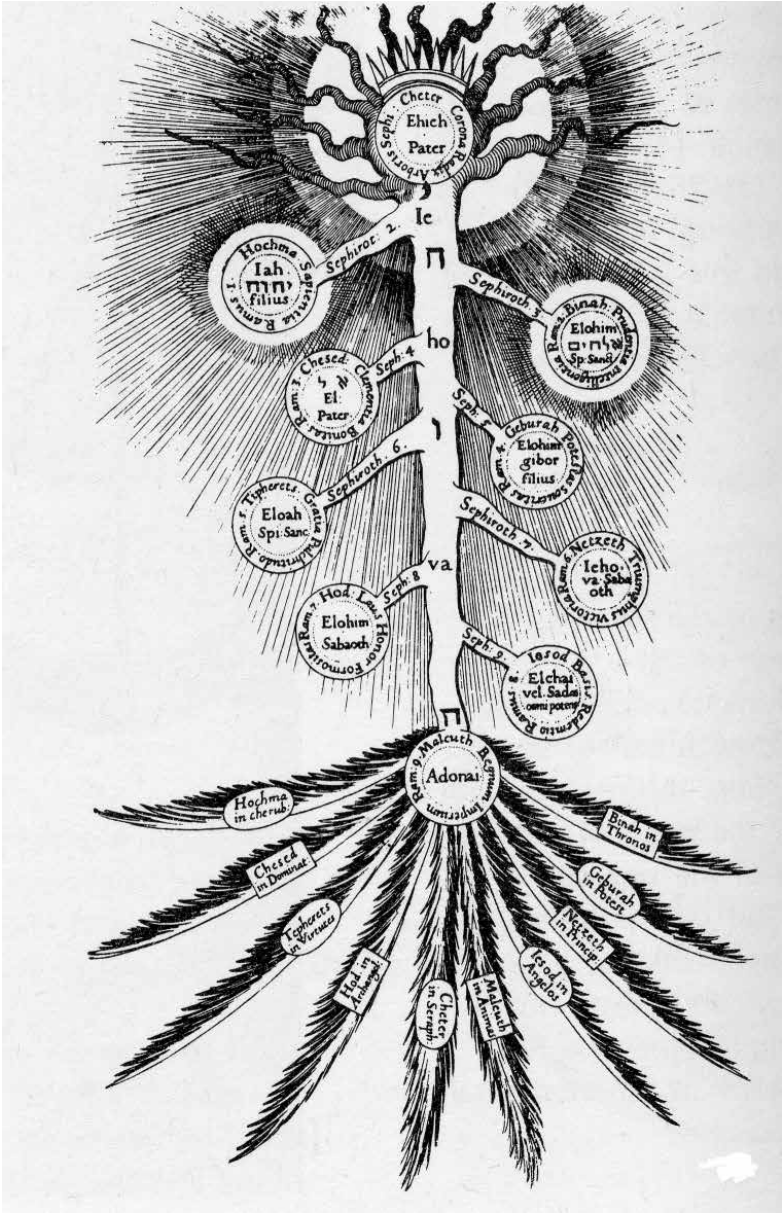


Fig. 2.15
Kabbalah Tree of Life,
Robert Fludd, 1621.

Robert Fludd. *The Tree of Life from the Deutsche Fotothek*. 1629. Print.
Wikimedia Commons.

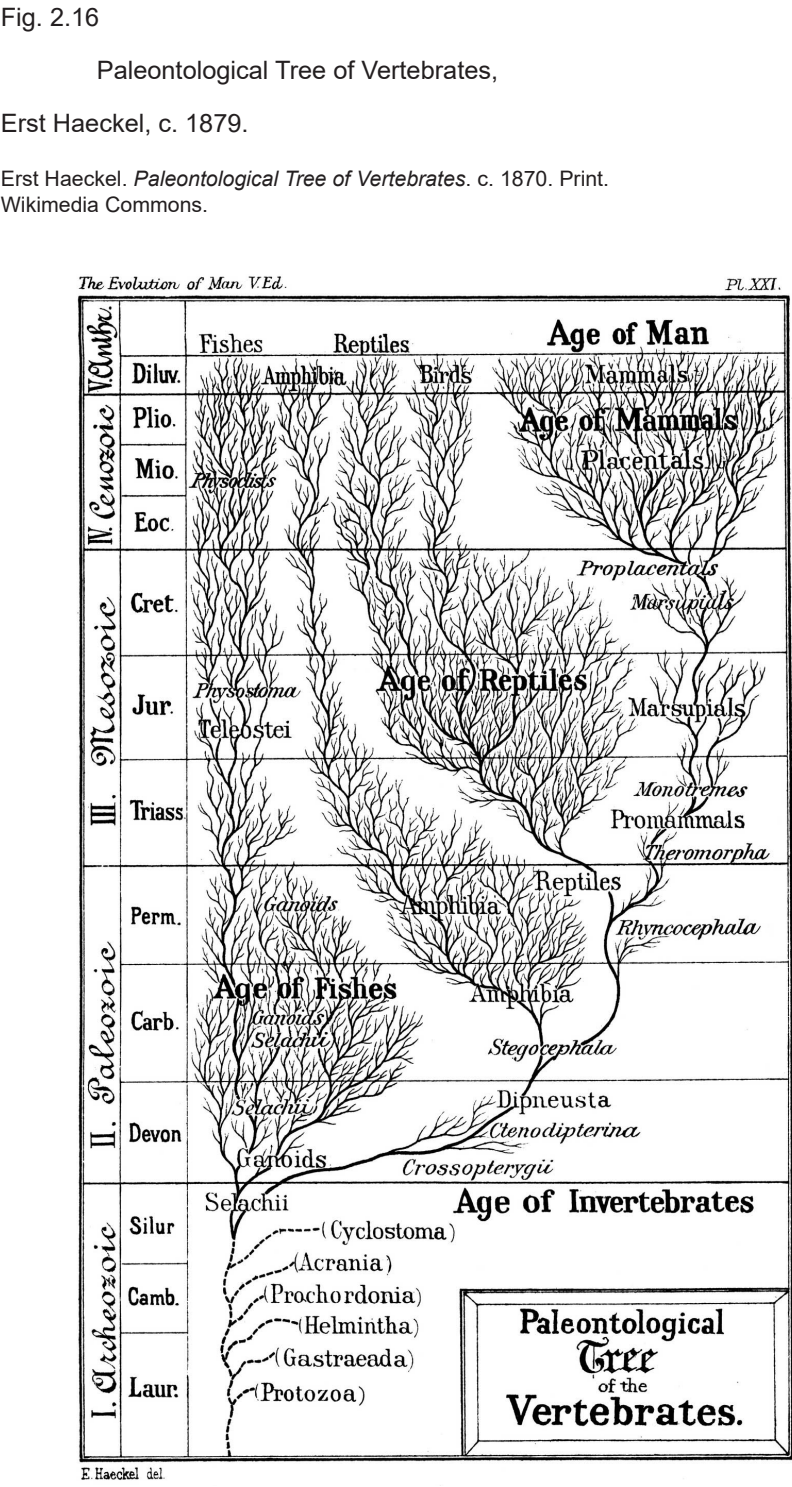




Fig. 2.17

Manna ash (*Fraxinus ornus*), from Medical Botany,
John Stephenson and James Morss Churchill, 1836.

John Stephenson and James Morss Churchill. *Fraxinus ornus*. 1836. Print.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.18

Yggdrasil - The Mundane (Ash) Tree,
Oluf Olufsen Bagge, 1847.

Oluf Olufsen Bagge. *Yggdrasil, The Mundane Tree*. 1847. Print.
Wikimedia Commons.





Fig. 2.19

Expulsion from the Garden of Eden,

Thomas Cole, 1828.

Thomas Cole. *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden*. 1828. Oil on Canvas. Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.20

The Garden of Earthly Delights,

Hieronymus Bosch, 1480-90.

Hieronymus Bosch. *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (Central Panel). 1480-90. Oil on Panel. Wikimedia Commons.



In the carnal acts between bodies (human and non-human), the work of art exceeds its own structures in a radical performativity. (...) Through process, the outside world enters the work and the work casts its effects back into the world. We are quite literally moved (Bolt 190).

2.5 The Universal Hunger for ‘The Flesh of the World’¹

Aesthetic impact is inseparable from the garden if it holds the concepts of art, beauty, idealness, and/or performance as part of its essence.² The following discussion will collect an understanding of garden aesthetic in terms of image, sensation, and atmosphere, with the intent to posit it as an enabler of the encounter between the garden and the imagination.

In the first instance, art and aesthetics are critical to this inquiry for its relation to performativity and attends to the issues of representation and image-making in landscape architectural practice. Barbra Bolt’s³ *Art Beyond Representation: The Performative Power of the Image* opens this dialogue in finding that exchange and transmutation between imaging and reality is implicit within the work of art. In this dynamic of openness lies the opportunity to put to test transformative ways of doing landscape architecture which come from outside the bounds of its normative practice. Bolt follows,

[T]he praxical engagement with tools, materials, and ideas produces its own kind of sight. Such knowing occurs at the level of hands and eyes and operates in a different register from the representational paradigm or ‘I’-as-subject in relation to mere objects. In the flux of practice, acts and decisions occur in the heat of the moment and not as the result of rational logic. In this space art produces effects of a very different order to that of mere representation. (...) In the dynamic productivity of practice, imaging doesn’t merely represent reality. Through a monstrous performativity, images leak into the world and produce it in some unforeseen way. This is the power of the work of art (187).

As in this research, Bolt engages a subject-less ontology to empower the work of art with its own aspects of behaviour which mediates the production of reality. The ontological world of the aesthetic, then, depends on the ability of materials, tools, and concepts to speak, and subsequently to be heard.

Aside from augmenting the means of landscape architectural representation, Bolt’s theory also suggests a way to articulate resonance between art and the garden itself. She proposes,

If art is to be an essential and necessary part of being, then it is in

1 From Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s *The Visible and the Invisible*.

2 As elucidated in section 2.3.

3 Barbara Bolt is Associate Dean of Research at the Victorian College of the Arts and Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. She is a practising visual artist and art theorist who has written extensively on the visual arts and their relationship to new materialist thought.

the midst of beings that art must happen. Thus, if in our everyday life we are open to possibility, such day-to-day practices as cooking and eating may be poetic rather than instrumental. Here, lived embodied experience is the element in which art thrives (188).

The everyday-ness of the garden - in the midst of being - is thus imbued with the power to reflect into the corners of our imagination – if we are open to possibility. Consequently, the garden becomes a process not only in of itself (as in its relation with time), but contributes to the process of reality as it is being produced. The performative force of the garden-as-art lies in its capacity ‘to effect movement in thought, word, and deed in the individual and social sensorium’,⁴ and therein proves itself to be as essential to our developing being as any other form or art or philosophy.

Juhanni Pallasmaa⁵ similarly investigates the reciprocal and evolving effect that images play between the tangible world and that of our imagination. Of his text, *The Embodied Image: Imagination and Imagery in Architecture*, he summarises:

All artistic and architectural effects are evoked, mediated and experienced through poeticised images. These images are embodied and lived experiences that take place in ‘the flesh of the world’, becoming part of us, at the same time that we unconsciously project aspects of ourselves onto a conceived space, object or event. Artistic images have a life and reality of their own and they develop through unexpected associations rather than rational and causal logic.

Given that the reception of aesthetic is distinctly human, our faculties of sensing are indispensable to this discussion. To this point, I have referred to sensorial affects in a synesthetic manner, often interchanging the verbs hearing, feeling, seeing, and so on to discuss alternate ways of knowing which are not bound to instrumental means. This prepares the subject matter for *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*, which offers an explanation of sensing that encompasses such exchanges. Pallasmaa’s overarching narrative retaliates against vision as a culturally privileged sense. He cites David Michael Levin⁶:

The will to power is very strong in vision. There is a very strong tendency in vision to grasp and fixate, to reify and totalise: a tendency to dominate, secure, and control, which eventually, because it was so extensively promoted, assumed a certain uncontested hegemony over

4 From Bolt, *Artistic Research: A Performative Paradigm?*

5 Pallasmaa is a Finnish architect and former professor of architecture and dean at the Helsinki University of Technology. His writings explore phenomenologies of architecture.

6 David Michael Levin is Senior Professor of Philosophy at Northwestern University. His book, *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision* discusses the role of vision in contemporary philosophy.

our culture and its philosophical discourse, establishing, in keeping with the instrumental rationality of our culture and the technological character of our society, an ocularcentric metaphysics of presence (21).

Pallasmaa’s text intends to subvert the dominance of the visual realm, suggesting that a skewed reliance on vision creates distance between an object and an observer. As an alternative, he offers that the fair engagement of other senses enables the observer to ‘connect’ with the observed. In this way, could it be said that the fully sensing observer in the garden is heading towards ontological flatness?

In imploring the reinforcement of our senses to engage with the matters that we inhabit and create with (in the case of this research, the garden) a case is made for a complex aesthetic experience of the garden which is not fixed. This is what I imagine is meant by architect Peter Zumthor’s⁷ insistence of the ‘magic of the real’ (18).

Thus, the matters of image and sensation imply a third small tributary of this review of aesthetics, coined ‘atmosphere’. Gernot Böhme⁸ qualifies atmospheric aesthetic as constituting qualities which arise or emanate from things. In harmony with object-oriented ontologies, Böhme confirms,

... it [aesthetic work] is about letting this thing step outside of itself in a certain way and thereby to let the presence of something become sensible (23).

Seeing the presence of the garden links to the sensorial field, which James Gibson⁹ emphasises as ‘aggressively seeking mechanisms rather than mere passive receivers’ (qtd. in *Eyes of the Skin* 45). The senses, personified as active and hungry, suggest a collective human impulse to engage in the sensual matters that compose and mediate images and atmospheres. As a meeting place of the garden and the imagination, the significance of aesthetics and access thereof gain momentum in the name of humanity’s common ground and the pursuit of connection. As Böhme suggests, ‘a humane existence includes an aesthetic dimension (30).

7 Peter Zumthor is a Swiss architect with interests in creating and examining atmospheric effects in relation to architecture.

8 Gernot Böhme is a German philosopher and author, contributing to the philosophy of science, theory of time, aesthetics, ethics, and philosophical anthropology.

9 James Gibson was an American psychologist and one of the most important contributors to the field of visual perception.



Fig. 2.21

Sunflowers,

Belgorod, Russia.

Andrew. *Sunflowers in Russia*. 2007. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.22

Sunflowers,

Vincent Van Gough, 1888.

Vincent Van Gough. *Still Life: Vase with Fourteen Sunflowers*. 1888. Oil on Canvas.
National Gallery of Victoria.



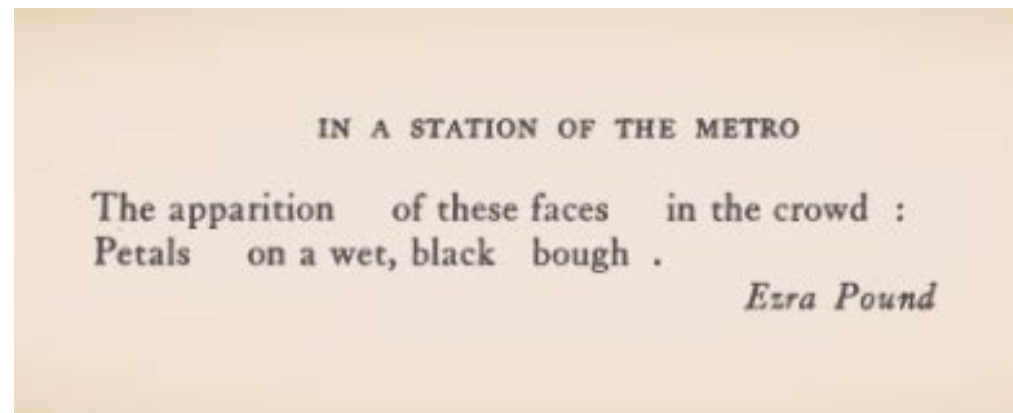


Fig. 2.23

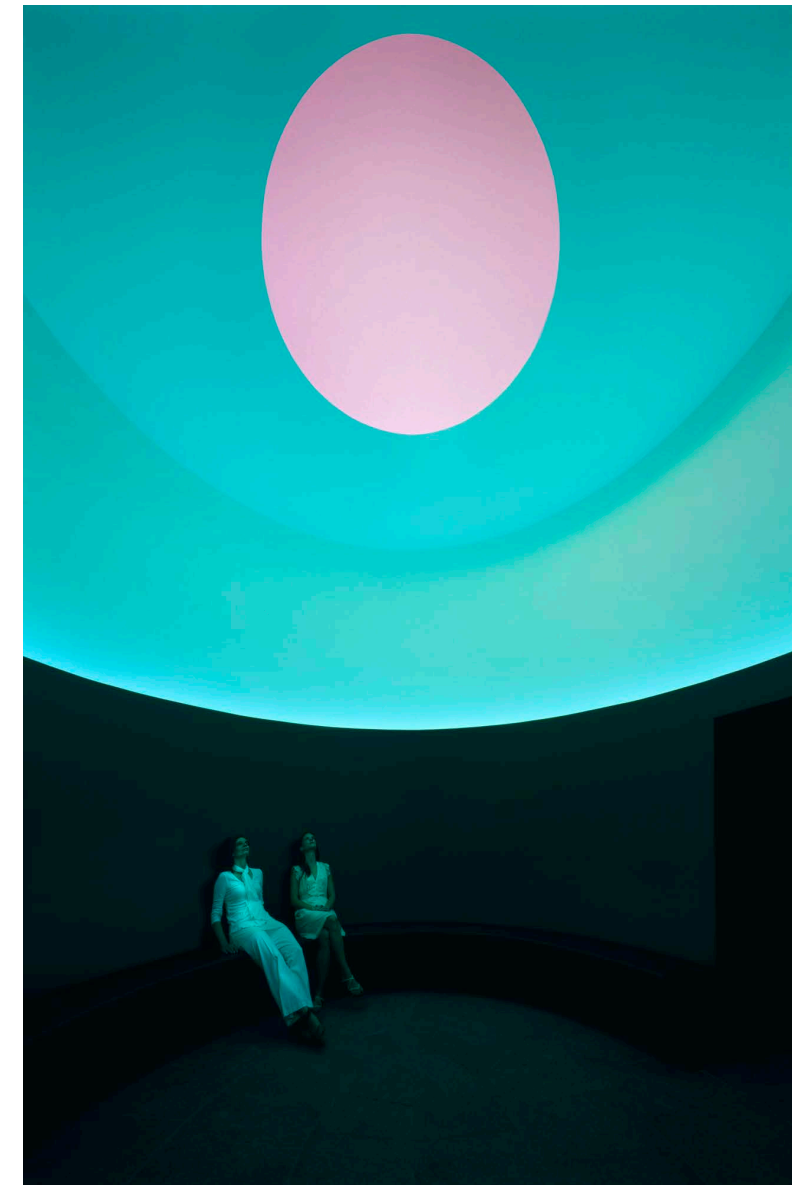
In a Station of the Metro,
Ezra Pound, 1913.

