

THE SEARCH FOR APPROPRIATE FORM: THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE AND ART IN  
THREE TIME PERIODS

by

ELIZABETH MATLOCK

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## ABSTRACT

# THE SEARCH FOR APPROPRIATE FORM: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND ART IN THREE TIME PERIODS

Elizabeth Matlock, MLA

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2008

Supervising Professor: Gary O. Robinette

Art and landscape architecture are both a means through which man can explore the natural world around him; they provide an opportunity for self expression and reflection. This thesis is based on the hypothesis that several times throughout history landscape architects and designers have looked to art for inspiration in times of change within the profession and that as that relationship evolved the roles have reversed. In the past landscape architects and designers have looked to art for inspiration, now artists are looking to landscape architects for inspiration and form determination. Three periods of history exemplify this changing relationship: the 1800s, the early 1900s, and the late 1900s.

The Claudine landscapes, as depicted in paintings in the eighteenth century, were translated into three dimensional forms by the landscape designers of the 1800s looking for inspiration. This was done predominantly because they were not truly designers, but horticulturists wishing to free themselves from the forms and styles employed in traditional, formal design. During the twentieth century, however, landscape architects were formally trained in an academic setting and the shift from the Beaux-Arts tradition to the Modern necessitated a return to art for relevant forms. Unlike the previous period, it was not merely a recreation of landscape paintings; it was more reflective in its nature. Modern landscape architecture strove to marry art, science, and industry with all its infinite possibilities. During the second half of the twentieth century artists and landscape architects, alike, wishing to express the fragility of the natural world began to produce environmental art and land art. Environmental art was the process of constructing large scale art works where viewer participation was encouraged as a means of re-introducing man to nature. Landscape architects were key in the production and installation of environmental art; from their knowledge of the natural world and its processes, to their understanding of the requirements for installation, and their design abilities artists were turning to landscape architects for their expertise.

The shifting needs and desires of clients and practitioners, as well as the continued desire to understand the natural world, prompted these shifts within both professions. Though the relationship between art and landscape architecture is continually changing, both fields afford man the opportunity to understand himself within the confines of the world around him.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Art, in its various forms, is as old as mankind. It has been taught, learned, written about, practiced, copied and studied. Painting, sculpture, and drawing are all part of the visual arts. Art, along with architecture, needlework, and dance, is one of the “mother arts”, art forms which are considered the predecessors to all other art forms, and has been a guiding factor in many of the other forms of human undertakings. Throughout history man’s artistic endeavors gave him a means of understanding, explaining, and glorifying the world around him. The landscape has been one of the most enduring themes in art. “Nature provides us with the essential metaphors for life and an understanding of our existence” (Matilsky, 1992, p5).

Garden design, landscape design, and landscape architecture, in one form or another, are equally as ancient. Humans began rearranging the land and the elements on it first through necessity then for aesthetic enjoyment. Throughout its history, in times of change, the designers of landscapes have looked to art as a foundation for design.

Land design was first a craft, passed down from father to son and master to apprentice. Until the eighteenth century, landscape architecture was designed based on a ridged collection of forms and symbols dictated by the style of the time (Jellicoe and Jellicoe, 1995, p155). In the 1700s landscape architecture shifted from the formal standards of the past and, lacking a set of guidelines, designers sought a new source of inspiration. Having little formal design training, being predominately horticulturalist,

designers looked to art. Nature, as seen through the eyes of a painter, replaced the strict design standards of the century before. The landscapes of the time were composed of a series of landscape paintings recreated in three dimensional form.

By the twentieth century landscape architects were formally trained in an academic setting. They were taught the basic principles of design, originally derived from art and put into practice by landscape designers two centuries before. However, these principles were established for individuals with no formal training, and in the early 1900s there was a revolt against this tradition of recreating paintings in the landscape. Once again, devoid of guidelines, landscape architects looked to art as source from which to base their forms and designs. Artists, at the time, were interested in the basic forms and components of the world around them, rather than its literal representation. The exploration of nature and the use of modern materials allowed landscape architects to marry the natural world with the man-made.

Through exploration of nature and scientific advances, man, in general, and landscape architects and artists, specifically, became increasingly aware of the fragility of and infinite possibilities in nature. During the second half of the twentieth century landscape architects and artists began to look to nature, not only as a source of inspiration, but also as a material, a canvas, and a gallery for creation. Environmental artworks and land art were created by both, landscape architects and artists alike, as a means of drawing attention to the vulnerability of the planet and/or creating spaces where viewers were actively encouraged to participate in these large scale artistic creations.

Both art and landscape architecture are human creations, outlets for man to respond to, expound upon, or revolt against the world around him. “The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance” (Aristotle). Art and landscape are man’s exploration of self imposed on canvas, cloth, paper, nature. “Art expresses as well as explores man’s relationship, intellectual and emotional, with the world” (Dalwood, 1974, p4).

“Nature as a whole is still disturbing, vast and fearful; and lays open the mind to many dangerous thoughts. But in this wild country man may enclose a garden” (Clark, 1961, p8).

### 1.1 Research Methods

The basic research method undertaken in this thesis was an intensive, multi-level literature review. The literature search was, at the broadest level, focused on art, garden design, landscape design, and the culture and society of time periods when landscape design or art was in transition, specifically when new design principles for landscape architecture were sought. Three periods of time were identified. More focused research into the literature for the eras before, after, and during each of these time periods was undertaken. The literature produced within each time period was also reviewed, paying attention to the artistic trends, literature, and writing focused on society and culture, landscape design criteria, and the personalities of leading designers or exponents of landscape design. Finally, research was undertaken on contemporary literature focused on the theoretical and design practices from each time period. Contemporary theorists

and historians expounded upon the successes and failures within each period, as well as the long lasting implications of each stylistic change in art and landscape architecture.

Reviewing the overall history of both art and landscape architecture allowed for the shifts in style to be noted and correlations drawn based on corresponding timelines. From these noted correlations three time periods were identified as periods of interest. The further research within each time period produced an outline of the world history, art history, and landscape architectural history of the time. From the timelines, literature reviews, and outlines assumptions were made and then verified through the continued research of the literature produced within each time period and contemporary literature. Finally conclusions were drawn and predictions about the future impact on the profession were made.

## 1.2 Hypothesis

The primary question addressed in this thesis is: what is the relationship between art and landscape architecture? The hypothesis is that there is a relationship between the two fields, which is particularly obvious during times of change or transition. A secondary question developed through the research undertaken for this thesis, that question is: if there is an ongoing relationship between art and landscape architecture, how has it evolved, landscape architecture cannot only take inspiration from art, but must also provide it?

This thesis looks, in detail, at three distinct time periods in history to illustrate the relationship between art and landscape architecture. Those periods are: the transition from the formal to naturalistic design in the English landscape garden from

the 1700s through the 1800s, the transition from the Beaux Arts tradition to Modern design from 1938 to 1958, and the transition from Modern landscape architecture to the environmental art movement from 1960 to 1990.

### 1.3 Definition of Terms

Art: Painting, sculpture, drawing, and all other forms of the visual arts, as well as literature, essays, and poetry. The visual expression of our “ideas about our human experience and the world around us” (Lazzari and Schlesier, 2005, p4).

Beaux-Art: The dominant school of thought regarding design through much of the nineteenth century; focused on the study and recreation of historically significant movements within art, architecture, and landscape architecture. (Stokstad, 1995, p1962)

Design Principles: The theoretical basis for informing design; interchangeable with design guidelines. (Turner, 2005, p2)

Environmental Art: Typically large scale, artistic creations focusing on and using nature as a source of inspiration, as well as a medium of expression. These projects can either have an ecological, functional, or aesthetic purpose; also called Land Art. (Matilsky, 1992, p4)

Formal: The landscape style, particularly popular during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, centered around straight axes, geometry, topiary, and symbolic meaning and storytelling. (Jellicoe and Jellicoe, 1995, p155)

History: The past, particularly the study of the past; “a process; a pattern of living and changing attitudes and interpretations” (Giedion, 1941)

Landscape: A piece of land, natural or designed by man, deemed worthy of replication or appreciation. (Corner, 1999, p153)

Landscape Architecture: “The profession which applies artistic and scientific principles to the research, planning, design and management of both natural and built environments” (ALSA, 1983); interchangeable, in this thesis, with landscape designer.

