

Museum

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Parks and gardens of delight

museum

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No. 169 (No. 1, 1991)



***Garden of Earthly Delight (detail),
by Hieronymus Bosch.***

Courtesy of El Prado Museum, Madrid

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'The smallest patch of green to arrest the monotony of asphalt and concrete is as important to the value of real estate as streets, sewers and convenient shopping.'

James Felt, Chairperson, New York City Planning Commission.

Robert Burle Marx, landscape architect, recalling the plethora of flora in the first garden he designed: 'I did a salad, but I didn't do a garden.'

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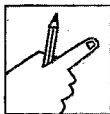
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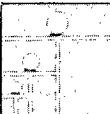
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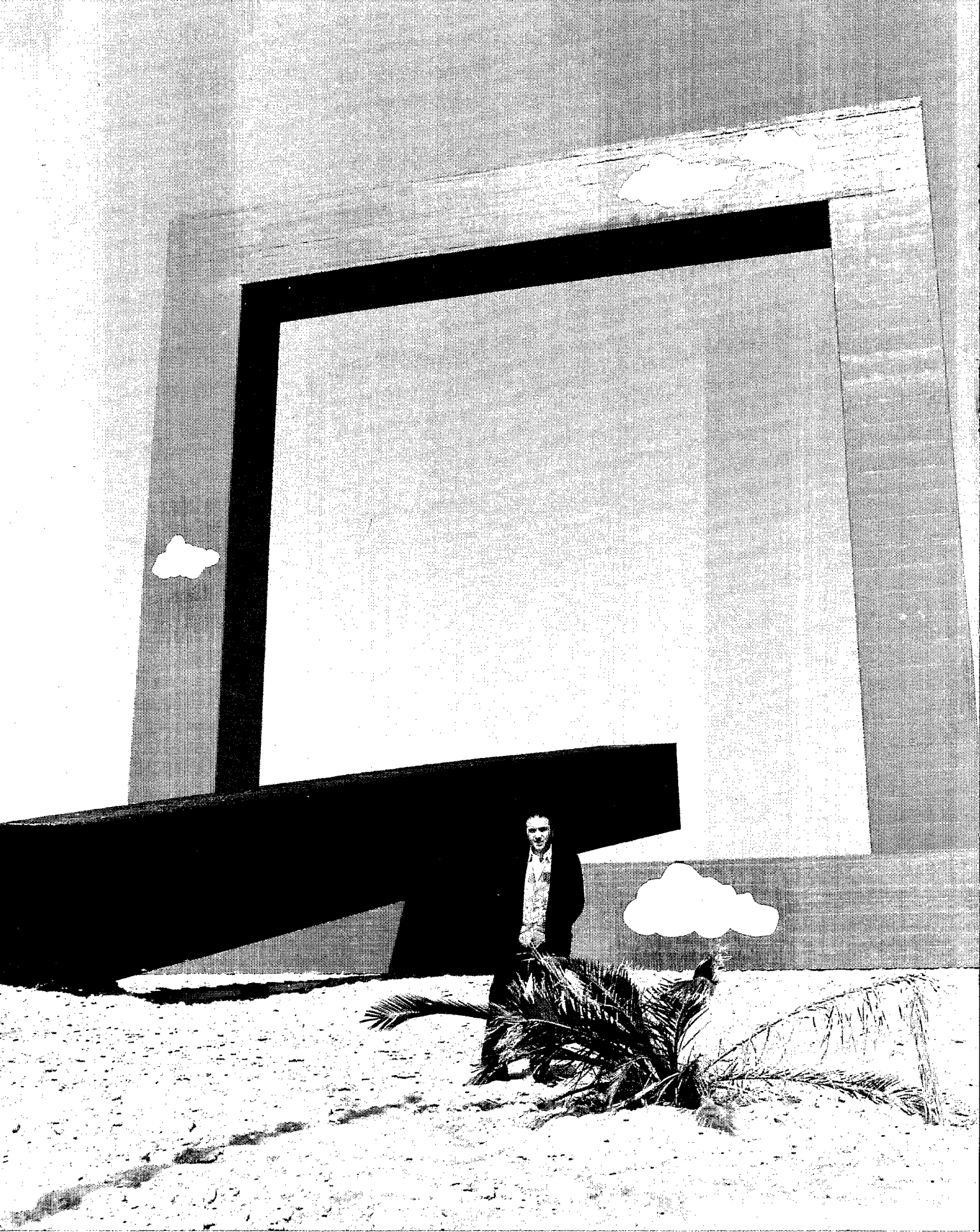
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From the Editor

*'If you want
to be happy for life . . .'*

As we were preparing this issue of *Museum*, a series of terrible storms ravaged Europe. Eighty-four people were killed and millions of trees were uprooted, 10 million in the Federal Republic of Germany and 8 million in France, for example.

In addition to mourning the human dead, people felt and expressed a real sense of loss about the devastated vegetation. For a few days at least, conversation brimmed with talk of the damage done to and by nature, and particularly (we noticed) with saddened reminiscences about favourite trees, now gone forever and whose replacements will take decades to reach full stature.

Sense of loss, saddened reminiscences . . . there was something else in the conversations too, more difficult to put a finger on, a feeling somewhere between awe and exhilaration. 'Exhilaration' over unleashed nature that had wrought so much havoc? It may seem strange, even contradictory, but yes, there it was. As one Frenchwoman said to a reporter: 'It's been going on for a week now and I'm . . . really . . . I'm really quite excited by it!'

Fear and admiration: these two apparently opposed attitudes have always characterized human reaction to raw nature. And the park or garden has always been—in psychological and aesthetic as well as physical terms—an arena in which humanity has endeavoured at one and the same time to tame nature and to expose itself to nature's unpredictable ways, our planet summarized in a few hectares or even a few square metres. Here the foreseeable and the unexpected meld into a single intention and experience. As the proverb says: 'Many things that grow in a garden were never sown there.'

The park and garden are, in addition, meeting places of tranquillity and violence, continuity and change, order and disorder—many of the contradictory qualities of human beings whether taken singly or together. No wonder they attract us as a mirror would, and that—like a mirror—they prompt and enable us to discover in ourselves and in the world around us feelings and phenomena we had not previously noticed or suspected. Invitations to reverence, communion, mystery and wonderment as well as discovery, they have often been thought to be endowed with magic, even divine, powers.

In our time, their power is the more necessary since the human striving to master nature encroaches more and more every day on what green spaces are left in our cities and on what undeveloped stretches of field and forest remain in our countryside. In this utilitarian age they are indispensable precisely because they are non-utilitarian: they are not, strictly speaking (and with exceptions, of course), agricultural. It is symbolic that the first gardens, which are thought to have appeared some 5,000 years ago in Mesopotamia when the palm tree had become acclimatized to that region, were meant not to grow food but to provide ornamental pleasure. Gratuitous, but as necessary as art; indeed, a kind of art.

This issue of *Museum* lays no claim to comprehensive coverage of major kinds and problems of parks and gardens around the world. We offer, rather, a broadly international selection of places that are attractive, evocative and/or provocative, but not necessarily well known outside their home territory. Each has its own story, particularities and museography-related approaches to such questions as conservation, restoration, visitor reception, education, roles in society, and so on. All join, however, in holding out to us a prospect of delight, summed up in another proverb:

If you want to be happy for a month, get married;
If you want to be happy for a year, butcher your sheep;
If you want to be happy for life, plant a garden.

Antonio Presti with Tano Festa's
Monumento per un poeta morto.
(see pages 31-33.)

Parks and gardens en route for the third millennium (with a glance backwards)

Until the end of the seventeenth century, parks and gardens in towns or in their surroundings were built by rulers, aristocrats and religious dignitaries. The parks served purposes of representation, delight, hunting, riding, enjoyment of a healthy environment and other ends.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century townspeople started to build urban parks and gardens in order to meet their own requirements, for example H. Nebbien's 100-hectare Folksgarten in Budapest. These new parks served as open spaces—'to see and be seen'—for entertainment, riding, coach-driving, strolling and communal social life proffered by the ensemble of natural and artificial elements very carefully composed, taking aesthetic qualities into consideration.

In the twentieth century the coaches of aristocrats and rich burghers and the splendid horsemen and horsewomen gradually disappeared from public parks. The walkways were flooded—especially on holidays—by the inhabitants of towns looking for leisure and entertainment. The demand for 'seeing and being seen' was still alive. When, however, many middle-class women looked for and found employment, urban parks and their paths gradually ceased to be places for seeing and being seen.

From the 1950s and 1960s, in response to new needs, 'green projects' were created to serve sports, recreation and active leisure.

It has now become a major and comprehensive goal to organize a coherent system of green spaces from the welter of urban parks, gardens and forests. In addition to maintaining and increasing the aesthetic qualities—in the interest of city-dwellers—advantageous ecological and atmospheric measures have been enacted and enforced.

In my view, public parks and gardens will have a much more significant role in the twenty-first century than they

have had up to the present. The inhabitants of cities and park/garden professionals will have to determine jointly the new functions and aesthetic composition principles of the public parks and green spaces of the coming century.

I am convinced that in the third millennium people will, somatically and psychologically, be able to create an environment offering welfare and delight, whose advantageous conditions will be greatly contributed to by parks, gardens and city resorts built and maintained up to modern standards, effective in both the ecological and the aesthetic sense.

On behalf of our profession, I am honoured—even moved—to think that *Museum* would suggest, and that the magazine's editorial Advisory Board would agree, to devote a special number to 'Parks and Gardens of Delight'. Thank you!

I should like to seize this opportunity to extend my greetings to *Museum* readers on behalf of IFLA and to ask them to support the highly motivated representatives of our profession in the interest of the (mostly city-dwelling) people of the next century so that we can continue to serve our profession effectively.

Dr Mihaly Möcsényi
President
International Federation
of Landscape Architects (IFLA)

Reverence and neglect

Since its publication in 1982, the Florence Charter has been warmly received in a considerable number of countries. It has drawn attention to a discipline hitherto regarded as a minor art. After the General Assembly, held in Rome in 1981, unanimously recognized that historical gardens should be considered as monuments, it became necessary, having regard to the special characteristics, materials and elements that go to make up a garden, to lay down common bases for the restoration of these monuments covering, in the first instance, the standards to be established and, secondly, the technical disciplines involved in such work. The reverence that historical gardens inspire in us and the state of neglect in which they have been left for years meant that an energetic appeal had to be made—one that would have an impact on public opinion—in a document backed by the prestige and responsible attitude of ICOMOS.

During this period we have seen the wide circulation that the Florence Charter has enjoyed; it has been translated into more than nine languages and has been referred to in many books, articles and publications and at all congresses and seminars on the restoration of historical gardens held during the past few years.

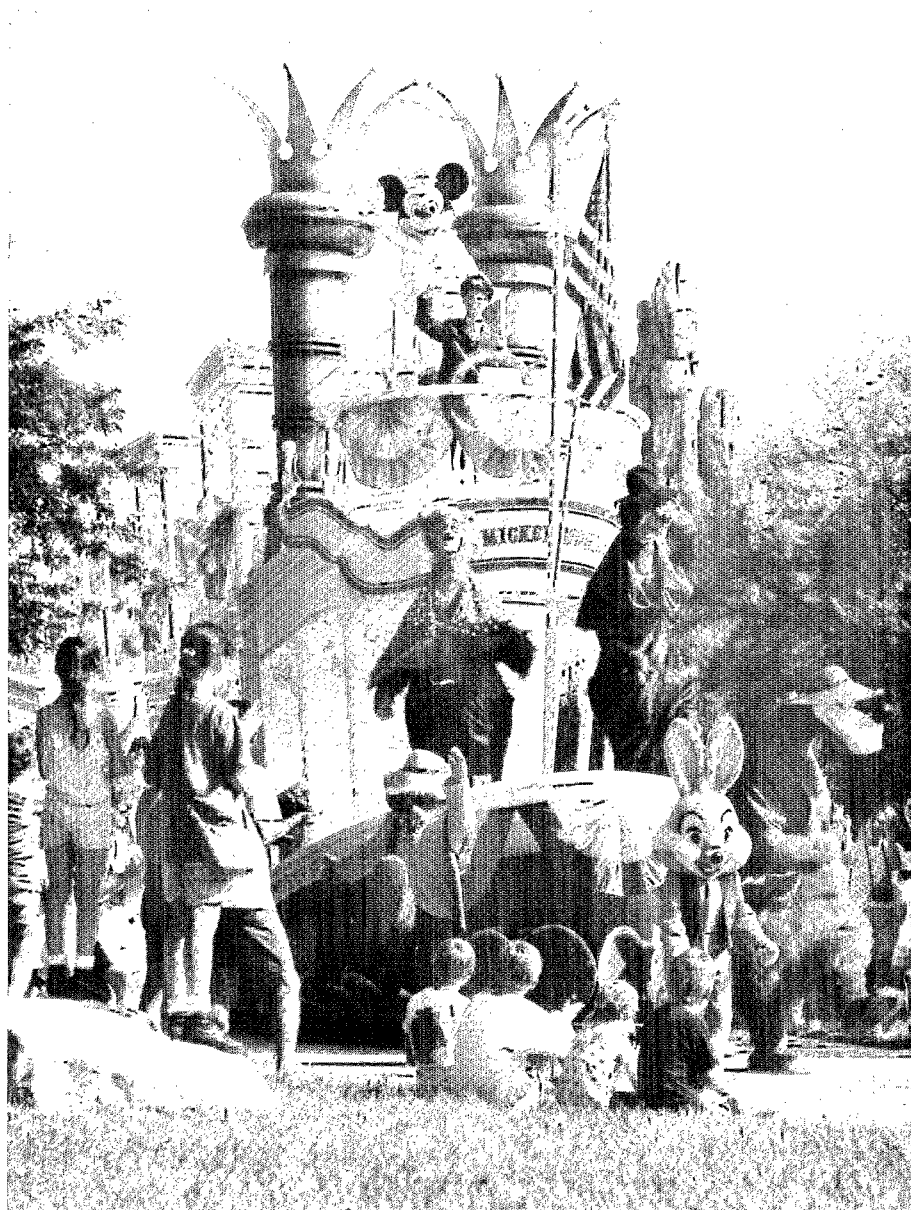
It has also heightened the awareness of both public administrations, since it calls for guarantees and joint agreements in restoration projects, and of the universities which have begun to include special study courses in the different disciplines involved in the work of restoring historical gardens.

Carmen Añon Feliú
President
International Committee of Historic
Gardens and Sites
(ICOMOS-IFLA)

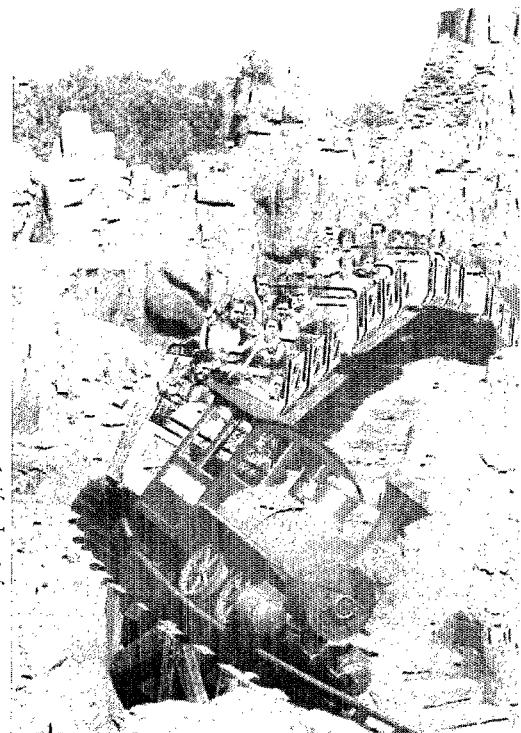
'Disneyfication'?

Some pros and cons of theme parks

The rapid spread of theme parks in some parts of the world pinpoints serious issues, of method and content, for museum professionals and others concerned by museums. We are, therefore, pleased to present in this number of *Museum* two informed and thoughtful, but certainly not identical, points of view about major questions raised by these dizzyingly popular places of leisure.



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© The Walt Disney Company, 1986

Big Thunder Mountain Railroad at Walt Disney World.

The Disney Character Hit Parade at Walt Disney World.

'Never Land' or Tomorrowland?

Margaret J. King *Cultural analyst in American studies and popular culture; did research at the East-West Center and Japan; served as Development Director of the Please Touch Museum in Philadelphia. Margaret King now teaches at Thomas Jefferson University. She is at work on a book on theme parks in the United States and abroad.*

'What is Never Land? A quite small island, very crammed, with hardly any space between one adventure and another.'

James Barrie, *Peter Pan*, 1904.

James Barrie's thumbnail sketch of Never Land in the turn-of-the-century novel written about the time Walt Disney was born gave an unintentional but quite faithful preview—an operational definition—of the current yet enduring mode of today's theme park.

The Disney parks, Disneyland in California and Walt Disney World, Disney-MGM Studios, and the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow (EPCOT) Centre in Florida, draw more visitors annually, well over 40 million, than any other American—and probably international—attraction. (Tokyo Disneyland draws another 10 million.)¹ The direct or indirect competitors include: scores of national shrines, capital cities, sports events, historic properties and museums. Compare, also, the average North American museum visit of fifty minutes to the eight hours spent on an average day in the Disney domains. The parks receive from 25,000 to 150,000 guests a day, and recently Walt Disney World's gates were forced to close in mid-morning due to capacity crowds—the dream of many a museum manager!

For these reasons alone, theme parks may properly be considered 'total destination resorts' without equal. More

important, however, besides having redefined amusement parks, Disney and his worldwide imitators are unavoidably setting the tone for the museum world. This is not surprising as there has been no more immediately successful or more 'global' cross-cultural and inter-artistic (all-encompassing) art form in human history. The bloodlines of the theme park are old and venerable: theatre, science and trade exposition, history park, world's fair, as well as the museum itself, especially the science museum and heritage park.

Theme parks serve as contemporary museums and history parks, fulfilling even better than museums their mandate 'to endow knowledge, incite pleasure, and stimulate curiosity', according to the 1984 Commission on Museums for a New Century. Through the device of 'theming' and its shorthand stylizations of person, place and thing, an archive of collective memory and belief, symbol and archetype has emerged. This is the 'bank' of popular culture from which much interest has been earned, both inside and beyond the business of entertainment. Museums of every kind can effectively draw on this account to prepare for the twenty-first century.

Although often considered simply a form of highly successful mass entertainment, the theme park (or atmospheric park, as it has also been called) has generated an ever-widening circle of influence, stretching from town planning and historic preservation to architecture, mall design and merchandising to video- and computer-assisted education, home and office decor, exhibit design, audience survey and crowd management. Inspired by inventive applications of technology and the use of 'themed' motifs in decor, the extension of set design, and flights of fancy along archetypal routes in sym-

bolic architecture, the 'Disney effect' is making itself seen and felt across the cultural board and across the globe. Growing up and out of its original role in popular culture, theme parks have matured and gained stature as the eager attention of marketing, planning and communications specialists has gradually moved in to focus on a diversity of their features.

What can museums learn?

What can museums learn from theme parks? This is a question about the dynamics of and between education, entertainment and acculturation. What are the cross-cultural effects taking place in the 'translation' of theme parks and their technologies across national borders? The central issues are: What do theme parks do, and why have they been so enormously successful? What might they have to offer the rest of the world—the real world outside their gates—and in which particular spheres of interest?

An appreciation of how various publics are attracted, involved and educated by theme parks, based on the application of theming to knowledge complexes, is generic to the innovative connections being made between entertainment and museology. These parallel the problematic cross-cultural encounters between formal and informal education addressed in the work of George MacDonald and Stephen Alsford at the recently opened Canadian Museum of Civilization, a prime example of a new-age museum. The great and gathering waves of world tourism, trade and migration lend an urgency and immediacy to understanding these questions never before felt.

These emerging integrations offer exciting new opportunities and directions for museums of all stripes and mandates in the coming century. At the same time, they represent an intellectual trend of growing importance in the world at large: the creative synthesis (or reunification) of popular with elite culture in myriad motifs, subjects and styles. As a case study, theme parks, rooted in the Californian and Florida prototypes, are also proposing some solutions, or problem-solving frameworks, for some of the central concerns of modern civilization, both Western and international.

Even so, it continues to be a point of pride with many American intellectuals, whose shock-troops are so often self-selected into the ranks of museum

management, that they have never (and refuse to) set foot in any of these places. This reflects a central source of tension in museums: the issues between the old guard cultural elite and the marketing perspective of the newer guard.

The director of an ethnographic museum recently reported to me that he visited the Bishop Museum of Ethnology in Honolulu while he shunned the Polynesian Culture Center theme park, the largest single attraction in the islands and the main source of popular impressions and beliefs about Polynesia. He returned home without ever experiencing the most important source of ideas on his museum's subject area! Analysing the intellectual underpinnings of both impulses has great potential for mediating this conflict, while holding out the promise to carry forward the whole enterprise of interpretation parks. Without some way of integrating these views, we are likely to see one of two extremes: either the perpetuation of museums as static, lifeless and forbidding places with a falling level of public attention, or as sales-oriented storefronts whose appeal runs in sporadic bursts without providing experiences of enduring quality.

There also needs to be further exploration of the issue of authenticity in the presentation of peoples, places, eras and artefacts. Romanticized or fictionalized presentation, or 'evocation', as I like to call it, has long enjoyed a revered place in the arts of the novel, play, poem, painting and film; it deserves a re-evaluation as an effective approach for historical and cultural interpretation.

In a recent essay, historian Richard Snow, managing editor of *American Heritage*, called Disney's *Main Street U.S.A.* 'a triumph of historical imagination'. Moving toward the same aesthetics of engagement are the surrogate artefacts that can be handled by the museum-goer in hands-on and interactive exhibits, or shared between institutions on laser-disc or as holograms—favoured over the precious, fragile or irreplaceable originals in the conventional static hands-off exhibit. Disney's sense of creative engagement, of innovation and of delight has had much to do with setting these wheels in motion.

Innovating on a popular-culture stage rather than in an avant-garde studio, the Disney 'imagineers' have been prime instigators in researching and developing concepts in this magical terrain between art and science. Examples are the arts of 'audioanimatronics', applications of computers

1. A 1987 survey of the French population indicated that 65 per cent plan to visit Eurodisneyland following its 1992 opening, a much higher percentage than even the American parks attract.

to problems in communication and exhibition, new uses of video-disc, electronics, and fibre optics, the remaking of historic artefacts by advanced engineering, the melding of space-age with neotraditional forms and functions, and the future-planning orientation of all park features. This experimentation has a very human dimension as well. The Walt Disney Seminars firm is a prominent player in management consulting, an 'excellence' company at the forefront of training hotel, hospital and museum executives as well as frontline workers in a variety of other service industries.

In this vein is EPCOT (Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow) at Walt Disney World in Florida. Originally planned as a residential community of 20,000, EPCOT combined some of the most advanced thinking in consumer science and ergonomics. As Architect Peter Blake remarked: 'Not even Le Corbusier at his brashest ever proposed anything so daring.'² By their interest in technology and approaches to education as a kind of enrichment available to everyone, the theme parks are probably closest to the evolutionary scale of public parks to the science museum or centre: for example, the Exploratorium in San Francisco.³ They are, on the other side, a relative of art museum and history park. It is this multi-relationship heritage that makes them such fascinating places, for they are survivors as well as progenitors, both a curious vanishing point and a vital wellspring for our beliefs and the images of those beliefs.

Ready for the next century?

Everywhere there is a great need for effective and efficient ways to organize and process information. The knowledge clusters in Disney exhibits such as science (*Living Seas, The Land, World of Motion*), and communications (*Communicore*), and the new Wonders of Life Pavilion, send out a tactile, visual and kinetic message about recent science information—as does, in a very effective manner, the monorail, *Universe of Energy* and *Space Mountain*. In the wake of the 'Disneyfication' of American (and international) public places come the pressures on museums, such as the Boston Museum of Science, to mount increasingly extravagant blockbusters, simply to keep pace with the likes of EPCOT. This pressure mirrors the tension between purist and consolidationist.

Theme parks offer a kind of stability in a world where change has become the rule, not the exception—and where the pace of change has accelerated at mind-bending rates. In the theme park, historical and cultural archetypes are set in place as a framework of reassurance, creating a zone safe from the barrage of change. Vital to our mental health is coping with the great *terra incognita* of the future (including the near future). Museums are taking their cue here, as well, from Disney's response in a form of subconscious but effective change management.

The wide acceptance and support of Disney's lands is an indication that they are connecting on too many levels and at too many points to be a mere diversion. We all feel to some extent like aliens in our own age and country. Theme parks and museums alike serve as stabilizers in the mad flux of modern change. As the future creeps up on us, it is interesting to note, certain features must in fact be updated: therefore, *Flight to the Moon* (Disneyland) became *Mission to Mars* after the moon landing became history, and *The House of the Future* in Tomorrowland closed ten years after its debut in 1957, when that future started to look too much like today.