Ezra Pound. *In a Station of the Metro*. 1913. Print.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.24

The Colour Inside,
James Turrell, 2013.

Florian Holzerr. *Visitors view of 'The Color Inside'*. 2013. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.



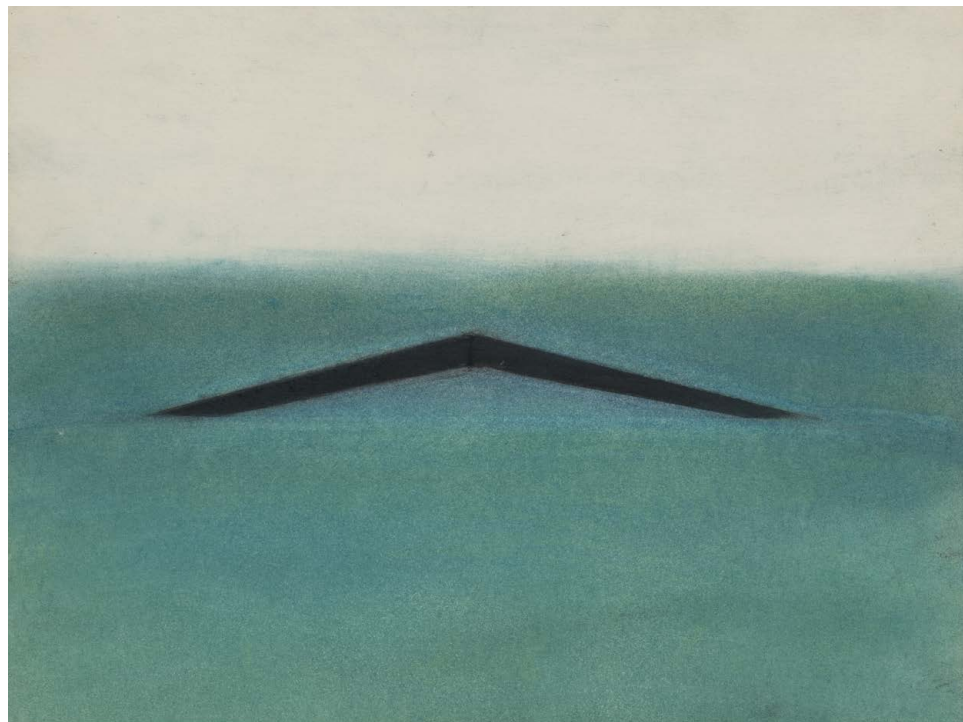


Fig. 2.25

Vietnam War Memorial,

Maya Lin, 1980-1.

Maya Lin. *Maya Lin Submission*. 1980-1. Drawing.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 2.26

Vietnam War Memorial,

Washington, D.C.

Unknown. *Vietnam War Memorial Washington DC*. Unknown. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.



2.5 Critical Reflection: Literature Review

Heretofore, this review of literature has served to propel my research inquiry in the following ways:

_ The provocation that instrumentalism limits imaginative landscape architectural practice has been justified, opening the inquiry to seek other ways of doing that engage the imagination.

_ Speculation as to why gardens are often distanced from landscape architecture has illuminated the issues implicit in the notion of an 'expertise' which is adhered to modes of knowledge that self-replicate, as in the scientific paradigm. This has the tendency to over-bear, ignore, or erase other traditions or practices in the field of landscape architecture.

_ A reciprocal relationship between the being of landscapes (designed or not) and a collective reception of the natural world has been alluded to, which builds significance for this research in its endeavour to foster sensitive thought and action towards the determinate environment.

_ The aforementioned raises how the garden is politicised as a reflection of the world that it nests in, and vice versa. The performative nature of images confirms this affecting reality through exchange and transmutation. Reality is found as reactive to the ongoing process of making and transforming itself.

_ Aspects of garden-essence have been identified which can be engaged to inform design practice. The elusive nature of the garden and the inconsistency between attempting to define it in quantifiable terms and holding a collective imagination for it has been highlighted.

_ The garden has been advocated for as a form of expression which does not necessitate utility, program, function or purpose.

_ An ontologically 'flat' study of the garden has given rise to the possible different realities of human-being-in the garden, and the notion of the garden as a collective being in of itself.

_ Applying a flat ontology to the aesthetic realm has garnered ideas as on par with tools, techniques, and materials as the means by which to create. Though abstract, under a flat ontology ideas have as much being as tangible things.

_ Aesthetic perception has been found to be a meeting point between the garden and the imagination. Image has been applied to the garden itself, so that it is found to evoke and invoke atmospheric qualities in a fusion of material reality and the

imagination. These are encountered (consciously or unconsciously) through the sensory apparatus of the body, which is active rather than passive.

— It has been suggested that a cultural reliance on vision and its tendency to totalise is implicated in landscape architectural practice's normative methods of representation. Seeing is posited as a synesthetic affect. Partnered with the idea that image does more than represent reality, this raises the question for this research of the role of representation in imagining new realities in the landscape.

Consequently, the research from here should examine ways of approaching the garden in landscape architecture which articulates the *outside* as a place of possibility and reinforces the garden as essential to our collective imagination.



Fig. 3.0
Casa Barragan Garden,
Luis Barragan.

Daniel Case. *Earthen Jugs Outside the Luis Barragán House and Studio*. 2015.
Photograph. Wikimedia Commons.

3.0	Precedent Review	
3.1	Introduction	
3.2	Gilles Clément	
3.21	The Garden In Movement	
3.22	The Planetary Garden	
3.23	The Third (Estate) Landscape	
3.24	Key Findings Implicating Practice: Clément	
3.3	Catherine Mosbach	
3.31	Stratigraphy: Space-time, Seeing the Unseen	
3.32	Scripting: Control and Spontaneity	
3.33	Miniature Landscapes	
3.34	Key Findings Implicating Practice: Mosbach	
3.4	Roberto Burle Marx	
3.41	Art and Landscape	
3.42	The Garden as Laboratory	
3.43	Conservation, Politics, and National Identity	
3.44	Key Findings Implicating Practice: Burle Marx	
3.5	Summary of Precedent Review	

3.1 Introduction

Under usual circumstances, an architectural precedent study would entail seeking out designed and/or built projects which bolster the inquiry so far established. Having attempted this approach, it became apparent that this would be an unsatisfactory method for which to discover guidance in mediating the worlds of landscape architecture and gardening.

Limiting the study to singular, complete projects would undermine a key tenet of this thesis – that the garden exists in perpetual motion. Fixity, it has been argued, has become synonymous with the work of landscape architecture, which is to the detriment of its own procedures and to that of the environments it serves to build.

In this spirit, it seemed most constructive to collect precedents in accordance with practice, and I have examined three key figures who share a common defiance towards fixity, yet are situated at different points on the spectrum between landscape architecture and gardening. I have considered these figures in terms of key thematic ideas behind their practice, their styles of representation, process, and making, how these communicate garden-ness in their works, and summarised each study in terms of how the findings might mobilise my own practice in this design-led research. I am as interested in what each of the following personalities have to say as what they do, and have therefore sampled their speech generously.



Fig. 3.1

The Garden of Ophans and Grasses,
Estuaire, St-Nazaire.

Gilles Clément. *Untitled*. Unknown. Drawing.
Area Archives.

3.2 Gilles Clément

Real terrain, mysterious but explorable, it invites the gardener to define its space, its wealth, its habitat. It holds humanity suspended in time. Each seed announces tomorrow. It is always a project. The garden produces goods, bears symbols, accompanies dreams. It is accessible to everyone. It promises nothing and gives everything (qtd. in Jones).

The illusion of mastery has driven us into the bottomless well of ignorance (qtd. in Chiambaretta).

Gilles Clément is a French gardener, garden designer, botanist, entomologist, landscape architect, and writer. He has created numerous parks, gardens, and public spaces in France and throughout Europe.

Clément considers himself foremost a gardener and maintains this distinction as integral to his work. As such, he refused the French national prize for landscape architecture several times before it was finally awarded without his consent. He retorted that it should instead be awarded to the farmers, engineers and foresters who are the real architects of the landscape.

Clément's work proposes new relationships between people and nature, suggesting that through his gardening activity he is connected to life. His experimentation in the realms of gardens and landscape energises the articulation of his academic work, from which three key concepts arise.

3.21 The Garden in Movement

In the garden in movement, plants are moved by transformations in nature so that the garden is sculpted by processes of change. It is both concept and method, that can expand or contract to fit varying scales. The central tenet is to embrace the living over form: 'to work as much as possible with—and as little as possible against—nature' (qtd. in Chiambaretta). Significantly, form is not forgotten, rather that it arises through the process of gardening over time. In the garden of movement, the actions of the non-human are as significant as the actions of the gardener.

All of the plants that settle spontaneously in a garden are worthy of consideration; there are no 'weeds'. Formal work comes second then in my approach to space. Most plants choose their own place, they are travellers and wanderers—on the scale of the garden as on the scale of the planet—carried by winds, currents, the pelts of animals, birds, and the soles of feet (qtd. in Chiambaretta).

In his garden of movement, the complexity of the systems that underpin landscape are recognised as intelligent, while the human compulsion to restructure and sterilize soil is deemed murderous. Clément is critical of the exploitation of earthly material, so much so that he renames the Anthropocene not merely to foreground human ignorance, but human stupidity:

The Stupidocene is the ecstasy of the illusion of mastery. In my own field, we transform landscapes in a spectacular and very violent fashion, we fuse together, we sterilize, we waterproof, we wage war on life. Unlike war, the industry of the Stupidocene does not display a desire to kill, yet it does it anyway with a radical and insidious violence (qtd. in Chiambaretta).



Fig. 3.2

Parc André Citroën,

Gilles Clément, 1992.

Gilles Clément. *Première fauche de printemps par les jardiniers du parc*. 1992. Photograph. Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 3.3

Parc André Citroën,

Anna Gilbert, 2018.

Anna Gilbert. *Parc Ané Citroën*. 2018. Photograph.



3.22 The Planetary Garden

Together, let us assume that the Earth is one small garden (Clément).

The concept of the planetary garden evolved from the garden in movement and was first considered by Clément upon seeing the first photographs of earth from space. He imagined an impact on the world in which the notion of care, as exemplified in gardening, could be expanded to the whole planet. The planetary garden recognises the transience of life and seeks to reimagine humanity as gardeners of the world.

By taking the measure of spatial finitude, planetary cross-fertilization, and the omnipresence of man—who has an impact even where he is not to be found—I have come to the idea of the Planetary Garden. It supposes that each citizen of the planet is a gardener, including mankind in the system of Gaia (qtd. in Chiambaretta).

The planetary garden acknowledges the global movements and migrations of plants as essential to the evolution, inevitably so, and that the favouring of certain kinds of life over others is counterproductive to the flow of nature.

‘Indigenous’ and ‘invasive,’ are terms that have no meaning. These cultural considerations don’t take into account the ecosystem as it has functioned since the appearance of life on Earth, regulated by movements and migrations (qtd. in Chiambaretta).

Notably, Clément extends the concept to all material things encompassed by the planet, so that the world itself becomes a closed loop of transformation and migration:

[The planet] hosts a self-contained biodiversity that represents our condition of sharing. It behaves like a giant washing machine that recycles all of the elements, in such a way that the water that I am drinking has already been drunk by a number of other beings before it reaches me. This is why it is fundamental to ask oneself how to put the energy that has been taken out of the environment back into it, or how not to pollute the water irreversibly. It is an enormous management project and a political program in itself (qtd. in Chiambaretta).

Fig. 3.5

Jardins de l'Arche,

Gilles Clément, 2007.

Gilles Clément. *Jardins de l'Arche, calade*. 2007. Photograph. Wikimedia Commons.



Fig. 3.4

Jardins de l'Arche,

Gilles Clément, 2007.

Gilles Clément. *Jardins de l'Arche, promenade des Gunneras*. 2007. Photograph. Wikimedia Commons.



3.23 The Third (Estate) Landscape

Abandoning land is like handing it over to a future forest (qtd. in Chiambaretta).

Landscapes of a third kind are a slice of a planetary garden, encompassing those parcels of land which are not managed, and where people do not go (or, at least, are not expected to go). Perceived by many as wastelands, Clément instead sees hope in these spaces which often host rich displays of biodiversity, invoking our dependence on a biologically diverse world. Clément challenges the negative image of these unruly spaces, and invites us to see in them a sense of promise.

Instead of presenting them as a loss of power over space, an abandonment or neglect, we can on the contrary look at them as a rehabilitation of the space (qtd. in Chiambaretta).

Left over to nature alone, Clément frames third landscapes as places worthy of our observance, and as a vault for the planet and its future. So too, might they provide an inspiration for design and our relationship with the living world -

I have often suggested that a managed space should be accompanied by an undeveloped adjoining space, left to its own devices, in such a way as to become a reservoir for hosting species that are deemed 'auxiliary' for the gardener, species that help the gardener without asking for anything in return. I feel more and more understood when it comes to these delicate subjects, but it is a matter of a change in vision accompanying a profound cultural change, and this type of change in values always takes a long time to gain ground. We are truly ignorant when faced with the roles and capacities of fauna and flora, which bring with them a feeling of loss of power, even though the living does also work with and for us (qtd. in Chiambaretta).



Fig. 3.6

The Garden of Orphans and Grasses,
Estuaire, St-Nazaire.

Jean-Pierre Dalbéra. *Le Jardin des Orpins et des Graminées*. 2012. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.

Fig. 3.7

The Garden of Labels,
Estuaire, St-Nazaire.

Jean-Pierre Dalbéra. *The Garden of Labels*. 2007. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.



3.24 Key Findings Implicating Practice: Clément

- _ See how the garden (as a microcosm of planetary ecologies) likes to move. Collaborate with this movement.
- _ Adopt a model of 'do no harm'. Speculate on the impacts of proposed landscape intervention from the point-of-view of the non-human. Avoid unnecessary acts of extraction and exploitation.
- _ Design with the intent to communicate care and collectivism, as gardens do.
- _ Challenge subjective notions of ecology, nature, and the environment.
- _ Treat landscape materials as though they are treasure. See their past and future transformations. Reject waste.
- _ Trust, observe, and learn from the un-choreographed doings of the ground.

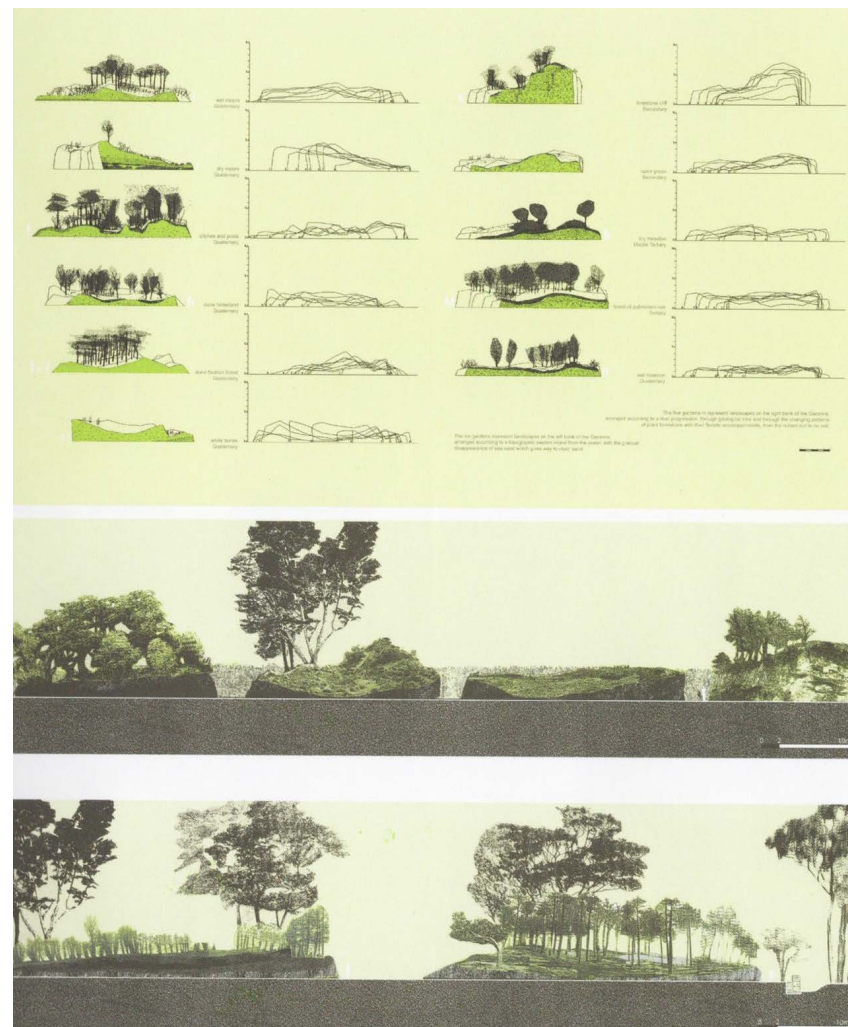


Fig. 3.8

The Gallery of Environments,
Bordeaux Botanic Gardens, France.

Unknown. *The Gallery of Environments at Bordeaux Botanic Gardens*. Unknown. Drawing.
Iconic Landscapes.

3.3 Catherine Mosbach

I turned to the realm of sensibility, of personal interaction. Between emotion and knowledge, the garden seems inexhaustible to me. It can offer a multitude of answers about ecology, botany, the environment. This garden can be taken forward in a thousand ways (Nature to Culture).

Accepting the idea of interconnections, randomness, and happenstance, and abstracting ourselves from the ideal of complete control would be a huge step forward (Nature to Culture).

Catherine Mosbach is a practicing Landscape Architect and writer, and founder of Paris based office Mosbach Paysagistes. Her work is informed by her studies in history, science, and anthropologies, and interests in the garden, the imaginary, and the mineral world. With a penchant for experimentation, her work is indicative of an innate curiosity in dialogue between nature and culture. Consideration of her work reveals a number of recurring themes.

3.31 Stratigraphy: Space-Time, Seeing the Unseen

It is possible to live in several time strata simultaneously, and this complicates things when you are working on the project because you don't know then what moment it is. And you can get lost.... (...) The garden can also be sly, it's constantly on the move and seems to lay traps by proposing a new presentation of a new moment that I hadn't imagined. The garden exists then only in the eyes of the different people who will freeze it in their minds, each at a different moment, in a different personal context (Nature to Culture).

Stratigraphy is a geological term which is concerned with the order and structure of rock layers. It is necessarily interlaced with the conditions of time and space as these factors together constitute the process of geomorphology. In landscape architecture, the ground is often referred to as a two-dimensional plane. Mosbach's ethos, however, offers the ground as both living and inert, and the formulation of land is of key interest to her practice. Furthermore, she treats time in her work as stratified itself. Different scales of time are thus conceived as layered and overlapping.

The garden is no exception to these concepts, which Mosbach appears to acknowledge with some delight. She suggests an image of the garden as a series of ever-shifting moments, some more visible, and some more anticipated.