Modern: Describes the art and landscape architectural movements of the early twentieth century, focused on the basic forms and components of the natural world. (Lazzari and Schlesier, 2005, p17)

Picturesque: In art, the practice of creating a composition that combines both Beautiful and Sublime imagery. (Turner, 2005, p230)

Picturesque: In landscape architecture, the practice of recreating or drawing inspiration from a landscape painting in a garden or park; a single or series of man-made “pictures” within the landscape. (Turner, 2005, p230)

#### 1.4 Literature Review

The literature review falls into four distinct categories including: an overview of landscape architectural and art history to identify points of intersection and interaction, an identification of periods of intense interaction between landscape architecture and art where art provided guidance and direction to landscape design, a study of the ways in which art influenced or directed landscape architectural theory and to assess the impact of that sway, and a review of current literature as it looks back to each of those periods and assessed the impact of those decisions in the light of subsequent history of the professional. This study is exemplified in a statement made by James Corner:

Landscape and image are inseparable. Without image there is not such thing as landscape, only unmediated *environment*. This distinction can be traced back to the Old English term *landskip*, which at first referred not to land but to a picture of it, as in the later selectively framed representation of 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch *landschap* paintings. Soon after the appearance of this *genere* of painting the scenic concept was applied to the landscape itself in the form of large scale rural vistas, designed estates, and ornamental garden art. Indeed the development of landscape architecture as a modern profession derives in large measure from an impulse to reshape large areas of land according to *prior* imaging...Whereas imaging is central to forging landscape, the tendency of many contemporary landscape architects is to assume that this prioritizes visual and formal qualities alone significantly limits the full eidetic scope of landscape creativity...Jackson and Stilgoe have documented the complexity of the term *landscape* and draw distinctions between art-historical, representational versions and vernacular, geographical definitions. They describe the Old German *landschaft* actually preceding *landskip* and as referring not to scenery but to the environment of the working community, a setting comprising dwellings, pastures, meadows, and fields, and surrounded by unimproved forests or meadows...In other words, the meaning of *landschaft* comprises a deep and intimate mode of relationship not only among buildings and fields but also among patterns of occupation, activity, and space, each of them bound into calendrical time...I am more interested in drawing a distinction between *landskip* (landscape as contrivance, primarily visual and sometimes also iconic or significant) and *landschaft* (landscape as occupied milieu, the effects and significance of which accrue through tactility, use and engagement over time. Both terms connote images, but the later comprises a fuller, more synthetic, and less picturable range than the former. Furthermore, the working landscape, forged collectively and according to more utilitarian demands than anything artistic or formal, has been more the traditional domain of descriptive analysis by historians and geographers than of speculation by landscape architects...In the working *landschaft*, performance and event assumes conceptual precedence over appearance and ego. (1999, p153 - 155)

This concept is seldom conveyed in the large synoptic history books regarding the development of the profession of landscape architecture. However, it is valid as professional landscape architecture changes from one of a picturesque design to a more meaningful, ecologically relevant, and sustainable design approach in the future.

#### *1.4.1 An Overview of Landscape Architectural and Art History*

For this phase of the research, general landscape architectural and art history books were read, including Tom Turner's Garden History, Geoffrey and Susan Jellicoe's The Landscape of Man, Marilyn Stokstad's Art History, Margaret Lazzari and Dona Schlesier's Exploring Art, and others. These books gave a broad-spectrum understanding of the history of both professions. Following the evolution within each field, the general dates of design shifts were noted and compared, and correlations were highlighted. In several books a direct link between art and landscape architecture was mentioned and these time periods were also highlighted.

#### *1.4.2 An Identification of Time Periods of Intense Interaction*

The various time periods identified during the first phase of the research were then examined more closely to verify that a direct connection between the two fields existed. From this three periods of time were identified as exhibiting a prominent relationship between art and landscape architecture. Once the relationship was confirmed the eras proceeding and following each of the three time periods were examined for a better understanding of the social, political, economic, religious, etc factors which influenced the shift from one style to the next.

#### *1.4.3 A Study of Art's Influence*

The previous phase directly led to, and sometimes occurred simultaneously, with a more intense study of each time period and art's influence upon landscape architecture. It was necessary to understand the context surrounding the shifts in style first to truly comprehend the effect that each field had on the other. It was also

important to evaluate the literature written throughout these time periods to understand the motivations and values of the practitioners of the time.

Though there is a vast amount of literature written about the shift from the formal to the naturalistic, there are still differing theories as to the exact cause of the transformation. Many authors site the changing political climate as the main cause. The British Civil War of the late 1600s and the American and French revolutions largely removed the aristocracy from power and took away much of their wealth, which enabled them to build and maintain large formal gardens. Much of the writing and garden discussions of that period gravitated toward more naturalistic planting and a greater adaptation of garden design to the forms of the natural landscape. These forms were much easier and less expensive to maintain, and did not reflect the majesty and power of the aristocracy. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was a great deal of interest in gardening and the landscape at all levels of society and culture. There was a great deal written about gardens and lengthy discussions of current styles and trends. In order to meet the demand for garden designers many painters and other artists became the designers of the new gardens. The styles and types of design ideas these designers brought with them, because of their background and training in art, is illustrated in the following quotes. Kenneth Clark wrote, "Landscape painting marks the stages in our conception of nature. Its rise and development since the Middle Ages is part of a cycle in which the human spirit attempted once more to create harmony with its environment." Sir Joshua Reynolds stated that "It is a proper study and labor of an

artist to uncover and find out the latent cause of conspicuous beauty and from thence form principles for his own conduct.”

Among the most helpful books in the literature search for this era were John Dixon Hunt’s Gardens and the Picturesque, The Art of Gardening Through the Ages by Tassilo Wengel, The Picturesque Garden in France by Dora Weibenson, and The Garden: A History in Landscape and Art by Filippo Pizzoni.

Though there was a great deal of writing during the early half of the twentieth century, much of it dealt with the theory and philosophy of garden design or the changing nature of garden design, it did not always deal with why the changes were taking place. The literature was somewhat divorced from the social and cultural writing of the same period. Political changes were taken for granted.

In the period from 1938 to 1958 there were, in effect, two main streams of literatures: one developed by the authors of the “revolution” and another by those who watched the revolution take place. This period of history began at the Harvard Graduate School of Design where three students heard a lecture by Walter Gropius, the new Dean of the School, and expressed their doubts about the relevance of their design education. Garrett Eckbo, Dan Kiley, and James Rose felt that the Beaux Arts approach to landscape design was inappropriate in light of the new rational approach to architectural design. They rebelled against the faculty and one of the students was dismissed, James Rose, one dropped out, Dan Kiley, while only one went on to graduate, Garrett Eckbo. These three students wrote a series of articles emphasizing

their approach to design. These articles were widely published in Architectural Record, Pencil Points, House Beautiful, and Home and Garden magazines.

These new ideas and the philosophy behind them caught on rapidly with the general public and with other architects and designers. However, the problem these young designers had was the subsequent search for new forms. They had abandoned the traditional forms and then had to search among the current art and design of the era to seek appropriate form for the new gardens they were asked to design.

Each of these three pioneers wrote about their work; Rose early in his career, Eckbo throughout his career, and Kiley at the end of his career. Kiley recognized LeNotre as an inspiration; Rose alluded to Mondrian in an oblique way; while, Eckbo did not attribute any of his numerous designs to any particular inspiration. Of a Modern landscape Eckbo said:

The garden will be called modern. If that is the only term which denotes an open-minded, uninhibited, straightforward solution of a problem on its own conditions, unimpeded by prejudices, preconceptions or the advertisement of the sources of inspiration, then they are. The designer feels no need of classification, rather the need for fusion of 'styles' and the development of Style and Design. (1990, p59)

The third, and final, period which was considered in this study was the second half of the nineteenth century and the creation of environmental art. While the amount of literature being produced on art and landscape architecture regarding this time in history has out numbered that of any preceding period, the distinction between the fields of art and landscape architecture has blurred. Environmental art has not solely been produced by artists; many landscape architects have also created large scale

pieces of land art. There have been many artists who have obtained degrees in landscape architecture in order to insure that their artistic vision is implemented exactly as they wish, and many landscape architects who have sought out more artistic solutions than traditional design. The interest in preserving and enhancing the earth and our environment captured the attention artists, at the same time many landscape architects were looking for ways in which to instill deeper meaning in their projects by incorporating the work of artists, by working with artists, or by comprehending the philosophical construct of many art projects.

Of the vast array of literature produced on this time some of the best are the Earthworks and Beyond series and Between Landscape Architecture and Land Art by John Beardsley and Udo Weilacher respectively. These are among the most definitive collection of environmental art projects currently in print.

Katie Campbell's work, Icons of Twentieth-Century Landscape Design, was central to the exploration of the relationship between art and landscape architecture throughout the last century. In this volume she illustrated a number of the most significant landscape projects of the past century and related them back to the artist or artists who have influenced the landscape designers of each of these projects.