The Disneyland experience is one that continues to influence much else in American and (with Tokyo and EuroDisneyland) international life, including the look and feel of our cities, public places and learning environments. Already, heritage parks are a national priority in the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and Japan (with the Little World Museum of Mankind at Nagoya, for example). The Ubersee Museum is developing projects in developing countries, and the Netherlands' Tropenmuseum is setting the tone for museums of 'cultural understanding'. The contemporary grand tour around the global village is a procession from theme park to theme park, while the Jason Project links museum to museum by satellite network. This new globalization of theming along with the integration of television into every aspect of daily life, is the backdrop against which all other attractions must be plotted. Given this premise, there is no practical sense in talking about museum-going, formal education, government programmes, or any other communication-rich institution as separate from popular culture or its demands and effects.

The 1989 Museum of the Future conference in Barcelona, anticipating

the 1992 Olympics, evoked the image of the twenty-first century museum as a vital hybrid of museum and theme park. Despite the assured inevitability of this image, there are still many museum managers who are not ready for the next century, whose response is shock and bewilderment in the face of an institution that is probably changing faster than any other. Museums are moving, some with alacrity, some with alarm, from the private club and cloister of the eighteenth century to the sleek public dynamo of the twentieth and twenty-first. It is an exhilarating ride to be on, and should be taken by everyone interested in the museum of tomorrow with an open mind—and notebook. ■

2. Peter Blake, in *Architectural Forum*, June, 1972, p. 28.

3. See *Museum*, No. 163.—Ed.

Love your machines

Neil Postman

The following remarks are excerpted from a keynote address delivered to the fifteenth General Conference of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in The Hague in August 1989. One definition of Dr Postman, who is from the United States, might be 'controversial thinker'.

In the case of America, which is the place I know best, we have a society that . . . most certainly can be improved by a museum. What kinds of museums does it need? Let us take a look at what is perhaps America's most popular museum—the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow, popularly known as the EPCOT Center in Orlando, Florida. I assume I do not have to justify my calling it a museum. Like Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia, EPCOT is an attempt to create a living portrait of what it means to be human in a particular time and place. It is, so to speak, the world's largest animated diorama.

Unlike Disney World, which is located adjacent to it, EPCOT is not intended to be merely an amusement park. Like all great museums of the world, EPCOT wants to fascinate and enthrall, but it clearly has an educational agenda, and has had one from its beginning. It wants to tell part of the story of human intelligence and creativity, and wishes its visitors to leave feeling inspired *and* instructed. If any or you have visited EPCOT, you may be thinking that this dual purpose is not quite achieved, that EPCOT is surely more amusement park than museum, and I would not dispute you. A few years ago, I was one of thirty consultants brought to Orlando by EPCOT's directors, who wanted us to make recommendations to enhance EPCOT's educational functions. Indeed, it is worth remarking that the consultants were told many times that it was never Walt Disney's intention to create in EPCOT one more of his amusement parks. This

was, in fact, to be his greatest monument—a museum celebrating the possibilities of humanity's future. The fact that EPCOT has strayed from that intention is why the consultants had been summoned.

'Technology über alles'

But from my point of view, the task was hopeless. The problem is not that EPCOT has become more amusement park than museum; the problem is that EPCOT is a museum providing a mistimed truth to a people in desperate need of moral and civic guidance. It is like trying to enlighten a miser by putting forward the ideal that a penny saved is a penny earned. The miser already knows this; indeed lives by that philosophy. He will learn nothing from your restating it. What the miser needs to consider is something along the lines of the Robert Herrick poem that begins, 'Gather ye rosebuds while ye may'. To quote André Gide. 'That education is best which goes counter to you.' He meant we learn by contrast and comparison, not by redundancy and confirmation.

The theme of EPCOT is 'Technology *über alles*'. In every exhibit, in every conceivable way, EPCOT proclaims that paradise is to be achieved through technological progress, and only through technological progress. The message includes the idea that new is better than old, that fast is better than slow, that simple is better than complex, and if they are not, we must change our definition of 'better'. To the question, 'What will it mean to be a human being in the future?', EPCOT answers, 'You will find fulfilment in loving your machines, as people once loved their God, their community or their family.' Of course, people who flock to EPCOT warm to this message, as a miser will warm to being told that a penny saved is a penny earned. But they will learn nothing from it.

To be sure, there certainly are places

in the world where the advice to seek salvation in technology may be useful. I have visited a few such places in my travels, and have thought that a large dose of EPCOT's philosophy would go a long way in eliminating some unnecessary inconvenience and misery. Indeed, in America itself this philosophy was inspiring and useful in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It helped us to build a new colossus. It gave us confidence and wealth and vitality and power. But for a society that has now totally committed itself to the idea that technology is divine, there couldn't be a more mistimed vision of the future than this. What can EPCOT teach Americans, or inspire us to think? We have already organized our society to accommodate every possible technological innovation. We have deliriously, willingly, mindlessly ignored all the consequences of our actions. And have, because technology seemed to require it, turned our backs on religion, family, children, history and education. ■

The gardens of paradise of Islam

Much of Islamic art has been given over to depicting nature, particularly as composed and arranged in the form of gardens. At the end of 1989 and the beginning of 1990, the Louvre revealed the wonderful variety of these forms of expression in an exhibition entitled Arabesques and Gardens of Paradise. Katerina Delouka, an intern with Museum, visited it for our readers.

In the artistic vocabulary of the Islamic world, nature is a preponderant source of decorative inspiration, keeping alive in people's minds memories of the splendour of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. The great royal parks of Sassanid Iran were called *firdaws* (paradises) and it is no accident that the two religions born in one of the most arid parts of the world should have imagined paradise as a luxuriant garden (for Christians it was the point of departure, whereas for Muslims it is their destination). Yet another legacy are the patios

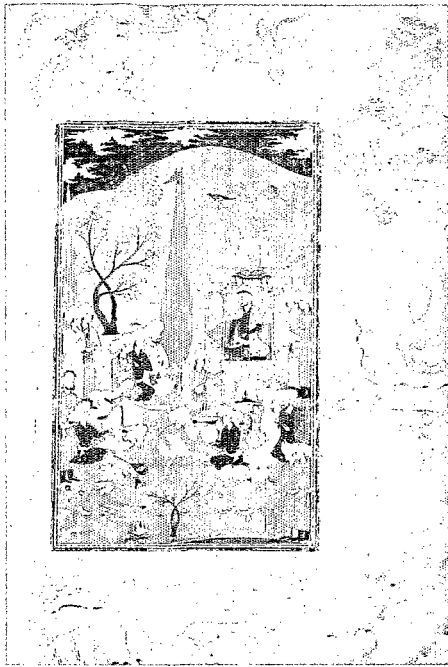
of Spanish houses and the little courtyards in the humblest of oriental dwellings, adorned with a fountain and a few plants, where anything may be used as a receptacle to put them in.

How does Islamic art depict nature? This, broadly, was the question that the Louvre exhibition was trying to answer. In order to do so, it presented examples of the naturalist art that spread right along the great crescent extending from India to Spain from the eighth to the eighteenth century of our era (and continued thereafter in other forms). A wide, indeed astonishing, range of techniques and materials was represented in the exhibition—ceramics, metalwork, jade, enamelled glass, ivory, wood and textiles, and of course carpets. Why 'of course'? The point is that nature in the Islamic tradition, perhaps more than anywhere else and more than ever before, was to become the symbol of the rich variety of life. By contrast with an often bleak landscape,

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Animals—here a peacock—are often treated with gentle humour. (Iznik, Turkey, second quarter of the sixteenth century. Musée du Louvre, Paris.)



Princely reception in a landscape. (Iran, beginning of the seventeenth century. Musée du Louvre, Paris.)


Nature—the perfect context for human activity, be it hunting, amorous day-dreaming or the quest for the absolute. (Iznik, Turkey, beginning of the seventeenth century. Musée de la Renaissance, Ecouen.)

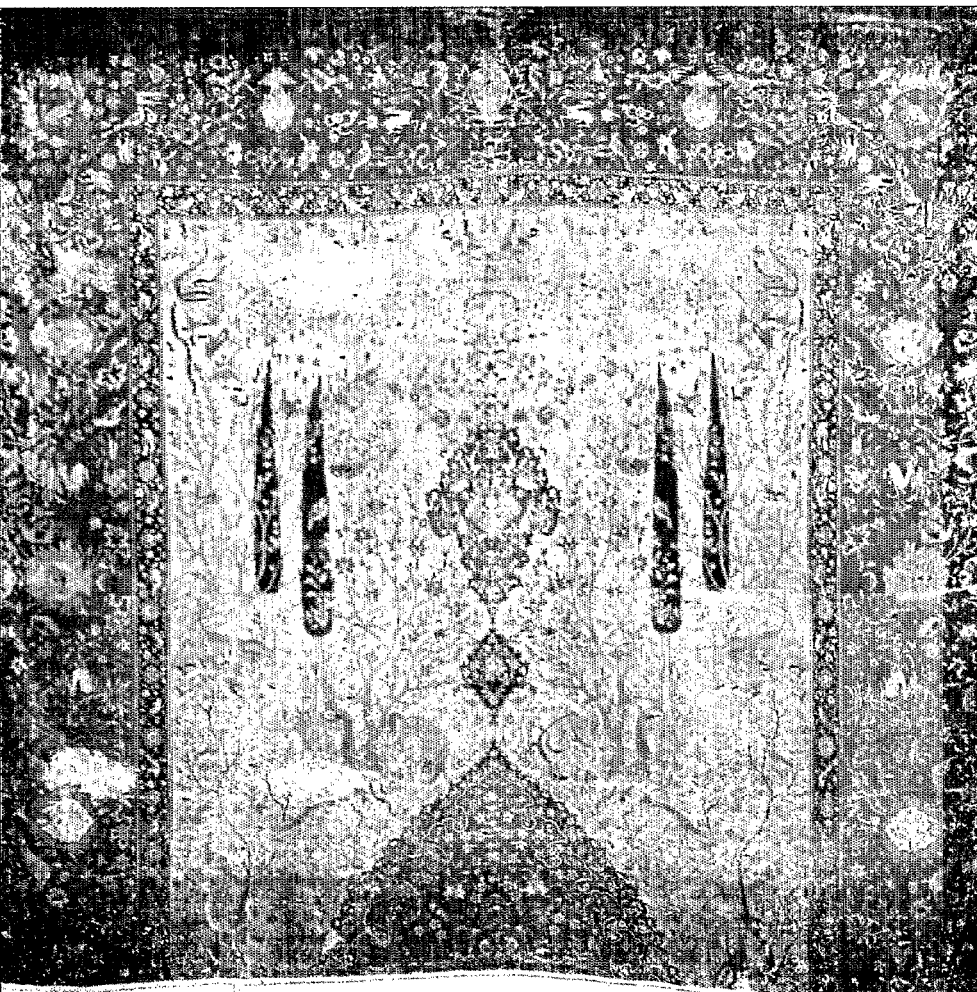


carpets were a way of creating an interior garden inside houses or tents.

Nature, then, is omnipresent in Islamic art and reflects a certain unity in the conception of art even if it is represented very differently according to the various styles, traditions, periods and countries. This unity and diversity intermingle in a process of creation ranging from the most simple motif taken directly from real life (the palm frond, for example) to the most symbolic representation (the garden, hence paradise), from the natural to the stylized, both within strict patterns (like the diamond motif) and in more flowing—if complex—compositions (floral designs, for instance) which enable the artist to give freer rein to the imagination. Animal figures, even when stylized, are treated with a keen sense of movement and, very often, humour and gentleness.

The scenes depicted became more complicated as nature became the subject of scientific study, and their functions, both private and public, were also to undergo change. Nature thus became the accomplice of amorous day-dreaming, the companion in hunting parties or the ornamental backdrop to sumptuous banquets.

The complex representations of nature may also be an allusion, not to say a hymn, to spiritual, religious and even mystical life. Animals like the sphinx and the phoenix and flowers like the rosette become emblems charged with esoteric meaning. All these elements, taken together, go towards creating a garden of paradise where calm and peaceful joy prevail. Nature becomes an ideal refuge for the soul in search of the absolute. 



Carpets—a way of creating an interior garden. (Tabriz, Iran (?), between 1524 and 1576. Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.)

The gardens of Eastern Europe

Patrick Bowe



Potlogi Palace, Bucharest, Romania. The dappled shadows thrown by the vine-wreathed cast-iron pergola.

Readers are now invited to put on a pair of stout shoes for a stroll in time and space through some remarkable gardens of Eastern Europe, almost all little known beyond their countries' frontiers, or even, in some cases, outside their own locality. Our leader is the Irish architect and garden designer Patrick Bowe who has been consulted on and helped restore gardens in Ireland and the United Kingdom, written extensively on historic and other gardens and lectured on gardens in France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, England and Kashmir. When they become footsore, readers may take a seat and admire the photographs of Eastern European gardens taken by Margaret Rutherford Jay in 1924 (the colour was added later, perhaps by the photographer herself), and published here for the first time.

Eastern Europe has always formed the gateway between East and West. In its gardens, for example, the patterns of Islamic design are overlaid on more conventional European gardening traditions. The first solid evidence of ornamental gardening in the region, however, lies in the excavated ruins of classical Roman villas. The chain of great villas, including that of Diocletian at Split, which lies along the Adriatic coast of Yugoslavia, contains terraces, courtyards, formal pools, mosaics and other garden fragments which enable us to reconstruct their gardens' design. Similar remains survive in the excavated towns of Oescus and Nicopolis ad Istrum in Bulgaria.

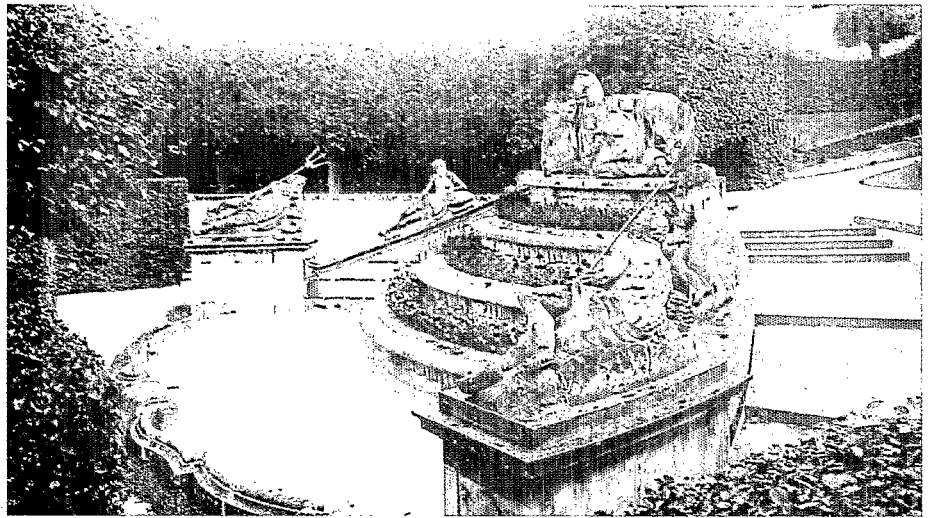
After the collapse of the Roman Empire, classical gardening traditions were kept alive only in Serbia and Macedonia (now part of southern Yugoslavia) which were then under the influence of the Byzantine Empire. By

the more settled eleventh and twelfth centuries, monks from Western Europe were migrating eastwards, building monasteries and creating small cloister gardens of geometric layout filled with vegetables, fruit, herbs, medicinal plants and a scattering of flowers. Such gardens are frequently represented in the background of medieval altarpieces in Hungary and Poland, and in the painted murals on monastery walls in Romania and Bulgaria. Few original layouts actually survive. However, the Franciscan monastery (1317) at Dubrovnik guards within its cloister an exceptional design of a central path, flanked by rows of stone benches and terminated by a fountain, which is quite different from the usual cross-walk plan.

Turkish innovations

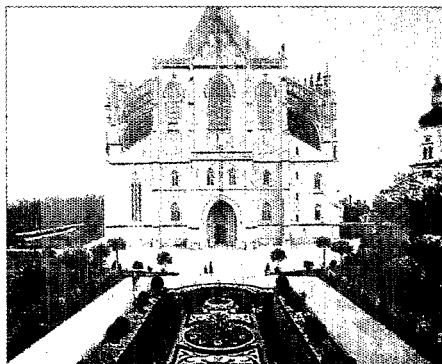
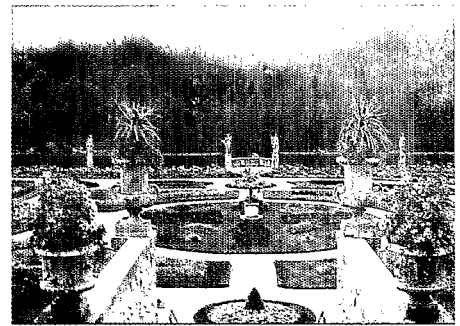
The peaceable pursuit of gardening was interrupted in 1242 by the Mongolian invasion of the eastern part of the region. The later expansion of the Ottoman Empire into the region had a lasting effect on both its architecture and design. In Bulgaria, where Ottoman rule lasted from 1391 to 1878, Islamic gardens were created in the courtyards of many mosques, and in the palaces of the beys and agas. The present City Park of Sofia derives from the garden of the last Turkish *vali*, Makhzar Pasha. In the provinces of Bosnia and Macedonia in southern Yugoslavia, the opulent creativity of the period is still visible in the courtyards of the mosques and in Muslim graveyards such as the one at Alifakovac near Sarajevo with its elevated position, exquisite tombstones and its original spiral arrangement. The Turks also introduced to Europe many new garden plants. Citrus fruits, pomegranates, many exotic shrubs, herbs and flowers, particularly, tulips in all colours, including green and lilac, are first mentioned in Hungary, for example, during the period of Turkish rule (1541-1686).

Those areas not under Turkish rule still looked to Western Europe for cultural inspiration. The Italian Renaissance, at its height between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was an overwhelming influence. Before the Turkish invasion of his country, the great Hungarian king, Matthias Corvinus (1458-90) invited Italian scholars and artists to his splendid courts at Buda and Visegrad. Ornamental aviaries, fountains, terraces, parterres, even labyrinths, of Renaissance design, as well as many plants imported from



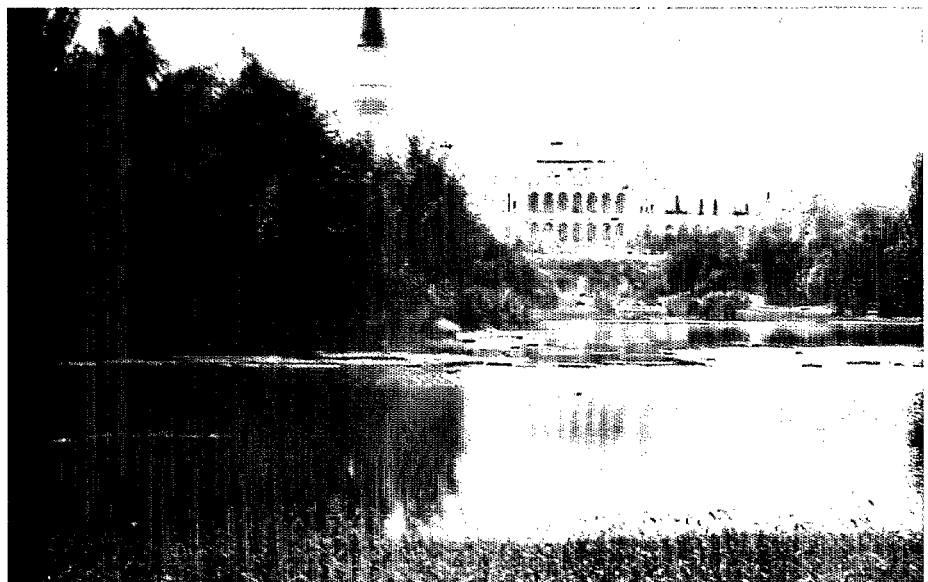
Dobris, Czechoslovakia. The garden was laid out by the architects de Cotte and Servandoni between 1745 and 1770, and restored by the French architect Touret in 1911.

Konopiste, Czechoslovakia. The baroque garden of 1750 was re-created as an Italian garden in 1910 under the direction of its then owner Duke Francis Ferdinand d'Este.



Kutna Hora, Czechoslovakia. One of the finest medieval churches in Europe was enhanced by a 'floral' carpet of colourful but tender plants when it was photographed by Margaret Rutherford Jay in 1924.

Park Carol, Bucharest, Romania. A minaret dominates the 'natural' design of the lake at the focus of this park called after King Carol.



Italy, are recorded in the gardens of both palaces. Close ties with northern Italy during the height of its humanist culture were maintained by the Republic of Dubrovnik (then known as Ragusa). Coastal villas with terraces, pergolas and pools connecting the garden with the sea, followed closely on Italian models. The best preserved of these is the Gothic-Renaissance Sorkocevic villa at Lapad. Of the dozen or so Renaissance gardens remaining in Poland, those at Baranow, Pieskowa Skala and Brzeg have been recently restored though that at Mogilany (c. 1560) with its modest classical layout, its hillside setting and its distant view of the Tatra mountains, is the most evocative.

In the succeeding century, gardens became more elaborate and grandiose in design. The Emperor Rudolph II graced his spectacular court in Prague with a complex of formal gardens richly decorated with statuary and fountains designed by the influential Dutchman, Vredeman de Vries (1527-1606). The nearby Valdstejn garden of 1626 has an equally sumptuous garden with a *sala terrena* designed by the Italian architect Pieroni and statuary by Adrian de Vries.

French influence

A period of great expansion and prosperity began in much of Eastern Europe after the defeat of the Turkish army at Vienna in 1688. The popularity of the baroque style of gardening, developed by the French and epitomized by the royal park of Versailles, spread through Europe reaching Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia, the northern part of Yugoslavia which was then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. The style was judiciously adapted to suit the drier climate of these regions by avoiding the many fountains and other complex water-features which were characteristic of this style of gardening in France. In Hungary more than 100 such gardens were made but most were subsequently altered or have disappeared. The largest remaining example is Esterhaza at Fertod which, though almost totally destroyed in the last war, has been splendidly restored. Many in Czechoslovakia have likewise disappeared and are only known through engravings. Buchlovice in the Chriby hills of South Moravia is a beautiful surviving example—its terraces, steps, pools and statues all unchanged and well maintained. Dobris and Kono-piste, both in central Bohemia, also



Cotroceni Monastery, Bucharest, Romania. A stone pergola overlooks a garden devoted to the variety of perennial flowering plants.

Sinaia Palace, Romania. The light-filled parterre, decorated with flower-filled urns is effectively contrasted with the sombre conifer woodland behind.



survive in their original classical French form. Magnificent embroidered parterres, numerous sculptures and clipped trees still decorate the gardens of Nieberow near Lowicz, and at Bialystock and Wilanow near Warsaw in Poland. Although many baroque layouts were created in Yugoslavia on the Pannonian plain between Styria and Vojvodina, the most magnificent is at Dornava near Ptuj in Slovenia. Here a 1.8-kilometre-long axis stretches through the house to be terminated by sculpture at either end. An immense, four-part parterre is centred on a fountain figure of Neptune and its rich sculptural programme mostly remains.

Beyond baroque

The complex formality of such baroque garden layouts began to be seen as rigid and anachronistic to the romantic sensibility which was developing in Europe in the eighteenth century. The more naturalistic effects of the English landscape garden with its extensive, undulating lawns, winding paths and informal sheets of water, better suited the prevailing temperament. In Hungary, a multitude of flowering trees and shrubs were planted in this manner to

present charming and informal vistas at Tata, Martonsvar (home of Beethoven's friends, the Brunswick family) and Varosliget, the latter two laid out by the famous German designer, C. H. Nebbien (1778-1841). In Czechoslovakia, the supreme example of the style is Lednice in South Moravia. Of truly international significance, this park created by the Liechtenstein family, boasts a 34-hectare lake with no less than fifteen islands, a host of romantic park buildings including a minaret (1791) and a curvilinear iron conservatory (1843) by the English architect, G. Devien. In Poland, classicizing tendencies emerged in conjunction with the landscape style. Temples and rotundas grace the four great parks—Arkadia, Lazienki, Lancut and Pulawy—which are open to the public. Pulawy is of particular interest as it was laid out for Izabela Czartoryska (1746-1835) author of the standard work in Polish on the English landscape garden, *Various Thoughts on the Creation of Gardens* (Wroclaw, 1805).

From the middle of the last century, the growing public interest in botany resulted in the creation of many collections of decorative plants, some eventually becoming arboreta of international

significance. Most notable are those of Kornik and Goluchow in Poland and the famous collection of Count Ambrozy-Migazzy at Malonya, then in Hungary but now in Czechoslovakia. New botanical gardens like those at Cluj in Transylvania and zoological gardens like those at Poznań in Poland were established. Increasing concern with public health and recreation led to the founding of public parks in cities. Park Carol in Bucharest is one of the best examples. Many of them were laid out on the ruins of the fortifications which had been built to encircle many old towns and cities. The parks at Jindrichuv Hradec in Czechoslovakia and Krakow in Poland are of this type. Health concerns were also responsible for the creation of spa resorts like Marienbad and Francenbad which had extensive landscape and flower gardens in which the spa's clients would exercise. Bright colour was usually provided by half-hardy or tender annuals just then being imported from South America, South Africa and the tropical

areas of South-East Asia. The floral 'carpet' in front of the great medieval church of Kutna Hora (c. 1380) in Czechoslovakia was an important example of this kind of flower gardening.