The garden is a staging of all the subterranean visibilities that appear and disappear in our relations with others. Some dimensions can however be anticipated, like the monumental development of the magnolias. I love plants, I love the earth, and I am forever looking forward to seeing them, as one does with loved ones. You can catch yourself out because if you think for one moment that you have lost these privileged moments, then you immediately start hoping they'll come back. You get caught up in the actual movement of the garden, tracking the many changes, the shifting patterns of light under a stormy sky, for example, which bring with them a new vibrancy and new possibilities (Nature to Culture).

Fig. 3.10

Louvre Lens Park,
Lens, France.

Catherine Mosbach. *Ground Patterning of Louvre-Lens Museum Park*. Unknown. Photograph.
Foreground.



Fig. 3.9

Louvre Lens Park,
Lens, France.

Unknown. *Louvre-Lens*. 2012. Photograph.
Aas Architecture.



3.32 Scripting: Control and Spontaneity

A design's potential lies in its capacity to accommodate such unscripted events. Our Western culture indoctrinates us into a cult of stability even though individuals and landscapes change on a daily basis (Design of the Biosphere).

Mosbach's practise intends to create a dialogue between project and program, of which the voices of site and participant are present. Mosbach clarifies, 'a dialogue means there are exchanges. It is an open creative and fertile system, not a monologue' (*Nature to Culture*).

However, her aspirations towards openness and the unpredictable do not hinder the specificity of Mosbach's design process. In fact, she suggests that 'scripting' allows these ephemeral events to arise with a heightened significance to temporal magnitudes:

I find it crucial to have an extremely precise design precisely in order to allow the temporal dimension to fulfil its role in terms of transfiguration and transformation by interfering in the design, augmenting it without annihilating it. We have to begin with an assumption of some sort, even though many parameters remain unpredictable. This hypothesis must therefore be as precise as possible in order to navigate through the timescales of a landscape that is intrinsically undergoing perpetual change (*Design of the Biosphere*).

As a screenplay is brought to life by its actors, Mosbach's scripting of designed landscape sees that the real theatrics take place in a future state.

The design is like an introduction, the opening of an evolving movie where many lives – animals, vegetation, humans – will play parts together after being introduced (*Nature to Culture*).

As such, Mosbach's scripting includes openness to change, temporality, and the unpredictable and the extent of this openness is modifiable. However, Mosbach warns against complete openness:

You cannot anticipate everything. Leaving the system open is a flexible way to accept unexpected events, although if you let the work be completely open to unexpected phenomenon, without a script, you actually have no project and no writing or sensitive translation. That's the limit of ecology: just trying to reproduce what is, by definition, always ongoing anyway (*Nature to Culture*).



Fig. 3.11

Bordeaux Botanic Garden,

France.

Unknown. *Bordeaux Botanic Garden*. Unknown. Photograph.
Landezine.

Fig. 3.12

Bordeaux Botanic Garden,

France.

Catherine Mosbach. *Water Garden*. 2000-02. Photograph.
Arquitectes.



3.33 Miniature Landscapes

Mosbach developed her technique of miniaturisation in tandem with her design proposal for the Bordeaux Botanical Gardens. Wishing to avoid reliance on museographic standards typical of this garden form, she encountered an issue of space (the site in question being a mere two hectares and narrow in character). Her response – to create a series of miniature territorial natures which could immerse the participant in such a way as those they are inspired by do.

Distancing the public from the object under observation was out of the question; the public was to be included within it. In the Western view, humans are always placed outside of systems, or more often than not, above them, when we are in fact part of the landscape just as any other beings (*Design of the Biosphere*).

Mosbach was so impressed with the effects of this method of composing landscapes that she tested and deployed the technique elsewhere -

The shift in scale exceeded our expectations. I have been using this method ever since, in different forms depending on the projects. Miniaturisation makes it possible to redeploy imagination at various scales (...). The more open the project is to a temporal process, the more imagination surreptitiously weighs in, whatever the season (*Design of the Biosphere*).

Although these miniature landscapes are inspired by nature, Mosbach insists that they are not intended merely as an imitation. She attests that life is characterised by progression and continuity, and this can be accentuated through design. Thus, she has little interest in what she describes as ‘replay’, and instead focuses her attention on the ‘direct’.

A representation is what the name says – a translation, not one to one, nor imitation. Would a lover give an imitation gold jewel to their beloved? No. The same goes for landscape. I imitate nothing. I just try to be inspired with the power of what exists to look beyond what we know, because our life has a limited span and little time to discover its many ‘treasures’ (*Nature to Culture*).



Fig. 3.13

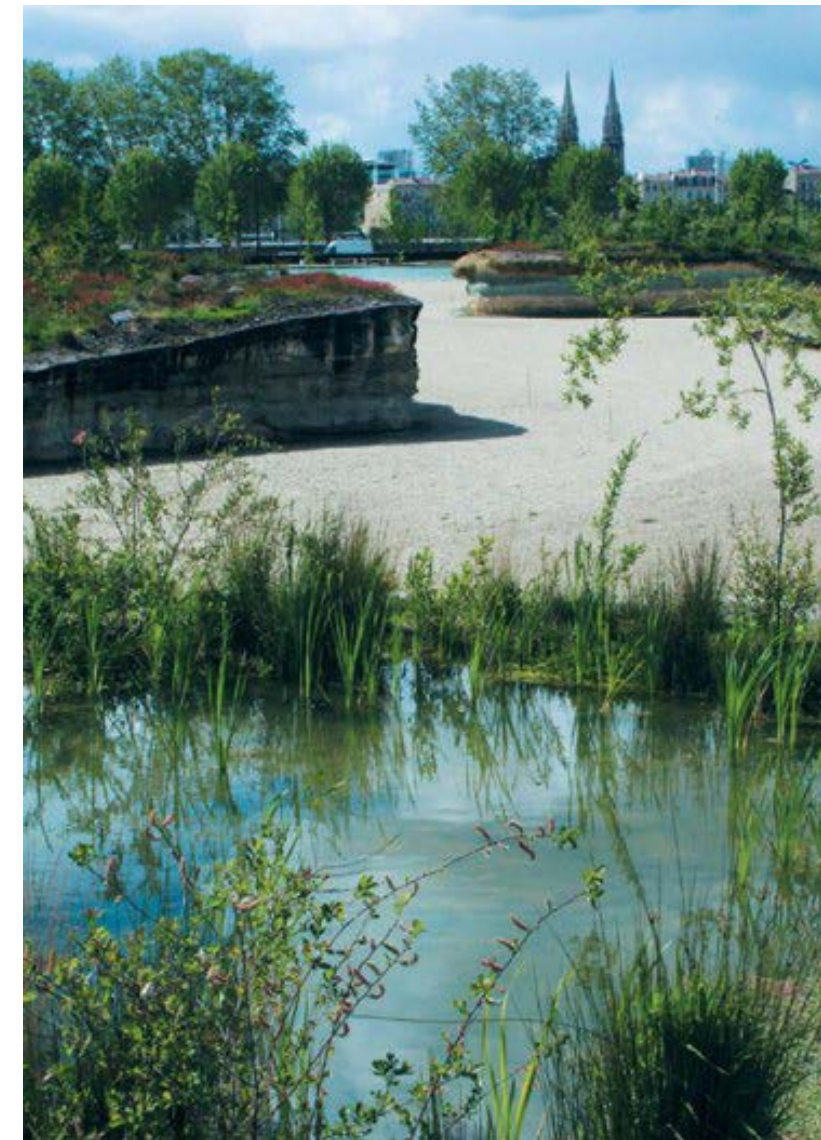
The Gallery of Environments,
Bordeaux Botanic Gardens.

Unknown. *The Gallery of Environments at Bordeaux Botanic Gardens*. Unknown. Model.
Iconic Landscapes.

Fig. 3.14

The Gallery of Environments,
Bordeaux Botanic Gardens.

Unknown. *Bordeaux Botanic Gardens*. Unknown. Photograph.
Landscape Theory.



3.34 Key Findings Implicating Practice: Mosbach

- _ Layer with different scales of time and movement. Accommodate spontaneity and the revelation of moments.
- _ Look for possibility between emotion and knowledge.
- _ Script an introduction and let the rest be co-written.
- _ Let everything have a voice. Listen. Create an open dialogue.
- _ Treat representations as translations, not imitations.
- _ Be direct, yet open to temporal processes.



Fig. 3.15
Duque de Caxias Square,
Rio de Janeiro.
Roberto Burle Marx. *Garden Design, Duque Caxias Square*. 1948. Painting.
MoMA.

3.4 Roberto Burle Marx

The garden will be a constantly changing entity, but if it contains its own rationale, if all its parts are interrelated then there will always be harmony (qtd. in Cavalcanti et al. 126).

Clouds and rain can change the focus of a garden; its whole proportion can be altered when the reflection disappears, or when a sudden storm leaves water in unaccustomed places (qtd. in Cavalcanti et al. 71).

Roberto Burle Marx is considered to be one of the world's leading landscape architects of the 20th Century. First and foremost, however, he is a horticulturist and an artist. Held in high esteem in painting, print-making, sculpture, stage design, jewellery, tapestries, and music, there seem to be few modes of making that he has not experimented with. His illustrious and diverse career has seen to his design of over 2,000 gardens across the globe. His passion and dedication to his art practice has undoubtedly lent strength to his work in landscape architecture and gardening, and the outcomes of his design-work make for a significant exemplar of practice which centralises the needs and aesthetic qualities of plants.

In reference to my life as an artist, having had a most rigorous training in the disciplines of drawing and painting, the garden was, in fact, the product of sedimentary circumstances. It came about from my interest in applying the fundamentals of aesthetic composition to nature itself, in accordance with the aesthetic sentiment of my epoch.

In short, it was a way I found of organising and composing my drawing and painting with less conventional materials. (...) Juxtaposing the aesthetic attributes of [cubism and abstractionism] with elements from nature was what drew me toward new experimentation (qtd. in Cavalcanti et al. 43).

3.41 Art and Landscape

Burle Marx's expanded practice in art was essential to his innovative role in modern landscape design, and his gardens in turn became supplemental to his art:

A garden is a complex of aesthetic and plastic intentions; and the plant is, to a landscape artist, not only a plant - rare, unusual, ordinary or doomed to disappearance - but it is also a colour, a shape, a volume or an arabesque in itself (qtd. in Kiss 148).

However, Burle Marx never treated his gardens exactly as he would a painting - insisting that the applications of colour and composition which bring a painting to life are not the same as the relationships between elements that bring a landscape to life. His extensive line of work dutifully points to an investigation of materiality which strives towards the specificity of each medium that he practised in.

I am an artist and I approach a garden design in that role. Not just as a painter, because the garden involves those dimensions of time and space that must be dealt with literally and not as an illusion on canvas (qtd. in Adams 10).

In addition to the formal qualities of Burle Marx's artistic output, he also recognised that the transformative power of art could be transposed to the garden as an art form, for the betterment of humanity and the preservation of flora and fauna -

Very few people will have the privilege of encountering an unspoilt nature. Few will feel the anticipation of a forest at sunrise, or the vast silence of mountains or tundra, where man just passes by. There one finds peace that surpasses all understanding; peace that man is gradually eliminating from the face of the earth. We shall never again find the peace of Eden, but we can try to get closer to it (qtd. in Cavalcanti et al. 126).



Fig. 3.16

Ministry of Education and Health,
Rio de Janeiro.

Roberto Burle Marx. *Ministry of Education and Health*. 1938. Painting.
Arch Daily.



Fig. 3.17

Ministry of Education and Health,
Rio de Janeiro.

Cesar Barreto. *Ministry of Education and Health*. Unknown. Photograph.
Arch Daily.

3.42 The Garden as Laboratory

This site [the Sítio] is the source of my experience in landscape architecture (qtd. in Raxworthy 190).

In 1949, Burle Marx and his brother Siegfried purchased an estate - Santo Antônio da Bica at Barra de Guaratiba, in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Presented with the problem of sourcing native Brazilian plants from nurseries, the 365,000 square metres of procured land thus became his personal laboratory - a place to amass, propagate, and observe his plants, which were often collected personally on expeditions across Brazil. At his own residence, he could be as daring as he liked without having to confront a public perception of failure in the case that his experimentation might not play as desired.

Burle Marx resided at his garden-laboratory, now known as Sítio Burle Marx, until his death in 1994. The tests which guided the ongoing creation of the garden were conducted conjointly between himself and his collaborators in an improvised fashion, in real-time, and usually without a plan. The findings of his work were as much about the growth and social habits of his plants as they were aesthetic - relating to form, colour, texture, and the spatial experience of being in the garden. Those experiments deemed successful would find themselves renewed in Burle Marx's commissioned works.

Although Burle Marx framed his garden at the Sítio as a place of experimentation, he never intended to dichotomise art and science. Instead, as an avid plant collector, botanist, and artist, he synthesises both in his design approach.

For the artist all of life is an experiment...it is always a search, the curiosity to encounter something he has not known before (qtd. in Salt).

He saw the work of his gardening as building knowledge and beauty alike, and dreamed for the gardens to be a place of education and delight for botanists, landscape architects, and visiting public. This was precisely his motivation in deeding the property to the federal government in 1985, with the added assurance that his garden would not be subdivided and his extensive plant collections would stay intact.



Fig. 3.18

Sítio Burle Marx,

Rio de Janeiro.

Unknown. *Sítio Burle Marx*. Unknown. Photograph.
Sítio Burle Marx.

Fig. 3.19

Sítio Burle Marx,

Rio de Janeiro.

Oscar Liberal. *Sítio Roberto Burle Marx*. 2015. Photograph.
Wikimedia Commons.



3.43 Conservation, Politics, and National Identity

At a time in Brazilian garden history when European influence and convention was considered paramount, Burle Marx's insistence on working with native species was radical, and as such, he is widely recognised as catalysing a renewed interest in natives in the Brazilian garden trade, as well as popularising the idea of regional significance in landscape architectural and garden practices globally.

At a time in Brazilian garden history when European influence and convention was considered paramount, his insistence on working with native species was radical, and as such, he is widely recognised as catalysing a renewed interest in natives in the Brazilian garden trade, as well as popularising the idea of regional significance in landscape architectural and garden practices globally.

Burle Marx did not only utilise native plants for their unique forms - he was also highly vocal in his advocacy for the preservation and awareness of these plants in their natural distribution. Additionally, his innate love for life and the living naturally extended from the environmental to social and economic dimensions -

An artist who opens up new vistas in his field cannot confine himself to the narrow problems and technical expertise of his craft. He needs a general culture and understanding. But today, above all, he cannot remain aloof from the social and economic problems of our time. Life cannot be confronted with sentimentalities (qtd. in Salt).

Significantly, Burle Marx did not limit himself solely to those plants of provenance - he took his consideration to adaptable and dynamic plants from all over the world to achieve his artful effects. This being said, he insisted that his designs should bear some relationship to the localised nature in which the place is embedded:

In some ways, we are fighting a defensive battle. A landscape architect should try to prevent destruction of the natural environment where it still exists; and, at the same time, create new landscapes with echoes of their original natural context, so as to build and conserve an artistic legacy worthy of those who will come later (qtd. in Cavalcanti et al. 126).



Fig. 3.20

Odette Montiero Garden,

Rio de Janeiro.

Jeffrey Bale. *Odette Montiero Garden*. 2011. Photograph.
Jeffery Gardens.

Fig. 3.21

Sítio Burle Marx,

Rio de Janeiro.

Angela Perigot. *Sítio Burle Marx*. 2019. Photograph.
Du Beau Monde.



3.44 Key Findings Implicating Practice: Burle Marx

- _ Make friends with plants. Live alongside them.
- _ Test ideas in the garden, guided by intuition and what is real. Experiment without fear of failure.
- _ Lead landscape design with landscape materials. Be literal. Treat landscape representations as the illusions that they are.
- _ Consider the aesthetic organisation of the garden as a juxtaposition of art and nature. Move to it.
- _ Keep eyes open and curiosity tuned for new encounters. Grow beauty and knowledge together.
- _ Let the garden be a site for activism. Relate it to the challenges of our time.
- _ Love the place, but no need to be a purist.

3.5 Summary of Precedent Review

Scoping the precedent study as a study of practice has brought forth a number of approaches and ethics with regard to the garden, and each study has demonstrated how these imagined concepts inform the reality of landscape works with garden-ness. Furthermore, the study has illuminated an opportunity to query the role of representation in landscape architectural practice, whilst prompting the generation of operative criteria for the practice housed in this design-research.

The projective drawings of the studied practitioners have been found to hold varying degrees of abstraction, and though their intent is to imagine landscape intervention, the creation of these drawings impels them to speak independently so that they become more than depictions. Partnered with Bolt's theory of performative images, where transposition and transmutation takes place between images and reality, it is presumed then that the representation is not fixed, and that it has the power to stimulate the imagination and propel action in the landscape in ways that are not always known. Thus, the ensuing design experiments should attempt to produce design imagery which can incorporate uncertainties and pose this as a benefit.



Fig. 4.1
Kyoto Garden,
Fushimi, Kyoto.
Stuart Davies. *A Quiet Walk in the Forest*, 2020. Photograph. Unsplash.

4.0 Eight Operative Criteria [Towards Garden Essence]

- 4.1 Concepts Behind the Gardens that Move Us _____
 - 4.11 Participation
 - 4.12 Tending
 - 4.13 Boundaries
 - 4.14 Extents
 - 4.15 Equity
 - 4.16 Latencies
 - 4.17 Growth
 - 4.18 Chance

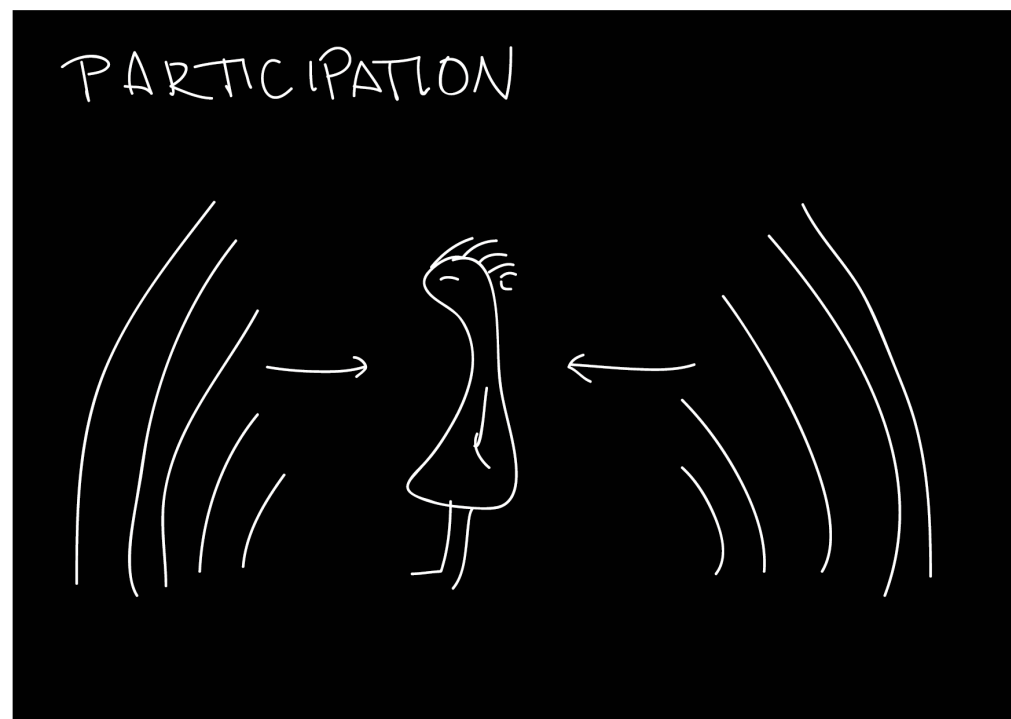
- 4.2 Summary _____

4.1 Concepts Behind the Gardens that Move Us

The ideas extrapolated from the review of literature, precedents, and my own gardening experience impelled the development of a set of key operative concepts that reflect garden-essence and could therein be engaged as tools to design-with, in the endeavour to design in a garden-like way.