#### *1.4.4 A Review of Current Literature*

The final research step was a review of literature currently being produced on the three time periods central to this thesis. This was done to understand what is being said by contemporary commentators concerning the interaction between garden or

landscape designers and the artist of each period. It was a way of seeing the lasting impact that each design shift had on the current profession.

In Recovering Landscape Corner, 1999, expounded upon the lasting effect that the Picturesque has had on the profession of landscape architecture. In the same book Elizabeth Meyer explored the Picturesque and illustrated how she used this period in history as a tool for teaching her students theory. Marc Treib and Peter Walker wrote extensively about Modern landscape architecture, relating the practitioners back to the artists who inspired them, and the continuation of the search for appropriate form. Campbell and other authors showed the melding of the fields, the blurred line between landscape architecture and art.

Many contemporary authors also focused on landscape architectural theory and philosophy. For instance, the Simon Swaffield book, Theory in Landscape Architecture: A Reader, contains excerpts from a number of authors focused on the derivation of landscape forms. In one essay, Creative Risk Taking by Steven Krog, the following statement was made:

Turning aside from this diversionary question, 'Is it beautiful?' we are free to accept artist James Turrell's imperative the 'the media of art are perception.' Small wonder that Robert Smithson, Carl Andre, Christo, Michael Heizer, Dennis Oppenheim, and other artists turned to landscape as their forum and/or medium. The landscape teems with factors which heighten one's perceptual awareness and one's artistic experience precisely because it overflows with latent present, is subject to relatively few metaphorical associations and is largely lacking in museum pretensions...However, because of the landscape architect's bent for practicality (i.e., the client's needs), the application of these windfall advantages presents a problem. If we agree that the subject of art is aesthetic perception itself, and if we wish to claim for landscape architecture a seat among the other fine arts, then we ultimately must

confront the messy dilemma of whether the profession's works are to be a service to society or a commentary on society. (1983, p61)

One other contemporary reference seems appropriate to mention in summing up the literature search. In the book Designing the New Landscape by Sutherland Lyall, the author outlines six types of new landscape in the 20<sup>th</sup> century: responses to the urban scene, perceptions of the cultural context, the structured landscape, relating to architecture, the subjective vision, and reconditioning nature. Under the "Subjective Vision" he harks back to an earlier time when he says:

In many ways landscape design has hitherto been primarily about the modification of existing topographies. But the new landscape is as much as anything to do with ideas, visions, models of a better or more intriguing environment. Some of these designs are visions, never particularly intended to be built. (1991, p32)

Over four hundred years the literature indicates that initially artists designed landscapes employing artistic principles and landscape designers learned from artists, next landscape architects borrowed design forms from artists, and currently landscape architects are giving back to environmental and land artists their unique perception of geology, ecology, hydrology, and the natural rhythm of the indigenous landscape. The evolution of this relationship has made both fields richer and more meaningful.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE TRANSITION FROM FORMAL TO NATURALISTIC

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were called The Age of Reason. The monarchy and the church were losing their hold and philosophy, science, travel, patriotism. These were becoming the ruling forces. Travel opportunities were highly prized and sought after. Journeys abroad served as educational endeavors, exposing the traveler to art, philosophy, cultures, and languages. The societal and political changes of the time, along with the increased opportunity to experience other cultures, directly influenced all of the creative fields, including art and landscape architecture. (Jellicoe and Jellicoe, 1995, p204 - 205)

Literature and art focused on the romantic notions of a time gone by, personifying the myths and legends from Ancient Greece and Rome, as well as the Bible. Set in idealized landscapes, containing large trees, winding paths, rolling hills, rough mountains, lakes, waterfalls, boulders, or hidden temples and sparsely populated with gods, goddesses, saint, legends, and peasants, these stories were the favored subject matter for European painters. Though based on nature, these paintings were romanticized and infused with a sense of tension. Jagged rocks were coupled with the smooth curves of grassed hills, the Sublime and the Beautiful in what was termed a Picturesque composition. Claude Lorrain, referred to as, “the greatest of landscape painters, and Nicolas Poussin were renowned for their landscape paintings. They created worlds that were, “timeless, ordered and free from strife – as a form of solace in

an increasingly complex world” (Matilsky, 1992, p16). These works exemplified the beauty of nature and the relationship between man and the natural world.

In many ways the late part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was the most confusing and difficult in English landscape design. The social and cultural guidelines had been changed with the English Civil War, the American Revolution, the French Revolution, and the rise of democracies on the Continent and in the New World. The old rules were gone, as were the resources which had been concentrated in the hands of the aristocracy. The guidelines for designing and planning, relevant for the last four hundred years, were no longer applicable or acceptable. People were looking for new directions, new perceptions and new guidelines, and nowhere was this more pronounced than in garden and landscape design, especially in England where gardening was becoming an area of significant writing and discussion.

Tassilo Wengel states:

Large areas of Europe saw the creation of great Baroque gardens like Nymphenburg, Bruhl, Schonbrunn, Wurzburg and Schwetzingen, to name but a few. This was accompanied by some sharp criticism, not to say downright opposition – in accordance with the development in each country – for different reasons. For example, the economic reason for this development can be seen as the change from arable to pastoral farming in southern England. It was here that the closely-cropped meadows with their isolated trees and hedges increasingly determined the landscape. So the basis was given for the kind of garden that seems to harmonize with the landscape because of its natural beauty...The spiritual source is the energetic pursuit of free development, the determined rejection of constraint and oppression, an opposition to the formal layout of the Baroque garden, to the interference with natural growth. Philosophers, poets, artists took up this movement and carried these new ideas into wider circles. Powerful impulses came from England...The two English poets and essayists, Joseph Addison (1672 – 1719) and Alexander Pope (1688 – 1744), were part of this movement that was marked by a new feeling for nature. Addison did not deny the artistic

merit of the formal garden, neither did he plead only for the wild beauty of nature. He sought a compromise, differentiated between the 'artistically beautiful' and the 'natural beautiful', and believed that both would gain by inclining towards each other...Pope, a major figure of classical English literature, expressed himself in similar vein to Addison in *The Guardian* in 1716. He inveighed against excessive formality and symmetry in design and championed the study of nature that it might be copied in the garden. He also recommended the study of landscape paintings and the practical application of what had been learned there from. (1987, p209)

It must be kept in mind that the garden designers of the immediate past did not have the requisite design skills or training to respond to the new demands and criteria. Therefore those who wanted to commission the new gardens, in the new forms, had to seek guidance in new place. Wengel also said:

Decisive influence on the composition of the new gardens was exercised by the architect and painter William Kent (1685 – 1748). He went on to become a landscape gardener, a profession in which he used the rules of composition found in landscape painting. He selected his motifs from nature and recognized that the curved line is an essential element in the natural garden. He took as his model the landscape of Claude Lorrain (1600 – 1682), Nicholas Poussin (1594 – 1650), and Salvator Rose (1615 – 1673). (1987, p210)

When garden designers left the safety and security of the French and Italian formal garden design and sought new forms which were more natural and informal there existed no precedents for them to follow. Therefore they sought out new forms in the older disciplines of art and design. The question became, what was an appropriate form for more egalitarian clients, which seems natural and requires less maintenance over its lifetime?

Miles Hadfield said:

Obscure though the sparks that set off the movement are, we have seen how an entirely new conception of gardening was coming into existence. Horticulture and (except incidentally) architecture played no part in it; most of its early practitioners were concerned with poetry, philosophy, aesthetics, painting, and historical or literary allusions...Their aim was to create illusions of ideal worlds, which they professed to think was inspired by irregular nature herself. Here, indeed, was an entirely new form of gardening: it was landscape painting in which the earth itself was moved to for ideal contours, water was controlled to form perfect lakes or romantic waterfalls, and trees were planted to grow into nature's forests. (1965, p80)

Thus the term "Picturesque" passed from artistic composition to landscape design, "as an explicit reference to the scenes represented in the major arts, confirming the affinity between poetry, theatre and painting and the newly-flourishing art of the garden" (Pizzoni, 1997, p166). These new landscapes were the three-dimensional realization of an artist's idealized version of nature.