As well as these large-scale developments, domestic gardens of smaller, flowering plants were being made. It was these that were photographed in 1924 by the American landscape architect, Margaret Rutherford Jay and which are used to illustrate this article. The royal family of Romania was foremost in introducing these flower gardens into the country. At the palace of Sinaia, a loggia was wreathed with wisteria; terraces, statuary and parterres were given a delicate clothing of perennial flowering plants. At Potlogi Palace, the vines on an ironwork arcade throw dappled shadows onto the walk beneath. At the Cotroceni monastery near Bucharest, a deliberately archaic arrangement of narrow beds of herbs and flowers was overlooked by a pergola.

In the early part of this century, the modern movement in art and design

inspired a series of city villas with architecturally designed gardens of high quality, such as the gardens of Jan Kotera and Adolf Loos in Prague, the Villa Tugendhat by Mies van der Rohe in Brno and the modifications to the palace gardens in Prague by the Slovenian architect, Plecnik. Current developments include the creation of parks and nature reserves in the environs of the larger towns for public recreation and education. The growth of mass tourism has resulted in large-scale landscaping works in the Black Sea resorts of Bulgaria and along the shores of Lake Balaton. Meanwhile, many neglected historical gardens are being reconstructed and restored. ■



Sinaia Palace, Romania. A fountain-screen with figures of Neptune and other sea-gods delicately clothed in a single colour scheme of orange-yellow flowers.



Sinaia Palace, Romania. A wisteria-clothed loggia.

Margaret Rutherford Jay, who in 1924 took all the hitherto unpublished photos illustrating this article, was one of a number of women who were responsible for the renaissance of garden design in the United States in the early decades of this century. At the time major university programmes were closed to them, so they trained at special alternative schools such as the Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture for Women and the Louthorpe School of Landscape Architecture, Gardening and Horticulture for Women. Emerging from programmes like Louthorpe and Cambridge in unprecedented numbers, young graduates encountered much resistance in a male-dominated profession. All-female offices played a crucial role in the extraordinary success of her generation of women landscape architects, who were routinely refused work in male-owned offices.

All the photographs are from the Margaret Rutherford Jay Collection at the Architecture Slide Library, University of California at Berkeley. *Museum* wishes specially to thank Librarian Maryly Snow for her timely help in procuring them.
© Margaret Rutherford Jay Collection

INDOORS/OUTDOORS—DELAWARE'S WINTERTHUR

A huge mansion, a large farm, and gardens that are a uniquely American blend of several European tastes—these are the main components of the Winterthur Museum and Gardens, laid out along the Brandywine River in the state of Delaware, United States. In this feature, Winterthur's manager of media relations, Lynn Davis, tells the story of the gardens while landscape curator Denise Magnani takes readers indoors to become acquainted with the house.

An American garden with European roots

Lynn Davis

The notion of a truly American garden may seem like an contradiction in terms; after all, as with most aspects of culture in the United States, gardeners have long taken their cues from established European traditions. Not until the twentieth century did American gardens progress through imitations of French and Italian styles and interpretations of the English landscape to arrive at a style that is uniquely American: a fusion of influences from almost everywhere.

The entire landscape at Winterthur reveals the quintessence of the American garden. By yielding to the character of its site and achieving a balance between the science of horticulture and the art of landscape design, the Winterthur garden appears as if it has always been there. In fact, it is a relatively young garden—and one that is constantly evolving.

When Henry Francis du Pont inherited Winterthur in 1927, he assumed responsibility for the garden. Like other members of his family, du Pont had a strong attachment to nature and a lifelong love of plants and flowers. Through his studies at Harvard University and on annual pilgrimages to Europe, he was exposed to a number of schools of garden design. The result of his interest and knowledge was a personal and masterful garden composition, one that reflects a number of influences without deferring to a European style.

Revolution and flowers

A French influence is not always obvious on a walk through the Winterthur garden. There are very few of the manicured shrubs, parterres, and axial designs that have come to define the 'classic' French garden. In fact, by the time the first du Pont left France for the New World, the French passion for the large-scale, geometric château gardens designed by Le Nôtre and his disciples in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had dwindled. As early as 1750 news came from England about natural-looking gardens, and missionaries stationed in the Far East wrote about the splendours of Chinese gardens, with their asymmetrical designs and exotic plants.

After their Revolution, the French developed a new passion for flowers and trees. 'No one is concerned with affairs of state,' wrote the botanist Louis Lelieur in 1802. 'Everyone is concerned with agriculture, it is the rage.' Paris became a lively centre for botanical study, with the Jardin des Plantes at the centre of the excitement. A young printer named Eleuthère Irénée du Pont was a regular student at the botany classes offered there. Although Eleuthère was an enthusiastic plant lover, he studied at the Jardin des Plantes for a practical reason, too: he and his father were planning to emigrate to the United States. They dreamed of a carefully planned colony in the wilderness where survival might depend upon liv-

Winterthur in the 1920s, when it was still a working farm.



ing off, and developing the resources of, the land.

After Eleuthère settled on the banks of the Brandywine River in 1802, one of his first undertakings was the planting of a garden and orchard. 'Being without a garden was the greatest deprivation,' he wrote in 1803, 'and it is the first thing that occupied my time.'

Although he was not a professional botanist, Eleuthère listed his vocation on his passport application as '*botaniste*' which he thought he would become in the United States. His passion for horticulture carried on to the next generation of du Ponts in the New World. His children all had gardens, and they travelled abroad several times on botanical explorations.

Ultimately, Eleuthère Irénée du Pont's horticultural legacy was his love of flowers—a legacy that touched the spirit of generations of gardeners without limiting the way this spirit was

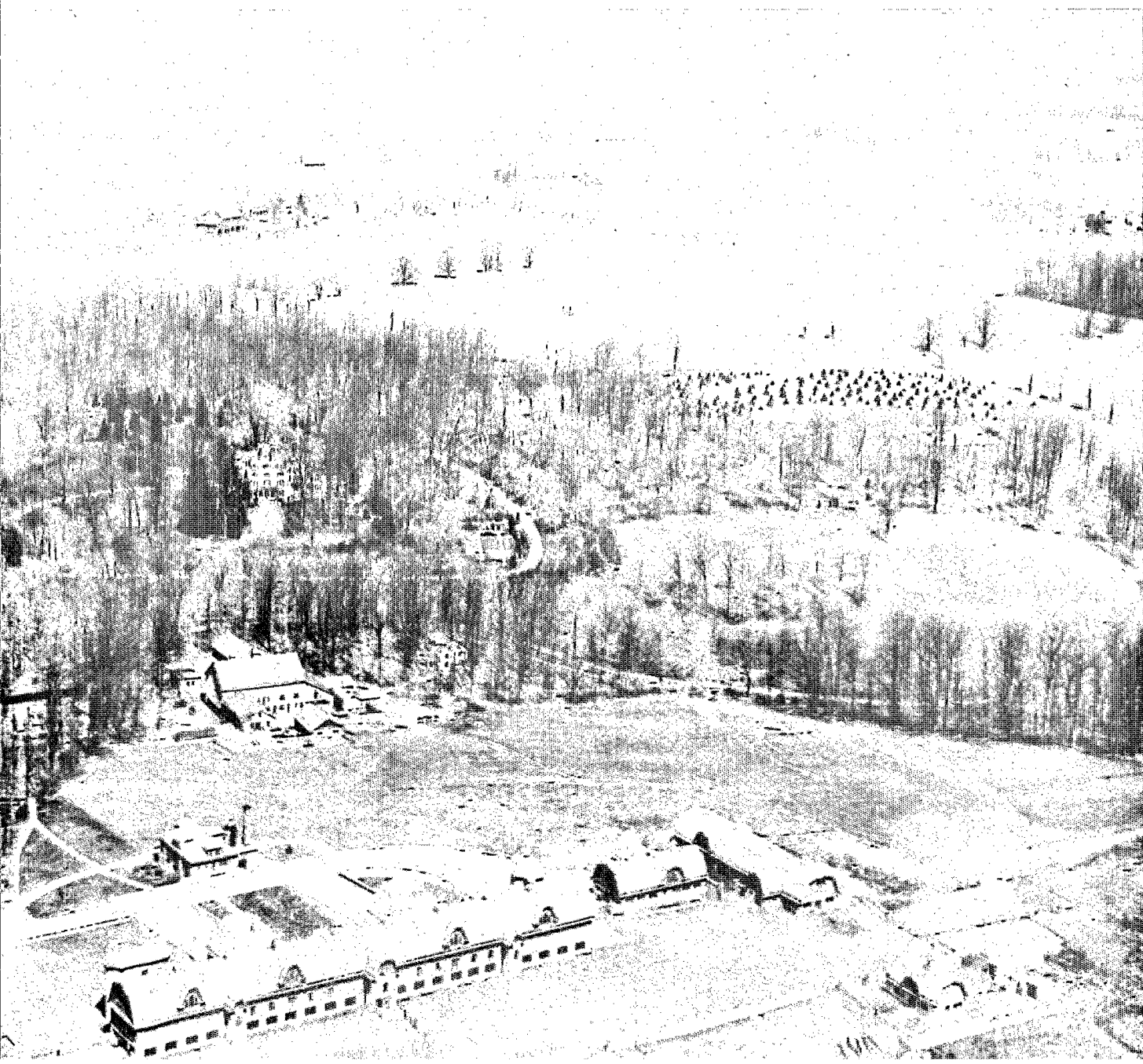
expressed. 'The family love for flowers will be, I hope, continued in my children,' wrote Louisa du Pont in 1876. Her hopes were fulfilled as both her son, Henry Algernon du Pont, and her grandson, Henry Francis du Pont, developed the garden at the family estate known as Winterthur. Direct French influences are subtle—a conservatory attached to the northern façade of the house, used as a showplace for exotic plants and trees, recalls the orangeries of pre-revolutionary France, and the semi-formal Sundial Garden, where flowering shrubs and trees such as yellowhorn, snowball shrub, silver-bell tree, fothergilla, quince and lilac bloom behind a billowy boxwood hedge.

The Sundial Garden was created by the American landscape architect Marian Cruger Coffin, as was Winterthur's only formal garden, the Reflecting Pool Garden. This is the only garden area at

Winterthur where the visitor can glimpse a definite Italian influence. True to Italian Renaissance design, this formal area is closest to the museum, and once provided a logical extension of the house. Here is one of the few places at Winterthur where visitors can find the structural approach and architectural features characteristic of the gardens of Italy—terraces, staircases, balustrades and statuary.

Pictures month by month

Of all the European traditions of garden design, English styles, including the eighteenth-century landscape park and the work of William Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had the strongest influence at Winterthur. The eighteenth century brought a major new development in garden history to England. Gardens of this period took



their cue from the landscape in an attempt to ease the regular symmetry of the formal garden. Proponents of this new style favoured winding paths, irregular lakes, and picturesque groupings of trees over the artificiality of intricately patterned knot gardens and topiary displays.

'In defining the shape of land or water, we take nature for our model, and the highest perfection of landscape gardening is to imitate nature so judiciously that the influence of art shall never be detected,' wrote Humphrey Repton, a designer and advocate of the landscape style. At Winterthur, the influence of the landscape school is most evident in the views from the Lookout and Oak Hill, and in the winding, tree-lined front drive that serves as the entrance to the estate. The carefully planned lawns, lakes and trees complement the rolling hillside of the Brandywine Valley, which is itself reminiscent of the English countryside.

In the nineteenth-century, English garden design became increasingly romantic in concept, eclectic in character, and complicated in detail. Garden designers such as William Robinson and Gertrude Jekyll changed the direction of gardening yet again. By shunning the pretension and excess that resurfaced during the Victorian era,

they advocated a skilful combination of proportion and design with the precise use of colour. 'We should not have any definite pattern to weary the eye,' wrote Robinson in 1871, 'but we should have quiet grace, and verdure, and little pictures month by month.'

Such principles had a profound influence on H. F. du Pont as he was planting the garden at Winterthur. Like Robinson and Jekyll, du Pont blended plants in naturalistic, yet carefully planned, schemes. He had a keen appreciation for the juxtaposition of colour and texture and was known for his adventurous, yet striking, pairings.

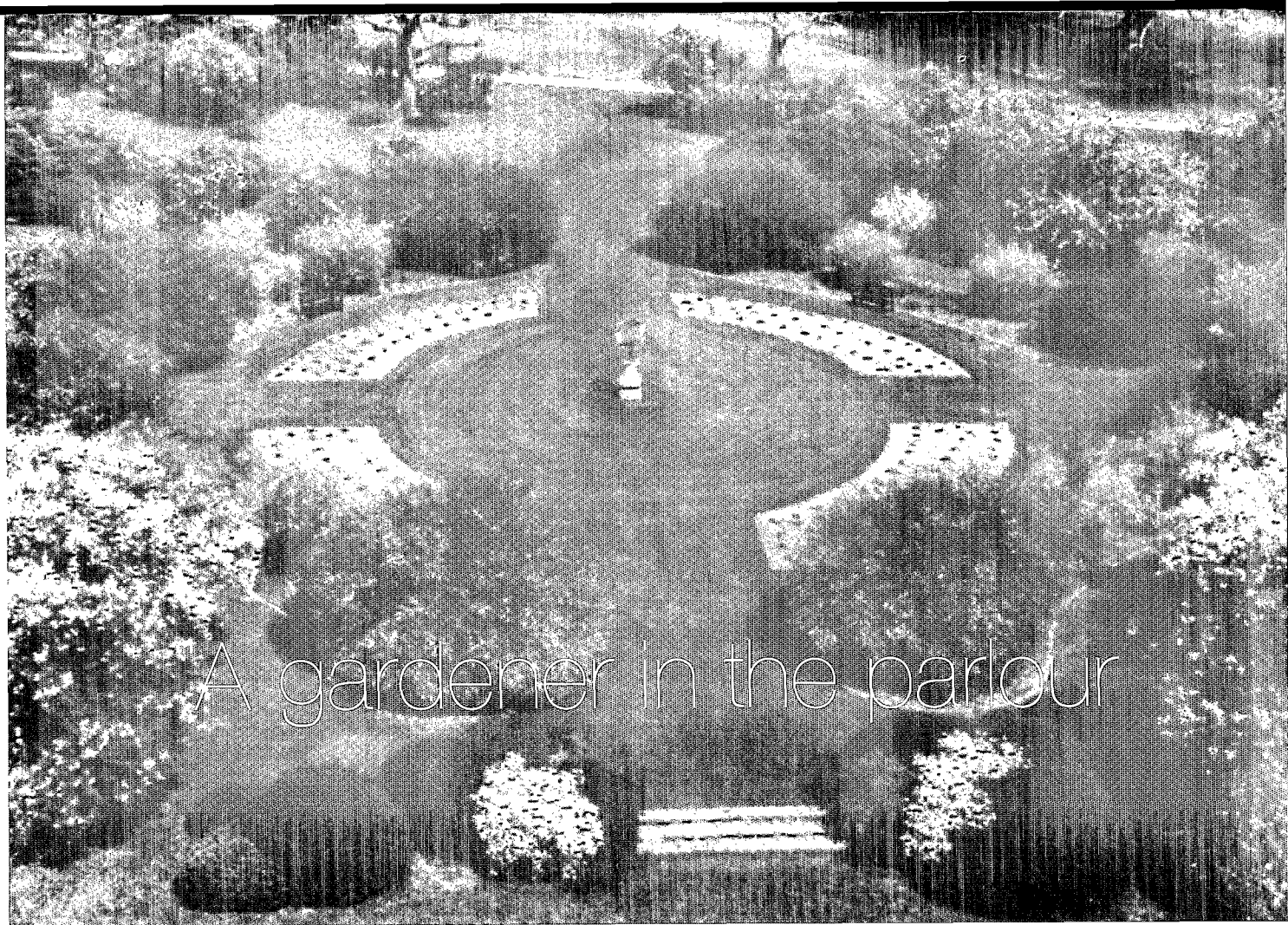
One of du Pont's favorite colour combinations, yellow and lavender, plays an important role in both the spring and autumn gardens at Winterthur. In April, the garden glows with the soft yellow of winter-hazel and lavender Korean rhododendrons. In the autumn, du Pont recreated this colour combination by contrasting the purple fruit of the beautyberry with witchhazel and also by using the purple flowers of colchicum to set off the yellow fruit of hardy orange.

But the Winterthur garden is more than just an aggregate of historical styles. With its layers of vegetation, innovative colours and forms, indigenous plant materials and majestic scale,

the garden is a tribute to both the American landscape and the American spirit. Thanks to the vision of Henry Francis du Pont, the twentieth-century American style exemplified by Winterthur deserves a place in the garden history of the future. ■

The Henry Francis du Pont house museum.





A gardener in the parlour

Denise Magnani

The Sundial Garden, one of the rare semi-formal areas at Winterthur.

Visitors to Winterthur Museum and Gardens search in vain for the imposing flight of steps and marble pillars that greet them at many major American museums. Instead, they drive for almost a kilometre on a road that winds among gently rolling hills, past groves of trees, streams, and a pond with Canada geese cavorting on its banks. Farm buildings, where heifers were raised when Winterthur was still a working farm, are visible from the road.

One curator of an Italian art museum felt a shock of recognition, exclaiming: 'Oh, it's like a Wyeth painting.' In fact, Andrew Wyeth lived, as other artists of the Brandywine school do, just a few kilometres away.

When visitors arrive at the museum, they are often surprised that the nine-storey, 196-room building does not appear more commanding. Nestled into the side of a hill, the building is actually dwarfed by the ancient trees growing in the nearby woods. The museum, and all the ninety-five other buildings on the property are painted in beige, informally known as 'Winterthur mud'.

This understatement, the celebration of the pastoral, and the careful integration of house and garden are by design.

The museum's founder, Henry Francis du Pont, was gratified that connoisseurs believed he had amassed the world's première collection of American decorative arts. But he also wanted visitors to enjoy Winterthur's natural beauty.

'In fifty years,' he said, 'people won't know what a working farm is like.' During his lifetime, Delaware schoolchildren came to see the newborn farm animals each spring, and thousands of people walked through the ever-evolving garden.

'I was born at Winterthur and I have always loved everything about it,' du Pont said in an interview. The estate was his family home and life's work, the place where he managed a farm and world-renowned dairy operation, pursued a life-long interest in horticulture and landscape design, and assembled a famous collection of Americana. To H. F. du Pont, the farm, garden and museum were three parts of a complex whole, inextricably linked to his love of nature, extraordinary attention to detail, and a taste for the subtle and harmonious in colour and design. He brought the three into a delicate balance that is today the hallmark of Winterthur.

Du Pont's fondness for the Winter-



Hippocampus on guard at the Reflecting Pool, the most formal garden area of Winterthur.

thur landscape developed during an idyllic childhood spent in the woods and meadows of his home. Like many members of the du Pont family, his father, Colonel Henry Algernon, was interested in scientific agriculture and ran an estate that resembled a small village. His mother, Pauline, passed along a love of flowers to her son and daughter Louise. After university, rather than enter military service or pursue a business career, du Pont enrolled at Harvard's Bussey Institution to study practical horticulture.

Forty-eight shades of green

When du Pont's mother died suddenly, he gave up his studies and returned to Winterthur to oversee the estate, allowing his father, a newly elected senator, to live in Washington, D.C. Perhaps as a distraction from his recent loss, du Pont began an ambitious series of horticultural and landscape-design experiments. He meticulously documented the blooming time, cultural considerations and aesthetic characteristics of thousands of plants. These lists became the basis for the lyrical colour combinations that appear throughout the seasons in the great naturalistic garden he left as his legacy. The task of directing the varied activities of the farm, garden and house over the next twenty years had enormous implications in the formation of his collecting aesthetic and in his creation of Winterthur's unique synthesis.

In the museum, the rooms that were once du Pont's suite offer a clear example of the importance he gave to the indoor/outdoor relationship. The view from his seventh-floor bedroom window, directly on axis with the Italian Renaissance style garden below, provides the best possible grasp of the estate. The study where he held early-morning conferences with his estate supervisors was filled with whimsical references to the pleasures of country life. From the adjoining porch, du Pont had an amazingly clear view of farm, woodland and garden.

In his wife's room (and in a number of other rooms), textiles were changed each season to harmonize or contrast with the colours in the landscape. In May, the dark pink and white floral design of the slipcovers and valances complemented the colour scheme of white flowering dogwood, pink and white Japanese kurume azaleas, and the pastel wildflowers that carpet the 3.25-hectare Azalea Woods that bloom on an adjacent hillside.

In the garden, du Pont learned to mass light colour against a green or brown background for greatest effect. In the museum, a number of rooms and hallways are painted in those colours. The painters on the estate keep forty-eight shades of green on hand for touch-ups. Oriental wallpapers depicting idealized landscapes create garden rooms out of interiors. Numerous landscape paintings and examples of needlework with floral motifs adorn the walls. Guides and curators encourage visitors to look outside to see what is blooming and how it relates to the interior.

After visitors become familiar with the indoor/outdoor connection, the designs of the rooms invite a closer inspection. For example, the Blue Bedroom has windows on three sides and walls painted in a muted grey-blue that seems to merge with the sky. Above the

mantelpiece hangs a landscape scene with sheep in the foreground, juxtaposed with an earthenware ram, ewe and reclining lambs that rest on the mantelshelf. Through the large windows on either side of the fireplace, visitors gaze upon land that was once pasture.

Although the farming operations at Winterthur ended soon after du Pont died in 1969, and although the family no longer lives on the estate, visitors still experience a feeling of liveliness, a strong sense of place. Henry Francis du Pont spent a lifetime collecting and arranging beautiful furniture and plants in order to share them with others. His gift to museum-goers, inherent in the collections and the Winterthur landscape, is a beneficent vision of the country's past and present, and tangible proof of the close connection between nature and art. ■

Spring comes first to the aptly named March Walk as crocuses poke up among the previous year's leaves and open wide on sunny days.



Chapultepec: a welcome haven amid the pollution

Luz Elena Zavala Grisi

Luz Elena Zavala Grisi, a bank manager and painter, owns a small country house far away from the horrible pollution that is suffocating Mexico City. This in no way diminishes the affection with which she introduces Museum readers to Chapultepec, one of the oldest urban parks in Latin America.

It is impossible to imagine Mexico City without Chapultepec Park. To speak of Mexico City is to speak of Chapultepec, by virtue of the tradition and sense of history that it embodies. Located in the south-east, very close to the Zócalo (the city's pre-Columbian and colonial central square), the park dates back more than 800 years and is the most outstanding historical, cultural, educational and recreational centre in the Mexican Republic as well as one of the largest, oldest, loveliest and most frequented public municipal parks in the world. It occupies an area of 643 hectares and is visited by approximately 1.2 million people every Sunday.

Its name is of Nahuatl origin and means 'hill of the crickets'. It refers to a volcanic hill rising nearly 45 metres above the level of the valley of the Sierra de las Cruces; at its foot there were once springs—now dried up—that supplied some of Mexico City's

drinking water; the hill is surrounded by a wood of the same name. The main entrance to Chapultepec Park is situated on the Paseo de la Reforma (Reform Boulevard), built in 1864 by the Habsburg Emperor Maximilian and then known as the Calzada del Emperador (Emperor's Highway).

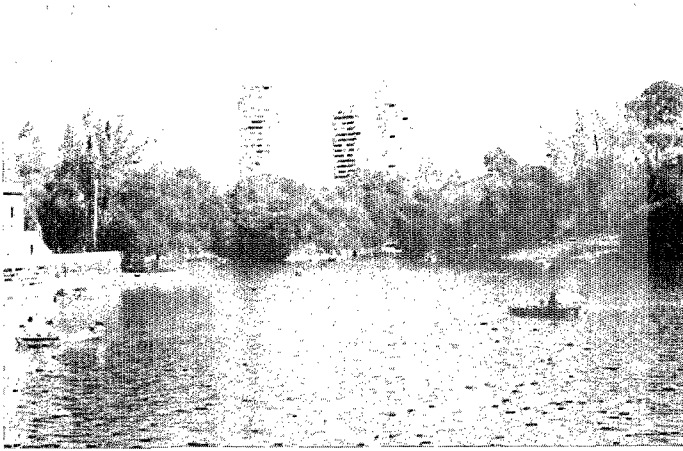
Following the decline of the Toltec culture and the abandonment of the city of Tula early in the twelfth century, some Toltecs reached Chapultepec in 1159 and remained there until 1162. It was then that Chapultepec began to take its place in history.