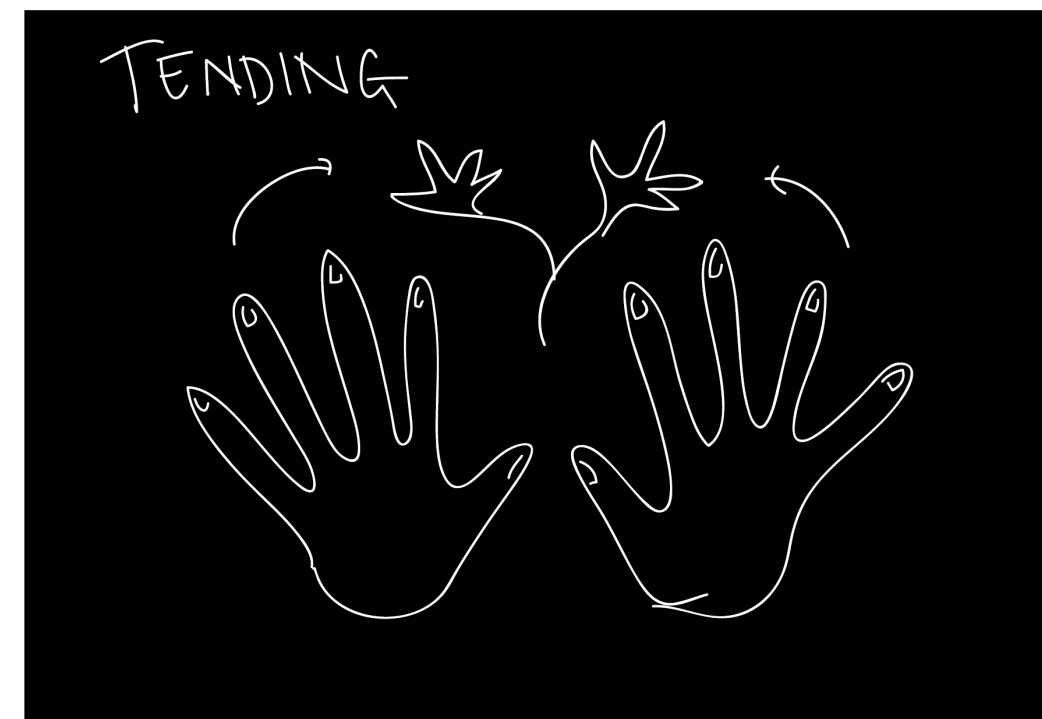
These have been iterated in the course of this research in tandem with the editing and addition of new material to the preceding sections, as well as through the process of discovery and reflection in the following stages of design experimentation. Thus, this section is illustrative of engendering a performative design practice, which aims bring out alternate worlds in and of the garden, and plays to the back-and-forth character of the garden-as-performative, whereby ideas act on the garden as much as the garden acts on ideas.

4.11 Participation



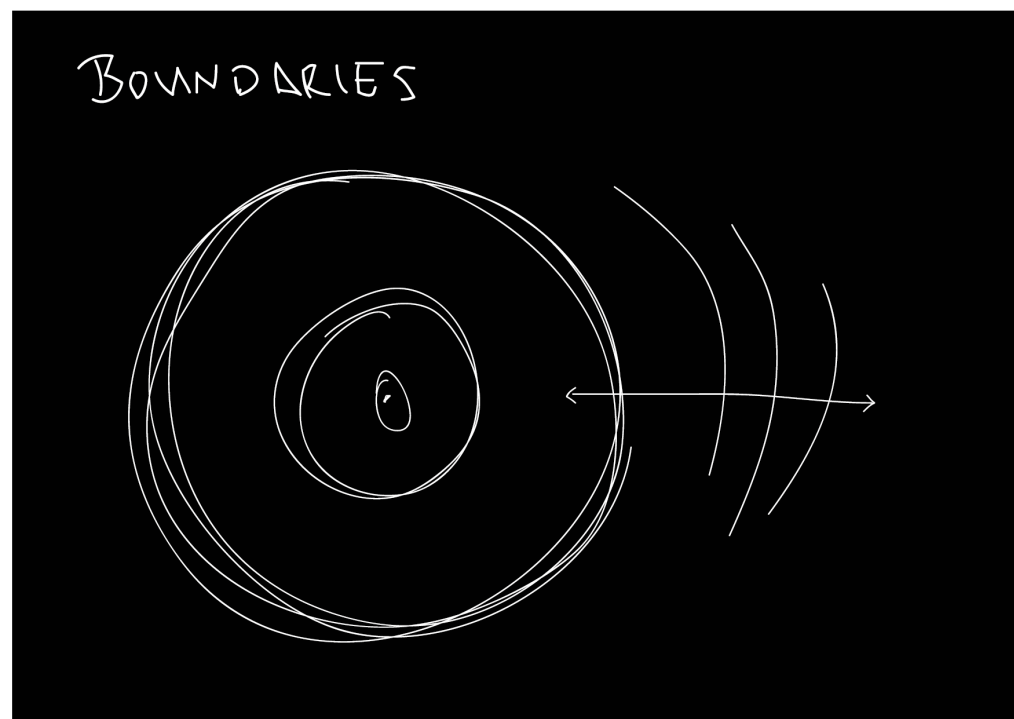
To participate in the garden is to allow the garden to act on you. Your participation in the garden can be all-enveloping, or a simple moment in passing. The quality of your participation depends on the will of your senses so they can make a feast of the garden.

4.12 Tending



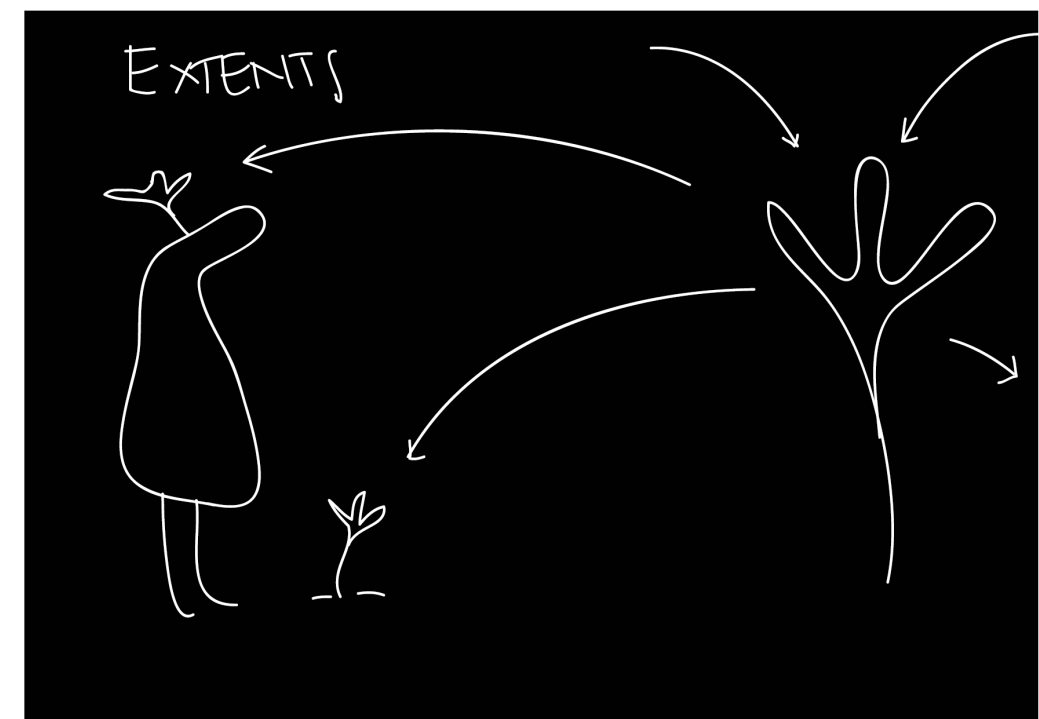
To tend to the garden is to act on it with tenderness. Tending to the garden is a responsive process in which your intelligence is partnered with the intelligence of nature. Tending occurs in real-time as growth arises, and is closely associated with your powers of observation. The effects of your tending become learning experiences.

4.13 Boundaries



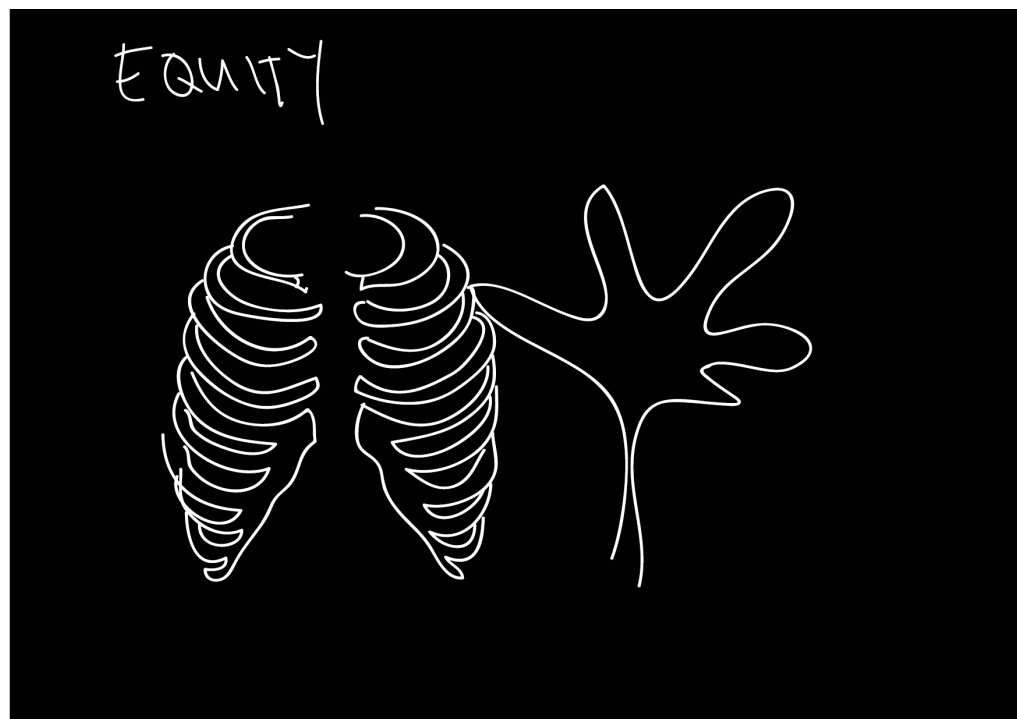
Boundaries define the reach of your gardening. Often, the external boundary of a garden might be unclear, but even so, your gardening will not extend outwards indefinitely. Like Russian Dolls, the garden can have gardens inside it, so that the garden as a whole appears to go inwards with an infinite revelation of unfolding worlds.

4.14 Extents



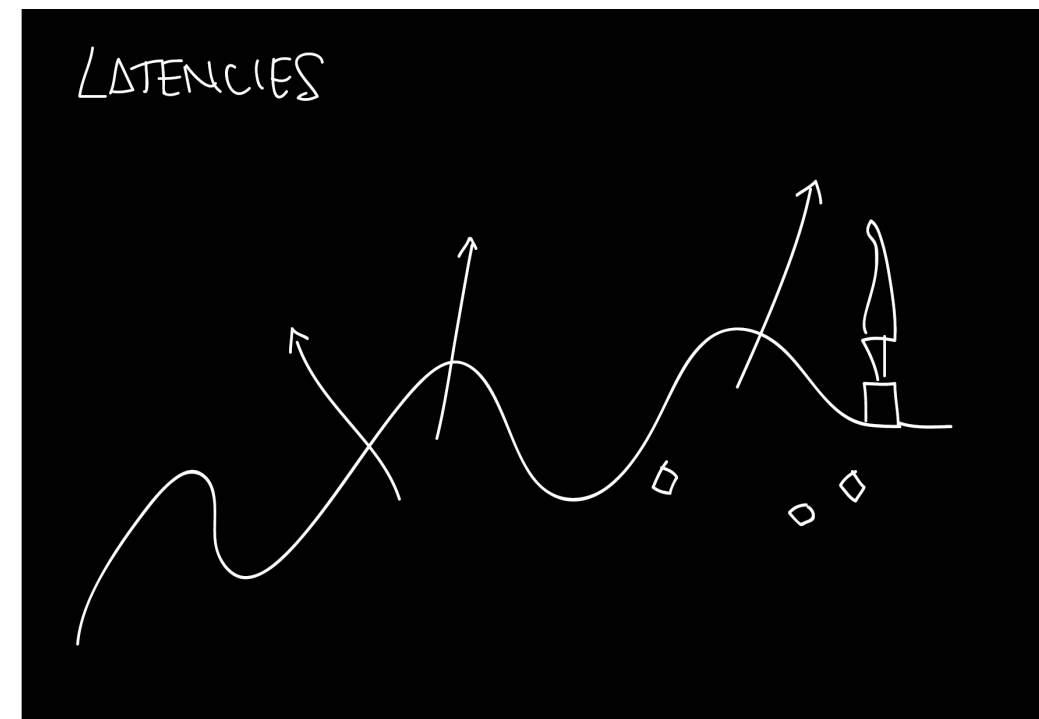
The extents of a garden burst from the confines of their boundaries. Seeds and rhizomes are received or depart from the garden and may travel great distances. You might catch a peep or a whiff of a garden from its outside, perhaps a vignette framed by a window. You could bring pieces of the garden into your home, or give pieces away, or you might even roam with a garden in your memory.

4.15 Equity



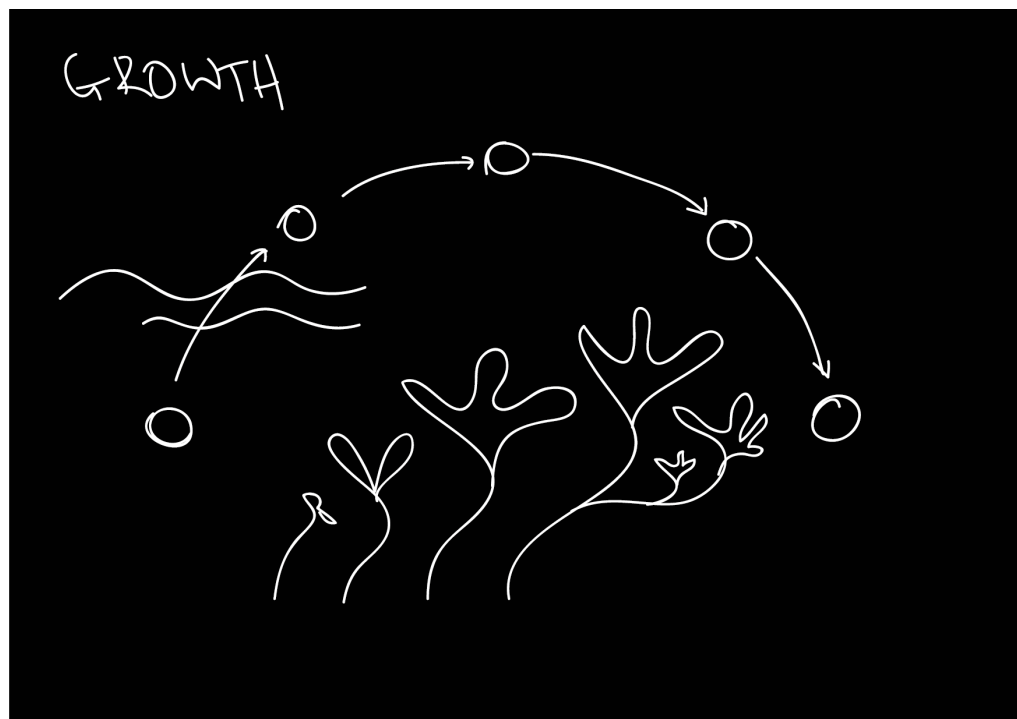
To achieve equity in the garden, all of its constituent parts - including the human presence - and be they living or inert, must be equally valued for their presence and contribution to the whole. The extraction of outside material for the betterment of the garden is not to be taken lightly. A garden hosts numerous forms of life, and their editing by the hand of the gardener or of nature is co-operative.

4.16 Latencies



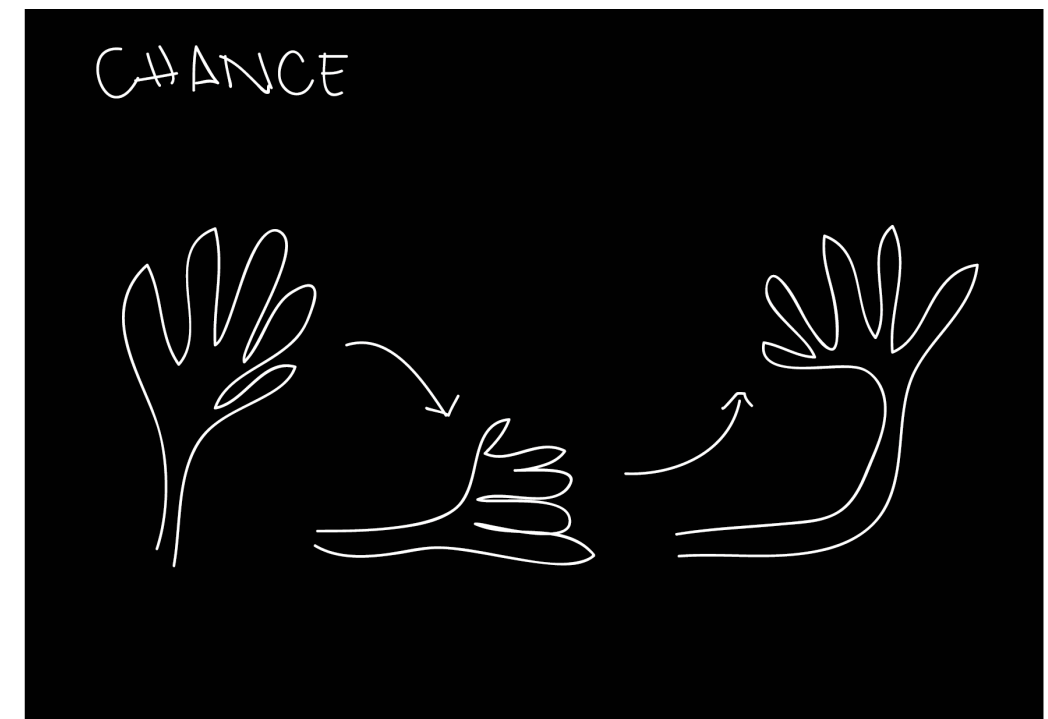
Latencies are those inert qualities of site that await your attention. They can be tangible or intangible. They are the shape and formation of land and soil, the seeds, roots, and relics contained and asleep in the dark. They are the layers of activity that precede your visitation - invisible footprints, something lost, a worn facade. A site can never be empty if you are tuned to register its innate memory.