Because of the dearth of contemporary landscape designers, at that time, who were able to respond to the new forms of garden design which was required in that changing period, William Kent, an artist who had been living in Italy, was brought back to England by Lord Burlington. Kent had been in Italy for nine years visiting Rome, Florence, Venice, and Bologna. He earned a living by making architectural drawings and copies of old Masters and sending them home to British patrons. Kent's training led him to see gardens not only in terms of Claudian landscapes, but as compositions of a three dimensional yet essentially painterly kind, where the visitor proceeds from one "landscape picture" to another, and so onwards through the garden. Gardens were designed to be viewed, not for "domestic pleasure," they were fashioned

so as to produce an intellectual, as well as visceral response from the viewer. Guests were sent out into the gardens with mirrors or tinted glass in order to simulate the appearance of a painting when viewing the landscape. Elizabeth Meyer noted:

The inhabitant became a connoisseur of visual scenery – the Picturesque landscape – or an observer/measurer of quantifiable landscape variables. This emphasis on the visual and recordable reduced the landscape to two-dimensional surfaces, either the vertical surface of the picture plane or the horizontal surface of the geographer’s map. (1992, p28)

Tom Turner identifies one particularly applicable quote from Sir Uvedale Price, noting:

In his *Essay...on the Use of Studying Pictures, for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscapes* (1794), Sir Uvedale Price wrote:

The particular beauty of the most beautiful of all landscape painters is characterized by *il riposo de Claudio*, and when the mind of man is in the delightful state of repose, of which Claude’s pictures are the image – when he feels that mild and equal sunshine of the soul which warms and cheers, but neither inflames nor irritates – his heart seems to dilate with happiness, he is disposed to every act of kindness and benevolence to love and cherish all around him. (2005, p188)

Several authors greatly influenced the progression of the Picturesque movement in landscape architecture. Chief among them was Alexander Pope, an English poet, who “championed the beauties of unadorned nature, vigorously rejecting the balance, regularity and artifice of formal gardens and topiary work. He also set great store by the *genius loci*, the Spirit of Place” (Pizzoni, 1997, p162-163). Humphry Repton, Sir Uvedale Price, and Richard Payne Knight accepted the compositional principles of the great landscape paintings as an unimpeachable standard of good taste. Gilbert Laing Meason published one hundred and thirty copies of a book entitled Landscape Architecture of the Great Painters of Italy in 1828, advising designers to study

relationships between buildings and their settings in the landscape paintings of Giotto, Titian, Poussin, Veronese, Lorrain, Tinteretto, Raphael, Comenishino, Michaelangelo, and others.

When the traditional, formal garden was discarded in England there was a search for form in the new garden genre. In 1753 William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* was first published. He identified several types of lines, primarily straight and curved lines, and the various lines made from a combination of the two. He expounded upon the virtues of what he called "the line of beauty" and "the line of grace". The line of beauty was a "waving line...being composed of two curves contrasted, becomes still more ornamental and pleasing, insomuch that the hand takes a lively movement in making it with pen or pencil" (Hogarth, 1753, p39). The line of grace was a serpentine line characterized by curving in one direction and then back on itself. Hogarth felt that all lines, specifically undulating lines, were aesthetically pleasing, but that, when proportioned correctly, the line of beauty was the most agreeable. He compared the perfectly proportioned line of beauty to the curves of the female corset: too curved and the form is awkward, too straight and the form is severe. Artists employed the lines of beauty and grace when composing their landscape paintings, and, later, landscape designers would employ this same technique in the creation of their landscapes. With the abandonment of the strict, formal design genre which had been used for centuries, there was a frantic search for guidance into new appropriate forms. This need was met by artists, some of whom provided sketches which gave suggestions as to how to arrange plants in a more naturalistic manner.

## 2.1 Conclusion

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the art world shifted from the idealized and representational style of the landscape painter to the interpretive style of the Impressionists. Moving away from a focus on the ideal to an interest in the basic forms and colors of the natural world, ideal or not. This shift in focus to form led to Post-Impressionism and onto Cubism, considered the beginning of Modern art. Modern art was prevalent throughout Europe in the nineteenth century, though it was not widely accepted in the United States until after World War I (Robinette, 1976).

Landscape struggled to keep up with the rapidly changing world of art. Roughly half a century after its inception the Picturesque became the prevalent style in landscape design. “(T)he main concern of the picturesque was how to process the unmediated wild world, how to control it or make it palatable for consumption by sanitizing it with art...nature out there was recycled for civilized use and consumption” (Hunt, 1992, p286-288). This degradation of the style led to a loss of meaning.

Though landscape design throughout Europe was quicker to respond to Modern art, the United States lagged behind. The founding fathers of landscape architecture in the United States, Fredrick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux, were devoted to the naturalistic style of the English garden. At the end of the 1930s Modern architecture was becoming acceptable in the United States, though the building's setting remained the domain of the naturalistic. Prior to the war a few innovative landscape designers began to explore the possibilities beyond the boundaries of the Picturesque and the Beaux Arts and Bauhaus traditions. Though these endeavors were cut short in 1914,

when World War I began, after the war they were resumed in earnest and a new era in landscape architecture was born.

In 1992 Meyer analyzed the downfall of the Picturesque, explaining how a set of design principles, established in and around a particular location and environment, specifically Great Britain, could deteriorate when applied to other locations. The Picturesque was originally a means of expressing an idealized version of the natural world specific to the British countryside. When the widely available literature expounding upon the natural beauty and character of the landscape, including illustrations which, “reduced the site to landscape by failing to depict topography and by cropping the perspectives into placeless, decorative vignettes,” the inevitable reproductions were merely copies of a portion of the whole and totally devoid of meaning and a sense of place (Meyer, 1992, p28).

It may be argued that this desire to seek guidance from artists provided a very superficial and “picturesque” approach to landscape design for the next few centuries, which hindered the profession’s relevance. On the other hand, there was not the scientific knowledge of ecology, geology, remote sensing, or even of cultural geography, archeology, or psychology which exists today. Those designers and seekers of form went to the only place which was available to them. Later designers would have design training available to them which related to landscape architecture and would not have to borrow from other, older, and more established professions. It was the first, but it would not be the last time when landscape designers would borrow from and rely on artists for design guidance.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE TRANSITION FROM BEAUX-ARTS TO MODERN

Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the population rapidly increased and man was developing, “all but the most remote and self-protecting parts of the globe” (Jellicoe and Jellicoe, 1995, p284). This was the Industrial Age, a time when man developed the capabilities to create and execute beyond the physical means of himself and livestock. (Jellicoe and Jellicoe, 1995, p284 - 285)

From landscape paintings the world of art evolved to impressionism. During the second half of the nineteenth century the focus of the art world shifted, Impressionists focused on colors, light, and form rather than the ideal or exactness. The Impressionists’ interest in form became the catalyst for Cubism or Constructivism. Inspired by the landscape painters from the centuries before, Modern artists were interested in finding significance in the natural form. Cubism was the abstraction of the natural world. “Abstracted imagery may or may not be recognizable, but has been derived from reality by distorting, enlarging, and/or dissecting objects or figures from nature” (Lazzari and Schlesier, 2005, p17). The idea was to extract order from the chaos of nature.

“New relationships were established between form and figure, colour and tone, straight lines, broken lines and circles, and between planes and dimensions” (Pizzoni, 1997, p223-224). Pizzoni continues on, noting, that in Modern art, Cubism in particular, artists began to gravitate towards creating series of “regular figures,” like

those found in the formal landscape tradition abandoned nearly two centuries before. As in art, landscape architects of the early twentieth century were searching for a means of expressing themselves beyond the confines of the Beaux-Arts tradition. Dean MacCannell said:

Until the middle of the twentieth century, landscape architecture sought inspiration by looking backward through history. The elegant geometric abstraction of Renaissance landscape design was intended as an application of Platonic forms. Nineteenth century archeology yielded layers of ancient environmental works that became models for romantic and nationalistic landscape design. Beaux Arts revival in the early twentieth century imported classical symmetries and details into large scale designs for world's fairs and for the City Beautiful movement...Landscape architecture's decisive rejection of styles from the past draws strength from two main sources. The first was a series of articles in the journal *Pencil Points* by Garrett Eckbo, Daniel Kiley and James Rose. These pioneers of modernism theorized a break with the past and a new landscape based on human needs. (2001, p104)

This period in landscape architectural history resulted from a similar set of needs and desires within the designers of the time, as had occurred more than a century before when formal traditions were abandoned in favor of a more naturalistic design approach. Although the societal and political circumstances were different the issues were nearly the same: the desire to create outside of the bonds of tradition and the question of where to draw inspiration from.

Modern landscape architects, like the Picturesque designers, chose to use art as a form giver. Though art and landscape design moved away from the naturalistic the focus was still on nature and universal theories. Inspired by the scientific approach to the natural world and technology, artists and landscape architects alike, sought a new way to express themselves by incorporating "clean lines", primary colors, and shapes

inspired by geometry. Mondrian's fascination with the geometric basis of the world around him was highly influential in the world of landscape design. His rectangles were to appear in patterns in paving and on walls throughout gardens. The appearance of these shapes was further influenced by the availability of new materials such as concrete, steel, and glass.