A century later, in 1280, sixteen Aztec families arrived in the wood from Aztlán. The crest of the hill with its view of the lake and the surrounding area served as an excellent look-out from which to observe an approaching enemy. The Ramírez manuscript tells us that 'they were surrounded by many peoples, none of whom showed them

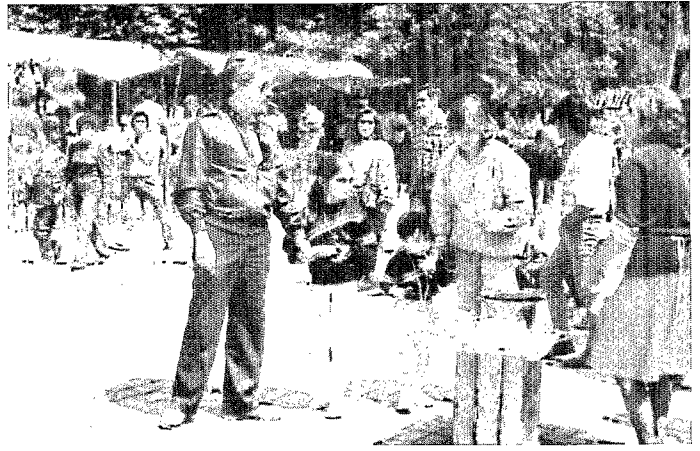
All photos by courtesy of the author



Chapultepec Castle: a presidential residence, an observatory and, finally, a museum.



A lagoon in the city centre.



Every Sunday, there are 1.2 million visitors.

goodwill'. The reasons for this hostility were the fact that the site was greatly prized by neighbouring peoples because of its springs, and differences in customs, religion and rites, and their use of an unknown weapon, the bow and arrow. They were eventually attacked and expelled from Chapultepec in 1299. A handful of Aztec survivors fled, seeking shelter among the reeds of the lagoon. It took them twenty-six years to re-establish themselves, and they founded Tenochtitlán, now Mexico City, in 1325.

The first aqueduct

Chapultepec became a sacred place for the Aztecs. In about 1428, Nezahualcoyotl, king of Texcoco and an ally of the Aztecs, built a mansion at the foot of the hill on the eastern side (a site that was to become the Chapultepec Restaurant, later the Wildlife Museum, and which now houses the National Museum of Modern Art); he enclosed the wood, added Montezuma cypresses to the flora and new species to the fauna. Montezuma I, the fifth Aztec emperor, built the first known aqueduct which conveyed water from the springs of Chapultepec to the city gate (1465/66). It was three kilometres long and consisted of two canals of stone and mortar running above a purpose-built road. One of the greatest hardships that the Aztecs had to bear during the Spanish siege of Tenochtitlán was the lack of drinking water, since Cortés had had the aqueduct destroyed.

After the fall of Tenochtitlán, because of the importance of the springs that supplied the whole population with water, Chapultepec was handed over to Mexico City in perpe-

tuity by Royal Letters patent issued by Charles V on 25 June 1530. In 1779, Viceroy Bucareli completed the rebuilding and cleaning of the aqueduct which ran alongside the Chapultepec road as far as the waterfall. It was 4,636 yards (3,963.5 metres) long, and comprised 904 arches. A mere twenty-two arches, rising four metres above Chapultepec Avenue, are all that now remain.

The initial project for Chapultepec Castle was the brainchild of Viceroy Matías de Galvez, and it was his son and successor, Viceroy Bernardo de Galvez, who carried out the entire project. The plans were drawn up by the engineer Manero, and building was supervised by Augustín Mascaró, an infantry captain. It was begun in 1785 and completed in 1787. Viceroy Horcasitas (1789-94) saved it from public auction and arranged for the castle to be handed over to the General Archives of the Viceroyalty.

Chapultepec was once more in the thick of historical events when, in 1847, as headquarters of the Military College during the North American invasion, the castle was the last bastion defended by the college's cadets aged between 13 and 19, all of whom perished in this heroic act. To commemorate it, President Alvaro Obregón built the Monumento a la Patria (Monument to the Nation), which was inaugurated on 27 November 1924.

The beauty of the castle and its wood led the Emperor Maximilian to choose Chapultepec as his residence and to undertake expensive renovations. The residential quarters were situated in the easternmost wing of the castle. Terraces were built, as well as the ramp encircling the hill and various roads through the wood.

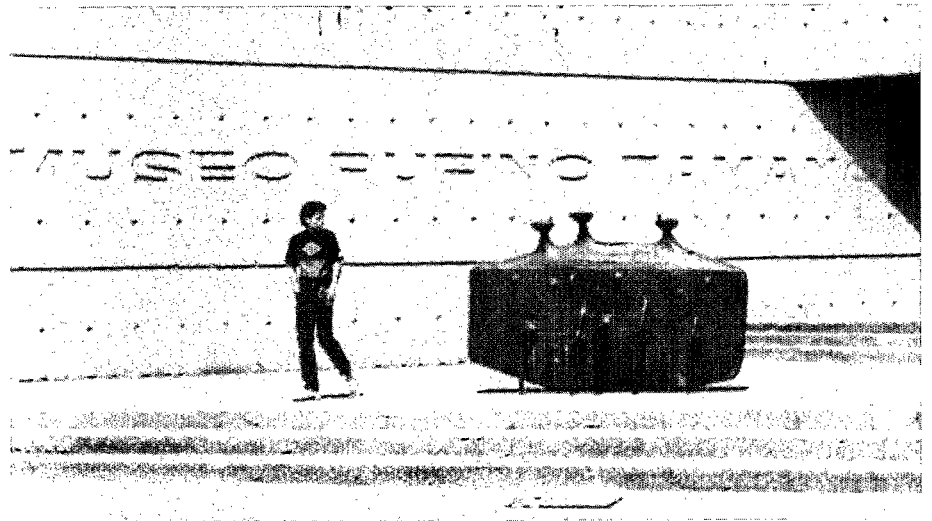
The President who resided longest in the castle and made the most extensive alterations to it was Porfirio Díaz. He replaced the second floor with a large reception room and a long gallery with leaded stained-glass windows. He connected the two levels of the building by means of a large white marble exterior staircase with a glass canopy and an interior staircase of carved wood, and had a shaft tunnelled through the rock of the hill for a lift which was entered from the ramp. Trees and flowers were planted in the gardens surrounding the tower and an astronomical observatory was set up there in 1878.

By a decree of 31 December 1938, General Lázaro Cárdenas ordained a new fate for the castle. He gave instructions for it to be handed over to the inhabitants, and had it converted into a museum, which was inaugurated on 27 September 1944. Thus it returned to its original purpose as a park for the enjoyment of the people and all who wished to visit it.

Poets, pagoda and litter

Chapultepec Park itself was tidied up between 1898 and 1910 on the initiative of José Ives Limantour, Minister of Finance. An extensive area was added to the north, the main avenues were paved, new roads, clearings and esplanades were opened and two lakes were made, the smaller with piers and skiffs for hire, and the larger with a fountain in the form of a rock and a wooded island on which a replica of the Winged Victory of Samothrace was placed. On its western shore was constructed the Casa del Lago (House of the Lake), the presidential summer residence which later housed the Institute of Biology

Foursquare in ancient Chapultepec,
the art of today.



and is today a cultural centre belonging to the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

Without a doubt, the recreational centre that attracts the most visitors is the Alfonso Herrera Zoo, named after the biologist who founded it. It was begun on 6 July 1923, contains 2,562 examples of 311 species and occupies an area of 136,458 m². It also contains a small scenic railway which is the delight of young and old alike.

There are numerous monuments scattered throughout the park, including very worn remains of effigies of King Montezuma I and his adviser Tla-caélel. Near the smaller lake may be found the Juventino Rosas amphitheatre, a venue for public concerts and the starting-point of the Poets' Road with granite busts of Antonio Plaza, Manuel Acuña and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz among others, resting on stone pedestals. Also to be seen are the huge pre-Hispanic monolith at the entrance to the National Museum of Anthropology, the carved wooden totem pole donated by the Canadian Government and the pagoda presented to Mexico by the Republic of Korea in 1968.

The second section of the park was inaugurated on 24 October 1962. It occupies 127 hectares and is composed of nine areas of woodland meadows and two lakes. The third section, inaugurated in 1974, covers a surface of 286 hectares, of which 7.4 have been landscaped.

Chapultepec Park is an ideal cultural centre, since it contains seven of the country's most important museums: the National History Museum, the 'Caracol' Museum, the National Museum of Anthropology and History, the Museum of Modern Art, the Rufino Tamayo Museum, the Natural History Museum and the Technological Museum.

In an interview which she was kind enough to grant me, Ms Luisa Mendoza, the park's general co-ordinator, spoke of the main problems that it poses, some caused by the age of the park itself and the erosion of the soil, and others resulting from the scarcity of resources, lack of water, litter thrown down by the many visitors and hawkers, and misuse of the facilities and wooded areas by the crowds of visitors who, because of the inordinate growth of Mexico City and its atmospheric pollution, come to the park to escape.

In order to solve these problems, a Chapultepec Park Campaign has been launched to raise funds to cover the innumerable expenses, to seek contributions in the form of time, labour and cash, and to organize educational and promotional activities. Ms Mendoza, with characteristic energy and enthusiasm, has very ambitious plans for the park, such as continuing the reafforestation of the wooded areas, oxygenating the lake water, installing water-sprinklers and planting fruit trees.

So it is that Chapultepec Park has been present throughout the city's history, close to the heart of citizens from all walks of life who find in it what they need; this includes recreation on its lakes and in its sporting facilities, cultural information in its museums and libraries, education in the workshops, and the welcoming haven of a wood which is part of Mexico's heritage. ■

A 'lung' just outside Paris

Alexandre Delarge

An eleventh-century château, flora and fauna which are still rural in character, craftsmen (and arts and crafts) on the way to revival, a commercial view of the products and services that will balance the budget of a first-of-its-kind museum, and walkers who are not content just to put one foot in front of the other—these are all ingredients (along with others) of a new 'lung', a natural park, forty minutes by train from the centre of Paris. Such, at all events, was what Museum was told over the telephone. So we went to see for ourselves and came back convinced. To describe this many-faceted venture we sought the services of its resident museologist, Alexandre Delarge, who is 33 years old and a man of many talents since, at one and the same time, he holds a degree in ethnology, organizes exhibitions and is a ceramist and puppeteer.

Some 30 kilometres from the French capital, the suburban tentacles of Paris curl round the northern edge of a small area called the Regional Natural Park of the Upper Chevreuse Valley. One of these tentacles is the new town of Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines and the park was formed by nineteen neighbouring communes in 1985 in order to protect their land from the encroaching concrete.

The thirteen communes in the north all lie in the Upper Basin of the River Yvette, known as the Chevreuse Valley, the name Upper Chevreuse Valley being coined for the remaining communes that lie in another basin. The choice was not a neutral one since this quite hilly area is, without doubt, one of the most attractive in the Ile-de-France. It is formed from a succession of valleys and plateaux, among which nestle small, traditional villages; more than half of it is covered by woodland.

This 'other world' of nature just outside Paris, and its rich historic heritage with the Château de Dampierre, the Abbey of Vaux de Cernay and Port Royal des Champs, are what people, mostly from the Ile-de-France region, come to visit on weekend outings. As well as being visited by people from the region, the Chevreuse Valley has acquired international fame and it is said that airline pilots on transatlantic flights point the area out.

It has been attracting tourists since the seventeenth century, when the young Racine roamed its lanes and wrote youthful verses: '*Là, le chevreuil, champêtre et doux bondit aussi dessous les boux* [There, the roe-deer, pastoral and tender also leapt beneath the holly].' Then came the nineteenth-century and its landscape painters at Cernay, who went there to merge themselves into the picturesque surround-

ings. In the twentieth century, we see hordes of invading motorists swarming over it in search of an Eden where the exuberance of nature blends with the beauty of ancient buildings.

Racoons and judo

That, in a few words, is how this Regional Natural Park came into being. After it had been established, I was asked to consider the possibility of establishing a museum there, to be, as seemed obvious, a Museum of Popular Art and Traditions. I then discovered that things were not as simple as they seemed, and I had to ask myself whether it was indeed possible to put a museum in the middle of the park, like an elephant in a china shop, without first thinking what the consequences might be.

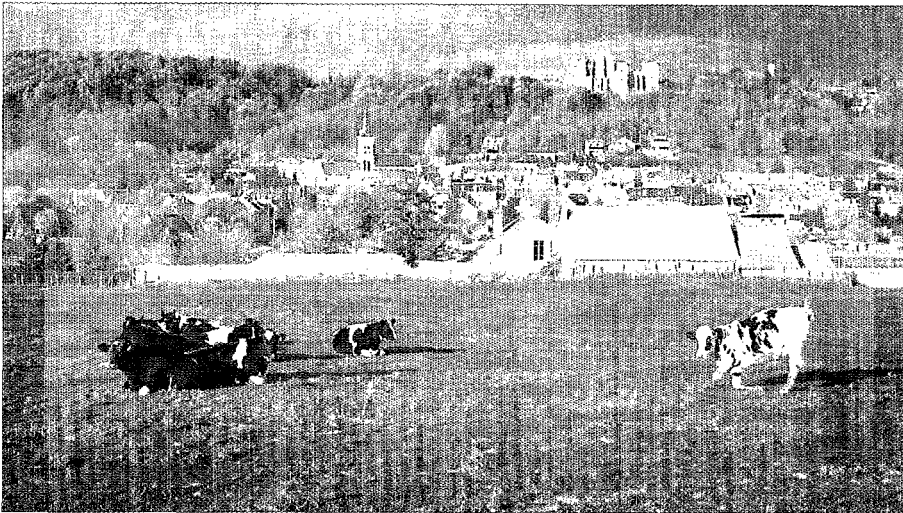
The first question to ask was: 'Should there be a museum?'; and the reply was: 'Yes, if it is given specific objectives, especially in terms of local development, and provided these objectives are consistent with the Charter of the Regional Natural Park.' I then set off to discover the area in order to iron out all the questions raised by the idea of having a museum. A list of points to be settled imperceptibly took shape, a simplified version of which is set out below, rather in the spirit of Jacques Prévert.¹

How should exhibits of a heritage consisting mostly of written or spoken materials be displayed?

How do you talk about things modern?

(You have to as this museum is intended to be in contact with life.)

1. The twentieth-century French poet who very much enjoyed compiling lists that waxed more poetic the longer they got.—Ed.



Seen from the valley, the Château de la Madeleine is the veritable 'high point' of the park.

How should all the natural environment and buildings be preserved since they are spread out and often small in size?

How do you talk about racoons?

How do you get the public to play a part in the museum?

How can you give an impetus to the cultural life of the area?

How can you ensure the stability of a population which frequently moves for reasons of work and because it is a long way to travel to Paris?

How can you work with racoons?

How can you get people to discover what the park is really like?

How can you avoid the vulnerable natural environment being spoiled by too many visitors?

How are visitors going to move around the park, since too many cars are a source of harm and damage to the environment?

How do you make racoons feel at home?

What do you do so that the area does not lose the varied, open and rural landscape which attracts people to it?

How do you obtain recognition for the Regional Natural Park of the Upper Chevreuse Valley?

How can you avoid galloping urbanization?

How do you combat racoons?

How is economic life to be developed?

How is the budget of the museum to be balanced?

This list is enough to make a person dizzy. It seems difficult, at first glance, to solve problems as contradictory as opening an area to visitors from Paris and its suburbs, and avoiding damage to the environment in question; developing an area of natural beauty outside Paris, and avoiding urbanization; or, again, having an ambitious museum policy and balancing budgets. To overcome this difficulty, we proposed adopting the attitude of the judoka,

who uses the weaknesses of his opponent to win the contest. The tone was thus set!

This was a real challenge, a project in which irreconcilable opposites had to be brought together, or so it seemed. In addition, the project was going to be the responsibility of a museum, and on reading through our list we may well wonder whether certain issues were its responsibility or whether all the issues in question did not more properly correspond to the objectives of the Regional Natural Park itself. Could the museum have gone too far, even before it started? To arrive at the truth of the matter, we shall take a detailed look, as an example, at two of the questions raised, namely: 'How can you get people to discover what the park is really like?' and 'How is the budget to be balanced?'

How can you get people to discover what the park is really like?

Any given area is an extremely complex entity which has such varied aspects that it is impossible to represent it fully in a museum, short of adopting the idea of Borges, the Argentine writer, and reconstituting the area inside the museum on a one-to-one scale. Taking this idea as a starting-point, however, we could perhaps envisage sending visitors out into the area itself, which would, at one and the same time, be more genuine and more lively.

The museum would then be considered as a series of points spread out over the area. There would, of course, be places more easily identifiable as museum-like (from the street nameplate giving two lines of information, to the traditional museum and the discovery trail). Each part of the area, whether natural or cultural, would, however,

Nestling within the château, with whose architecture it does not clash, the Park House is the nerve centre of visitor orientation and park management.

speak for itself. If we want the small components of the museum to be visited, however, they need to be discovered on foot, at a pace at which there is time to stop and look at those details which give an area its particular character. A policy for constructing paths therefore needed to be drawn up since paths would form the framework of the museum.

A word of warning none the less, since we have to be aware of the risk that car parks would have to be provided at the start of every path, unless a public transport service linking the Regional Natural Park to the railway stations was envisaged. The three ingredients—network, walkers and public transport—as just described, would permit both wide distribution throughout the area and effective preservation of the environment. None the less, the effort made to break the museum down into scattered elements had to involve giving thought to the exhibits which, provided they were of great interest, would encourage the visiting public to fan out widely. The ways in which this could be achieved would be, first of all, by having a variety

of museographic sites, making it possible to mount a variety of styles of permanent exhibition and, secondly, by putting on temporary exhibitions as well as events and performances.

Where performances are concerned, puppets seem to offer interesting prospects, since the medium is original and competes hardly at all with the shows staged in the capital. They need only limited facilities, can be the partial responsibility of the visiting public, enable exhibits to be created for display, make use of the oral and written heritage, and, lastly, make it possible to deal with topical subjects of general interest.

Before finishing with this topic, I should like to deal separately with two technical aspects, starting with the visiting public. Only one study has been carried out thus far on the park area's visitors. It was carried out almost ten years ago and was not done in connection with the scheme we are outlining here. It none the less deserves credit for having identified the socio-cultural classes of the area's visitors (middle to upper), their preferences (nature first of all and then places of cultural inter

est), and where they come from (90.9 per cent from Paris and its suburbs). In addition, a general study on hiking in France concluded that, in 1981, almost 3 million of the Ile-de-France's inhabitants were interested in rambling, and that they tried to make their walks serve some purpose. After comparing the two studies, we think we have come up with something that should satisfy the demand.

A study is now being made that should show how valid our ideas are. However, we must also pay attention to the construction of the paths, which will be both places where visitors are made to feel at ease and the means of access. This is why great attention has had to be devoted to the 'trivial' side of things. First of all, for visitors to be satisfied, the paths must either be circular, 4 to 10 kilometres in length, or must connect two railway stations. The routes have thus got to be decided on, the paths must enjoy public right-of-way, and the local mayors must give their consent to the paths being opened officially. The area must then be surveyed to determine the state of the paths, the interest of the routes, and the



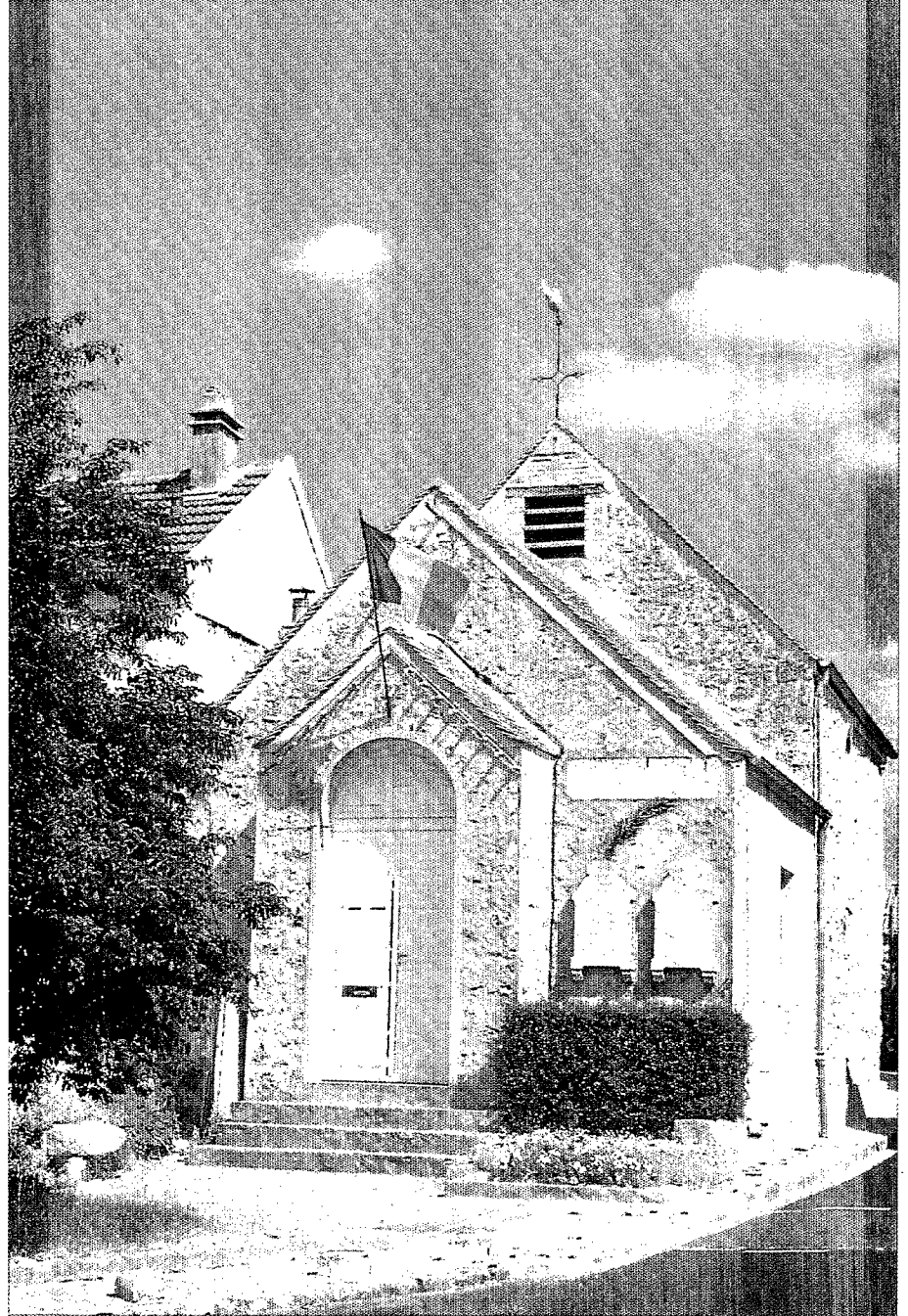
services available on the way round; then it has to be decided where the welcoming and information panels and the signposts are to be put. Visitors indeed need to be welcomed and given guidance in order to relieve them of the fear of getting lost. We have therefore prepared specific maps, to be mounted on the panels, which can be read easily and provide a fairly practical and attractive view of the places to visit. Unfortunately, things do not always go smoothly along the paths. There are problems such as reluctance to allow certain paths to be opened, the difficulty of keeping them in good repair (damage caused by cross-country vehicles and horses), and mistakes in signposting owing to the complexity and newness of the path network.

It would seem that the area in question can thus be discovered only by spreading the public out over it. It is an extensive and expensive project in terms both of investment and running costs. It presents us with an undeniable challenge, but it is up to us to show that the greatest challenges are those which are met. This is also the subject of our second question.

How is the budget to be balanced?

This is a difficult question, for museums with balanced budgets are rare. It must first be said that the park is a local government body and is therefore ready to invest (even if it does so in the context of a partnership). None the less, the operating budget has to be balanced. The idea is first of all to build up a strong image based on sightseeing on foot, so that hikers in the Ile-de-France will immediately think of the park. This calls for a policy encompassing graphic images, proper facilities, specific products, advertising, etc. The various people and bodies involved must also be determined to preserve the open and rural nature of the landscape. In addition, the economic activities of the area must be associated with the project, that is to say, the farmers, craftsmen, traders, people providing services, and businesses, each individually benefiting from the reputation of the Regional Natural Park and the visitors to it, and each becoming an ambassador for the area *vis-à-vis* their customers.

Lastly, at the risk of rousing a sleeping monster, let us touch briefly on the idea that culture and Mammon are irreconcilable brothers. Right from the planning stage, a museum must be conceived in economic terms, and this



is the only way in which culture can find its financial feet. After all, publishers have never been criticized for making money! The museum thus has to be planned like a business offering natural and cultural leisure activities, services and consumer products. As much as possible, every museum section of any appreciable size should have a commercial unit like a shop, restaurant or tea-room attached to it. None the less, steps must be taken to restrict staff levels and to secure payment for visits and cultural offerings.