4.17 Growth



You will never live the same moment twice. The world moves onwards and indefinitely. Growth is a pleasing sign in the garden, but it is necessarily implicated with decay.

4.18 Chance



In many ways, the most delightful quality to the gardener at heart. The unpredictability of nature and the unrelenting desire of being can produce astonishing events in the garden. A gardener who embraces the unknown finds serendipity.

4.2 Summary

The process of naming and reflecting on a set of operative criteria to encompass garden-essence and garden-doing intensifies the supposition of a common imagination of the garden. Aspects of commonality arise from the criteria by pointing to over-arching and overlapping themes which span the distance between the imagined and the real. These themes resonate of the human-being in the garden, spatiality and formal quality, ethics towards the non-human, and temporal and serendipitous events. The resultant compilation works together to form a foundation which is open and flexible, yet concrete enough to suspend design ideas and activities from. This suspension is what will be put to test in the following design experiments.



Fig. 5.0
The Garden at Prospect Cottage,
Derek Jarman.
Zoltan Tasi. *Dungeness*. 2018. Photograph. Unsplash.

5.0 Experiment One: Designing [a Garden]

5.1 Introduction _____

5.2 Project Objectives _____

5.3 The Site _____

5.4 Design Concept _____

5.41 A Walk-Through

5.42 The Eighth Garden

5.5 Testing the Design Outcome Against Operative Criteria _____

5.6 Reflection _____

5.1 Introduction

The impulse to design a garden for a residential site responds to the established provocation that popularised methods of practicing contemporary landscape architecture exhibit a strong tendency towards instrumentalism, often at the expense of aesthetic considerations which are not tied to measurable functions.

To a reasonable extent, the typical layers of analysis that a landscape architect is likely to employ on a public site need not apply at the residential scale. If the hypothesis for this research suggests that limiting one's design values to an anthropocentric sensibility inhibits the full potential of designed space, then a residential site becomes the ideal context in which to test ways of designing which allow the garden to exist for its own sake. Free of problems and programmatic concerns, the opportunity is ripe to test ways of designing which allow for gardening, and to make the garden itself an expression of natural process.

5.2 Project Objectives

- _ Design for the being of the garden.
- _ Design the garden as the beginning of gardening.
- _ Design the garden to reflect co-existence and interconnection.
- _ Design for seeking senses, so that the garden can speak and be heard.



Fig. 5.1

Site Analysis.

5.3 The Site

The selected site is located in the Wellington suburb of Melrose, where the landscape is characteristically steep. Here, the existing garden here appears to have had little attention, aside from the presence of an old apple tree, a prolific rose bush, and some lumpy terracing. Its outlook over the south coast, steep terrain, and solar exposure offer great potential for the beginnings of a spectacular garden.

Fig. 5.2

Site Photograph #1.

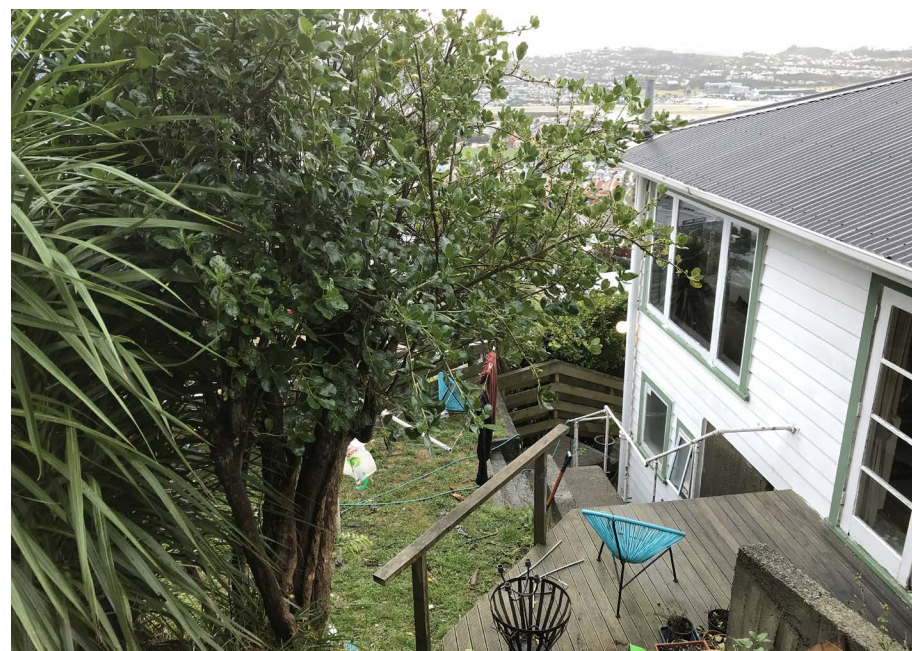


Fig. 5.3

Site Photograph #2.

Fig. 5.4

Site Photograph #3.



Fig. 5.5

Site Photograph #4.

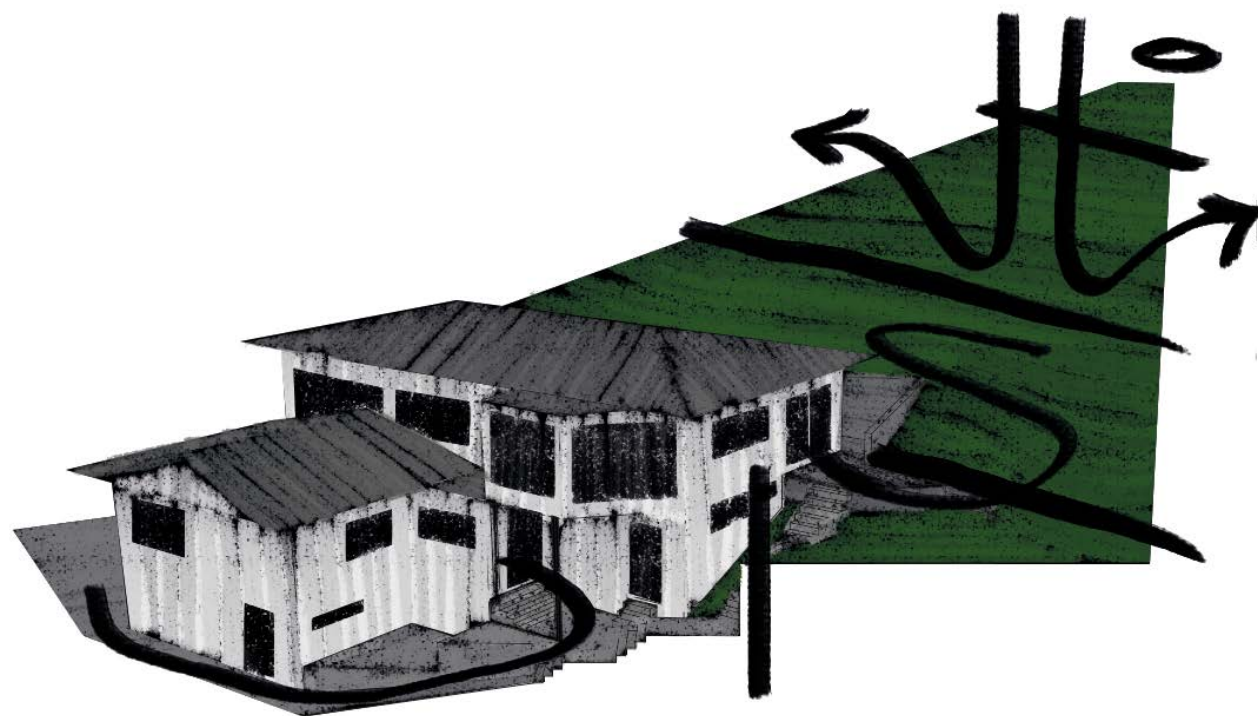


Fig. 5.6

Concept Drawing.

5.4 Design Concept

A concept for this design experiment settled through means that I have come to know well in landscape architectural design. These include digital modelling, drawing softwares, and photography. Site analysis marks the outset of the process, with the steep terrain and its relationship to the house receiving the most attention. Interestingly, there were elements of the existent garden that I did not see in my first trips – for example, certain trees and other plants, a large eucalyptus tree stump, and peculiar shapes in the hardscape which never seemed to line up in my representations.

The resultant concept builds the garden from the bottom up in incremental stages. Although the structure and material design is specified in detail, it is intended that additional decisions and adaptations would be made as the garden comes into its own: in real-time and in response to conditions on-site. Changes during the process of construction will affect the following stages, so that the creation of the garden has an aspect of improvisation and spontaneity.

As fig. 5.6 demonstrates, the concept makes space for the garden by pushing the steep terrain from the centre outwards, creating a fat, fluid boundary in which three primary layers are tucked into. These layers will stand as their own encompassed world, and will contain secondary layers within. Although each layer is differentiated from the last and intends to surprise, subtle hints in form and materiality foreshadow the flavour of the next. As the garden is ascended, each set of stairs will become narrower than the last. As distance is gained from the house, the garden will become more like a paradise.

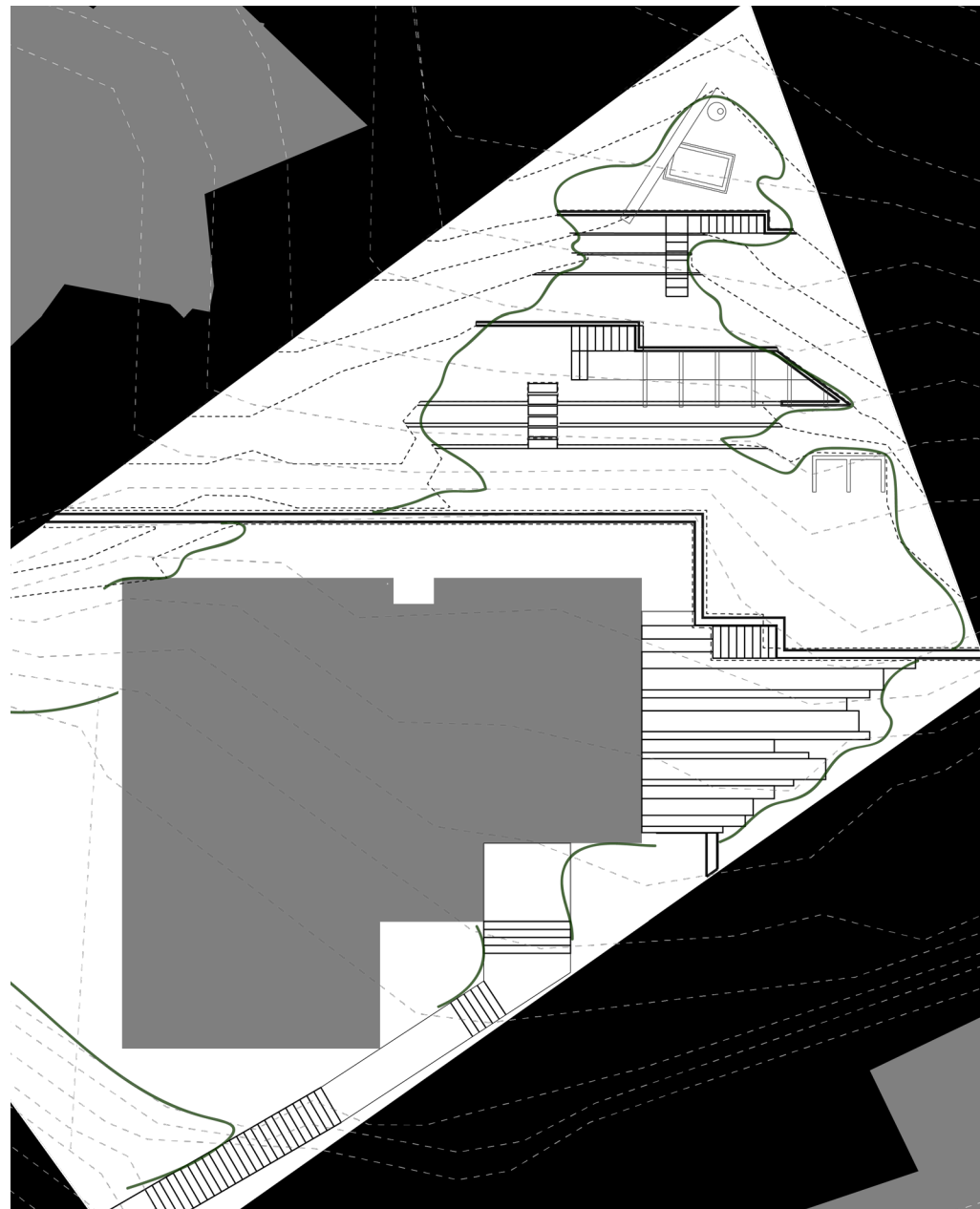


Fig. 5.7
Site Plan.
1:200
> N

Fig. 5.8
Elevation.
1:100



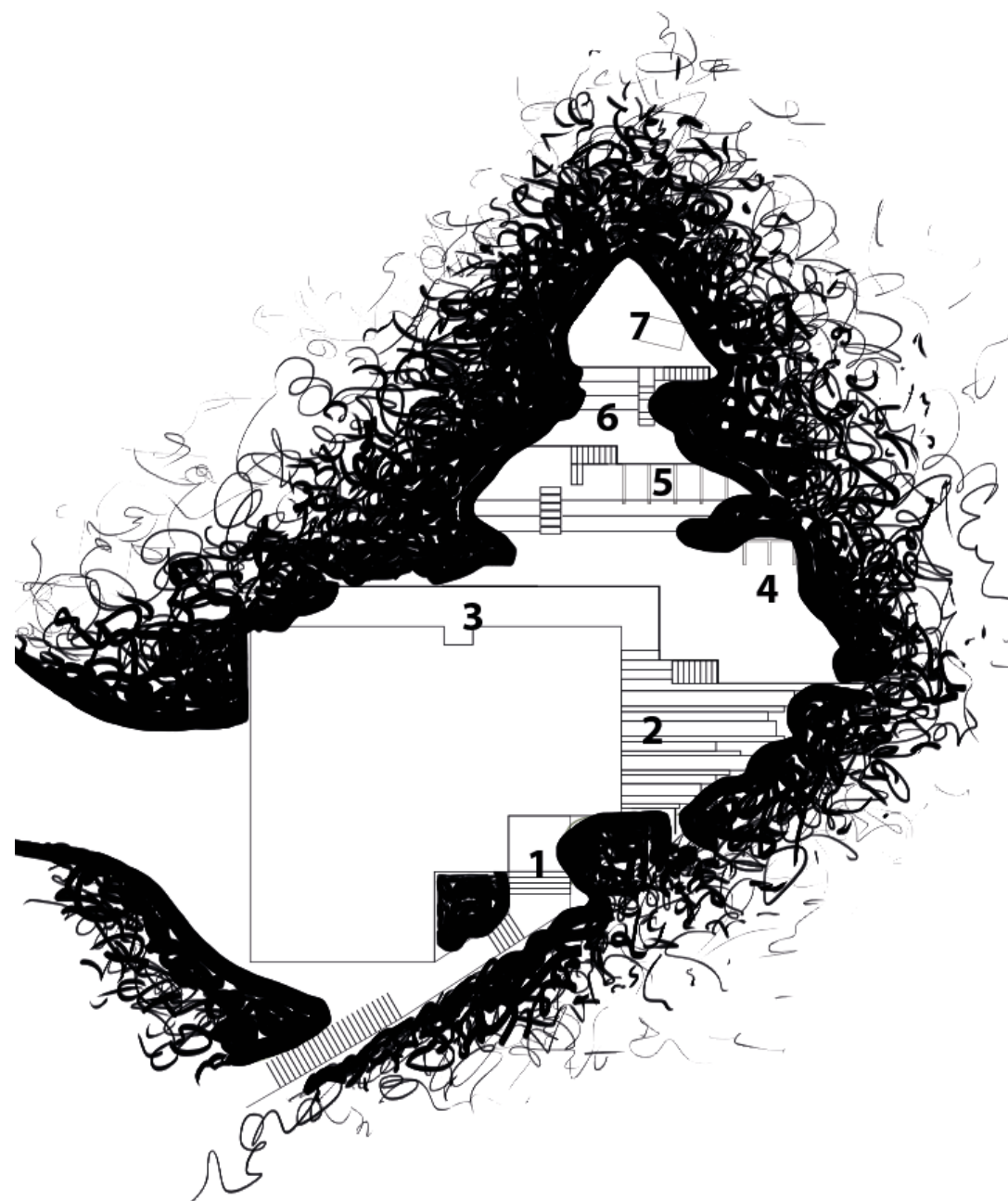


Fig. 5.9

Diagram of Gardens.

>N

5.41 A Walk-Through

The representations produced for this garden design should stir the imagination of those who see them with fresh eyes. However, I consider them insufficient to fully encapsulate the garden as it appears in mine. Therefore, I have opted to use text to augment the imagery offered. I have found text to possess the ability to give rise to image as much as any visual media, and this is precisely the affect that founded the Imagist poetry movement of the 20th Century. The underlying characteristic of this movement is to use plain language to produce a precise mental image. This is what I have tried to achieve here.

_ Main Entrance. Dense planting surrounds the terracotta porch. The wall beneath the deck is rendered in deep red lime plaster. Pebbles mulch a stand of lancewoods ahead of the lime wall, with a narrow line of access between - to bring a wheelbarrow to the corner where garden material can be winched up.

_ The Deck That Remembers the Tree. A plane of custom milled timber - retaining knots and bark. Open to coast and mountains.

_ Red Run. Wall and ground are rendered in deep red lime plaster. Plants drip over the edge. A long washing line hangs, catches a shard of sun. Look to the south - you can see the coast through the trees.

_ Ever-Changing Vegetable Garden. A joyful walk from kitchen to compost - the heart of the garden. Beds are not laid out in this garden, it is free-form and changes seasonally.

_ Greenhouse Full of the Sea. Made with recycled glass panes, it is sunken and partially concealed by plants in three terraces ahead. Rear retaining wall of timber stacked bark side out - a vertical, irregular pattern. Charred and oiled, a deep black absorbs heat.

_ Elemental Middle Place. Pale sand, plants spring. Stacked slabs of terracotta with stones between, filled with water. Aquatic plant edging. Corten stairs float over these narrow puddles towards the final stairs.

_ Topmost Tier. From the corten stairs, hop on a stepping stone to take the last set. Intimate space for a sunken bath and iron stove. A large rock juts from the hill behind, carrying water, skims the edge of the tub. Pull a bung out of the underside, light the stove, the water will warm. The last task of construction signifies reward: you have shown care for the garden, and so it will be good to you.

Fig. 5.10

Planting Concept #1,
Foxgloves, Chinese Elm.