Two innovative ideas were coming into being throughout the industrial world: land use and form. Taking the entire community into consideration when planning and designing was the idea behind the first, "the science of land use". It "was concerned with urban design, land and landscape-planning, and the conservation and proper exploitation of natural and historic resources" (Jellicoe and Jellicoe, 1995, p285). The second creative force in the early twentieth century was the idea that form should come from function. Particularly in architecture, individuals were searching for an understanding of the machine oriented world. "(L)andscape architects forged a new form of landscape design that wedded social patterns, spatial ideas, materials, and aesthetic vocabularies, creating new 'landscapes for living' " (Corner, 1999, p30) Treib.

In 1990 Garrett Eckbo, one of the main proponents of the Modern movement in landscape architecture, stated that the movement began in "response to the profound impacts of the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions" (111). He noted that Pierre Le Grand, Thomas Church, Dan Kiley, James Rose, and himself were among the first to defy the Beaux-Arts tradition and embrace Modern design aesthetics. Modern landscape architects longed to break away from formulaic design, to truly understand a site as a unique set of circumstances and components, and to establish a direct

relationship between the architecture and its surroundings, while taking the client's needs and desires into consideration. They moved away from recreating paintings and storytelling, and focused on form.

As one of the first Modern landscape architect, Gabriel Guevrekian married “the still, reflective mood of the Persian Paradise Garden with the aesthetics, materials and technology of European modernism, he created a vibrant, contemporary style; his design for the Villa Noailles in Hyères remains one of the most innovative and celebrated gardens of the twentieth century” (Campbell, 2006, p22). In his design he referred to the paintings of Mondrian and Klee. Unfortunately, as with many innovations, Villa Noailles was not recognized for its historical significance until after many years of neglect and a series of “restorative” efforts that, in many ways, fundamentally altered the character of the garden.

In 1930's California Thomas Church began his career, striving for a style that incorporated the best of the formal and naturalistic approaches, believing that all gardens are works of art in their own right (Pizzoni, 1997, p251). In 1947 he was commissioned to design a swimming pool and the necessary out buildings on a site before the residence was to be completed, the Dewy Donnel Garden. According to the plan which Church drew on September 5, 1947 he called for a kidney shaped pool, which was like many of the design forms of Aalvar Aalto and the artist, Jean Arp. When the pool was completed it was hailed as the “swimming pool that changed the world,” since it was the first completed and built in the Modern garden design tradition. A number of other landscape architects in California in the late 1940's and early 1950's

referred back to the contemporary art of the period as a guide to the forms of new landscape architectural projects, including Lawrence Halprin, Theodore Osmundson, and Robert Royston to mention only a few.

At Harvard Graduate School of Design, three young students met their new Dean, Walter Gropius, the former Director of the Bauhaus in Germany. He spoke of a new approach to architecture which presented the opportunity to develop new forms, rather than relying on the traditional Beaux-Arts methods. The students heard him speak of “form following function” and that designing to a style was artificial and inappropriate. Eager to apply this new approach to landscape architecture, James Rose, Dan Kiley, and Garrett Eckbo approached the faculty at the University with their idea to revolutionize the approach to landscape design and were, unceremoniously, rebuffed. James Rose was kicked out of school, Dan Kiley dropped out, and Garrett Eckbo completed his Masters degree. In order to make their voices heard to a larger audience these three students began publishing a series of articles in both professional and shelter magazines. In these articles they proposed to utilize this new approach to landscape architectural design. However, in order to include illustrations with those articles they had to design some new gardens to illustrate these principles. The Beaux Arts design approach had depended largely on bilaterally symmetrical designs and these students wanted to find forms that were not axial in format. One of the first places they found such an approach was in the contemporary arts of that time. Many of the contemporary artists were doing free form designs that did not have a readily apparent symmetry or axes. These three students were at least aware of and borrowed forms and lines from

some of the contemporary artists of the same period of time. As contemporary landscape architects moved from the Beaux Arts style to Modern landscape design the search for form givers to embody the new concept that “form follows function.” They searched in Modern art, in oriental landscapes, and in nature for new and relevant garden and landscape design guidelines.

All three of these young professionals became writers during their professional careers so they had ample opportunity to explain what they did and why, exactly, they did it. Instead, they chose to have others explain the derivation of the physical form of some of their design forms. Exactly as happened in the earlier period, new design forms were needed, dictated, or called for. The landscape designers of this era did not have all of the requisite design skills to adapt to the new forms. Because of that they were not told to go back to art to seek solutions or approaches to seek new design forms. Instead they chose to go to Modern art and design forms to fully illustrate their advanced concepts.

Marc Treib said:

Shapes, forms and spaces drawn from the work of Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Wassily Kandinsky, Mies van der Rohe, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Naum Gabo, El Lizzitsky, Joan Miro, Jean Arp and Isamu Noguchi were as important for what they were not as for what they were: they were neither the informal nor the formal tradition, instead their idiom spoke of today, of design in space...The years at Harvard constituted a pivotal stage in Eckbo's formation: and academic study gave him a laboratory for pure research and its applied development. Several design studies investigated the linkage of modern art with Eckbo's more socially rooted ideas. (1997, p29)

Treib comments specifically upon Eckbo's fascination with the zigzag pathway, inspired by Pierre-Émile Legrain's Tachard garden in La Celle-Saint-Cloud, noting that

Eckbo, himself, said of the garden, “It blew my mind because of that little sawtooth edge” (Treib, 1997, p24). The pockets of landscape formed by breaking the traditionally straight lined edge of a path served as a means of slowing the viewer down and creating interest. This was one form which Eckbo readily attributed to Modern art.

Another artist that Treib believes was extremely influential in Eckbo’s career was Wassily Kandinsky. Kandinsky did several studies illustrating the various methods for subdividing a square using diagonal lines, a reoccurring theme in Eckbo’s designs.

Roberto Burle Marx was an accomplished painter and landscape architect from Brazil.

In 1965, when the American Institute of Architects dubbed him ‘the real creator of the modern garden’, Roberto Burle Marx assumed the title with pride. Though a noted painter, singer, sculptor and designer of textiles, jewelry, ceramics, murals and stage sets, it was his landscape design which brought Burle Marx international fame and placed Brazil in the forefront of that Europe-dominated art form. (Campbell, 2006, p58)

He came from a very accomplished family. Early in life he began painting, particularly in oils and had a number of showings of his paintings which were Modern in style. He was asked, because of his design training and understanding of horticulture, to help with landscape development in Brazil, which then had a very limited history and an even more limited horticultural plant palette. Burle Marx did a number of very exotic and elegant landscape designs for private residences, as well as for commercial and governmental buildings. When he completed his conceptual design he found that it was not possible to implement his designs because there was no commercial horticultural industry to supply plants of the size and color he needed for specific projects.

Undeterred, Marx instituted excursions into the jungles of Brazil to collect native plants which could be propagated and cultivated for use in landscape design. During his lifetime he had more than three hundred plant patents of vegetation which he had discovered, propagated, and used on his landscape designs to provide the distinctive color, form, or texture he needed to create the sorts of designs he had in mind and which he felt were appropriate to the Brazilian climate and culture. Since there were few other landscape architects working in tropical climates he was selected to work in other South and Central American countries and in the Southern United States. The design for the landscape development along Biscayne Boulevard in Miami was prepared by Burle Marx shortly before his death, but has not yet been implemented. Roberto Burle Marx was one of the first artists working as a landscape architect in the last one hundred and fifty years, but he was by not means the last. He was just evidence of a resurgence of people with design and artistic training and experience coming back into and reinvigorating the profession of landscape architecture.

### 3.1 Conclusion

Although lasting only a short twenty years, Modern landscape architecture stimulated a renewed public interest in the potential of landscape architecture. After the Second World War the number of individuals study and entering into the profession increase dramatically, and the principles embraced by the Modern designers provided a set of guidelines and established potential sources of inspiration.

However, there were limitations to the relevance of Modern landscape architecture. Most notable, according to Treib, was the focus on the private garden,

which led to “the disappearance of the noticeably designed landscape beyond the small scale of the garden” (Treib, 1999, p29).