The museum thus forms the backbone of a tourist economy providing a means of livelihood for each person concerned and, in return, deriving its income from the economy that it generates. Let us take a closer look at how this works. The museum, with its collecting activities, research and exhibitions, is unable to balance its budget. Particular attention should therefore be paid to

A museum path can be as odd as a town hall-cum-church and . . .

services (e.g. hotels, catering, nurseries, transport, information about activities on Ceefax) and consumer products (items specially created for the museum, local products, arts and crafts, and various shops). Secondly, efforts must be made to associate with the museum businesses which may wish to act as sponsors or provide facilities, or which may expand their commercial interests in a direct way, such as by opening a combined museum and restaurant. Work with businesses may also lead to original products linked to the museum, such as the revival of a traditional drink no longer being made, and the devising of games based on themes connected with the museum. For the museum to benefit, the businesses would obviously have to pay back, directly or indirectly, a proportion of their profits, as these derive indirectly from the museum. This is only possible, however, if the museum's contribution can be quantified.

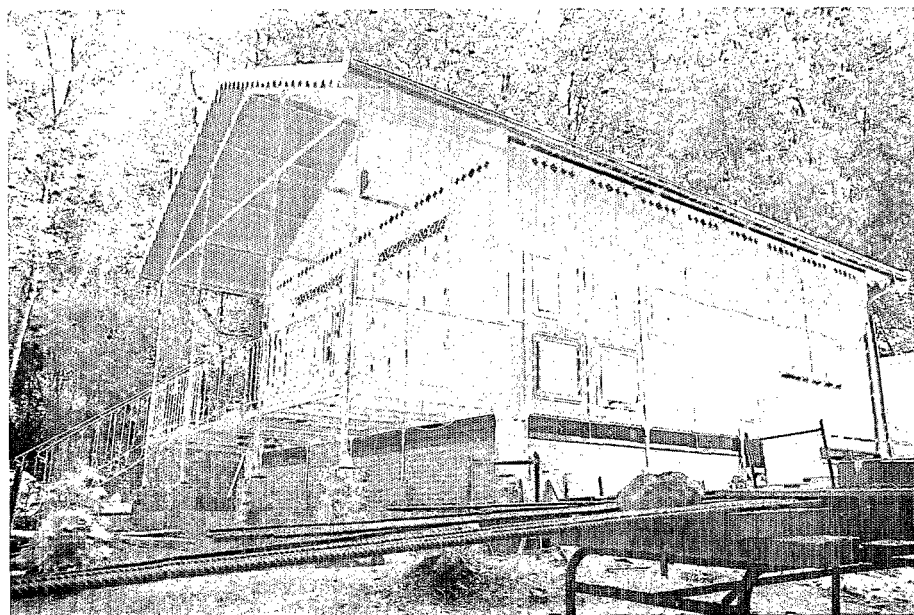
One solution might be the use of 'smart cards' which would entitle visitors to reductions. This system would enable the number of employees to be reduced, would ensure that visits to small museum sections were paid for, that people became regular visitors to the museum and that it became better known. The very composition of our museum makes it possible to envisage a balanced budget. The great number and variety of the museum's constituent parts mean that there can be a slower

turnover of exhibitions, while the small size of these constituent parts associated with the type of visits makes it possible to reduce or even do away with surveillance without, however, taking away all human contact. Planning the museum with definite objectives and providing specific facilities for the public should succeed in attracting a large proportion of potential visitors. A study is being conducted at the present moment which should establish the validity of this approach, which proposes that the park museum should be conceived in economic terms so that each participant will derive benefit from it.

Fanciful and immoderate?

This leads me to the conclusion that our museum is realistically fanciful. What we aim to show is that we can win even if we do not always swim with the tide. The corollary is that we need influential associates and the involvement of all possible partners, including government and financial circles and associations. The underlying idea must be original, impressive and ambitious, these being the characteristics which will make it very well known. The time needed to set everything up must be relatively short as otherwise the public will be disappointed to find things dragging on unfinished. There must be innovation, but at the same time we have to be very much in tune with what the public wants. ■

... as picturesque as the Iron House (restoration just being finished).



A museum path and its ten wonders

Start out from Maincourt, where you can admire the extraordinary building of the combined town hall and church. Continuing your walk, you can branch off and follow an educational trail which demonstrates the various features of the valley. Walk along the River Yvette and past the twelfth-century wash-house and cattle-trough. Further on, after passing the beech trees covered with carved messages from the last century, you can walk alongside the fane, a Gallo-Roman temple. Going on past the mill and across the valley, you come to the village of Dampierre. There, take a steep road and halfway up it to your left you can look down on the Château de Dampierre, built by Mansart, with gardens by Le Nôtre. Be sure to visit it and its adjoining floral park. Continue up the road to the top where you will find the Iron House, a building that can be taken to pieces, erected by a classmate of Gustave Eiffel and said to have been used as a ticket office during the 1890 Universal Exhibition in Paris. This house has been converted into a hostel and stands in a nineteenth-century garden which is now being restored. Once through the forest you will be able to look down on the valley and the little village of Maincourt where you started out from. If you have enough time, visit the cemetery with the three quarrymen's graves, touching creations which are reminiscent of the works of Jean Arp and which stand among the primroses. All along this path, you will have been able, with the help of a guidebook, to discover the four forest milieux typical of the Upper Chevreuse Valley. You are now back at the combined town hall and church, having covered 5 kilometres, a walk lasting one hour fifteen minutes, not counting stops. A nice ramble, wasn't it!



Auguste Léon (Albert Khan Collection)

Paris 2 × 2

In Paris there are two Japanese gardens, this one at the Espace Départemental Albert Khan (photographed here by Auguste Léon in 1911) and another one located at Unesco Headquarters.

And there are two vineyards, this one recently planted in the Georges Brassens Garden, and a much older one on the slopes of Montmartre.

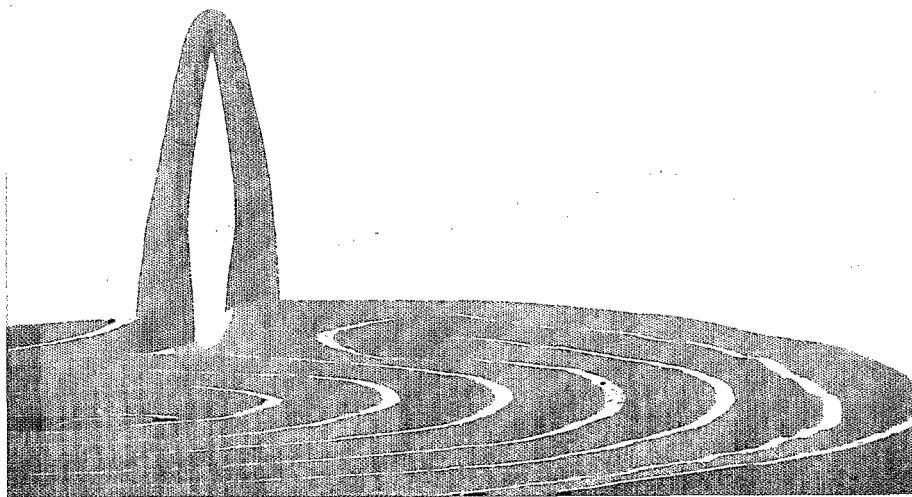
Arthur Gillette



SICILY AS SCULPTURE GARDEN

'Think big' could have been a subtitle for these articles, but even that injunction is too diminutive for our larger-than-life subject: a determined man, his barren region, and huge sculpture. To do this astonishing mixture justice, we asked Agnese de Donato, who has many years' experience writing about art for *L'Europeo*, *Tempo Illustrato*, *Paese Sera* and other periodicals, for a report. An additional dimension is provided in a second account by Adele Cambria, also a journalist.

Italo Lanfredini's *Arianna* labyrinth (reinforced concrete). Castel di Lucio.



© Zeno Colantoni

'Don Antò'—the scale is immense

Agnese de Donato

Antonio Presti, a 32-year-old Sicilian, owner of a construction business and a bachelor, lives in Santo Stefano di Camastra; his identifying mark: a splash of delightful madness for art. Antonio Presti is not an art lover, even less a common or garden art collector. He *devours* art, and by art is devoured.

When I met him for the first time, some six years ago, he had not yet had his first 'collision' with art; he was a charming youth of many qualities and extravagances: rich, handsome and lively. He had just lost his father and had inherited a fortune, namely an important construction business, a cement works and an asphalt factory. Was this not more than enough for the young man?

For anyone else it would have been. Anyone else would have taken a showy wife, smothered her in jewels and sables, driven her around in a Cadillac, escorted her to theatrical galas or benefit balls, would have had a yacht, would be kowtowed to by his peers and respected by the *mafiosi* potentates of his home region. No. Out of respect for his father, he continued the businesses left to him. In a gesture of great affection he decided to honour his father's

memory with something visible, something important, something everlasting. This something turned out to be a sculpture by Pietro Consagra, 20 metres high, made of reinforced concrete, put in a mythical site, in the valley of the Tusa river, a wide torrent which in summer runs dry revealing a riverbed of stones and wild flowers and, in winter, when its waters rush, they lap at the sculpture's base.¹ All this has now become history. But, I am getting ahead of my story!

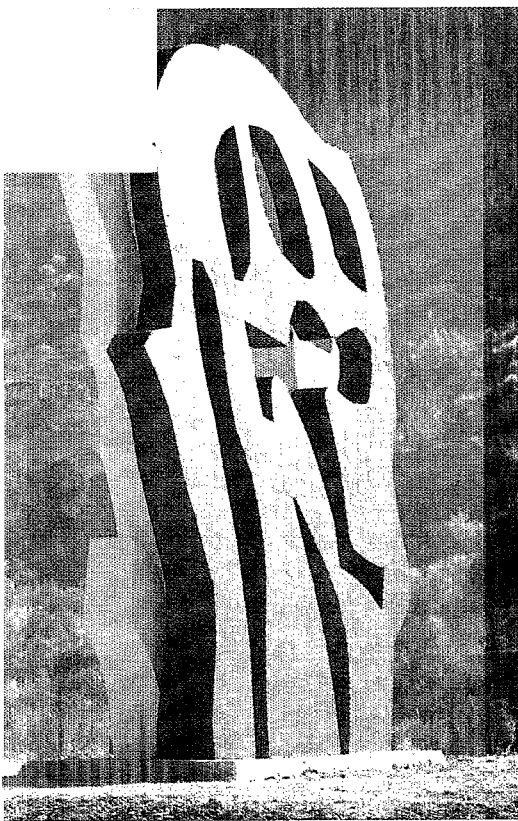
An extraordinary adventure

I met Presti during a fashionable reception, where immediately, despite our age difference (mother and son), we formed an extraordinary friendship. Reciprocal trust and even a kind of complicity were the building blocks which cemented our mutual understanding. I shall never tire of telling how fascinated I was by Antonio's passion for the art world and artists, an unusual passion, such as I have never encountered in other people. He is unique. I don't think I am exaggerating: who else would dream of putting up gigantic

works of art in the most remote (and yet most appropriate) places in Sicily, an area, and let's admit it, that is God-forsaken and ignored even by humankind?

The artists he chooses must be or fall in love with Sicily, more precisely with his remote part of Sicily, a sweet-and-sour land backed up against the mountains and bordering on the Cerulean blue sea of Tusa and Cefalù. Only then do the chosen artists fall into step with their own being, as well as with their own art and the way it will fit. The artists go, in fact, to stay in Sicily, and life in the Presti house is not easy. It is a communal life shared with the workmen from his company. The artists then become completely convinced of Antonio's vision of art: art, nature and daily life as one whole. Indeed, artists who go there eventually fall into perfect harmony with everyone and everything, be they Milanese, American, Japanese or Roman. It has never been otherwise.

1. As we go to press, *Museum* has learned that Antonio Presti has been convicted of 'violation of the building code and infraction of the norms of environmental management' and ordered to demolish Pietro Consagra's sculpture. (See photo on page 32.)



© Zeno Colantoni

Pietro Consagra's *La materia poteva non esserci* (Matter Might Not Have Existed) (reinforced concrete). By the river Tusa.

Under the umbrella title of *Fiumara d'arte* (Art Torrent), artists and workmen create these gigantic art-works, experiencing together an extraordinary adventure—climbing among the hills, along the dry river beds, on the round stones of the sea-shore. At last the 'perfect' spot is found as a site for the planned sculpture, which oddly enough seems to be the only possible choice, a choice made with great care, where the work will be in harmony with the landscape, the wind, with the rising and sinking of the sun. The work then begins, regardless of obstacles.

Presti donates the sculptures (whether they happen to be on his property or not); even better if they are on public property. It would be perfectly simple to erect the sculptures on his own land, simply doing what other collectors on a lesser scale have done in the past. But Presti's obsession is that his land is so enriched, embellished and privileged by these sculptures that he wants to be able to share them. He wants (and he battles like a lion for it) the inhabitants of the villages in the area to be able to live with the art and draw profit from it, from its artists and from the world of culture in general. He has been successful in reaching that goal. The most important phases of the *Fiumara d'arte* project (the inauguration of Pietro Consagra's sculpture, the international competition for 'new

sculptors', and the more recent unveiling of works by Piero Dorazio and Graziano Marini, Paulo Schiavacampo, Tano Festa, Antonio di Palma, Hidetoshi Nagasawa and Italo Lanfredini) were marked by the presence of numerous artists and personalities from the cultural milieu gathered there from all over the world in perfect fusion with the local population.

Different, therefore suspect

The most recent, chronologically speaking, of these happenings was a mammoth 'three days' crammed with treks from one sculpture to the next, country feasts joined in by thousands of local citizens who had come to take part and observe. The 'three days' were, however, marred by the arrogance of certain local authorities who arrived in the middle of the festivities: these funereal elders wanted to sequester and demolish the art-works with the excuse that they were 'illegal'. Isn't that unbelievable? Think of Sicily, whose age-old beauty has been devastated by the construction of high-rise buildings, tiny houses, little villas, middle-sized villas, even huge villas of the powerful, all built without regulation permits, and draw your own conclusions. And so? Why so much resistance to a man like Antonio Presti, who spends a great deal of money and a great deal of his time in such a precious cause? Why fight against him with such dogged arrogance? I couldn't possibly give a correct answer.

I know that the most cultivated and modern minds have fought against those attacks with documents and articles; I know that there has been more than one parliamentary inquest; I know that the Sicilian people are on Presti's side. But, he is being blocked because he is so *different*, because he doesn't spend his money on diamonds and sables; he spends it on making things for the Sicilian people, a gesture that questions the authorities in charge rather too closely, drawing attention to their own negligence.

Another of Presti's characteristics is to 'think big'. He cannot exist within a medium-sized format, let alone a small one. His scale is the immense, inconceivable for most mortals. When he comes to Rome, he doesn't visit one gallery, he visits ten. A maquette becomes a monument 30 metres high. He invites a friend to dinner and somehow that friend finds himself or herself in the middle of a huge banquet. It's Antonio Presti's rhythm. Down there at

home, in Santo Stefano di Camastra, 'Don Antò' is loved by his staff of workmen. He spends his evenings with them as well as all his free time. But it is not enough to give satisfaction to his boundless artistic frenzy. He releases the brake, flies to New York or Paris, San Sebastián or Barcelona, all places where he meets new artists and visits new museums. In five or six years he has managed to do what most people can't even do in a lifetime.

If he didn't exist . . .

Presti likes it when I tell him he runs his life over the speed limit and without a safety belt. I feel very close to him because of his vital fury. We have a working relationship. I have put my long experience in the art world at his disposal and introduced him to all my contacts. I organize his dealings with artists. He is very sure of himself; he never doubts his taste. That sometimes disturbs me and it makes me envious when I see the speed and lack of hesitation with which he chooses a work of art or an artist.

Outgoing, extravagant, generous, brilliant, totally unconventional, Antonio Presti thinks of *one* thing and ends up doing a *hundred*.

So there you have him—and his project. A huge outdoor museum. The utopia of art as an electrocution, as a damnation, as an amusement, as pleasure, as joy. He will win at his game. Perhaps many years from now the name of that likeable madman Antonio Presti will be on everyone's lips. And one can apply to him the advertising slogan which says: If it (he) didn't exist, it (he) would have to be invented. ■

Only in Sicily?

Adele Cambria

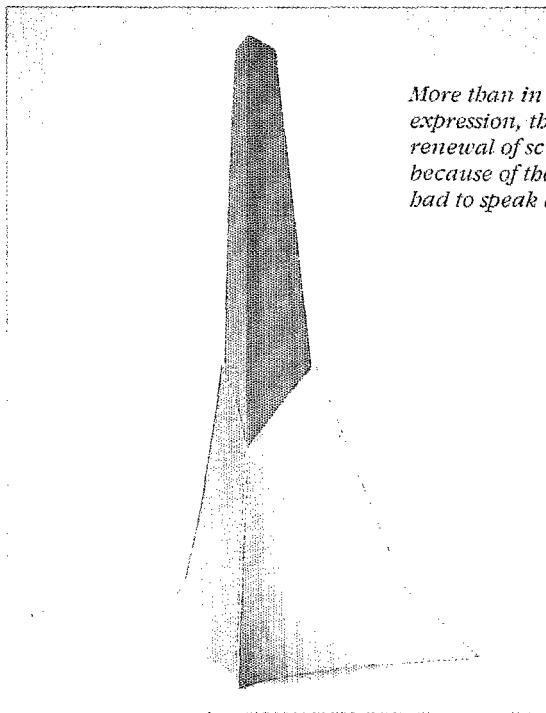
'It's wrong to persecute a widow and orphans. Write that down, write that down.'

What pathos, unimaginable in any other part of the world, in that phrase spoken by Antonio Presti's mother against a flowing yet motionless azure backdrop, the huge *Onda mediterranea* (Mediterranean Wave), a painted cement sculpture by today's *enfant prodige* Italian sculptor, Antonio de Palma. The sculpture, on a hilltop at Motta d'Affermo, overlooking the equally azure Sicilian sea, had just been unveiled complete with all the fanfare for the occasion, banners and standards, the mayor with tricoloured sash and happy children.

Such things, I say to myself, happen perhaps only in Sicily, the land where it is possible to interweave the most outrageous fantasy with the most tender and terrifying maternal love, such devotion to beauty with the horror that comes from a blind and Mafia-riddled bureaucracy.

Some time later Antonio brings me up to date by phone: 'All three court cases have been grouped together in the prefecture. I have been accused of building without a permit. The lawyers tell me not to worry, that a general amnesty will arrive before long. But I don't *want* to be amnestied like a common thief. I have spent money from my own pocket; I in fact did request and obtain the permits required; I made a gift of those sculptures, as I have all the others, to my people, to the inhabitants of the island. So why in heaven's name should I be *amnestied*?'

He is indignant, but in his characteristic mild way and he continues, 'down there' in the deep south, to invent projects and to create not ephemeral events but real, lasting 'things'. 'Now I am restructuring a hotel in Tusa,' he goes on. 'L'Atelier sul Mare (Studio on the Sea), as I have renamed it, has forty-five rooms and each room will be painted by an artist among others: Vedova Perilli, Turcato, Corpora, San



© Zeno Colantoni

More than in any other form of artistic expression, the need is felt today for a renewal of sculpture's language, precisely because of the power sculpture has always had to speak directly to people.

Nino Franchina

Maquette by Nino Franchina for *Controcorrente* (Against the Current), a 25-metre-high steel sculpture now being built to full scale.

Tomaso. And then, there is the water fountain project. Everyone says that in Sicily there is no water. I am planning to follow the map drawn up for me by the old people. I will dig 150 artesian wells. The public fountains linked up to them will be 'reworked' by artists. The third project: a retired people's home which will be built on the cement factory site and decorated by young artists.'

Hieratic

For me, the most intimate experience of his work (if sculpture can be discussed in such terms) was the visit to Italo Lanfredini's labyrinth. To begin with, the colours were striking. We reached the sculpture site just an hour before sunset. During the time it took to go through the labyrinth, the sky grew redder and redder, and the clay which marks the contours of the labyrinth reflected the hue of the sky. During the approximately forty-five minutes it takes to go through the inside of the labyrinth—eight turns made within eight irregular circles, arranged like a tunnel getting smaller and smaller, diminishing from the huge to minute

within the seemingly unending walls—it felt to me as if the warm summer itself were crumbling off those walls and covering our shoulders and arms and becoming absorbed by our very blood. For me, a person from the south, those sensations evoke a torrid passion; who knows why? Perhaps because once, as a child, I unwittingly overheard two lovers murmuring behind a wall still warm from the heat of the day.

When Antonio comes to Rome, I always ask him how Lanfredini's labyrinth is bearing up, high on its deserted hillock face to face with the church of Castel di Lucio. I worry that, abandoned to its own devices without anyone to look after it, the labyrinth will be vandalized, sullied. *Arianna*, the name given to the labyrinth by its sculptor, would not tolerate that.

The memory remains intimate and intense. We were at least fifty people going through the labyrinth at once; and yet, while we were each silently locked in our own thoughts, we also felt tied one to the other. Perhaps the effect was also caused by the singsong yet hieratic tone of our guide Maria Monti's voice. ■

Bomarzo—readings

Oswaldo Rodríguez-Musso



Gigantomachy, or the Combat of the Giants.

If the Park of the Monsters of Bomarzo were a piece of music, it would most probably be a madrigal by the composer Carlo Gesualdo da Venosa, a contemporary of the Duke of Orsini, that other Italian prince who designed the park. Strange forms, daring modulations and pervasive dissonance are typical features of the works of both. And so it was no accident that Museum should have asked a musician, the Chilean composer of vocal music, poet and essayist Oswaldo Rodríguez-Musso (laureate of the French Charles Gros Academy and the Cuban House of the Americas), to explore this unusual garden.

The Leaning House.



To a Latin American who has read the Argentine writer Manuel Mujica Lainez's novel *Bomarzo*,¹ the mere word 'Bomarzo' has magical connotations of the kind that are associated with many leading works of Latin American literature. The only difference is that Bomarzo does not depict a semi-realistic, semi-magical Latin American world but the life of a Renaissance duke tormented by his own physical deformity and hanted by the horrors committed in his name.

With this in mind I set out on the journey that was to take me to the park in the vicinity of Viterbo, one fine Sunday bathed in the autumn light of Italy. Having made my way along winding country roads through the vineyards, I came upon the crenellated wall beyond which lay the tranquil repose of a Renaissance garden. But I was greeted by a teeming throng of trippers from Rome, men with their wives and children and groups of teenagers listening to loud pop music blaring from portable radios. The children were busy with all kinds of games and activities, under the watchful eye of their moth-

ers, while the men were glued, chain-smoking, to a transistor radio tuned in to the commentary of a hotly disputed football match. All this was going on in the midst of cool shady greenery from which emerged huge stone figures of monsters carved out of the rock.

Turning my thoughts away from the fun and games going on unconcernedly around me, I tried to focus my mind on the words of the Argentine writer who had aroused my curiosity, and prompted my visit here.

In Mujica Lainez's novel, the Duke of Orsini tells his life story in the first person. It is in fact an imaginary autobiography, telling us all about his fascinating, turbulent existence and how, until about half-way through his life, he was to portray it through the sculptures he ordered to be carved in the gardens of his palace. According to Mujica Lainez, this esoteric garden 'like nobody but himself' was, in the mind of its creator, a book. A book of stones encapsulating the innermost secrets of his troubled life. A life about which we know very little if we go by the history books, but about which we can imagine a great deal if we follow the paths charted for us by Mujica Lainez.

It may well be asked whether it is logical or even permissible to base an explanation of something as tangible as the sculptures in this extraordinary park on the fantasy of a present-day Argentine author writing about the public and private life of a Renaissance duke. As I see it, though, some historical licence under the guidance of a writer who does, if summarily, draw on fact, is as legitimate here as was the Renaissance painters' habit of clothing the Virgin Mary, her son Jesus and the Twelve Apostles in the elegant Italian tunics of their day, with little regard for the climate of the Sinai desert.

of a park of monsters

Dali tried to buy it

But let us go back to the Duke of Orsini. This is how Mujica Lainez describes the thoughts that went through his mind when he imagined his garden: 'A book of rocks, good and evil in a book of rocks, all the pain that has racked my being, anxiety, poetry and aberration, love and crime, the grotesque and the exquisite. Myself. In a book of rocks. Forever. And in Bomarzo, in my Bomarzo.'

One of the things that surprises the observant visitor most is that these enormous sculptures were not brought here from elsewhere. This would in fact have been impossible to do, judging by their size and weight. They were carved on the spot, out of the natural rock. This fact alone makes the park unlike any other. Mujica Lainez gives us an insight into the Duke's cogitations: 'Each rock held an enigma and each of these enigmas was also a secret belonging to my past and my character. They had to be unlocked . . . for a long time I wandered like a madman in among the rocks, observing them, touching them.'

It so happens that Manuel Mujica Lainez was not the only eminent intellectual to have visited the Sacred Wood. We know that André Breton, Jean Cocteau, André Pieyre de Mandiargues and Salvador Dali were regular visitors. The last-named according to the American critic Paul Hume, tried in vain to buy the park from the Italian Government.

It would be interesting to make a study of the influence that the monsters of the Sacred Wood very probably exerted on the work of these artists, in which monster-figures feature prominently—evidence of cross-cultural influences over a long period of time. The Duke of Orsini's wish to see his name and memory live on down the ages—in other words, his desire for immortal-



The Elephant and Legionary.