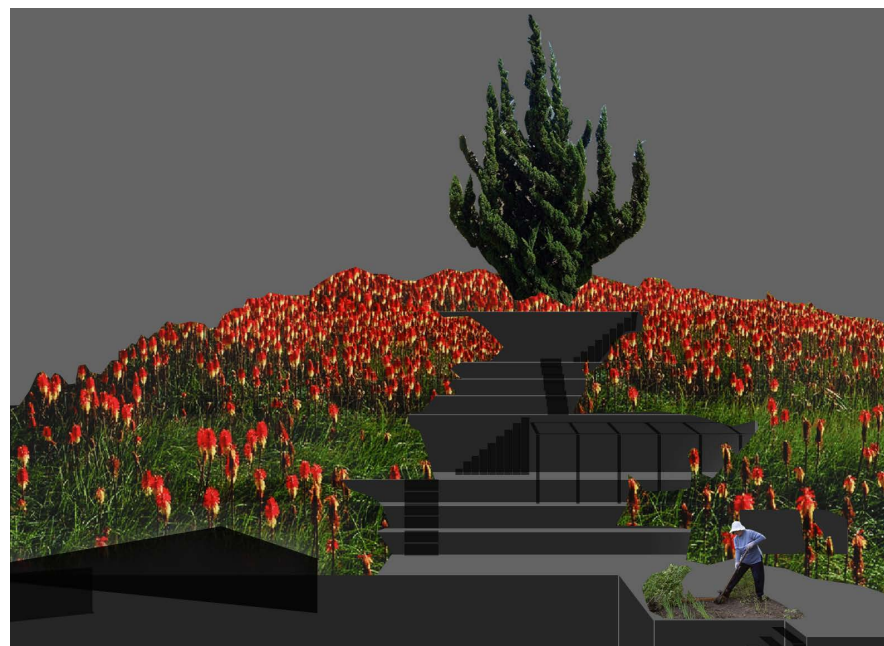
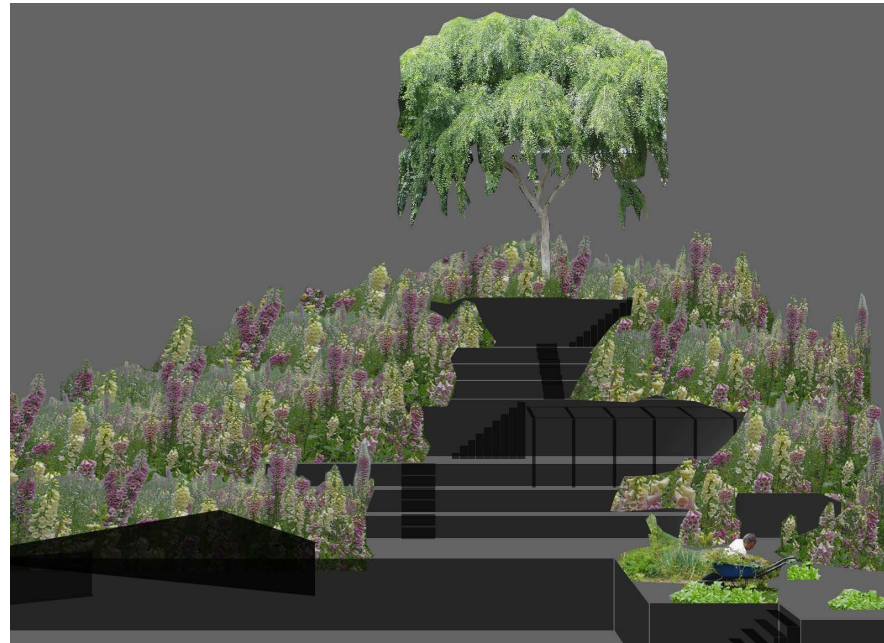


Fig. 5.11

Planting Concept #2
Red Hot Pokers, Juniper kaisuka.

5.42 The Eighth-Garden

What to make of this inky and imprecise space that holds the garden in? In the first instance, it has been created in mind of an ethic to avoid unnecessary landscape extraction. Second to this, it intends to honour the way of the site – steep, undulating, earthy. As such, it has resulted in a boundary that is also a garden, which could even be left to its own devices. It could also be where the most gardening over time might happen - it is a place of possibility. Figs. 5.10 and 5.11 suggest a beginning populated with a mass of vigorous growers, wherein future editing - addition of plants, subtraction of the mass - to happen under the guidance of practice and observation. The evolution of this space will undoubtedly reference its origins, as volunteers from the initial mass planting will continue to invite themselves to the garden.

5.5 Testing the Design Outcome Against Operative Criteria

_ Participation. The design seeds participation in the garden by letting it affect the participant via their senses. For example, lime render was selected due to its strong association with touch. With this material, touch can be seen on its surface. The sound of water is also intentionally placed so that it becomes increasingly audible as the participant moves up and through the garden.

_ Tending. Designing the garden to activate gardening is an essential objective of this research phase. Care was taken to ensure that material could be brought into the garden via wheelbarrow and winch. The greenhouse is where new plants can be propagated and nurtured, and the compost signifies an act of generosity to the soil and its plant and microbial life.

_ Boundaries. This is a garden of many gardens, contained by a soft boundary that subverts the harshness of angular property boundaries. Gardening activity does not extend beyond the property boundary, but it does become less intensive as they are neared.

_ Extents. The garden is designed to have a presence from within the house. It is not only seen from its openings, but is experienced through the exchange of material from the kitchen, compost, and vegetable garden. Furthermore, the garden relates to its exterior, so that it contains the faraway coast and mountains.

_ Equity. Every material deployed in this garden is treated with sensitivity, and the garden is set up for the gardener to act kindly on the garden long into its future. Insects, birds, and wandering plants are welcome to visit here.

_ Latencies. The garden retains and celebrates its steep site character. During construction, a fate will need to be chosen for the kawakawa, tī kōuka, and prolific apple tree that the previous owner adored - who, in fact, passed away one day as he was collecting the fruit.

_ Growth. The plants that populate the garden will evolve in time, and their compositions will also be changed by the hand of the gardener. Though the structure of the garden might be complete, this is only provisionary and the garden will always be in a moving state.

_ Chance. The boundary garden leaves room for chance. Otherwise, it is difficult to comment at this stage, given that the design-work is a matter of projection. The only way to report on chance in this garden is to be there.

5.4 Reflection

The process of designing a residential garden was useful in collecting, naming, implementing, and testing operative criteria to assist landscape architects to design for the being of the garden and for future gardening. However, analysis of these criteria against the design work raises some inconsistencies that should be addressed in the next phase of research.

The outcome of the test culminated in a stale-mate, where the research question could not be responded to without having the opportunity to work with the design from the point of view of the gardener - in real-time, on-site, and in an ongoing way.

This conflict is noted by Julian Raxworthy as a key difference between the two practices. Those in the architectural profession are bound to operate in a representational and projective fashion, wherein their production proposes a resolved future state of place. Meanwhile, those who inhabit a gardening role work in a way that is personally responsive to events that arise from past and present states. As gardening takes place, the future state of the garden flexes beyond the capabilities of predictive modes.

The design experiment became reliant on typical architectural standards, and the possible gardening between the proposed hardscape became imagined from this context. As it stands, the plan and imagery of the garden do not make for a convincing garden yet, given that they lack specificity in regards to a planting scheme.

Retrofitting this design experiment to better address the latter part of the research question (garden-doing) could go in two directions. The first would require the landscape architect to switch into a gardening role to develop the rest of the design on-site, embracing some aspect of improvisation and influenced by what is available in the moment and which cannot always be planned for - for example, plant, salvaged, or site materials.

The second direction would see to some aspect of collaboration with a gardener. This would entail the landscape architect to relinquish some control over the project. Strategic parameters could be set to guide the gardener, but the plan should be kept open in some way so that it becomes a flexible document. In this way, the plan is not considered as the final step in the design process, rather that the construction of the project necessitates ongoing development as it materialises.

Unfortunately the possibility of moving into a construction phase for this garden is not viable. Therefore, the next phase of research should seek to find a relationship between landscape architecture and gardening practices which doesn't fall into the established ways of doing of either, but finds a common ground that brings the best qualities of both together.



Fig. 6.0
Moon Gate,
Hamilton Botanic Gardens.
Jan Kaluza. *Moon Gate*. 2020. Photograph. Unsplash.

6.0 Experiment Two: Making [a Garden]

- 6.1 Introduction _____
- 6.2 Project Objectives _____
- 6.3 The Site _____
- 6.4 Guiding Concept _____
- 6.5 Enactment _____
- 6.6 Future States _____
 - 6.61 Imagined Garden Five Years From Now #1
 - 6.62 Imagined Garden Five Years From Now #2
- 6.7 Testing the Made Outcome Against Operative Criteria _____
- 6.8 Reflection _____

6.1 Introduction

In the experiment of making of a small garden in Marlborough, the gardener's sensibility is prioritised so that design decisions predominantly occur in real-time and on-site. The primary medium for making, therefore, shifts from two dimensional drawing material, to four dimensional plant material. When the planting is complete, the garden is catalysed. As growth occurs, the composition will necessitate editing, by removing and/or adding material.

It is hoped to be beautiful, but the underlying pursuit is to learn something about garden materials and engage with chance and the unknown. Resultantly, I have flipped the design process which carried the prior experiment on its head.

6.2 Project Objectives

- _ Work directly with plant material, site, and the garden.
- _ Work with intuition, flexibility and serendipity.
- _ Speculate on possible futures of the catalysed garden.
- _ Speculate on representational techniques for planting design.

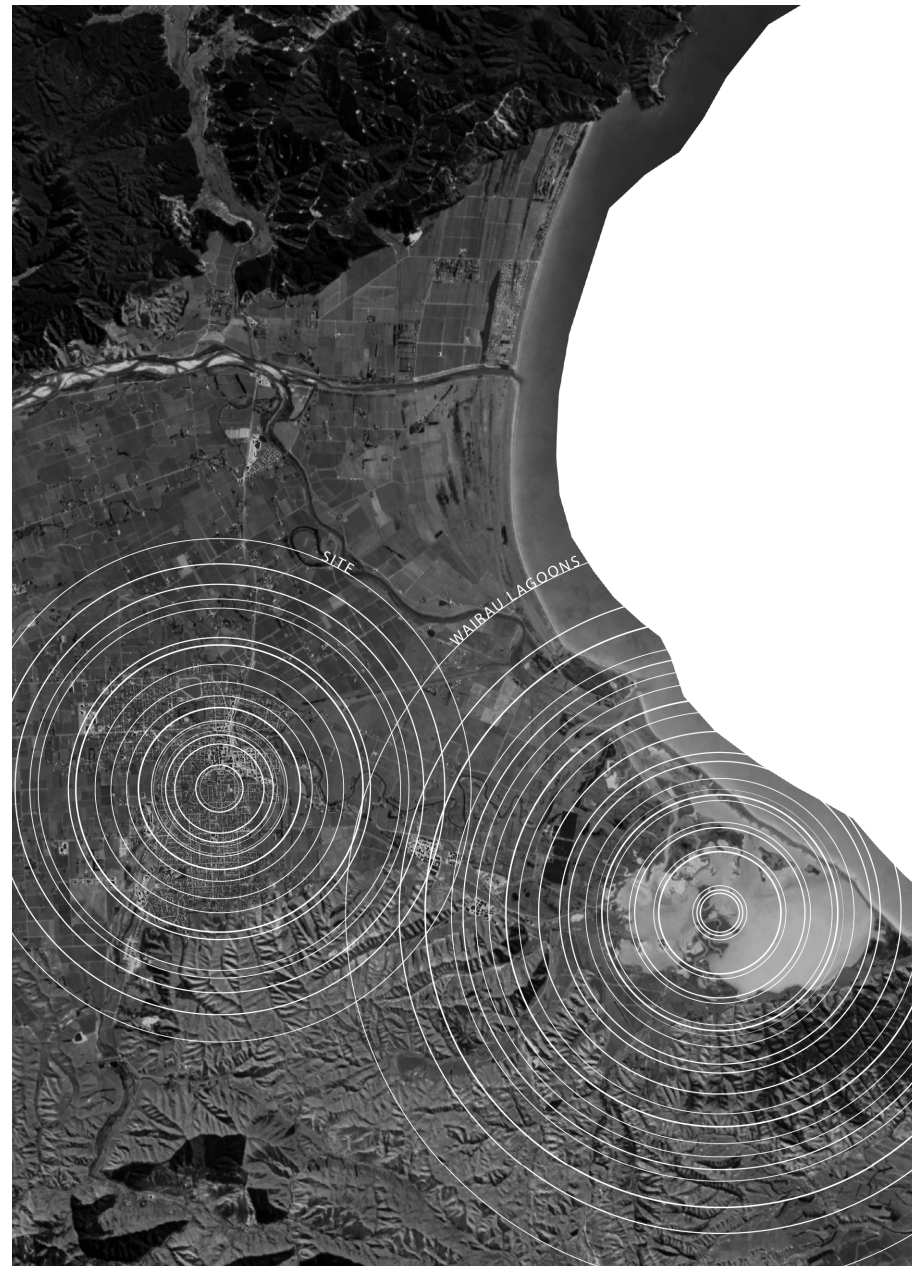


Fig. 6.1

Marlborough Region

1:750,000

6.3 The Site

The selected site is in the township of Te Waiharakeke / Blenheim. Before it was cleared for agriculture and urbanised, it was a swampy place, full of harakeke. As the issue of the gardens site-ness has been raised several times in this research, this is a good opportunity to explore influence between the site and one of the region's most significant and interesting natural landscapes, the Wairau Lagoons.

The site itself has flatness and defined boundaries. The ground is damp and needs amending – it is mostly grey, compacted fill with a lawn topping, and can barely be qualified as soil. It is north-facing and receives plenty of sunlight, which can be harsh in the height of summer.



Fig. 6.2
Site Photograph #1.

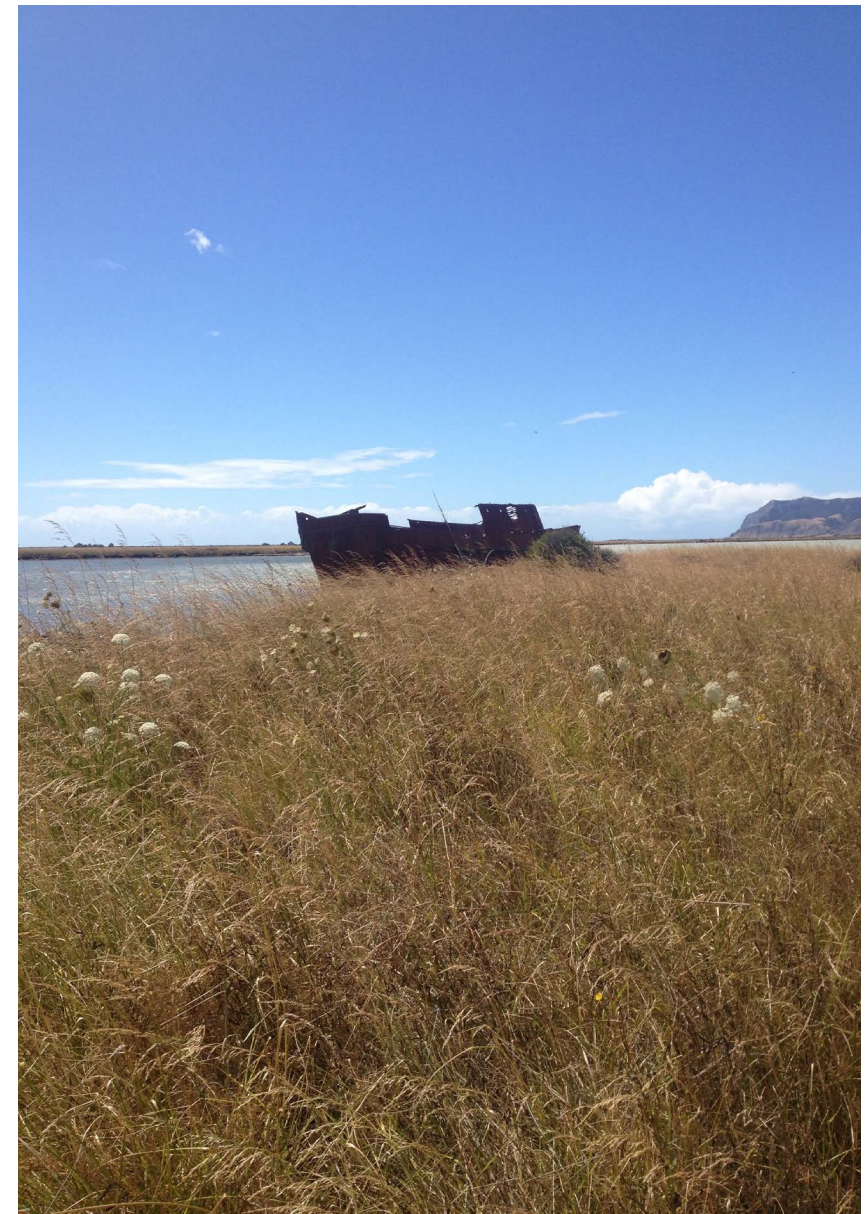
Fig. 6.3
Wairau Lagoons Photograph #1.





Fig. 6.4
Site Photograph #2.

Fig. 6.5
Wairau Lagoons Photograph #2.



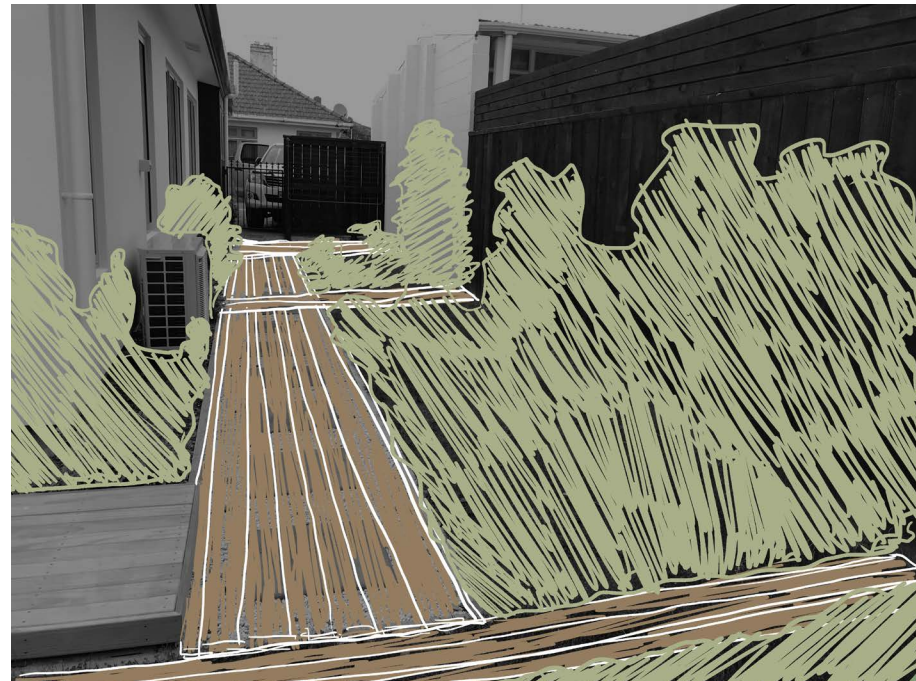


Fig. 6.6

Concept Drawing.