There were several reasons for the end of Modern landscape architecture, including: Hideo Sasaki wrote a major article on education which called for a rational approach to design in 1950, Phillip H. Lewis, Jr. began promoting “physiographic determinism” in 1953 which called for regional analysis and form seeking, the G.I. Bill made it possible for a large number of new students to enroll in schools of landscape architecture and as they were trained in design they sought out newer forms from nature, from science, and from culture and history, and the publication of Ian McHarg’s Design with Nature. In his book McHarg lays out an approach to landscape architecture centered around the natural ecology of a site, which form emerging through a methodical analysis of the site, uses, users, and needs. “(L)andscape architects jumped aboard the ecological train, becoming analysts rather than creators, and the conscious making of form and space in the landscape subsequently came to a screeching halt” (Treib, 1999, p31).

## CHAPTER 4

### THE TRANSITION FROM MODERN TO ENVIRONMENTAL ART

Throughout mans' short existence little changed geographically or climactically, though man's relationship with nature has changed dramatically. Initially scared of the unpredictable world outside, man learned how to harness the power of nature and deemed himself above it, ruler of the natural world. As the world progressed, in particular science, man's understanding broadened and nature became a force to work with rather than one to fear or try to control. In the second half of the twentieth century man came to truly understand himself as part of nature. (Jellicoe and Jellicoe, 1995, p320 - 321)

In 1979 with the European Conservation Year it became clear that the Earth could not sustain mankind indefinitely. The increase in population and finite availability of resources became the catalyst for conservation. Man was now acutely aware that all his actions affected not only his quality of life, but that of the entire planet. (Jellicoe and Jellicoe, 1995, p320 – 321, Matilsky, 1992, p33)

Along with man's understanding that the Earth's resources were limited came the realization that the theoretical frame within which scientific man was living in was "bent on self-destruction". A new set of values and belief systems were established as a counter balance and necessity in hopes of preserving mankind and the planet.

As with all art forms Environmental art was a means by which man attempted to understand the world around him. The first examples of environmental art were created

hundreds of years ago in the Americas. The native people constructed large sculptural serpents and ceremonial mounds from the earth itself. Contemporary earthworks used natural materials as well, but also other materials which are responsive and related to their sites. Artists were interested in the cultural history of a site, as well as the natural history. Each had great impact on the site, its uses, and associations to the public and the artist.

In the second half of the twentieth century concern for the environment and the limited capacity of Earth seeped into the art world, giving artists a new focus and set of tools with which to express themselves. Many strove to re-establish man's connection to nature by creating public pieces. In 1962 the first alarming account of human destruction to Earth was published. It was authored by a marine biologist, Rachel Carson. She "described the death of wildlife and the destruction of their habitat as a result of agricultural pesticides" (Matilsky, 1992, p33). The environmental movement grew in the following years and in 1968 Apollo VIII captured the first image of Earth from space. This image, as well as the most famous taken on Apollo XVII in 1972, reinforced the notion of the Earth as a contained biosphere. Everything is connected and everything has an impact.

Environmental art was important not only because it offered a new way of creating art and thinking about it, but also because it called attention to nature...Unlike earlier painters who depicted specific landscape features, environmental artists visualize the forces, processes, and phenomena of nature: organic growth, light, water, crystals, and other elements. Nature was no longer captured in an eternal moment through static paintings but interpreted as alive and constantly changing through an art that mirrors its cycles and rhythms. (Matilsky, 1992, p38)

Along with the environmental issues of the time, artists were struggling with the notion of art as a commodity. Works were taken out of the gallery and moved out into nature. In 1969 the film LAND ART was made as a means of introducing the public to the new artistic movement. According to Michael Lailach, Gary Schum made the following statement regarding his film, LAND ART:

The artists of land art sought expressive means going beyond the limitations of traditional painting on canvas. It was no longer the painted picture of a landscape, but rather the landscape itself of the landscape marked off by the artists that became the actual art object...the studio – gallery – collector triangle, within which art had previously been played out, was disrupted. (2007, p5)

Artists were also responding to the increased demand for public art, and using this demand to voice their concerns. A variety of public art programs were initiated during this time, including: the General Services Administration “Art in Public Places Program”, the National Endowment for the Arts public arts program, the Federal Highway Administration’s “Art on the Interstate”, and many state and local public art programs. Many artists were commissioned to create pieces for Federal, state, and local buildings, as well as along highways and other public buildings. Many artists also took it into their own hands to create public works, sometime without a patron or sponsorship. Many times these became the new icons of this particular age. Projects such as “Spiral Jetty” by Robert Smithson, Mill Creek Canyon Earthworks by Herbert Bayer, Sun Tunnels by Nancy Holt, Grand Rapids Project X by Robert Morris, Valley Curtain by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, The Lightning Field by Walter De Maria, Wheatfield – A Confrontation by Agnes Denes, Effigy Tumuli by Michael Heizer, Time

Landscape by Alan Sonfist, and Roden Crater by James Turrell all deal with the land and landscape, yet are considered art, not landscape architectural projects. These projects pointed to the future for the profession and excited the interest of landscape architectural professionals and their eventual clients. Environmental and land art was accepted by a wide audience and called a great deal of attention to the phenomena and to the natural landscape itself.

The environmental issues present in the art world were the same in landscape architecture, and, in fact, the two professions greatly overlapped during this time. Many artists were creating landscapes and many landscape architects were creating art.

Landscape architecture, at the time, was changing drastically. The number of practitioners was increasing, and the variety of fields from which they came was becoming more diverse. These fields still included art, but now also included a variety of scientific and cultural fields: hydrology, geology, ecology, etc. The scope of the profession was also growing to include regional planning, suburban planning and development, regional analysis, etc.

While this time was a transitional period for landscape architecture, landscape architects were looking beyond art for inspiration. They were looking to history: cultural, regional, art, and landscape architectural history, as well as the vast amount of scientific data available. Campbell notes:

But art was not the only source of inspiration...Ancient earthworks provide a template for various projects from Eggborough's industrial landscape to the monumental swirl of Spiral Jetty. The oriental aesthetic is also evident throughout the century, from Naumkeag's Chinese Garden through Noguchi's UNESCO garden to the Taoist geomancy underlying the Garden of Cosmic Speculation. (2006, p9)

Landscape architecture was becoming widely recognized as an independent profession, and the requirements to become a practitioner were increasing, both, in difficulty and in diversity. Artists began to look to landscape architects for their technical expertise, as well as utilizing their design training. Artists and landscape architects were now collaborators. Both fields were looking to a variety of sources for inspiration, including each other.

Landscape architects responded to the work of these artists with works of their own. George Hargraeves began designing new landscapes on the top of landfill sites and designing corporate campuses to resemble the extraction process by which they acquired their wealth, Chevron Geothermal. Richard Haag converted a brown field site in Seattle into a new type of park, and Ian McHarg rescued a 25,000 acre swamp and made it into a habitable and productive new town through proper ecological planning, The Woodlands.

Peter Walker, who was one of the most significant landscape architects of the twentieth century, has been very close to a number of environmental artists, primary among these, environmental artist Carle Andre. In 1977 Andre used a series of fieldstones on a project in Hartford, Connecticut. Peter Walker picked up on that theme and produced a number of projects in which he incorporated rows of fieldstones and rows of solid wood blocks in the landscape to define space and to curtain traffic. Walker also looked to other artistic sources of inspiration, including cultural art. In one particular instance, Peter Walker was working in Thailand and in seeking appropriate form he referred back

some of the paving patterns used in historical buildings and recreated these in the courtyards at an airport in Bangkok. In the courtyards he also used topiary elephants covered with native vines, as well as symbolic pagodas. In this case he was reaching out to local artists to seek a landscape architectural form in a strange environment. This seemed to be very appropriate for this project and set an example for landscape architects from the West working throughout the rest of the world in the future.

As landscape architects responded to artists, many artists responded to landscape architects by creating landscapes of their own. Robert Irwin was named as the landscape designer of the central garden at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, even though he had never previously designed such a large landscape project. He, in turn, hired a number of local landscape architectural firms to assist with the selection of the appropriate plant materials and guidance on the proper installation techniques for that particular site.

Isamu Noguchi was another such artist who endeavored to create works of landscape architecture. One of the most famous sculptors of the twentieth century, he had been doing landscape designs of various sized and scales for most of his career. He designed a waterfront project for New York City in 1923, though not built in New York in 1983, sixty years after it was designed; it was finally implemented on the waterfront in Miami, Florida. Noguchi designed a significant garden for the UNESCO building in Paris after the Second World War. He was also asked to design the Billy Rose Sculpture Garden in Jerusalem. One of the last major projects of his life was the California Scenario in Segerstorm Plaza in Costa Mesa, California. It was entitled

California Scenario because it was a homage to his home state and it was symbolic of the state and what it had become.