1. Manuel Mujica Lainez, *Bomarzo*, Seis Barral Editores, 1980 (First edition: Buenos Aires, 1975.)

All photographs by Arthur Gillette



ity—has thus been fulfilled, finding tangible expression in several works of art of our time. The novel *Bomarzo* has been the inspiration for an opera by one of the most renowned contemporary Argentine composers, Alberto Ginastera, which had its première in the United States in 1967. (In fact, Mujica Láinez was the opera's librettist, and most of the situations described in the novel can be found in the libretto.)

The opera *Bomarzo* by Ginastera and Mujica Láinez was described by the American critic Paul Hume as unrivalled among the music of its time, besides containing scenes 'unparalleled in the history of music'. He refers to a scene in which the Bomarzo monsters are trying to speak:

Each singer in the chorus has to produce *senza voce* and in free, discontinuous rhythms the guttural sounds of the consonants L J G K P N for a period of twenty seconds, the sounds fading out at the end of the episode . . . the scene is that of the ghostly nocturnal prelude and we find ourselves in the middle of the gardens of Bomarzo where the gigantic stone monsters are trying to speak. But the only sound they can utter is an inarticulate frog-like croaking . . . it is a scene of unparalleled fantasy in the history of music.

The opera, which was first performed in Washington, was divided into two acts and fifteen scenes, lasting two hours and twenty minutes, with nine principal singers, and Paul Hume, in

his review, compares it to Monteverdi's *Orfeo*.

But what do we actually know about the Duke of Orsini? Pier Francesco Orsini was born in 1523 and during his lifetime was known by the pseudonym 'Vicino' after his grandfather, who had lived in Florence at the court of the Medicis—in other words, among philosophers and humanists. In 1544 he married Giulia Farnese, a member of another of the oldest Italian families. The couple took up residence in the Palace of Bomarzo and carried on the construction of that dwelling begun by Pier Francesco's father. Legend has it that the young duke murdered his brother in a fit of jealousy and that, like Richard III of England, he was physically deformed, with a hunchback and a withered leg. This did not prevent him from enrolling in the papal army that went to the aid of Charles V in his German campaign of 1546. On his return, he divided his time between the opulent court of Rome and his palace at Bomarzo, where he read *Orlando Furioso*, works by Petrarch and chronicles of journeys to distant countries recommended to him by his close friends, the astrologer and philosopher Cardan and the prelate of Saboya, J. B. Drouet, chaplain to Cardinal Henry of Portugal, who was fascinated by astrology and wrote a poem about the Sacred Wood.²

Roman symbology?

Work began on the garden in 1551, but the Duke spent two years fighting in the war in Flanders, where he was taken prisoner. During his absence, Giulia Farnese and her family completed the work on the Sacred Wood.

Although there is no absolute certainty about the name of the architect responsible for the Sacred Wood, most historians attribute it to the Neapolitan Pyrrho Ligorio, born in 1513. Ligorio, under the patronage of the family of the princes of Carafa, studied drawing and then left for Rome where he studied architecture according to the tradition of the day, whereby architects were given instruction in symmetry, mathematics, perspective, topography and analogy, as well as history, philosophy, astronomy and musical theory. Ligorio became a follower of Raphael and worked at the Vatican, and subsequently on the construction of the Château of Fontainebleau. Until 1551, the year in which work began on Bomarzo, he worked on the Cardinal of Ferrara's gardens at Tivoli, and later, in 1560, on the Quirinal Gardens. He replaced Michelangelo in 1565 as architect of St Peter's, Rome, and died in 1585 while serving at the court of Cardinal Farnese.

For want of any documentary evidence about the particular choice of

Orco, or the Whale.

figures in the park and the presumed order in which they are to be visited, scholars have proposed interpretations based on documents written by Ligorio, such as his vast forty-volume work *The Antiquities of Rome*, in which he describes and interprets the use of mythological monsters in Roman symbolism. Attempts have also been made to find clues in the works of Ligorio's followers, who were presumed to have worked in the Bomarzo gardens—Simone Moschino de Orvieto, Raphael de Montelupo and Curzio Maccarone, of whom the latter two designed remarkable fountains at Viterbo and Tivoli.

There are no doubt common features in all the parks designed throughout the Renaissance period, in keeping with the fashion of the time and the style evolved by architects or sculptors, but we cannot rule out the possibility that it was the Duke of Orsini himself who chose his figures and that, in one way or another, they reflect his own personality, his own way of interpreting his dreams, fantasies, torments or obsessions.

A comparative study of contemporary trends in garden design would take up several volumes, but one example of the kind that arouses the traveller's curiosity is worth citing. Not long ago, in the Federal Republic of Germany, I had occasion to visit a small hunting lodge belonging to the Princes of Würzburg, where I was able to admire the splendid baroque sculptures in the Park of Veitshöchheim, *all of them smiling!* There, too, as at Bomarzo, there are dragons in profusion guarding the steps up to the esplanade of the lodge and the entrance to the grotto which represents hell. And there are also sphinxes—also with smiles on their faces! I wonder whether the architect(s) or the sculptor(s) were responsible for this unexpected mirth; or was it the lord in his castle who decided that it should be so?

Combat of the Giants; Leaning House

Let us dwell for a moment on what we can see from the photographs accompanying this article.

The Combat of the Giants, or Gigantomachy. An enormous rugged-featured figure is gripping the legs of a second—female or androgynous—figure which he is proceeding to tear limb

from limb. Scholars have seen in this struggle the encounter between Hercules, King of Etruria, and Cacus, who terrorized Latium. Or else it might be the struggle between good and evil. Or, again, it may be the arduous, painful labour of one who seeks pure knowledge and, in that search, constantly has to sift through the grossly physical. 'The Gigantomachy of the Sacred Wood is, then, a warning to those who are embarking on the quest for knowledge,' observe F. X. Bouchart and Nadine Beauthéac. To the character in Mujica Lainez's novel, this sculpture represents Pier Francesco Orsini's own struggle with one of his brothers, Maerbale, whom, in the story, he murders.

The Leaning House is an unusual building, about which historians are unable to agree. Most of them claim that its inclined plane is due to a landslide. But Giovanni Bettini maintains that an examination of the actual structure of the rock in which it was carved suggests that the house was designed in this way.³

According to Mujica Lainez's character, the house was built with the following idea in mind:

I resolved to include a special tribute—a singularly caustic one, it must be said—to my intellectual friends. . . . Instead of a sculpture, I thought up the idea of a small building, exquisitely proportioned, but leaning to one side, rising up at an angle to the ground, making it difficult to move around in so confined a space.

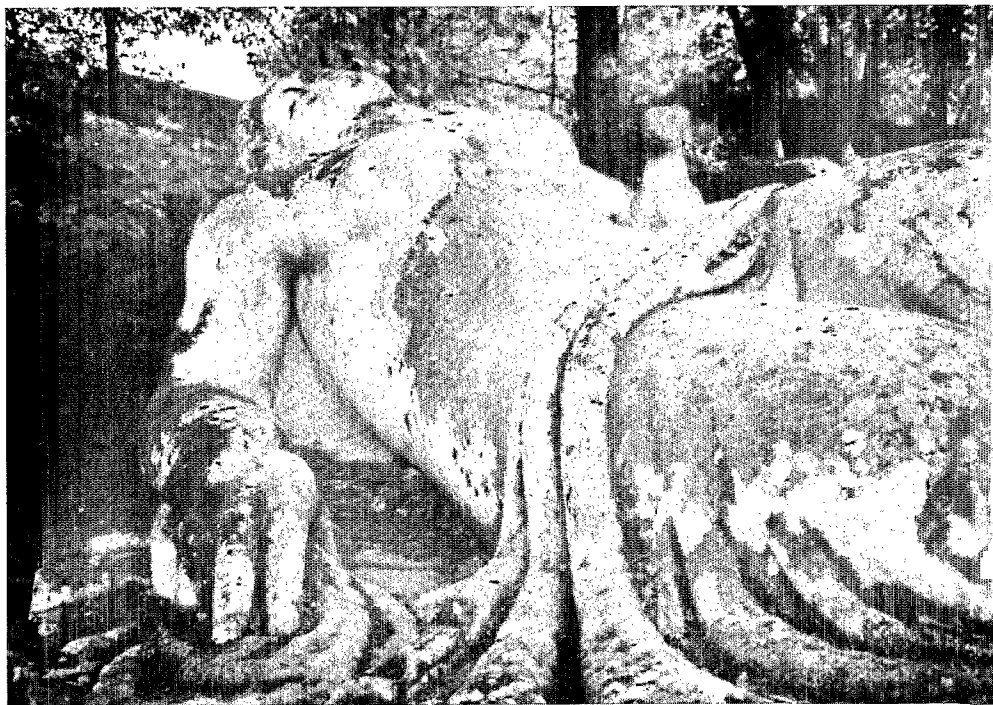
It would not be unreasonable to surmise that the idea of building this strange leaning edifice was thrown up by the Duke's boundless imagination, as yet another of the eccentric features of his park, in imitation of other such constructions he may have met on his travels. I myself have seen at least three even more ancient structures of this kind in Italy, in Milan and Bardolino, quite apart from the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa, which was built at a particular angle to allow for subsidence at the base.

There is nothing unique, either, about Orsini's Elephant as an ornamental feature of a place of recreation: statues of elephants are to be found in Catania; in Rome, on the Piazza Santa Maria sopra Minerva, there is Gian Lorenzo Bernini's last work, produced in honour of Pope Alexander VII, bearing an inscription that refers to the strength of the elephant. The elephant in question is surmounted by an obelisk inscribed with the symbols of Egyptian wisdom. The inscription at the base says that it takes the intelligence and strength of an elephant to sustain the burden of sound knowledge.

2. F. X. Bouchart and Nadine Beauthéac, *Jardins fantastiques*, Paris, CEP, 1982.

3. Giovanni Bettini, *Bomarzo—Parco dei Mostri. Ville delle meraviglie. Guida al Parco dei Mostri*, Viterbo, undated.

The Sleeping Nymph.



The Sea Monster.



The Dragon.

According to Bouchart and Beauchéac, the Duke of Orsini may have had in mind the esoteric legend to the effect that the wisdom of the elephant is mightier than the martial skills of a Roman centurion. Giovanni Bettini, for his part, recalls what Ligorio wrote about the elephant: the wisest of all animals, one that can 'discern good from evil', is magnanimous and proud and vows gratitude and love to the moon, before whose face it sends up a stream of pure water from the fountain in homage to Diana. This alone, adds Bettini, would justify the presence in the park of the greatest of all beasts. But, he continues,

we must not forget that the ancients saw this animal as the incarnation of eternity; moreover, this particular elephant [the Bomarzo one] is depicted crushing a legionary as a reminder that the greatest army of antiquity's most formidable adversary was Hannibal, who destroyed the temple of Ferronia—very close to Bomarzo—and seized the treasure of the Etruscans.

Ligorio, continues Bettini, may also have intended to allude to the fact that one of the first Roman pleasure gardens belonged to Scipio, the African, whose name was associated in sixteenth-century minds with the elephants he used in his armies.

Mujica Láinez takes the sculpted figure of the elephant mounted by a guide and trampling a soldier underfoot as the inspiration and setting for a curious tale. Here the elephant, he maintains, is Annone, presented as a gift to one of the Popes and ridden by Abul, his young and beautiful African slave and guide, who was subsequently given to Vicino

by one of his Medici cousins. At the beginning of Láinez's novel it was Abul who, on the instructions of his young master, the Duke of Bomarzo, slew Beppo, the Duke's brother, while they were out hunting, and then fled the court of Florence, never to be seen again. Chronologically, in Láinez's novel, the elephant was the first of the sculptures to be hewn out of the rock in the park.

The Dragon and the nymph

Bettini tells us that the mouth of the colossal head of the *Orco*, a derivation of Orcus, one of the names given to the Lord of the Inferno, by analogy with the *orca* or killer whale, the most deadly of all whales, is inscribed with Dante's words: *ogni pensiero vola* (all thought fades away). Inside its cavernous mouth, the visitor is greeted with the curious sight of a serving-table and benches, as though this were some ancient tavern where the traveller could find food and rest.

A reproduction of this gigantic marine creature was used as the stage setting in the opera *Bomarzo* by the producer Ming Cho Lee as the central symbol of the Duke of Orsini's tragic fate, for it is here that he retires to mediate as death approaches, having drunk a poisonous draught in the belief that it is the elixir of immortality.

The sculpture of the Dragon in combat with three animals—a dog, a lion and a wolf, which, according to Bettini, symbolize spring, summer and winter, in other words 'the present, the future

and the past'—is probably one of the most striking sculptures in the park. Ligorio held the dragon to be the symbolic custodian of all that is sacred. Bettini expresses some surprise that the sculptor should have given the dragon 'butterfly's wings'. In fact, wings adorned with filigree markings and rings were characteristic of Renaissance representations of dragons, including those in the two allegories of St George by Paolo Uccello.

Láinez takes a different view. In Vicino's mind, the dragon and the two canine figures (there are only two in the novel) symbolize the Duke's military career. The dragon represents Charles V and the two dogs the two campaigns he fought in the Emperor's armies.

Bettini, extrapolating from Ligorio's writings, suggests that the Sleeping Nymph may be Ariadne drowsing between two cupids representing mortal and divine love, or alternatively the nymph to whom Ovid refers and whom Ligorio calls simply Nife, or purity, in Greek etymology. Mujica Láinez's interpretation is that the sleeping nymph represents Pantasilea, a beautiful and renowned courtesan who is said to have lived in Florence at the time of Pier Francesco Orsini and was reportedly instructed by Orsini's grandfather to initiate the young duke in the arts of love. She also plays an important part in Ginastera's opera.

Bettini suggests that the enormous head of the Sea Monster supporting a sphere or symbol of the planet Earth surmounted by a castle may be the head of Proteus, the son of Neptune, though it may also be Glaucus, the fisherman

A French Bomarzo



who was changed into the Sea God after consuming certain magical herbs. But Bettini himself says a little further on that the real significance of this figure lies, rather, in the castle, which represents the power of the Orsinis over the other noble families of their lineage. This is also Mujica Lainez's interpretation.

Our tour would not be complete without some mention of the huge turtle, its shell decorated with geometric symbols, surmounted by a baroque figure, apparently dancing, an enormous figure of Neptune, a twin-headed siren, various other gigantic nymphs, sphinxes and urns, the open-air theatre, the Nymphaea, Venus, Cecere, and the Etruscan stone bench bearing the evocative inscription:

*Voi che pel mondo gite errando,
vaghi di veder maraviglie alte
et stupende,
venite qua, dove son faccie borrende,
elefanti, leoni, orsi, orchi e draghi.*

(You who wander through the world
Eager to see great wonders,
Come hither, where you will find
fearsome images
Of elephants, lions, bears, whales and
dragons.) ■

Upriver from Nantes, on the banks of the Loire, there is a miniature Bomarzo, smaller and more recent than the original one but no less intriguing. Its story has been told by the writer Joël Roussiez and the photographer Philippe Ruault in *La Folie de Monsieur Siffait*.¹ Here are a few passages from the book:

Monsieur Siffait had a great deal of money and a mind to build things. He decided to build something on a piece of land belonging to him. . . .

Monsieur Siffait, a magnanimous soul, employed the jobless victims of the 1848 recession to consolidate, or build . . . what? A great garden? He didn't need a house, for he had his own château nearby. . . .

I am not really very sure any more; I am beginning to wonder. Monsieur Maximilien Oswald Siffait was possessed by this mad impulse to build for the future. He embarked on the creation of an Italian garden, spent a

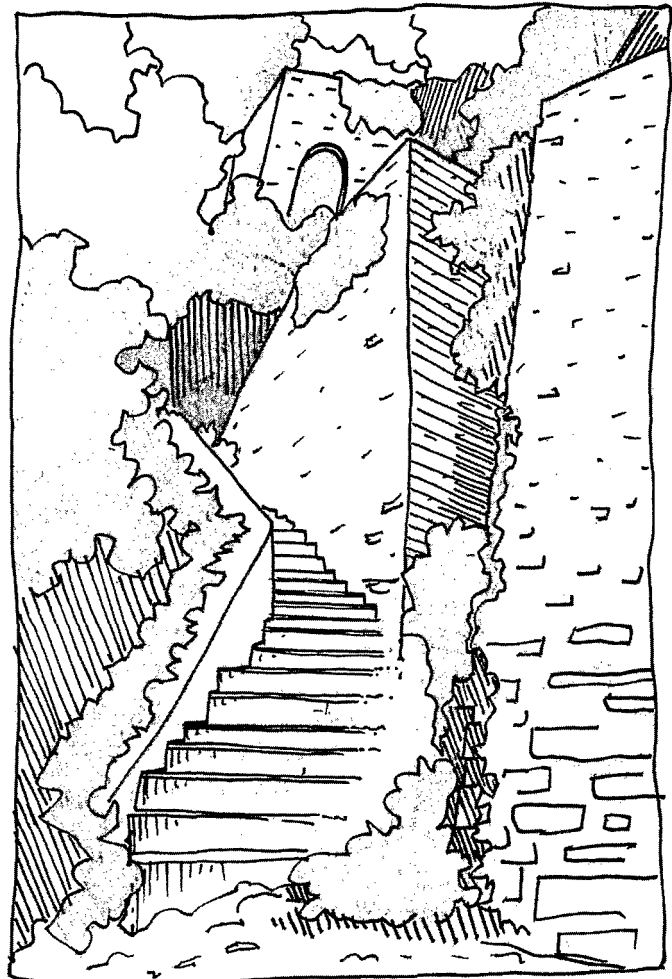
fortune on a house of dreams and ended up with nothing finished and nothing in his pocket.

Something is left, but it seems to me that something else has been lost in the story of Monsieur Siffait. Not sanity, for you need that to build something—no, it is something else that has been lost . . . an island perhaps, the 'lost island' that is still there but could never be seen.

And so I came to discover the Loire, with its sandbanks and a few terraces generously donated by Monsieur Siffait . . . I wander around—anyone, for that matter, can wander around on his land as though they owned it—to be greeted by a wall with nothing behind it, a window-frame with no opening, leading nowhere. I stroll beneath the vaulted jungle into a temple, a sanctuary . . . and I let myself be carried away.



1. Joël Roussiez with Philippe Ruault, *La folie de Monsieur Siffait*, Nantes, Editions Arts-Cultures-Loisirs, 1985.



Steps leading nowhere, having nowhere to lead to.

An innovation: underwater parks

Katerina Delouka

A park under the sea? For oysters, perhaps. But what 'on earth' are oyster-beds doing in this issue of Museum, devoted to gardens of delight? It is simply that underwater parks—well organized, with sign-posted routes and guides who have swapped their peaked caps for diver's masks—do exist and are even beginning to grow in number. To describe them to you, we called on Katerina Delouka from Greece, an experienced diver, an underwater archaeology student at present writing her thesis, and a trainee in our editorial office. For the readers of Museum, she . . . took the plunge.

Jean Rostand wrote: 'Once upon a time, man thought that he was living in a vast and inexhaustible natural environment. He thought that he could waste it and he spoilt it with the excrement from his technology. He is a rough tenant who now realizes that he must show some regard for his earth and his sea.'

People now understand, in fact, that natural resources are far from inexhaustible. The establishment of natural parks has certainly been one factor in this growth of awareness, which should, in its turn, contribute to the survival of our species. Thanks to the parks, at least partial protection of nature is assured and, in addition, the parks have provided a quite ideal place for scientific and leisure activities.

When you hear the words 'natural park', you think of a park on land. However, during the last twenty years or so, underwater parks have begun to appear, frequently covering fairly extensive areas. What are their principal characteristics? First of all, they contain one or more ecosystems which have been transformed little or not at all by human exploitation or occupation. The areas they cover are of special scientific, educational and recreational interest or else they contain real natural landscapes of great aesthetic value. Secondly, they are administered by

some high authority, which takes steps to see that their ecological, geomorphic and aesthetic aspects are not endangered. Finally, there are definite rules permitting the park to be visited on certain conditions for recreational, educational and cultural purposes.

A distinction nevertheless needs to be drawn between underwater parks and underwater reserves. The prime purpose of the reserves is to preserve the most valuable parts of the natural subaquatic heritage. They therefore exist only to serve science, and particularly to ensure the preservation and reproduction of ecosystems and animal species that are heading for extinction. Exceptional cases apart, they are not open to the public and any recreational activity therein is strictly forbidden.

On with your flippers

To come back to underwater parks: the staff there are concerned only to see that nature is protected and that the diver/visitor comes to no harm. They therefore ensure that a number of rules be observed. For example: (a) any kind of underwater hunting is forbidden; (b) fishing with a net or line is forbidden; (c) for everyone's peace and safety, boats must observe a speed limit; (d) the use of rockets (e.g. in case of distress) is forbidden; and (e) all divers are responsible for their own safety during the underwater visit.

Once the diver/visitor has undertaken to follow these rules, the silent world of the sea will be ready to reveal secrets which are doubly profound. It is not, in fact, just a question of a physical feat consisting of moving in three dimensions in an environment which at first sight may seem hostile, but also a matter of preparing oneself for a psychological change, that of getting away from daily life and feeling different, unique, at least for a few hours. One just needs proper equipment (e.g. air bottles, flippers and a mask) for the adventure to begin. The destination? The underwater parks of Port-Cros



The author.

(France), the Northern Sporades (Greece) or Eilat (Israel), for instance.

The Island of Port-Cros lies off the coast of the Var department, among the Iles d'Hyères, in the Mediterranean. The underwater park there forms a band 600 metres wide round its shores, covering an area of about, 1,800 hectares. The varied underwater relief (which goes down to 80 metres at its deepest point) means that it is home to highly diversified fauna and flora which are perfectly representative of life in the Mediterranean. There is, for example, a plant there called *Posidonia oceanica* in honour of the Greek god of the sea. It is not a seaweed but a genuine marine plant that flowers and fruits. It grows in 'forests' that play an essential role since they facilitate the oxygenation of the water and at the same time provide shelter and food for fish, which also reproduce there.

Animal life in the Port-Cros Park is equally interesting. Among the channels and caverns formed (like works of architecture) by the calcareous alga *Lithophylla* ('stone leaf'), glide lobsters and a large number of fishes such as croakers, rainbow wrasse and scorpion fish, whose continual comings and goings offer a feast of shape, movement and colour to the visitor's eye.

The living and the imaginary

Another Mediterranean sea-bed is to be found in the Northern Sporades Park in Greece. The water here is warmer than

at Port-Cros, which favours the growth of delicate plants like the marine iris and of that animal disguised as a plant, the madrepora. Here, too, as a pleasant surprise, is *Monachus monachus*, a typically Mediterranean seal which is, unhappily, becoming extinct.

Let's come up to the surface again now and go to southern Sinai and the Gulf of Eilat, where there is an underwater park of the same name. Here the flora and fauna are a mixture of species, some of which are still Mediterranean and others already quite tropical, like the 150 kinds of red and soft coral, for

example. The range is quite astonishing because it extends from the most primitive forms of under-sea life to those which are highly intelligent and complex. While we might be enchanted by this profusion of life, however, we should still be on our guard because the dorsal spines of the sea scorpions and stone-fish, passing behind the coral reef over there, can paralyse or even kill the careless diver.

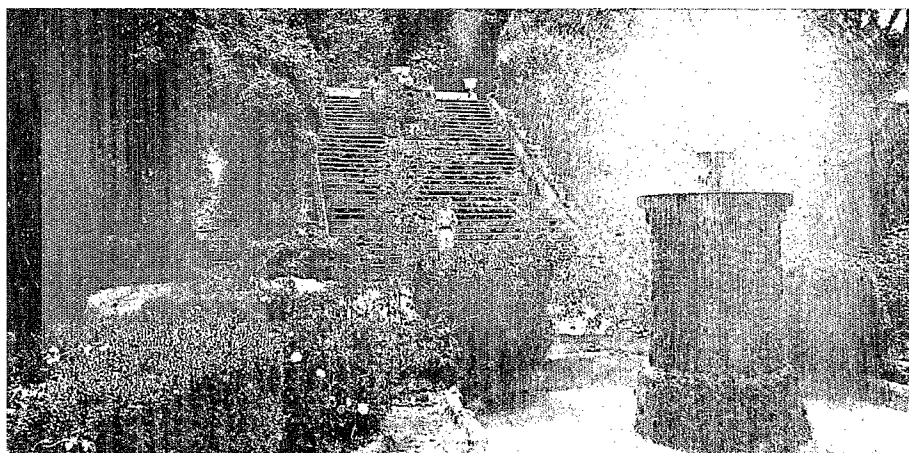
Well, our trip is ending. Before we say goodbye, however, I should like to express one small regret, which is that I have not found in many underwater

parks a dimension which would have made it possible to prolong the pleasure of underwater discovery. What I have in mind are traces of human life. In the Port-Cros park, many wrecks have been kept, with a whole living universe around them, as well as an imaginary universe which is primarily in the mind of the diver/visitor. This, however, is just an exception which, in my opinion, is much too rare. In addition, even there, no effort has been made to develop the archaeological side of things. ■

Spain: a seventeenth-century park remodelled

How can a garden created as long ago as the end of the seventeenth century be put to use in 1991, the age of ecology, when the fight is on to preserve the treasures of nature and even nature itself? The answer is to be found in the El Retiro Biopark near Málaga in Spain with its many original features, which are described below in a joint article by the team responsible for creating the park. It was written in 1990, on the eve of the inauguration of the old garden in its new form.