6.4 Guiding Concept

A small garden which swells with growth and appears deeper than it is. A garden which acts like a basecoat, and invites embellishment as it continues to come into itself. A garden which demands observation and participation.

The concept illustrated in fig. 6.6 intended to make direct reference to the Wairau Lagoons, and thus make a garden that behaved in some way like its landscape's past. However, this concept was quickly loosened in the first stages of doing the garden. After visits to nurseries, plants with more volume and seasonal variation than those found at the lagoons were selected to elicit an intensified sense of change and movement. There are, however, some remnants of the initial concept in the design outcome - grasses, harakeke, divaricating plants, white flowers.



Fig. 6.7

Discovered Material,
Collage.

6.5 Enactment

The design experiment commences by visiting two plant nurseries, where the plant material for the garden is intuitively selected based on anticipated growth characteristics, aesthetic quality, and appropriateness to site conditions. A spatial understanding of expected growth is gained by creating some preliminary sketches, from which a list of quantities can be presumed. Many spontaneous adaptations to these initial drawings are made as the garden is populated with plants over the course of an afternoon.

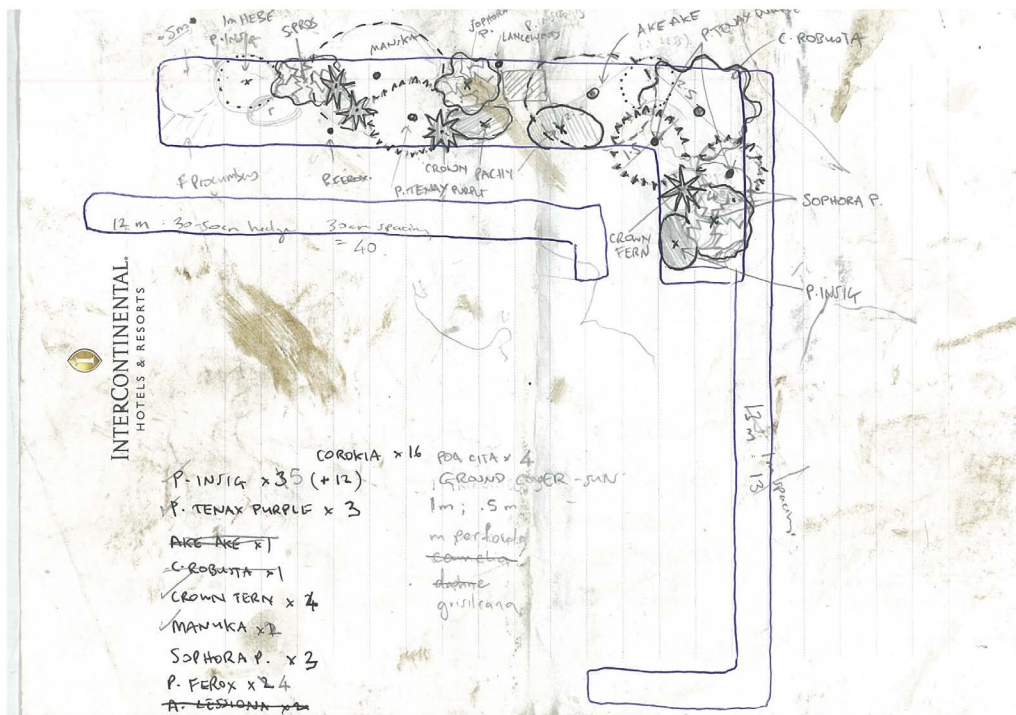


Fig. 6.8

Sketch #1.

Fig. 6.9

Sketch #2.

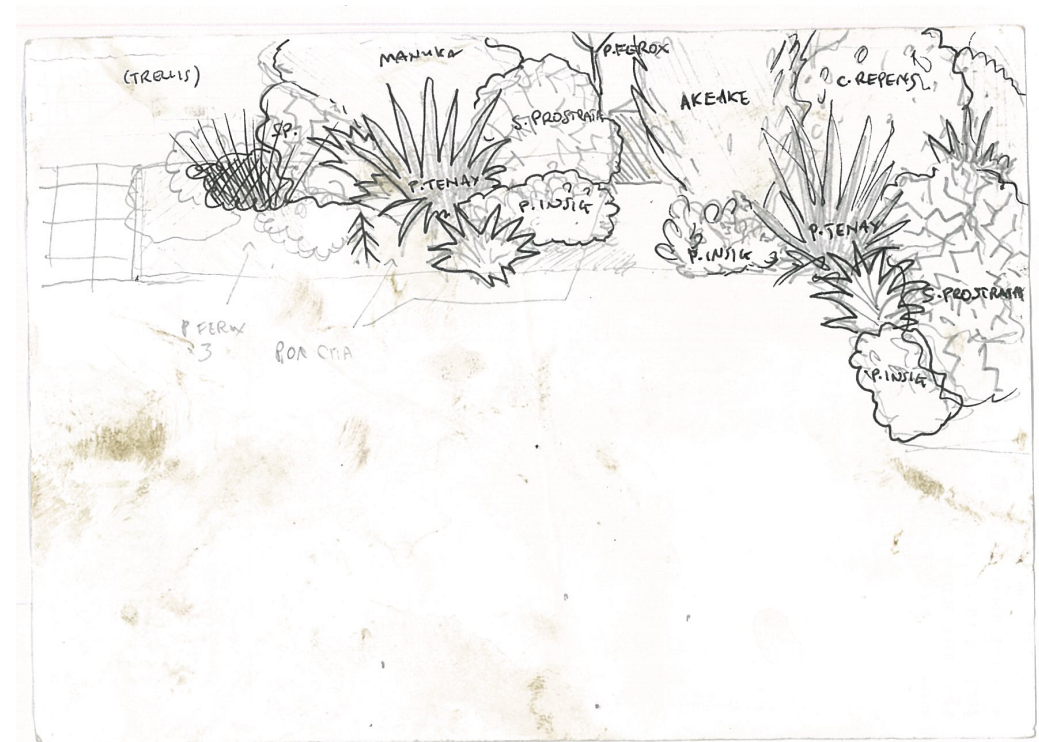




Fig. 6.10

Present State.

6.6 Future States

With the garden now catalysed, I imagine its future with excitement and anticipation. Over time, a series of decisions and actions will be taken by the gardener and by other forces who have the chance to act on the garden, and it will keep changing in response to the moment that has just been. This garden is a test, as making anything is, and there is some time and patience needed to see where it will go.

Though this is a place of the unknown, if seeing overlaps with the realm of the imagination - as discovered through the review of literature – then you can see the garden and its elements as they metamorphose in their own cycles of time. For example, you can see how a plant stretches into the light, or how rocks have folded over themselves in a conglomerate liquid state.

I have tried to engage this seeing-in-motion to illustrate two possible scenarios for the gardens future, and am informed in part by Raxworthy's assertion that the gardener "direct[s time] as the landscape architect is mapping its wake' (3). Therefore, the future state of the garden depends on the gardener's response to revelations in growth, coupled with their imagination for new possibilities.

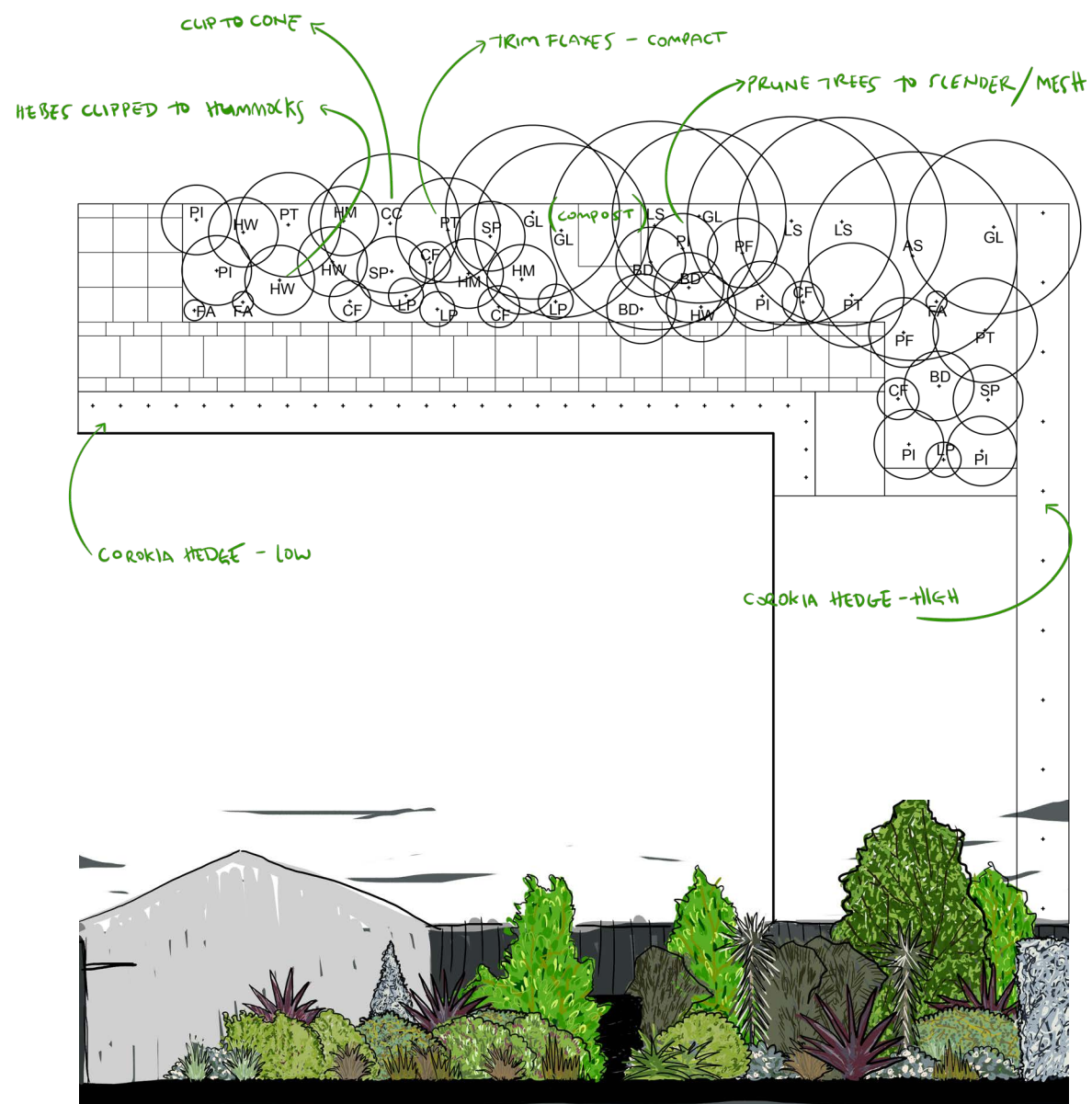


Fig. 6.11

Future State #1,
Plan / Elevation, 1:100.

6.61 Imagined Garden Five Years From Now #1

The scaled plan in fig. 6.11 was drawn retrospective to the doing of the garden, and is intended as documentation from which to edit and learn from the garden as it grows. On first glance, it raises some questions with regard to standard landscape architectural representations for planting design. Reviewing the documentation complete with the plants expected growth could lead one to believe that I have made a terrible mistake. This could be so, but in the instant moment what I have made is no-less a garden. So how might it present in the future? On review of the planting plan, depicting its best guess at 'finished' growth, you could imagine the plants swelling rapidly and competing for light, nutrients, and space. Of nature's own volition, some plants will probably die, and others will adapt by changing their form. Much as I change my shape to fit on a crowded bus, crowded plants will often become narrower, denser, and/or more spindled. This can be confirmed by observing other established plant communities.

However, this is a garden for gardening in, and has not been made under the guise that it takes care of itself. It is expected that the gardener will not be able to help herself as the garden grows denser, and will eventually find herself pruning, dividing, snipping, shearing - so that the bullies are mitigated and the underdogs shine. As such, the scenario illustrated sees that the trees along the back of the fence are kept thin and airy, the flaxes are trimmed and divided so that they become compact and hearty spears of purple, the hebes are whittled down so they lope in hunched shapes, orange jabs of libertia spread outwards, and the pachystegia grow large and full of flowers.

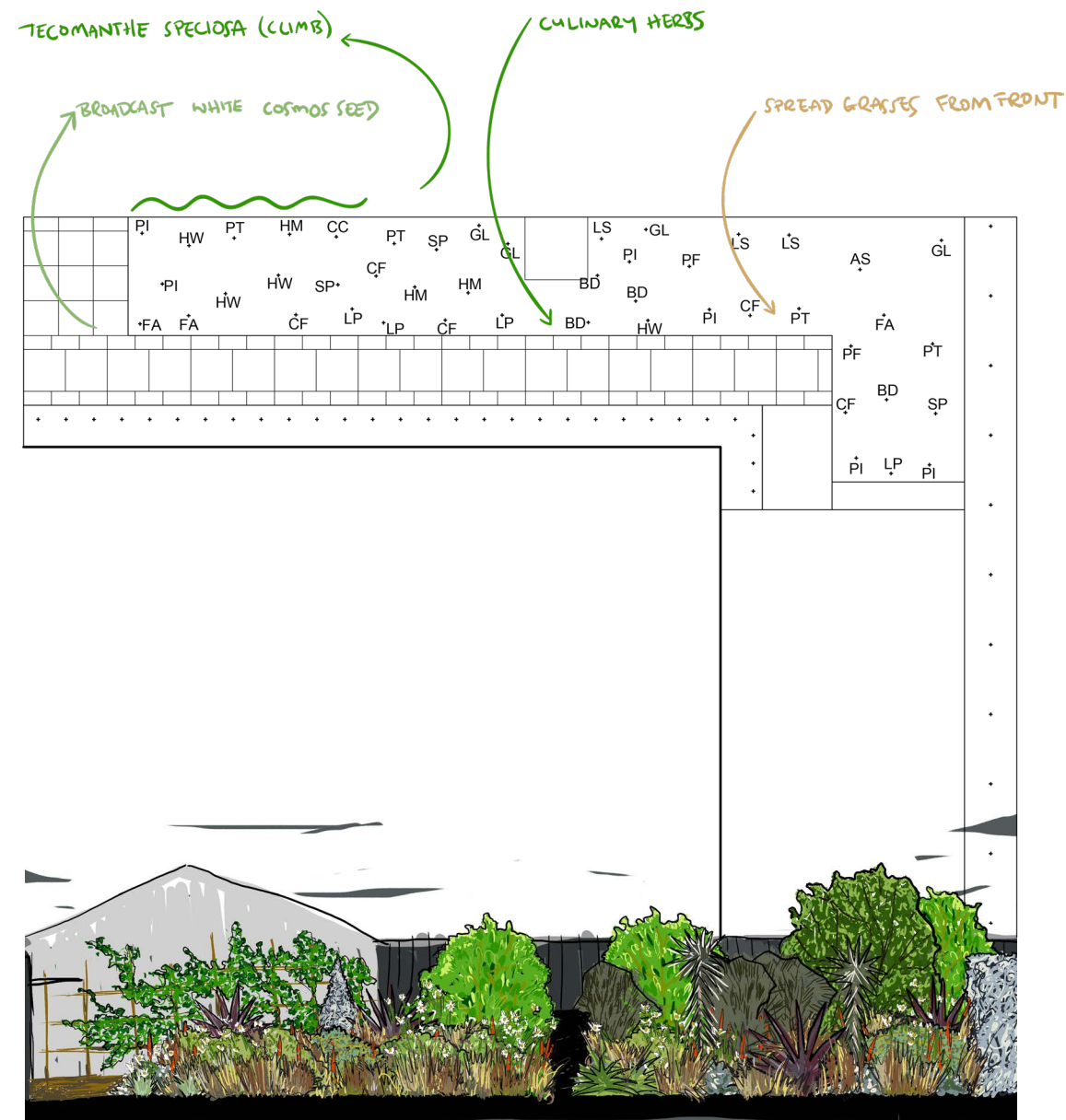


Fig. 6.12

Future State #2,

Plan / Elevation, 1:100.

6.62 Imagined Garden Five Years From Now #2

I am interested in changing trajectories of the garden, so in this scenario the conversation is picked back up with the Wairau Lagoons. Various carex and oioi are added to the front of the garden bed and sweep back through it. The edge becomes blurred with plant threads. White cosmos seeds are scattered in patches where there is light (say, where a plant has been removed or divided) and grow spindled amongst the green. They will go to seed and arrive newly in the following years. This I would even do today, so that there is some chaos to enjoy while the given plants are still young. In front of the neighbours' garage, a trellis has been affixed to a railway sleeper and laid at the concrete footing of the building, supporting a leafy green vine which flowers profusely in summer. Growth has been responded to elsewhere in the garden as in the last scenario, by trimming, shearing, and in some cases, removal or division of a plant.

6.7 Testing the Made Outcome Against Operative Criteria

_ Participation. The garden has been catalysed to produce a rhythm of colour and texture that makes your eyes move over it at random. There is only one entry into the depth of the garden, and this is through the daily visit to the compost, where you are implicated in the ecological cycle of transforming and reusing energy.

_ Tending. All gardens are gardens of maintenance. At some point in the long-form habit of garden observation, you will likely be compelled to intervene in the garden. Your actions will direct the garden in tune with your aesthetic taste, which is interlinked with the display of form and vitality of individual plants as they have grown.

_ Boundaries. This is a garden of fixed boundaries. Thick vegetation and hedging will soften the harsh fence lines and create an illusion of depth. Edged in timber, the existing garden beds are retained, but the planting will contort this sharp line to a wavering, blurry edge.

_ Extents. The garden borrows from the outside. Little bits of tree, sky, and flashes of suburbia can be seen across the way. A bursting lemon-tree which hangs over the deck is an asset. So too does the garden have a presence from indoors - it fills the frames of the windows like a gallery.

_ Equity. Replacing the lawn with a variety of plants allows for more life in the garden. The addition of mushroom compost boosts microbial life in the soil, and will positively impact the planting. The integrity of the soil life is ensured by covering it with a layer of wood mulch to lock in moisture and prevent erosion.

_ Latencies. The garden communicates a regional latency, looking to the Wairau Lagoons as a role-model. Additionally, *Pachystegia insignis* occurs in the garden, whose natural distribution is limited to the region. Over the last decade it has become an emblem for the town, and frequently habituates traffic islands, among other places.

_ Growth. Economy of resource is achieved by utilising young plants in root trainers. The ensuing growth will be dramatic and will require some mitigation, unless nature makes a competition of it. Spring and summer will bear witness to many different types of white flowers. The garden as a whole will also grow into new future states: the gardener will add and remove material as they are moved to.

_ Chance. This is not a neatly planned garden, but an intuitive one. There will be no failures because the gardens future is navigated depending on what unknown events arise. How the plants will deal with the positions they have been assigned is of great interest. The garden is a spectacle when there is room for circumstances to arise which exceed the confines of fixed expectations.

