
Editor's Introduction

The history of landscape architecture is inseparable from that of literature. Literature serves to document landscapes and the imagery of words, particularly in poetry, describes form, evokes experience, and alludes to meaning. In garden and landscape history we must rely on texts for so little physical evidence survives. Thus the gardens of Alkinoos or Calypso from Homer's *Odyssey*, *The Song of Songs*, Giovanni Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, the *Romance of the Rose* by Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, or Edgar Allen Poe's "The Domain of Arnheim" have been fundamental to our understanding and interpretation of gardens past. Poetry has served as inspiration and critique, witness Richard Payne Knight's, "The Landscape, A Didactic Poem." There have also been poet designers who expressed themselves in the media of words and landscape, often blurring the distinctions between them. Yuan Mei, Alexander Pope, and Ian Hamilton Finlay were all successful at this blending. There are designs that are gardens of poetry, such as *kyoku-sui-no-yen*, Japanese poetry competitions where poems were composed and floated down a water channel in the garden, and of course there are designers whose work is poetic. In this issue we highlight the work of three landscape architects/poets. Ian McHarg's historic contribution lies not only in his ideas, work, and teaching, but as the author of *Design With Nature*, one of the profession's seminal documents. In recent years he has turned his hand to poetry, where we can read another expression of his lifelong

concerns and passions. Grant Jones has been writing poetry much of his life. The Northwest sensibility he brings to the creation of places, his honed understanding of their processes, and the subtleties of meaning so apparent in his design work are evident in his poetry as well. Joni Palmer at Iowa State University has been teaching a course entitled "Reading and Writing the Land." *Landscape Journal* encouraged these authors to contribute their poetry, but it is important to note that like more conventional submissions, they were sent out for a blind refereed review. I hope their publication encourages more landscape architects to both read and write poetry.

Since 1915, landscape architects have sojourned to Rome as Fellows of the American Academy. In the early years fellows spent three years in residence, although their terms are shorter now. For all participants the unique physical, social, and cultural setting of the Academy has been a stimulating, restorative, and often transformative life experience. Unfortunately, beyond the community of the Academy, few people see or read the work of fellows. Beginning in this issue, *Landscape Journal* will publish portfolios of the work of Rome Prize winners in landscape architecture. (Frederick Steiner was a 1998 recipient in Historic Preservation and Conservation, but is surely part of the

landscape architecture community.) The insightful drawings of Mary Margaret Jones and Elise Brewster are important reminders of the central role of drawing, not only to communicate ideas and intentions, but as an exploratory medium, a method of design research.

In addition to poetry, drawing, and photography, other methods of research are represented in this issue: historical, applied, cross-cultural. Mark Francis's "Case Study Methodology for Landscape Architecture" is the result of work commissioned by the Landscape Architecture Foundation to encourage and codify such documentation for the profession. At the formative stage of this important endeavor it is critical that the proposed method is disseminated. *Landscape Journal* is pleased to act as the forum for this most essential activity that is sure to benefit the landscape architecture profession and further expand our base of knowledge.

Just before this issue was going to press we heard of the death of Ian McHarg. In the recent past we have also lost Garrett Eckbo and Hideo Sasaki. An incomparable generation of landscape architects is passing. McHarg's larger than life persona, presence in the public arena, and passionate exposition of his ideas puts all landscape architects in his debt. Historians will sort out his contributions, but for now I have asked Fritz Steiner if he would offer a few words, which follow. The eulogies, accolades, and reminiscences have only begun. But perhaps the best tribute is Ian in his own words. The selection of his poems in this issue were among his most recent thoughts. As always he says it best himself.

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