Fray Alonso, founder of El Retiro.



El Retiro: the Court Garden in the 1920s.

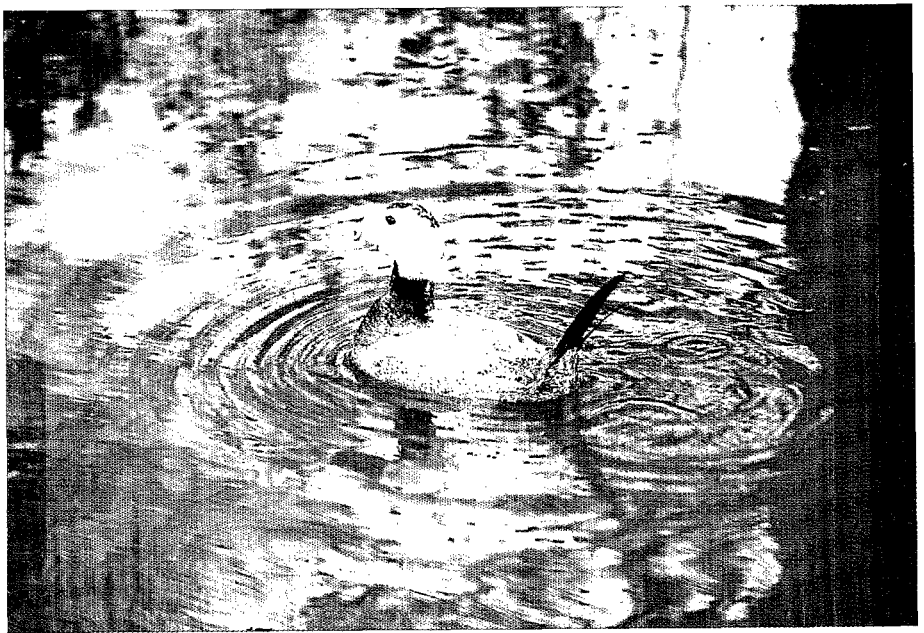
Disappearing flora and fauna, and the constant threat to species that have so far survived, are facts about which the public must be informed, in order to foster enough active awareness to hold in check in the short, medium and long term the deterioration of our essential natural environment that has already begun. That environment has influenced the world's cultures in their manifold expressions, as tradition, language, music, crafts and so forth.

The philosophy of the team introducing this project to *Museum* readers concentrates on two aspects of the present relationship between humanity, culture and nature. First, the break with the natural environment and, second, a certain falling off in the creativity which human beings undoubtedly possess

and which could be employed to attain our goal. The goal that is our main theme in this article? Safeguarding nature and the historical and artistic heritage. The human race has not devoted itself solely to the destruction of its environment but has also managed to embellish the natural landscape in a responsible manner with much that it has created.

The designers of the El Retiro project were consciously looking for a model achievement which would be the corner-stone of a philosophy seeking to encourage this force for the creation of beauty, and at the same time re-establishing contact with the environment through emotional, creative and hence active participation in culture and nature and the safeguarding of both.

Oxyura leucocephala: El Retiro and southern Spain in general constitute one of the last refuges of this species on our planet.



But what are the aims of the El Retiro project? They are:

- To reclaim, conserve and enhance a historic garden which was declared to be of outstanding beauty (*jardín artístico*) in 1984 by a royal decree issued by the Ministry of Culture.
- To bring city-dwellers closer to nature, and thus to further cultural and ecological issues, by giving them a shared goal: the protection of flora and fauna in general and plants and birds in particular.
- To create a centre for the study of botany and ornithology with special emphasis on the protection of ornithological and botanical species.
- To work with organizations and institutions concerned with environmental protection, nature study and environmental education.
- To provide a type of cultural and educational pastime previously unknown in the Iberian peninsula.
- To encourage the public to safeguard nature and also whatever embellishes it, including, in this case, the El Retiro estate.

El Retiro is situated 11 kilometres from the historic and artistic centre of Málaga and just 15 minutes from the international airport of that cosmopolitan city on the shores of the Mediterranean. The area enjoys a subtropical climate and its temperature reflects the mildness of the Mediterranean with an average of over 12 °C in the coldest month; there are more than 100 days of cloudless skies and an annual total of more than 2,900 hours of sunshine, equivalent to an average of 240 sunny days. It is, of course, this weather that attracts some 6 million people every year to the region, which is known as the Costa del Sol (Sun Coast).

Arab, English, French, Italian

The variety of ecosystems in the province of Málaga, together with the features described above, provide suitable conditions for the cultivation and development of a very large number of plant species. This fact is confirmed by the way in which many botanical species from different parts of the world have adapted easily to this natural setting.

The gardens of El Retiro form part of the old estate of Santo Tomás del Monte. The estate was founded by the Dominican friar Alonso de Santo Tomás, a fascinating figure who was said to be the son of the Spanish king Philip IV, and who was Bishop of Málaga between 1664 and 1692. It was Fray Alonso's intention to create a place where he himself and the members of his congregation could find the seclusion required by all religious orders, hence the name of El Retiro (the retreat) by which the gardens have been known ever since. At first, El Retiro was a kitchen garden where the friars grew fruit and vegetables for their own needs, and where plant species brought from the far-off countries in which the Dominicans exercised their apostolate were gradually introduced.

On Fray Alonso's death, the estate passed to the monastery of Santo Domingo, and in 1699 was acquired by the first Count of Buenavista, Don José Guerrero Chavarino, who was very probably of Genoese origin. Some 100 years later, when it was owned by the third Count of Buenavista, the famous architect Don José Martín de Aldehuela made certain stylistic changes to the garden which to this day account for the charm of the overall effect: formal

French gardens decorated with marble and terracotta statues and sculptures, alternating with others landscaped in the English style or else inspired by Italian baroque. The whole design shows Arab influence, with waterworks and fountains.

The public's knowledge of ornithology and botany is not usually very extensive. One of the purposes of El Retiro is therefore to provide better environmental education and foster awareness of conservation issues. But no lasting results would be achieved if visitors were saturated with too much information. Moreover, there would be no way of compensating for people's dwindling receptiveness and powers of concentration over a period of time. The aim is to introduce a dramatic flavour, as if this were a theatrical work: the initial contact with El Retiro becomes an introduction to the main characters and events, and the work builds up to a surprising, and above all unexpected, climax which fixes it in the memory. It is possible to avoid psychological saturation and to impose a dramatic framework only by making sure that there are not too many species in the cast and by establishing a one-way system with no side paths, thus guaranteeing the constant emotional involvement which any work of art demands.

Well-defined natural areas are being established around the historic garden where, according to rigorous scientific studies, birds and plants will be able to complete their full biological cycles. The various components of these biotopes are strictly maintained in order to ensure the balance necessary to sustain the natural dynamics and behaviour of the organisms living in these natural settings.

El Retiro covers an area of nearly 17 hectares. The park selects cultivated specimens which most nearly fit our requirements and which are listed in the registers of the relevant national and international bodies. Thus the present populations in the countries of origin are not affected. As we know, many of these populations are severely diminished. Given the alarming decrease in a large number of species, we are sure that our efforts can contribute to an appreciable improvement in their current situation.

We have opted for an aviary design that is both simple and sophisticated, with spacious enclosures varying in size from 80 to 1,000 m² to a height of 5 metres covered with fine mesh of a certain shade designed to make it virtually imperceptible to the human eye. These aviaries provide the birds with almost complete freedom. There are other major features which also contribute to the well-being of the birds and to the enjoyment and active involvement of the visitors.

A 'loan' repaid with interest

The aviaries and observation points are positioned so that visitors always view the biotopes from south to north. The setting resembles a theatre in the sense that the spectators find themselves in an area of relative darkness created by the plant cover while they are viewing the biotope, which in this analogy corresponds to the sunlit stage. At each observation point we provide brief but expressive introductory information, so as to make visitors want to discover the specimens at close hand. This is one of the main reasons for limiting the number of species and specimens. On the botanical side, other specimens are being added to those already present at El Retiro, representing some eighty botanical species from all over the world, selected according to various criteria such as climate and soil conditions, compatibility with the vegetation already in the garden, and style, size, form, colour, flowering time, hardiness or sensitivity. In the kitchen garden (*jardín-buerto*), following the tradition of the friars in the seventeenth century, we are increasing the number of species by adding tropical and subtropical fruit trees such as custard apple, mango and pawpaw as well as medicinal, ornamental, industrial, aromatic spices, and so forth.

Teachers from primary and secondary schools will be able to organize

practical programmes on ornithological, botanical and related topics in conjunction with El Retiro, so that their pupils can verify in the field the material taught in class and thus consolidate their knowledge through visual experience. There will be a lecture hall for these schoolchildren where nature will be the main subject taught.

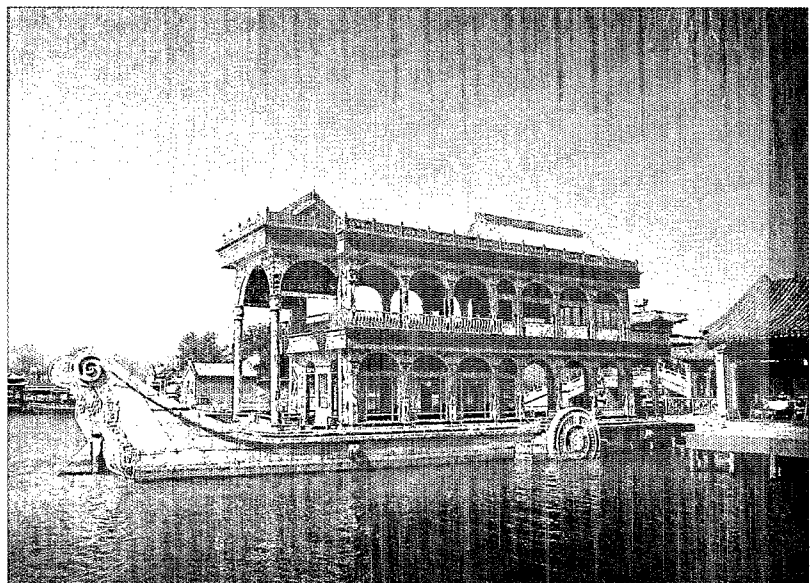
Our environmental education assistants will devise walks on selected themes and set up children's conservation committees, competitions, specific *ex situ* projects and excursions to other natural areas. A wide range of facilities will also be provided for students and scientists in biology, veterinary science, ornithology and botany. In this section we are also thinking of laying out a special garden for the blind, who will be able to enjoy the flora in the garden through the senses of touch and smell.

A specialist library, a museum on the history of El Retiro and a video projection service will add to the effectiveness of the educational work. Future

plans include the publication of a newsletter on recent events and short-, medium- and long-term projects. Our mobile environmental education unit will also visit schools in the region. We shall be publishing a full general guide to El Retiro as well as specific guides on art, ornithology and botany. Other publications will deal with such subjects as seasonal changes and their consequences for the cycles of flora and fauna, whether represented at El Retiro or otherwise.

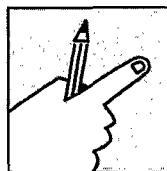
In conclusion we should like to say—and this is the core of our credo—that the El Retiro Biopark will be a project requiring a 'loan' from nature and culture which will be paid back with interest. We also see the project as a means towards understanding between all the world's peoples, and in this spirit we invite readers of *Museum* who are interested in our point of view and our concerns to contact us at the following address: Bioparque El Retiro, Apartado de correos 885, Málaga, (Spain). Telephone 62.15.80; fax 43.61.51. ■

FOLLY IN A CHINESE GARDEN



What could be more natural than a small paddle-wheel steamer on the vast lake in the gardens of Beijing's Imperial Summer Palace? Look again: the steamer is, in fact, made of marble, a 'folly' dreamed up by the Dowager Empress Ci Xi at the beginning of this century and funded with resources originally intended to beef up China's war fleet. Even had the money been spent on guns instead of this eccentric toy, was it not too late to change the fate awaiting the Qing Dynasty?





What's wrong with clutter?

Len Deighton

Since attending the Royal College of Art (on scholarship), he has flown helicopters, worked as a waiter, directed art for a London advertising agency, and written two cookery books, not forgetting some thirty highly-researched thrillers which—beginning with The Ipress File and ranging on through such bestsellers as Horse Under Water (a submarine, in case you were wondering), Yesterday's Spy, Funeral in Berlin and Goodbye Mickey Mouse—grippingly chronicle wars both hot and cold. How could someone with the Renaissance curiosity and versatility of Len Deighton not hold strong views about museums? These he states in this article, written specially for Museum.

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'Museum'—it's not a word to be used lightly. A car far past its prime is said to be suited to a museum. Recently I heard a writer disdainfully condemn an inconveniently big word processor as something that should be in a museum. (It was mine, actually.) I visited a grand house not so long ago. When afterwards my wife said it was like a museum, she was not admiring it.

It is said that 'when things are old and broken and useless, we throw them away, but when they are very old, very broken and totally useless we put them in a museum'. Museum authorities are aware of these feelings abroad and have done something drastic about it. They have invented 'the museum experience'. It is an opportunity to hear the sounds of an ancient lute emerging from a respectable Greek vase. BBC-style sound effects—thunder and the anguished cries of actors wielding sword and club—are offered as a means to the better understanding of ancient battles. The 'experience' began as a desperate attempt to breathe life into waxwork shows and became big business as it extended its activities into the museum world.

Once museums were warehouses that stored the nation's heritage. In antiquity a museum (*mouseion*) was a centre where priests, scholars, mathematicians and astronomers worshipped the Muses, drank a glass of wine or read through the collected writings. Today's museums date from the French Revol-

ution when books, paintings, silver, furniture and all manner of other treasures were seized from the Church and from the great houses to become public possessions.

More recently museums became collections which emphasized the development of science or—as Europeans explored the world—helped the study of ethnology. Such scientific purposes guided the work of the British Museum (London) so that its Assyrian reliefs, Sir William Hamilton's collection of classical vases and the Phrygian and Elgin marbles were brought there for scientific study rather than as the great works of art that they are today.

Soon a distinction developed between 'galleries' where the emphasis is upon the aesthetic and 'museums' which are concerned with a wide range of collections. These vary from applied art or science to the specialized ones, like the artillery museum in Leningrad. Some experts categorize 'museums' as collections that benefit from being placed within a historical context, while 'galleries' house items that are better viewed for their aesthetic appeal. One expert deplored the influence wielded by art historians:

It is an occupational hazard of art historians that they may know all there is to know about a work of art, all that anyone has ever said about it, and yet be unable to contemplate it aesthetically as a work of art.¹

Many of my artist friends feel that the traditional arrangement of the gallery is unsatisfactory because its paintings are always in chronological order. The building thus became an illustrated history of art, and the visitor too much concerned with the way that schools of painting evolved to look at each painting for its own sake.

Plastic labyrinth

I sympathize with this point of view as I see the cult of sociology get an ever firmer grip upon the world of art. While most critics of the written word can put a sentence or two together, few, if any, art critics have any idea of how to draw or paint. This disability is more than made up for by an abundance of social observations. Typically a lecture, or film, on 'art' ignores the paint, the technical methods, the drawing skills and stated intentions of the artist but develops simplistic theories about contemporary political and social forces that reduce the artist to no more than an intermediary. It would be most unfortunate if galleries followed this trend.

Many professionals fear that in the new changes galleries and museums will lose their close association with real scholarship, conservation and research. 'The spiritual decline of our museums is not progress,' stated one museum official who left to work with a private company,² 'and money freely spent at the turnstiles is dangerously irrelevant when the intellectual foundations of the institutions have been fatally undermined.'

For many years museums had remained unchanged. The scholar was welcomed and invited to stay to lunch; the public was tolerated (providing no one spoke above a whisper and the staff were not pestered with questions). Most of the world's museums are still like this and with ample government funding will remain so. But for many museum directors the 1980s was a time of change. They soon discovered that government policy about funding meant that museums were asked to become 'financially viable'. Trustees—often government appointed—brought in a more commercial breed of museum director. The public were charged for admission and as bearers of funds they had to be enticed. Museums became a part of the \$150 billion a year entertainment industry, and for many of the new directors 'entertainment' meant 'theatre'. If designers rejected these commercial ideas—and I know more than one who did—more compli-

ant designers were sought out. There had to be sound and smoke and banks of video screens interminably repeating scratched loops of film, most of which owed more to Hollywood than to scholarship. A visit to a museum had become an 'experience'.

Whatever they knew about art or science, the new directors, and their trustees, knew what they wanted. They spent vast sums of money to build synthetic environments that were history with all the nasty bits removed. Museum directors made sure their designers understood that the typical family wanted an untroubled outing. Oh what crimes were committed in the name of that typical family! More and more museum treasures taken down into the store rooms. The museum became a plastic labyrinth through which paying visitors filed to the accompaniment of echoing effects with music and commentary. It could usually be heard faintly throughout the entire building; and could be speeded up to get the crowds through faster in the busy times.

The trouble was that museums, already short of cash, were often brought near to bankruptcy by these massive design jobs. Certainly there was little money left to increase the collections or to repair their decaying buildings. Museum shops grew bigger and more glittering, and the goods they sold more and more tawdry. Additionally, they were to find that a family, who used to go back to a museum again and again to discover new and wonderful dusty treasures, decided that an expensive 'experience' was not something to be repeated too often. And while the old-fashioned museum was something to enlarge, illuminate and extend your reading and study, the 'experience' was a passive entertainment that satisfied rather than stimulated.

Collections face difficulties and it is hardly surprising that controversy has flared around the changes taking place in London's mighty Victoria and Albert Museum of 'fine and applied arts of most countries, periods and styles'. It is a vast collection of some 5 million pieces ranging from modern bookplates to old lace and embroidery, from silverware to tin toys. Its newly appointed director changed its name to the National Museum of Art and Design, and staged exhibitions of photographs by Linda McCartney, the belongings of Elton John and displays of knitting and modern hosiery. Saatchi & Saatchi adverts for the museum showed a disembodied hand fondling

1. Harold Osbourne, in *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* (special issue on Art Museums and Education), summer 1985.

2. Peter Cannon-Brookes, who was at the National Museum of Wales.

the breast of a statue, and gave jokey emphasis to the museum's cafeteria: 'An ace caff with quite a nice museum attached—where else do they give you £100,000,000 worth of *objets d'art* free with every egg salad?'

This new approach was not universally admired. Said a former V&A director:

The trouble with the museum's present policies—jiving in front of the Raphael cartoons, Saatchi advertisements in the subway, sales of commercial knitwear from Habitat in the museum galleries—is that they inhibit serious visitors to the museum.

Having drawn blood, he added:

The London public is, in my experience, less demanding, less educated, and less educable than the public in New York, but it is still more intelligent and more critical than present policies suggest.³

That educable New York public was not to be deprived of the new approach however, and a London-based Curator said of the Metropolitan Museum of Art: 'It has become a super-store on Fifth Avenue, a frenzied experience where the calm necessary to enjoy a work of art is denied one.'⁴

In fact the Met kept its standards high, and museum directors in the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Italy were not under such pressure as were their colleagues elsewhere. In Paris, a lot of money was spent in converting an old railway station into the Musée d'Orsay. One architectural expert said it was like

a Cecil B. de Mille stage set for some Hollywood spectacular of the fall of this or the fall of that. [It was] an aggressive orgy of ornamental excess, and nowhere is it possible to escape from intrusions on the eye. The worst experience is the total visual destruction of the Gauguins and neo-Impressionists.⁵

Sell off surplus objects?

The National Maritime Museum at Greenwich is a treasured jewel and changes there had one museum professional get to the heart of the problem. Distinguishing between subject and object has become a key factor in the arguments:

In proclaiming the National Maritime a 'Subject Museum' rather than an 'Objects Museum', and stating that its collections are only there for the maritime stories they tell, [Director] Ormond made a point which he must know to be only partially true, else why does he not convert his entire Museum into a theme park and sell off all objects surplus to the requirements.⁶

Still resisting the radical new ideas are specialist museums. They are not rich enough for the 'experience' and their style is difficult to change. This particularly applies to collections of large artefacts. At Bovington, Dorset, United Kingdom, the chronically underfunded Tank Museum is simply a collection of 160 armoured vehicles crammed into a huge tank hanger and overflowing, so that some stand outdoors. The descriptive material and supporting research is expert, the result excellent. In France, directly on the autoroute near Cannes, a group of car collectors preserve their superb vintage treasures in a modern building that is both museum and garage. In Munich the Deutsches Museum offers an excellent display of everything from aeroplanes to pianos. Under the museum there is a coal mine but it is made from the authentic machinery from an old mine and has nothing of the 'theme park' about it. Another museum defying the onslaught of designers is H.M.S. *Belfast*, a Second World War cruiser anchored in the Thames near the Tower of London.

This cruiser is a part of London's Imperial War Museum. The museum library staff—wise and helpful—have over the years played an important part in the work of most writers of military history. The museum itself has long been cherished by visitors from near and far. I know of two experts who came across the Atlantic solely to see its truly amazing clutter of uniforms, posters, badges, artillery pieces, biplanes and some of the best paintings on show in London.

There is no clutter there now. The wonderful old museum building—the infamous Bedlam lunatic asylum in earlier days—has been totally refurbished. An extra 4,600 m² of floor space provides a chance for each exhibit to be placed like a diamond-encrusted piece in the window of the sort of jeweller's shop that doesn't display its prices. Said one architectural writer:

Laid out like sculptures in the new shopping centre-style exhibits gallery . . . surrounded by a sprinkling of clinically clean field guns with a sanitized Spitfire, Mustang and Focke Wulf 190 overhead, these tanks epitomize the dead hand of museum culture.

The writer continues:

No wonder its finest hour is the 'Blitz Experience'—a portrayal of largely imaginary civilian heroism in a spacious air raid shelter.⁷

Homesick in Hungary

Small museums, such as the elegant little Watch Museum in Vienna, show how to be simple and effective. The tiny London museum of Jewish Life (Finchley, London) is a magnificent example of what can be done on a shoestring. The Clark shoe factory at Street (Somerset, United Kingdom) has a tiny museum of shoes which I found captivating. In Los Angeles, Douglas, the aircraft manufacturers, display their vintage wares in an elegant setting surmounted by a fine restaurant. London's Musical Museum (better known as the Piano Museum) is a deconsecrated church in Brentford High Street. It is packed tight with samples of every kind of keyboard instrument, many of them mechanical. With several operating at the same time the music is raucous, resonant and delightfully atonal.

Museum design does not have to be bad. The Burrell Collection in Glasgow provides a fine example of what can be achieved by designers in harmony with their task. This staggering collection of ceramics, vases, reliefs and paintings is housed in a 1983 red sandstone building brilliantly sited against woodland. We should not dwell upon the scandals and incompetence that followed upon Sir William Burrell's bequest to Glasgow Corporation so long ago. Let's rather rejoice that finally it stands here as an example of outstanding museum design.

The houses of famous people can also be revealing. In Vienna a visit to the crooked little house of Mozart, the light and airy house of Haydn and the sombre house of Freud provide experiences that linger when the Palace of Schönbrunn is thankfully forgotten. From Vienna a short trip over the Hungarian border can provide a visit to the Esterhazy palaces (both winter and summer), and you can relive there the fretting of homesick musicians that led Haydn to write his 'Farewell' Symphony. The tiny country cottage in which T. E. Lawrence (of Arabia) lived is another house that provides an insight to the former occupant. (It is near the Tank Museum: a visitor can make a sortie from London and visit both.)

I suppose I particularly enjoy the more modest kind of historic houses for I can remember many of them, from Lord Leighton's astounding tiled Arab-style dwelling in Holland Park Road (London) to the distinctly less glittering houses of Renoir and Escoffier that I

visited in southern France. What a delight it always is to see London's Geffrye Museum where early-eighteenth-century almshouses now contain a series of rooms representing domestic interiors from 1600 to 1939. Other favourites include the Sir John Soane's Museum and the Wallace Collection. Both are collections of antiquities and works of art in beautiful London houses.

The treasures we leave for our children to wonder at are in the hands of museum directors, trustees and museum designers. Skilled designers must have a deep respect for the exhibits and an understanding of all the problems that currently torment museum officials; but above all they must be willing and able to confront any bad ideas that come from those officials. By all means let's attract school parties and those who want only an afternoon out. But let's not replace our great collections—of art or science—with plastic experiences.

The fundamental desire of the artist is to impose order upon the chaos of nature. This desire extends to most human beings and leads to authoritarian rule and tyranny. The museum director should resist the temptation to get rid of clutter. ■

3. Sir John Pope Hennessy, writing in *The New York Review*, 27 April 1989.

4. John Harris, Curator of the British Architectural Library's Drawing Collection and Heinz Gallery in a letter to the *Independent* (London), 16 February 1989.