One of the reasons for Noguchi's desire to design landscape projects was so that he would have the ability to place individual pieces of his own sculpture into the landscape as he saw fit. He expressed the fact that he had been extremely frustrated in the past by having someone else acquire and place his sculpture in the landscape in a manner which he felt was inappropriate. In some cases he designed sculpture parks, such as in Houston, Texas at the Cullinan Sculpture Garden, where he designed the garden itself, yet none of his work was included in the collection. He was probably one of the most significant artists as landscape architect of the time. One of the problems that he had in contemporary society was that he was not licensed or registered as a landscape architect in any state, therefore he had to hire or work with professional landscape architects in the individual states in order to get his projects constructed, built, or planted in not only the way he wanted done, but in a way which was acceptable to the local regulatory authorities. This was one of the impeding factors for artists designing landscape projects in the contemporary environment. Noguchi designed a very sophisticated narrative in the California Scenario, it personified the geography of California, with the deserts, the mountains, the water bodies, the redwood forests, the agricultural economy, and space industry centered in southern California. It is rarely noted or referred to but is comparable in complexity and sophistication to some of the narrative gardens developed by artists in the mid eighteenth century.

Noguchi was a significant influence on a number of other artists and landscape architects, including Martha Schwartz. She was a young artist who was interested in landscape architecture and enrolled in graduate school to gain her professional credentials. Upon graduation she began responding to competition invitations and by submitting many of her projects for publication. She represented a completely new aspect of landscape architecture in which an artist becomes a landscape architect, and yet continues to produce artistic landscape architectural projects rather than purely functional solutions to specific site problems. Over the years she gained a great deal of recognition, however it is often been necessary for her to comprise some of her more exotic ideas in order to gain implementation and construction. In real life situations, for instance, she was asked to design landscape features on the roof of a parking garage outside the Department of House and Urban Development Building in Washington DC. Because the weight limitations on the roof of the parking garage she designed a series of light weight night lighted overhead canopies. Her original proposal was too brightly colored and when they were illuminated at night they would have caused controversy within the bureaucracy, so it was necessary for her to make the objects completely white so that they were much less noticeable. In one other instance, Martha Schwartz was asked to design a rooftop on an underground parking garage in New York City. The rooftop had a very limited weight restriction therefore her solution consisted of a series of benches throughout the courtyard on the north side of the building. Because the rooftop would not hold the weight of trees she designed the benches in such a way so that individuals sitting on the benches could choose their degree of privacy or

intimacy with others by selecting appropriate seating locations around the curves of the benches. The basic bench forms were borrowed from the forms of embroidery of the French formal gardens and then truncated. Those forms, appropriately, developed from history and from art of another era were fitting for twentieth century New York City. Over the past twenty years she has done a great many residential, institutional, and commercial projects throughout the world. She has a unique vantage point and has produced some of the most artists and dramatic landscape architectural projects in history.

#### 4.1 Conclusion

It can be said that the Environmental Art movement has yet to end. Artists and landscape architects continue to work together, slipping in and out of each other's fields, learning from and inspiring each other. Many artists are now and have been pursuing a degree in landscape architecture, while many landscape architects are striving to get more in touch with their creative side. As the interaction between these two fields continues, so does the competition for commissions. This competition pushes and encourages both fields, and is immensely beneficial to the client, who has the opportunity to choose between an artist and a landscape architect, depending upon the particular demands of the project.

The collaboration between artists and landscape architects is like bringing a new set of eyes to a problem. Each party brings their own particular ideas, preferences, and expertise. The ability to look outside of art and/or landscape architecture for inspiration has opened the door to a vast array of new forms, both functional and aesthetic. The

increase in the design training undertaken by landscape architects has made the profession more sensitive to the needs and demands of the client, as well as the wealth of sources from which to draw inspiration. As with the periods previously discussed, there has been a surge in the literature produced about landscape architecture. Within the profession the amount of theoretical text has increased, encouraging landscape architects to think, not only about the existing means and modes of creating, but also about the potential for innovation: a new creative process, new materials, a new way of using old materials or of producing ideas. The increase in literature has also improved the public's knowledge and understanding of the profession of landscape architecture. Clients are more aware of the variety of approaches possible when addressing a design problem.

Landscape architects need artists for design simulation and idea generation, and artists need landscape architects for their technical expertise and alternative approach to design. It is difficult to determine the next phase or movement in the worlds of art and landscape architecture, however, the continued collaboration between the fields seems to be beneficial to both. Care should be taken not to become too dependent on that partnership, lest landscape architects, once again, become gardeners, devoid of design skill and only able to reproduce that which has gone before based on a rigid set of forms and guidelines.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

“Although landscape design is the most vulnerable of art forms – subject to the cycles of nature, the ravages of time, the whims of climate, economics and fashion – through the twentieth century it has become, as Geoffrey Jellicoe once predicted, the mother of the arts” (Campbell, 2006, p11).

The profession of landscape architecture, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, owed a great deal to the field of art over the past four centuries. Until the eighteenth century gardens were designed in traditional ways by craftsmen who were essentially horticulturalists who know how to grow and move plant material. They usually had no formal training in design and were not able to change design direction when culture and society changed. Therefore they were at a loss when monarchies fell and garden styles changed from very formal to more naturalistic. The only place they thought to go for design guidance was to artists. Therefore, for a period of time in the eighteenth century, artists became landscape designers and they, in turn, did not know where to go so they went back to classical art and tried to construct replicas of famous paintings of the landscape. As visitor walked through their gardens designers wanted them to see one painterly composition after another. These gardens were designed as recreations of famous paintings or pictures and thus were known as “picturesque”. This design through a series of perspectives did not take into account natural ecological patterns, plant growth, development and decay of the vegetation as natural objects,

subject to change. In some ways this perception or approach, probably did more harm to contemporary landscape architecture than any other factor the current professionals inherited from the past. The evils of “foundation planting”, “beautification,” and the superficial perception of landscape design as “making a place pretty” all came from that period of time and that way of thinking by the artists who acted as landscape designers when there was no one else who understood design within the craft or trade itself. On the other hand, there were those interested in gardening that learned from the artists and became landscape designers, of sorts. They, then, in turn, apprenticed or trained another generation of designers who wrote, researched, travel, and advanced the emerging science of landscape design. Much of this took place in England which was visited by Andrew Jackson Downing and by Frederick Law Olmstead, who brought many of these concepts back to 19<sup>th</sup> century America where they became part of early landscape architecture. This was the basic design theory on which the profession was founded in the United States, even though it was flawed and derived from a limited basic view of the landscape. Consequently this is one of the reasons for criticism of the current profession and one of the reasons that the landscape urbanists wish to restructure the profession.

One other consequence of the decision to look to art during the 18<sup>th</sup> century is the necessity for such extensive design education and study in the current landscape architectural curricula in educational programs. There was no formal education in landscape architecture until the first program was begun at Harvard in 1900. In that program, and all other such programs since that time, design has been one of the key

components either in design studios or in design theory classes. Since the average daily work schedule in a professional office requires so little actual design, it seems unnecessary for students to study design in school to such a degree. The fact is, however, that so much of what is done in technology and implementation is based on basic design training and understanding it is vitally important that students and professionals understand, fully, many different aspects of design and design implementation. Because of that intensive design training and exposure in the educational program is one of the major reasons that we have not had to go back more often to art for more assistance in time of change. It is also probably one of the reasons that the return to art in the 1938 to 1958 period was so short and abbreviated. During the period from 1960 to 1990 landscape architects did not go back to art, they interacted with artists as equals and sometimes leaders.

The education of landscape architects as professionals is enabling them to adjust to changing cultures and societies, and to adapt their design to many locations around the world. This comprehension of design and design theory has made it unnecessary to borrow and has made the profession of landscape architecture more relevant and able to respond to change. This would not have been known without a review of the past since this is not a fact which is generally taught or studied in traditional history classes.

Landscape design is a means by which man could express and assert his individuality. Though dependent on the Earth and only a small part of a greater whole, man strives to remain a unique entity.

### 5.1 Future Research

While this thesis incorporates a great deal of literature, it by no means includes it all. There are many aspects of each of the three time periods examined that could be studied in more detail, as well as a more focused study on the impact that each style had on the current profession. Another area for further study is the exact definition of environmental art and the distinctions, if any, made between those works created by artists versus those created by landscape architects. The developing relationship between landscape architecture and art could be investigated, and more concise conclusions regarding the future of landscape architecture as it related to art could be drawn. The ability for landscape architects and artists to successfully collaborate is another aspect of this thesis that could benefit from more research. A detailed definition and explanation of theory as it relates to landscape architecture, as well as the potential benefits from theory being included as a required component of the education that landscape architects receive could be highly profitable to the profession.