6.8 Reflection

In this experiment I have taken the role of the gardener to gain some insight about garden-doing through direct engagement with site and plant materials. I have adapted a normative process of design as it is found in usual landscape architectural practice, where planting design usually follows hardscape - to one which is led by planting. Meeting plants in the nurseries generated a direction for the garden and the subsequent documentation revealed the process of improvisation on site to be very different, even unadvisable - compared with a process which puts the plan first.

Flipping the design process in this way puts the garden in a state which has an uncertain future, and this has been posited as authentic to the spirit of the gardener. Where there are predictions around growth, they are flexible scenarios that depend on the series of events that preceded that particular moment. Thus, the gardener is flung into the flow of nature and they work with the garden to guide it over time. The garden can be considered as process and flux, which transcends the instrumental notion of product. The largely imperceptible changing of the garden over time, from moment to moment, provide the grounds to conceptualise gardening as ongoing experimentation which affords opportunities to learn new and novel things about the garden itself.

In light of this, I have found fallacy in representing plants in relation to their suspected mature volume, as though they radiate in symmetry towards a fixed limit. In the context of this research, I would consider this to undermine their being - as living entities in states of irregular movement and chance. Resultantly, I have found drawings in elevation and perspective to be of more use, especially in imagining the future management of the garden.

Although I have learned of the benefits of making directly in the garden, and with room for chance and improvisation, I have still not found within this research a sufficient way to represent the garden as a living, moving, collective community - of which the human participant plays a part. However, I have noticed that the language I have been using to articulate gardens has become more nuanced as the research has progressed. This emergent and evolving vernacular promotes an image of the garden in unending motion, and that the garden - having life - has a factor of autonomy. Thus, the use of language has so far been the most effective means to meet the objective in 1.3 - *to engage representational techniques which venerates biotic life and exposes its propensity as ever-shifting*. Using words as a medium for design is usually ill-advised, but with a performative methodology and a flat ontology of gardens and garden-making, words and concepts are just as viable means as pens, software, and butter-paper to design with.

The next phase of this research should therefore intend to engage further with the themes of time, movement, and change that have become more pronounced in this phase, and find a way to make these visible so that the landscape architect might see gardens differently than standard representations in this field can accommodate.



Fig. 7.0
Claude Monet's Garden,
Giverny.
Adora Goodenough. *Giverny*. 2019. Photograph. Unsplash.

7.0 Experiment Three: Performing [a Garden]

- 7.1 Introduction _____
- 7.2 Project Objectives _____
- 7.3 Project Concept _____
- 7.4 Project Materialisation _____
- 7.5 Testing the Performed Against Operative Criteria _____
- 7.6 Reflection _____

7.1 Introduction

We have to recognise that every breath of air we take, every mouthful of food we take, comes from the natural world. And if we damage the natural world, we damage ourselves. We are one coherent ecosystem. It's not just a question of beauty, or interest, or wonder - the essential ingredient of human life is a healthy planet. We are in danger of wrecking that (David Attenborough, qtd. in Telegraph).

A state of horror lurks over contemporary life as the repercussions of anthropocentric dominion over the biosphere take hold with heightened intensity. It is imperative to see, with new eyes, biotic life and its complex mesh as alive, sentient, and intelligent, regardless of what is understood or taken for granted by the avenues human reason. Our seeing is restricted by our innate relationship with time and the perceiving bodies we inhabit. As a dog-whistle is nothing according to our hearing; plant, insect, and geological life are largely invisible in our consideration. And yet, there they are.

This phase of research implores you to roll your eyes up from your inside to your outside, to step outside yourself and inhabit a different quality of time so that you might see non-human things (in the scope of this research, the garden) as shifting communities which are always teetering on chance as moments unfurl like ticker-tape. Of these communities, you are certainly not exempt, yet you, or nothing, is in charge. Everything works together: the conductor is redundant without an orchestra, the orchestra plays silence without instruments, the instruments do not exist without vegetable, animal, and mineral.

[Click here to watch 'Shadows'](#)

7.2 Project Objectives

- _ Seek an affective way to represent time, movement, and change in the garden.
- _ Posit the garden as a place to imagine a more equitable world for the non-human.
- _ Perform garden-essence and garden-doing as ontologically flat.
- _ Interrogate and perform the seeing-of-the-garden.



Fig. 7.1

Text Study #1.

7.3 Project Concept

A concept for this design experiment is instigated in text, extracted and loosely connected from seemingly disparate research notes and intentions journaled over time.

‘The Real’ refers to philosophies of Lacan and Žižek, among others, which articulates an authentic and absolute reality which exists regardless of symbolic order or qualified upon (Anthropos) sense perception.

‘The Holy’ is meant in an agnostic sense. The concept for holiness comes from the Hebrew word qodesh, which means apartness. The holy, therefore, encapsulates that which is unrestrained by the fixity of classification.

‘The Process’ alludes to Eddington’s *Arrow of Time*, which posits the direction of time as one-way. Raxworthy locates the gardener at the head of the arrow, ‘directing [it] as the landscape architect is mapping its wake’ (3).



Fig. 7.2

Text Study #2.

...Igniting a connection with The Real, The Holy, and The Process produces empathy, humility, and optimism.

It is possible to experience empathy for biological life which is other-than-human if one registers a non-discriminatory dialogue with the living.

Humility is realised when one recognises that there is no order of importance in the realm of The Real, The Holy, or The Process.

The unimportant-ness of 'me', as an 'I' of one among many, contains a peculiar kind of optimism. I bury a seed in reasonable hope for a future bloom because I believe in the liveness of matter. Clearly, in the context of academic research, risk is openly put in play here.

7.4 Project Materialisation

Despite this experiment being instigated in text, I selected the media of video as an appropriate format for the challenge posed. Like gardening, digital moving image is one of a handful of modalities of art that engage with four dimensions, and, as I am a designer in landscape, time is also integral to my design practice. This qualifies the video as a piece of designerly work in this final experiment, hinging on performing a sense of time in the garden.

Footage for the video was shot over the course of several weeks, mostly on location at Otari-Wiltons Bush. The repetitious act of visiting the site allowed me to capture an array of ephemeral conditions, so that, when sliced together, the extent to which a garden can transform became visible.

Although I have presented the concept as a package in the preceding section, in reality this was actually a page of notes which were beginning to make me feel a little un-hinged. The text above as it stands only solidified through the back-and-forth acts of making the video, trying to put it into words, and trying to attach an aesthetic to the text. As such, the video went through many iterations, and came to many dead-ends.

The turning point which lifted the process out of what felt like a continual feedback loop occurred while observing the outline of my figure in the garden. I realised that I was missing the perspective of the garden itself, its being. And so I staged a time-lapse, to capture on film the independent doings of plants. Seeing this footage for the first time was like opening a present, and with it I could figure out how to keep building the film. In a way, the moments of the plants that I had immortalised in video told me so.

At this point I also decided to incorporate text into the film to help hold it, to give its openness some bounding - I have implemented this in the form of a poem and have sampled and abridged it to suit the research demands¹ - the full version can be found in the appendix. Titled 'Shadows', the poetic seems apt to pair with the imagery generated, speaking to the uncertain nature of the garden, at the same time, that indeterminate sense of aesthetic elicited by the foregrounding of the imagination in the context of landscape.

¹ This method resonates with the poetic technique 'cut-up', which can be traced to the Dadaists of the 1920's and was popularised by William S. Burroughs by mid-century.



Fig. 7.3
Still #1.

Fig. 7.4
Still #2.





Fig. 7.5
Still #3.

Fig. 7.6
Still #4.



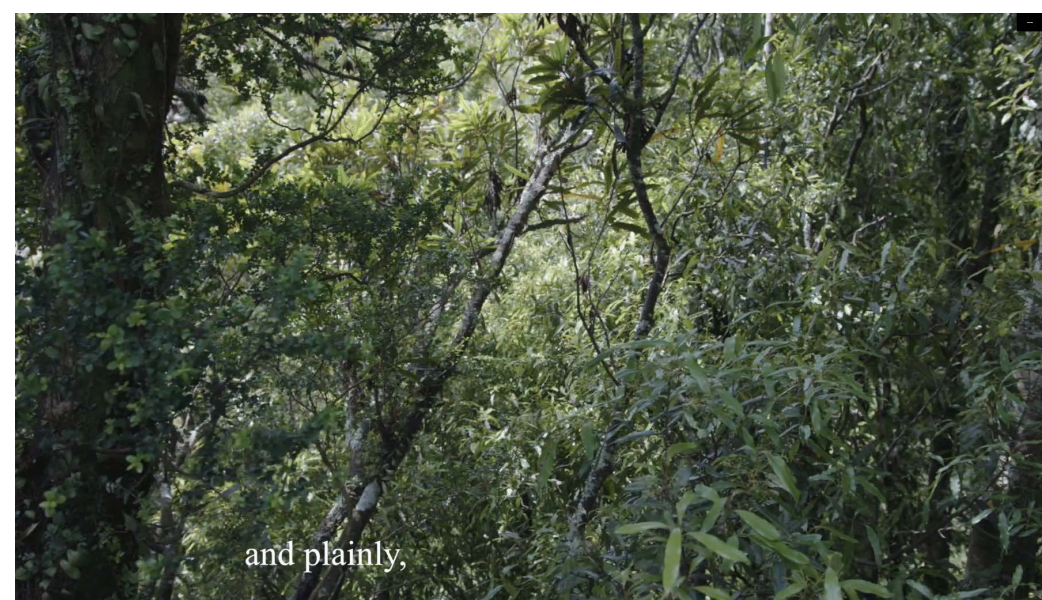


Fig. 7.6

Stills #5 & #6.

Fig. 7.7

Stills #7 & #8.





Fig. 7.8
Still #9.

Fig. 7.9
Still #10.



7.5 Testing the Performed Against Operative Criteria

_ Participation. The first scene that was imagined for this video project makes reference to a photograph of Gilles Clément enveloped in his garden. The idea that the gardener is part of the garden as a community of living things occurs as a repeated motif throughout the duration of the video.

_ Tending. Tending of the garden is performed in the second half of the film, after the premise of participation is set. The action of tending is produced in response to the manifestation of growth and the gardener's patient observation.

_ Boundaries. For the most part, the film is set in the gardens of Otari-Wiltons Bush. It is depicted as a garden of many gardens which can be registered through varying perspectives and temporal scales.

_ Extents. The world of the real and the world of the imagination and memory intertwine in the film, which suggests that the garden can be in many places at once.

_ Equity. The video attempts to communicate equity by keeping the gardeners presence semi-detached. She is obscured, dissected, and/or blurred so that other components of the garden become intensified.

_ Latencies. The latent qualities of the garden reveal themselves as seeing is honed. In the endeavour to see the whole garden, you might pay notice to such details as a spider's nest, or the rotting of plant matter.

_ Growth. The video hinges on a long time-lapse which shows the otherwise imperceptible phenomenon of plant growth. To see this is almost perverse, and hopefully gives rise to the simple notion that a garden is alive and subject to never-ending change.

_ Chance. The video seeks to present ephemeral phenomena through changes in weather conditions. Most interestingly, though, was the review of the week long time-lapse segment, in which rogue insects in the constructed garden (a stick insect, a snail, some mealy bugs, a weta) made themselves known.

7.6 Reflection

The outcome of this design phase ties into the discoveries and findings of the preceding sections, and fills the remaining gaps to meet the research objectives and thus edge closer to the research question posed.

The video presents two worlds of the garden, one which is tied to orientation – of memory, perspective, idea, ethic; the other which is material – plant, soil, water, and other such plain things as the sun rising and sinking daily. The video suggests that these two worlds are not so far apart - there are no dream sequences or clever animations here to distinguish the imaginary from the real. Instead, the imaginary appears to overlap with the real so that they become one and the same in experience. This confirms the presence of a common imagination in and of the garden as significant to its existence as we see it. Highlighting the vast terrain that the garden inhabits in the imaginative realm – which exceeds the simplicity of things without ideas – makes the garden ungraspable and unattainable, thus accentuating our desire for it.

The way that I have approached the medium of moving image for this experiment depends on the real and aims to intensify it. This is achieved by finding methods of abstraction within the medium to make it seem more real to our eye. In particular, I have manipulated time in different ways to express it as layered and subject to perspective. Thus, the gardener in many instances is slowed down, while the time-lapse sequence compresses ten days into a few minutes. Comprising close to 10,000 individual photographs which are sequenced minutes apart in real-time, this part of the video especially emphasises what we know mundanely, in an affective way – the simple notion that plants are always moving, no matter how slight. This is what gives the garden its uncertainty and therefore stimulates our imaginations.

Further to this, I have manipulated the scopic field to de-subjectivise the human participant in the garden. Merleau-Ponty suggests that the eye is a guide to the examination of ideas in the aesthetic world, and raises the obstacle that this presents – ‘I see only from one point, but in my existence am looked at from all sides’ (qtd. in Tunis). Therefore, the scopic field includes the angles of the non-human. This is what I have artificially induced in the video so that we can imagine the gaze of things aside from our own in the garden, and their interaction with us as fellow object.

A key implication of this experiment for the benefit of landscape architectural practice lies in the performance of garden-essence and garden-doing as intertwined in an ongoing tangle of effects between one another. This finding is elucidated through the performative practice of making, only becoming clear through watching and re-watching the work as it came into its own being. Moving between the imagined and the real during the process of design is suggestive of tangible techniques that may be imposed on established ways of practicing landscape architecture, and these will be raised in the final conclusions.

8.0 Conclusions and Significance

The performative research has asked the question,

How can garden-essence and garden-doing equip landscape architectural practice with the means to expand the condition of practice beyond instrumental, solutionist problem-solving and towards the indistinct and immeasurable reaches of our collective imagination?

It has taken the supposition that there is a vital quality of commonness at play within landscape practices. As discussed at length, this commonality is intertwined with the political dimension of the landscape due to its ontological bearings. In this way, commonness is compounded in seeing the world that landscape practice responds to and invents as one that is shared amongst many beings, their relations, their expressions; and is thus inhabited and experienced by all imaginable and unimaginable things.

The above assertions were drawn in the process of research through acts of garden-ness - posited as an outside to the bounds of instrumental landscape architectural practice - by way of the performance of three experiments. Over the course of these experiments, the question was interrogated not to any ends, but to the production of affect spiralling out of the staged encounters.

Thus, to collect any tidy conclusion at the close of this research appears to be the wrong desire – in fact, in seeking something to resemble an answer, the field appears to have escalated so that the whole world can now be seen as able to embody garden-essence and garden-doing.

Therefore, what follows affirms the very particularised significance demonstrated by this research undertaking with reference to the practices of landscape architecture:

— Through performativity, landscape architecture is implicated in the production of reality, and thus it is imperative to keep its practices open to the unknown in order to continue innovating better worlds, rather than focussing its efforts of 'fixing' the symptoms of forces that are outside of our control. This requires a willingness to experiment with ways of doing that arise outside quantitative modes that have the characteristic of self-replicating.

— Landscape architects can imbue garden-essence and garden-doing in their practices if they remain open to possibility - an imaginative exercise. This requires direct engagement with landscape materials, of which tools of representation are supplementary but no less important in generating imaginative concepts. The performative talents of

different representational tools, it has been shown, impact the way the image speaks, and thus can mobilise vastly different outcomes in the landscape and landscape perception.

— As the garden has been found to have its own mode of existence that cannot be fixed or controlled, landscape architects need to practice flexibly to ensure the prolonged vitality of the garden and garden-like landscapes. This could entail consideration of *the plan* as an origin for designed landscapes that is played on by the effects of chance, and subsequently open for future response and direction. Other ways of navigating this kind of flexibility might arise by adapting *the plan* to something that reflects a strategy to guide gardening, or designing by making on-site in an improvisatory manner, in which the procedure of making becomes performed in that it depends on responsiveness to the work as it emerges.

— The ‘outcomes’ of this research are suggestive of a landscape practice where much longer maintenance periods are accounted for. In this case, the idea of ‘maintenance’ can also be adjusted to include ongoing intervention and adaptation as reactive to the materialised designed landscape, rather than maintaining the initial representation as one resolved vision.

— Designing with gardens at any scale can generate exponential ideas and opportunities for learning, which can be redeployed in other contexts by replicating-with-a-difference, as is the way of performative practice. The garden, then, gains significance for landscape architectural practice if considered as a grounds for testing and experimenting with concepts.

— Anything that we can imagine for the design of landscapes is justifiable because everything, including concepts, have a belonging in the material world, and ideas are integral to the practice of landscape architecture. However, the full spectrum of ideas cannot be unanimously affirmed by metrics. Therefore, to access the imaginative realm as it is found in the garden, landscape architects must put their faith in a common imagination which is undefinable and intuitively felt, and thus always up for renewal.

In company with this research, landscape architecture could be figured as a fostering of process, which holds its own logic situated in a space of the outside. With process we can escape formalistic instrumentalism, and the work of designing with landscape can assert itself, speak, be seen. Although this may be seen as an enormous responsibility and risk to ask of the landscape architect, the perceived risk of making failures in and of the landscape due to experimentation with outside ways is diminished by the very real risk of reckless, and often plainly

dangerous impacts of anthropocentric attempt to bestow landscapes with categorical certainty.

If we can encounter the garden flatly, responsively, in motion, and without judgement, then we can approach landscape practice in such a way that surpasses ego and puts us in the midst of the gardener’s habit of entertaining uncertainty - by responding to and reconfiguring that which is already present, in whatever capacity that arises. Thus, the performative makings and doings in the landscape depend on the roaming imagination, and this is the offering to the practice and theory of landscape architecture that this research poses. Aligned with an aspiration to re-orient towards craft, which has shown to be at risk of being lost in landscape architectural practice, the research therefore impels landscape architecture - and that which it brushes up against - to hold its place as a transformative art.

9.0 Appendix

- I. Shadows cast by the street light
under the stars,
the head is tilted back,
the long shadows of the legs
presumes a world
taken for granted
on which the cricket trills.
The hollows of the eyes
are unpeopled.
Right and left
climb the ladders of night
as dawn races
to put out the stars.
That
is the poetic figure
but we know
better: what is not now
will never
be. Sleep secure,
the little dog in the snapshot
keeps his shrewd eyes
pared. Memory
is liver than sight.
A man
looking out,
seeing the shadows-
it is himself
that can be painlessly amputated
by a mere shifting
of the stars.
A comfort so easily not to be
and to be at once one
with every man.
The night blossoms
with a thousand shadows
so long
as there are stars,
street lights
or a moon and
who shall say
by their shadows
which is different
from the other
fat or lean.
- II. Ripped from the concept of our lives
and from all concept
somehow, and plainly,
the sun will come up
each morning
and sink again.
So that we experience
violently
every day
two worlds
one of which we share with the
rose in bloom
and one,
by far the greater,
with the past,
the world of memory,
the silly world of history,
the world
of the imagination.
Which leaves only the beasts and trees,
crystals
with their refractive
surfaces
and rotting things
to stir our wonder.
Save for the little
central hole
of the eye itself
into which
we dare not stare too hard
or we are lost.
The instant
trivial as it is
is all we have
unless—unless
things the imagination feeds upon,
the scent of the rose, startle us anew.

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