### 5.2 Implications for the Profession

In 1999 James Corner attempted to identify the various factors which limited the relevance of landscape architecture as a profession. He stated that while sentimentality and conservatism are two central issues, the twentieth century preoccupation with the ecological status and viability of the planet is just as restrictive. Proponents of the ecological approach, “continue to attend to an objectifiable nature that they believe remains external to culture” (Corner, 1999, p3). This misguided view of ecology as existing outside of cultural constructs, serves as the basis for failure. By not taking the

cultural surroundings into account, environmentalists repair a small portion of the damage while neglecting to even address the human actions that created the damage in the first place. “As with stitching up wounds to the skin that are only recurring symptoms of some large failing the continual patching over of problems is a well-intentioned and praiseworthy effort but one that fails to adequately address their source” (Corner, 1999, p3-4). On the other hand, designing landscapes valued solely on their sentimental and aesthetic attributes stifles the progress of the profession as well. Focusing all of one’s attention on one aspect of the landscape limits the possibilities. Landscape architecture is in the unique position of applying both artistic and scientific methods and approaches to the design and creation of landscapes, by concentrating on one field and neglecting the other, designs only fulfill half of their potential. “Whether a particular project is naturalistic, rectilinear, curvilinear, formal, or informal is irrelevant; what matters is how the form and geometry of a project make sense with regard to the specific issues it is trying to address and the effects it is trying to precipitate” (Corner, 1999, p4).

In his 1983 essay, Creative Risk Taking, Steven Krog wrote about the inherent failures in the design process employed by landscape architects. The current design process is intended to produce vast amounts of information pertaining to the site and users; however, little insight is given to the actual creation of the design. “This is not the fault of the process. It never promised us solutions to our problems – just a means toward their logical scrutiny” (Krog, 1983, p59). This breakdown in the process is

viewed by many designers as an insurmountable obstacle, therefore limiting their creativity to the solely functional and/or aesthetic, devoid of innovation.

Krog suggested that landscape architects abandon the established design process, embrace their place among the fine arts, and seek a means of designing, not only as a form of self expression, but also as a method of communicating. Norman Newton did not agree with Krog's assertion that landscape architecture was a fine art, stating that, "In the fine arts – as in painting or sculpture, for examples – the creator of a work is engaged primarily in solving his own problems – doing what he feels he must get out of his system or explode. The landscape architect, on the other hand, is trying primarily to solve other people's problems' " (Krog, 1983, p60). Krog felt that this classification did a major disservice to both the fine arts, in general, and landscape architecture, in particular.

I believe that for most artists today the situation is almost exactly the opposite of that suggested by Newton; that making art is a quest, a looking for something that artists don't have, can't find, or wish existed. Says Fowle's Daniel Martin, 'You create out of what you lack, not out of what you have.'...What is sought after by the artist cannot be an object, it must be an experience. (1983, p60)

As a new design process Krog suggested that the current process of gathering information and evaluations should not, nor cannot be overlooked, and should be considered a first step. Two dimensional plans and drawings perpetuate the misconception that a visually stimulating plan will produce a "desirable landscape," however finds no alternative form of communication (Krog, 1983, p62).

Landscape architecture must bring new meanings to continue to be relevant. A site must be taken for itself and then beyond to incorporate, not only all the aspects of

self that make it individual, but also those that correspond and/or collide with the world at large. There must be a connection to that which is greater, to the whole, in order to allow the participant the opportunity to “discover special, unknown aspects of (his/her) own perception and understanding” (Krog, 1983, p63).

Landscape architects must look beyond art for appropriate forms. The wide array of artistic, scientific, historic, and cultural information available should be consulted and considered when designing a sight, as well as regional context. With the vast amount of information available the needs of the client and/or the functionality of the site is sometimes lost. These factors should always be taken into consideration, however, they, like art, should not be the sole form determinant. When only one aspect of a site is addressed, be it functionality or aesthetics, the site ceases to perform.

“It will be said, then, on what shall we base our forms? Where shall we find them? And the answer is, in the world which is around you in space, and behind you in time. If you understand it and love it and enjoy it there is your inspiration” (Eckbo, 1950, p11).

APPENDIX A

MARC TREIB INTERVIEW WITH THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE  
FOUNDATION

“If we look at the Donnell garden and compare it or contrast it to the Miller garden, we might ask why both of these might be considered modern gardens? Both of them, I think, modern gardens is their reliance on space. That, although the geometry is different between the Donnell and Miller gardens, that both landscape architects are concerned with the spaces around the house, connecting to the house, and the means that they use to define the spaces, primarily, tree structures, shrubs, and hedges.” Marc Treib.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW WITH MARGARET ROBINETTE

Elizabeth Matlock: How long have you worked for the City of Dallas?

Margaret Robinette: 23 years today.

Matlock: During that time what has been your primary focus, interior or exterior art?

Robinette: Both.

Matlock: In your experience with outdoor public art do you deal mostly with trained artists?

Robinette: I deal with professional artists, they may not have a degree in art, but they make a living selling their art, or have at least sold some of it.

Matlock: In most cases how is the setting for public art established? Is it designed ahead of time and the piece is fit into it or is the setting designed around the piece?

Robinette: Both. We try to get the parties to collaborate. If the artist comes in early enough in the process he/she can work with the architect or landscape architect and they can design the site together to suit both the artwork and the site's purpose and needs. Most artists don't design the site. There are a few who are capable of doing both, but not too many.

Matlock: Have you seen a shift in the last several years in regards to the role of the landscape architect in public art?

Robinette: Yes. Landscape architects are more involved and understand the design process better. They are much more involved with environmental art. It is best if there is collaboration between the artist and the landscape architect because the artist is the creative force and the landscape architect understands how to make a site work.

Matlock: Are more artworks being designed by landscape architects?

Robinette: Landscape architects are more open to incorporating art into their sites. There is more education on using art through journals and newsletters.

Matlock: Are they collaborating with artists more?

Robinette: Some artists' medium and approach work best when collaborating with landscape architects. There is a project right now involving Thomas Balsly and Leni Schwendinger that the Parks Department is working on. It is for the Main Street Park. Leni Schwendinger, the artist, and she is creating a piece based on what is called a prairie pothole. Prairie potholes were the areas in prairies where there was an indentation and these areas filled up with water when it rained and attracted birds and other wildlife for water. I think that's the name that she is going to use, prairie potholes. What she is constructing is a concrete base with bowls all along the top that will fill up with rain. The artificial part is that she is going to include a sprinkler head that will fill the basins up at different times. The water will attract the birds and throughout the day it will evaporate. And it really will be a prairie pothole because the architect has decided that the landscape around it is going to be a prairie, it is going to be filled with grasses.

Matlock: Weren't architects generally the ones that chose the art and how it would be incorporated into the site?

Robinette: Historically, yes. Now there is more of a trend towards integration.

Matlock: Do you think that landscape architects will play an increasingly important role in the art world?

Robinette: They could.

Matlock: Is there anything about environmental art that I should include in my paper?

Robinette: There are several types of environmental art. There are those that impact the environment, some that incorporate the environment, and those that are impacted by the environment. Many environmental artists force the environment into something it would not normally do. I think that they should follow the golden rule that thou shall do no harm.

Matlock: Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Robinette: Landscape architects are influenced by contemporary artists. If there is more collaboration between landscape architects and artists I think that they would come up with something better than if they were working individually.

Matlock: So the sum is greater than the parts.

Robinette: Yes.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Elizabeth Matlock began her college career at Trinity University in San Antonio before transferring to the University of Texas in Austin to complete her bachelor's degree in Fine Art. After graduation she worked for a couple of years while deciding where to begin her master's in landscape architecture. Finally settling upon Lincoln University, Beth set off for Christchurch, New Zealand. She lived and studied in New Zealand for over two years before a family emergency brought her back to the States and the University of Texas in Arlington. While in New Zealand one of her professors, Jacky Bowring, introduced her to the historical connections between the worlds of art and landscape architecture, which ultimately inspired her choice of thesis topic.

Beth's continuing research interests include art and landscape architectural history, as well as the new developments in sustainable design and therapeutic gardens. She is currently employed with a landscape architectural firm based in Austin, Texas, where she has been able to be involved in designing a wide variety of projects including several multi-family developments, commercial sites, a park and trail system, and a retirement community.

In the future Beth hopes to become more involved in the development and design of facilities and communities for the elderly and the infirmed, including hospitals, specifically those utilizing outdoor spaces for therapeutic purposes. As well as continuing her research on the relationship between art and landscape architecture