5. John Harris, (former curator of the RIBA drawings collection) writing in the *Architectural Journal*, 4 March 1987.

6. John Mallet (lately Keeper of Ceramics at the V&A) in a letter to the *Arts Review*, 1 December 1989.

7. Martin Pawley, *Architect's Journal*, August 1989.



Koreans living abroad lend a hand

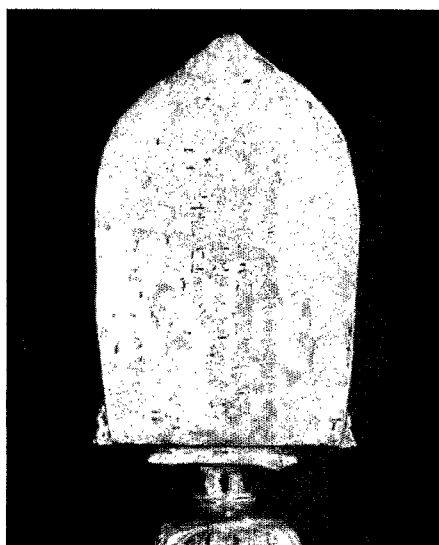


The sculpture returned to Pyongyang comprises a Buddha in the centre flanked by two Bodhisattvas, against a finely worked screen and mounted on a plinth decorated with lotus motifs.

On the back of the sculpture is an inscription indicating that the piece was made in A.D. 539 at the Ranklang Temple in Pyongyang by the monk Beubyong acting on the instructions of the monk Yeun, who wished to celebrate the existence of life in this way.

The way home for cultural property travelling back to its country of origin is not always as tortuously institutional or bureaucratic as it might seem at first glance. A case in point is the Korean triple statuette, over 1,400 years old, which recently went back to Pyongyang, its town of origin, after more than fifty years spent abroad, and about which the National Commission for Unesco of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was kind enough to provide *Museum* with the following information.

First, the object in question. It is 32 cm high, and consists of a Buddha flanked by two Bodhisattvas, the group backed by a screen and resting on a plinth decorated with lotus motifs. A forty-six-character inscription in vertical lines on the back of the screen gives a precise clue to the origin of the treasure. It was made at the Ranklang Temple in Pyongyang, now capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in the year Kimi, the seventh year of the Yeunga years of the Koryŏ era (that is A.D. 539). The work was done by the monk Beubyong on the instructions of the monk Yeun, who wished to have a thousand such sculptures distributed in order to celebrate the existence of life.



But let us take a closer look at certain aspects of the work, which is quite outstanding, even though another similar one was discovered in 1963. First, the central Buddha: the smooth top-knot of hair, the tranquil smile 'in the old style', the hands with palms extended wide open towards the observer—a gesture signifying absence of fear (and reminiscent of certain later Christian statues of the early Middle Ages)—all these features, along with the V-shaped folds of the robe, express the imagination of their creator. The same is true of the fine crowns and individual lotus-patterned plinths of the Bodhisattvas and the decoration—flame-tree flowers and stems of climbing plants—on the screen. *

There and back

The work was discovered in Pyongyang in 1931 during the Japanese occupation of Korea, on the site of what had been the Royal Palace in the Koryŏ era. A Japanese took the statuette home with him. But for it, it was not to be a one-way trip.

It was in fact a Korean living in Japan, O Il Hwan, who, half a century later and with great patriotic sentiment, bought the statuette along with some ten others at a very high price. He contacted the General Association of Koreans Resident in Japan in order to have the Buddha and Bodhisattvas sent back. And so they were, in December 1985. Today they are on display in their home town (if it can be so called) at the Central Museum of Korean History in Pyongyang.

This is only one instance among hundreds of others where Koreans living abroad have been instrumental in sending back to their country of origin cultural property which had been lost to it.

Photos by courtesy of the National Commission for Unesco of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea



Trinidad de Cuba:

historic, romantic, combative

Marta Arjona

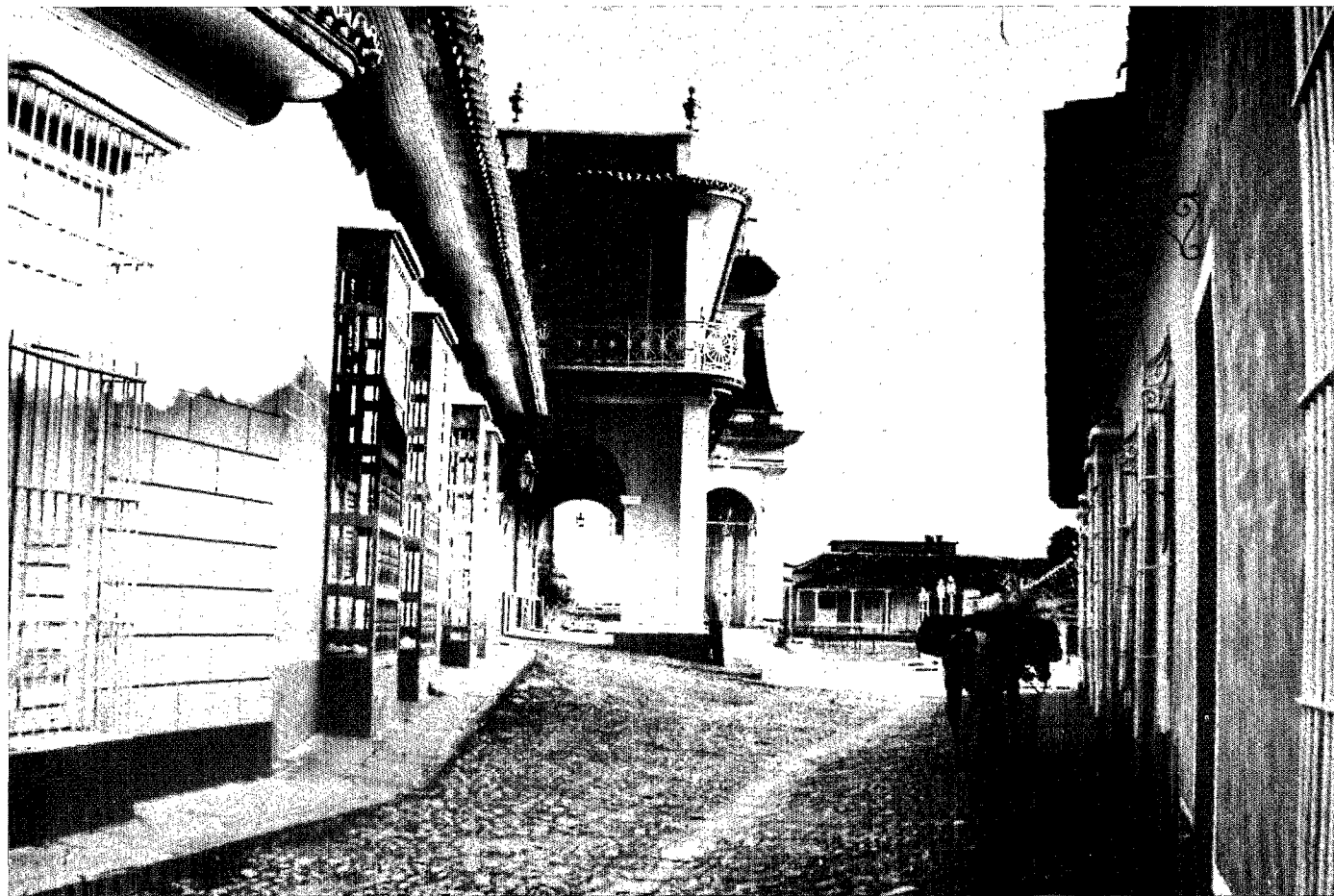
How can museums be mobilized to bring to life the history of a Caribbean town that has been in existence for nearly five centuries? Marta Arjona, Director of the Cultural Heritage of Cuba and member of the Executive Council of ICOM, offers an answer.

The town of Trinidad, founded in 1514 on the southern coast of central Cuba and one of the most outstanding testimonies to the urban architecture of Cuba and Latin America, is on the World Heritage List of Unesco's Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and epitomizes the old settlements founded on the island and throughout the Caribbean by Spain.

The historic urban centre of Trinidad covers an area of 37 hectares and possesses various cultural and social facilities that provide a permanent socio-cultural service for a population that includes a large number of young people and schoolchildren. Museums occupy a distinguished place among the cultural facilities of the town, which has been gradually organizing its cultural heritage and, in so doing, has rescued a great many objects and historical material. It has so far succeeded.

Seen through the window of a museum, a city that is almost a museum in itself.

All photographs by courtesy of the Dirección del Patrimonio Cultural de Cuba



in establishing five museums containing substantial collections and is now working on a project for a museum of the flora and fauna of the Valle de los Ingenios, 5 kilometres away from the historic centre.

The first museum to be established in Trinidad was the Museo Romántico, which was set up in 1974 in the Palacio Brunet, an eighteenth-century mansion. Its collection comprises mainly eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Cuban furniture and porcelain, glassware and lamps of the same period. It is one of the most complete collections of decorative art of the time, and in Trinidad it remains a testimony to the life of affluence of a society the growth of whose resources kept pace with its sugar production—the largest in the world in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The Archaeological Museum, created in 1976, houses collections of Cuban aboriginal artefacts and objects from the colonial era. It is involved in intense promotional activities and deals with matters relating to the archaeological excavations in the region; such work is carried out only by qualified persons and after due authorization has been obtained.

Putting their raison d'être across

The Architecture Museum was opened in 1979 and contains everything imaginable relating to the architectural development of the historic centre of Trinidad: maps, scale models, unifying features such as sculptures, studies of materials, ornaments, door-knockers, flagstones and so on. This museum, located in an eighteenth-century house facing onto the Plaza Mayor, monitors the conservation and restoration projects of the historic centre for the Provincial Commission for Monuments, in particular its Trinidad office.

The Palacio Cantero, the country's finest example of neoclassical architecture, houses the Trinidad Municipal Museum, established in 1980. This forms part of the national museum network comprising other municipal museums that collect and exhibit all testimonies relating to the history of their respective regions under a policy designed to project the museum as a centre for the rescue, conservation, promotion and dissemination of the heritage and for a better understanding of what constitutes the cultural identity of each region of the country.

In 1984 the Museo de la Lucha contra Bandidos (Anti-Banditry Museum) was set up as a tribute to the men who had fought to wipe out the gangs of bandits that had depredated various regions of the country, robbing and killing peas-

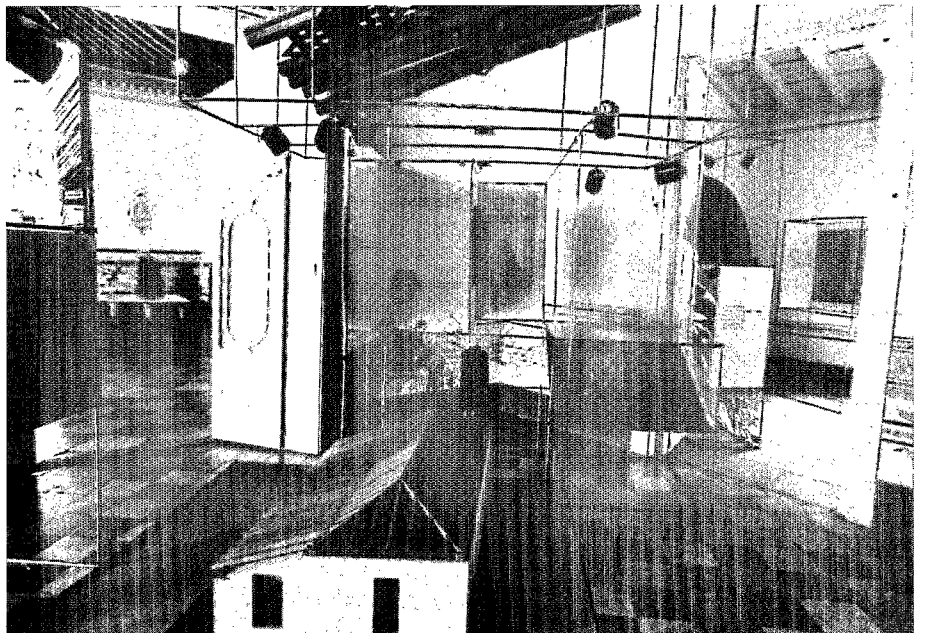


An atmosphere of nostalgia prevails around the eighteenth-century Palacio Brunet, now the Museo Romántico.

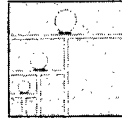
ants, literacy workers and other defenceless people. The museum houses a substantial display of objects, documents and weapons that played an important role in this fragment of Cuban history. It is located in the old eighteenth-century Convent of St Francis of Assisi, whose tower soars above the buildings of the town centre.

The museums of the historic centre of Trinidad, as described in this article, are fine examples of the desire to project the correct image of their *raison d'être* to the local people and to visitors. Professionally, they cover the disciplines by which they are formally identified, and on the sentimental plane their most earnest desire is to reveal to the visitor—as Alexander von Humboldt did to the world after visiting Trinidad in 1801—the beauty, the life and the nature of their city. ■

Display methods used in the Archaeological Museum.



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Guides in the flesh—and all volunteers

Robert N. S. Logan

GAGMA is one of the less-enticing acronyms we have heard in quite a while. No matter; in this article Robert N. S. Logan, President of the Glasgow Art Gallery and Museums Association (also known as the Friends of Glasgow Museums), tells how GAGMA helped open that Scottish city's new Transport Museum and ensure competent guiding, free of charge, among its attractive exhibits.

It is twilight on 9 December 1938. A city street has reached a moment of hiatus: there is nobody about. In the lamplight, a few cars are parked on the cobbles; a delivery tricycle stands abandoned outside the café, an empty pram outside the toyshop. The newspaper kiosk is also momentarily empty, although the seller's hat and coat are on a book in the corner. The post office and bank are resolutely closed, although through the elaborately etched windows of Teacher's public house there are inviting lights. The cinema lacks a queue: perhaps the double bill of *The Drum* and *Little Miss Broadway* is not appealing enough. The chemist's window, full of glass bottles with quaint labels, is without the seasonal bustle of assistants making up the treatments for winter ailments. And not a solitary traveller passes in or out of the Underground entrance.

Wait, however, for the opening of the doors of the Glasgow Museum of Transport. Motionless for five decades, the street will soon fill up with spectators of the past, for this is the newest part of a new display of vehicles and memorabilia related to travel which has brought a record number of visitors (1,304,816) since the doors first opened in April 1988. First located in a redundant repair shed for the Glasgow trams which were the nucleus of the collection after the city switched over to buses, the museum added locomotives, cars, lorries, horse-drawn carriages and ship models, and finally outgrew what had become a building beyond its useful life (though another user has committed large funds!). The relocation to another redundant building found much more workable space, since this was the famous Kelvin Hall, scene of many major exhibitions and events until a new Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre was opened.

Bentley to gypsy caravan

Kelvin Street was an innovation, although one used to advantage elsewhere: the re-creation of a street of period shopfronts, drawing on many of the collections in the Museum Service, and calling on established businesses in the city to provide sponsorship for the installation. The Friends of Glasgow Museums, known also as the Glasgow Art Gallery and Museums Association, provided part of the funding, and the street includes not just the re-creation of an Underground station with period trains, but a lecture theatre-cinema for visiting parties to take in the essential work of interpretation.

The main hall begins with a display opposite the main entrance of the shining fire appliances, which are as attractive to youngsters as the steam locomotives ranged alongside lines of tramcars. In the forefront, open for access though surrounded with a painted warning line, is one of the newest acquisitions: a 3.5-litre Bentley coupé, dating from 1934, in the familiar deep racing-green livery, its long sleek bonnet the epitome of elegance and power. Off to one side is a line of carriages led by a mail coach of 1840. Private and commercial conveyances also include a fine painted gypsy caravan dating from 1918. Beyond this, laid out to display the private cars, is a period motor showroom, sponsored by one of the large retail firms in Glasgow, while on a mezzanine floor above is the collection of cycles, with motorized examples from 1905 and a rare Lagonda tricar, telling the story of the British pre-eminence overtaken by Japanese technology and marketing.

Soup and rolls

All of these sections give the prime experience of close-up access to the 'real thing'. However, the visit is much more enriched with information, and the Friends have trained some fifty guides on a voluntary basis, who take turns of duty in the museum. They have been recruited from societies and retired engineers with a real interest in automotive engineering; the training includes public speaking and group dynamics. The hall is not easy acoustically, but care in designing the itinerary followed by the guides allows for talks at strategic points where most can hear and the public is not impeded. Although the service is planning the introduction of audio-guides for individual visitors, a guide in the flesh cannot be replaced when it comes to dealing with awkward questions!

This is the fourth Glaswegian museum to introduce the guide service, and we know it is much appreciated by visitors. While the filling of the duty rotas can be onerous, it becomes a routine, and the initial enthusiasm has not fallen away in this second year of the new museum's operation. On Christmas 1988, over 1,000 guests came and sang carols in Kelvin Street and around the museum, dressed in 1938 clothes and with a Salvation Army band in uniforms of the period. Soup and rolls were served, and somehow the idea, which came from the deputy director who also serves on the Friends' committee, seemed to sum up the involvement which the public, the Friends and the staff all share in this award-winning 'new-in-old' museum. ■

Letters to the Editor

Sir,

On 9 December 1989, the Geneva City Council adopted its total budget for 1990 (610 million Swiss francs, including about 100 million for culture). As it was considered vital to make savings in order to avoid higher taxes, the cultural side suffered substantial cuts. The accessions budget for all museums in Geneva was consequently axed, representing a cutback of about 1 million Swiss francs, and the subvention for the founding of a museum of modern and contemporary art was reduced.

This decision is extremely serious. Although the function of a museum is indeed to conserve, it cannot, however, rest content with counting what it has saved. It is also important for it to put its assets to good use. In this instance, this means our heritage, consisting of new accessions, which are a source of fresh knowledge and renewed pleasure. An accession is like the birth of a child, revitalizing a family. Without accessions, a museum is a dead institution whose imagination withers and whose research runs out of steam, the result of which is that the public loses interest and donors turn away. Which of your treasures would you give to a museum lacking in appeal? Accessions more successfully build up a heritage that reflects society than is possible if one trusts to the good fortune of donations. This heritage is neglected when it is not able to accommodate a society's finest productions, which are then left to take their chance on the market. In a word, the heritage is one of the keys to a living culture.

It remains for me to express the hope that, in coming years, the political authorities of Geneva will realize that culture is a priority which needs to be thought about in a realistic and objective manner rather than being used for vote-catching.

Yours sincerely,

CHANTAL DE SCHOULEPNIKOFF
Vice-chairwoman, ICOM-Switzerland

Dear Editor,

Number 163 of *Museum*—subtitled 'Great Pioneer Museums Four Decades Later'—has captured my attention: it's well worth reading.

In this ocean of paper with which we are deluged every day, we end up, of necessity, by being selective and putting aside about nine out of ten books, articles and so on. What criteria affect our choices? First and foremost the desire to *demystify* ordinary experience to the fullest degree possible.

From this point of view, I'm really disappointed that the introductory article by Gaël de Guichen and Jacqueline Maggi wasn't twice as long; this would have enabled them to deal in a more comprehensive manner with the question posed by the title: 'Are we Mature Enough to Be Self-critical?' In the few pages at their disposal, they've merely revealed the opening to the labyrinth, but not the labyrinth itself!

Likewise, Om Prakash Agrawal has important things to say concerning 'achievements and problems' of the New Delhi National Museum, Thomas Messer casts an interesting light on the evolution of the Guggenheim in New York and Hernan Crespo Toral testifies in a refreshingly frank manner to the difficulties he encountered with the Central Bank Museum of Ecuador—but all of these *pro domo* observations frustrated me to the extent that they are limited to the museums in question. Jean Cuisenier, also, clearly describes all the red tape he ran into during the development of the Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaires in Paris, but fails to explain why this was so; it's a pity, for the 'administrative constraints' are less than satisfactory in this case, from either a causal or an explanatory point of view.

Finally, it seems to me that Rosanna Maggio Serra best rises to the challenge posed by this issue. Following on her effective critique of the architecture of the Turin Municipal Modern Art Gallery, she proceeds to focus on its social context and lays bare the different factors that permitted development of a negative state of affairs. She recognized what was wrong, wanted to do something about it and dared to follow through. Bravo!

STELIOS PAPADAPPOULOS
Athens

Museums activate teenagers—one teacher's story

Olga Dassiou

Graduated in 1980 from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Department of History and Archaeology) and has taught in secondary schools since 1982. She has lectured and published on the relationship between this level of schooling and archaeology, and stories by her have appeared in literary magazines in Thessaloniki.

In 1982 I went to work as a teacher in a state secondary school at Soufli, a provincial town 1.5 kilometres from the Greek–Turkish frontier. I was to teach the pupils of this small town ancient and modern Greek, literature and history. My first contact with my pupils was disappointing, as they were both indifferent to learning and suspicious of me. They found Homer's *Iliad*, a remarkable work full of tension and humanity, very boring. Even though the study of history could have given them the opportunity to get to know the evolution of the human race, and could have contributed significantly to shaping their political and social awareness, the pupils disliked learning about the past.

Naturally, I wondered what was wrong. Perhaps I wasn't a talented teacher. Or might my plight be due to the fact that I was working in a small provincial town, far from the main centres of the country, and with pupils from lower social classes, culturally as well as economically poor? But when I talked to other teachers who worked in large towns, I discovered that their pupils seemed to have the same reac-

tion as mine. Gradually, I realized what the problem was. My pupils had learnt grammar and syntax, they knew technological rules, and they could easily remember historical dates, but something was missing: a love of substantial knowledge, a love of human beings. They were unable to connect knowledge and emotion; they were emotionally immature and intellectually backward, even for their age. These were 13- and 14-year-olds who had never had the chance to listen to classical music, and who had never seen a piece of sculpture, a painting or an ancient pottery vessel. They had never visited a museum; they couldn't understand the influence of Byzantine art or folk music upon their own cultural identity. They had no contact with their own folklore. I decided that I had to find a different way to communicate with them.

The fact that I had graduated from the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Thessaloniki helped me very much, as did my contact with painters and artists and my participation in excavations. I also felt very close to various forms of art. So, I began to experiment.

A change in awareness

My first steps involved the use of what I call 'school media'. I asked some pupils to paint pictures of scenes described in their textbooks. I assigned some other pupils to write poetry or prose expressing their feelings when viewing artwork, a landscape, or an event in the everyday (or religious) life of the country. Other pupils were requested to express their reactions to music. They were to choose a cassette, listen to it, and then relate their thoughts about the music to their classmates. Some students made models: Penelope's loom, Odysseus' raft, the topography of the coast near Troy. Another group were



The author.

asked to bring to school postcards, posters and slides on the same themes. Then the pupils put on a kind of exhibition of the things they had made on the school's ground floor. Some of their paintings and their hand-made constructions were even bought by other pupils, though there were also a few derisive comments. I sensed that a change in awareness was beginning to happen. It was time for the second step: contact with museums and archaeological sites.

One of my classes was sent to visit a museum having no previous preparation. On their return, it was obvious that they had understood only a little of what they had seen. None of the exhibits had seemed to impress them or stimulate their minds. Another group of students then toured a museum and archaeological site accompanied by a guide. Very few of the students were willing to listen to the guide; most were more interested in the cafeteria near the museum. Nevertheless, on the bus coming back, and later in the classroom, I was asked a great many questions. The pupils wanted to know how an excavation is conducted, what the job of archaeologist entails, and how archaeological finds are exhibited.

Guides with trembling voices

A third group of museum-going students followed a totally different procedure. After a small introduction on the educational programme of our next excursion, I had them form small groups. These groups were themselves to prepare to guide the visits of the museums we were going to see. One group was to be responsible for one hall in the Thessaloniki museum, another

group was to be responsible for another display, and so on. There were many problems: the pupils had difficulty reading the reference books, they were afraid of failing or of being ridiculed by their classmates. Despite these problems, the groups did a remarkable job. With trembling voices they guided their classmates through the museums, presenting each exhibit from a historical, sociological and artistic point of view. The benefit from this approach was great. The students understood that the 'stones' and 'jugs', as they had been wont to call the vestiges of an earlier civilization, certified a human presence and bore witness to civilization's continuity. They felt that they could 'see' their ancestors' religious ceremonies, their local fairs, their athletic competitions and their battles, their development during years of peace and their despair during times of war. They could understand the various financial, political, social and civil dimensions of their ancestors' existence.

I then had my pupils write a new set of essays. These proved to be outstanding, and expressed understanding of and admiration for the ancient world with both humour and imagination. We had come a long way from the first cold, dull papers I had received! My pupils had, so to speak, consciously joined humanity on its long journey through history. With their approval, I wrote an article entitled 'Archaeology and Education'. In it, I described my teaching procedures, and made proposals to the Ministry of Education concerning educational programmes and training methods for teachers. When the article was published in the Greek teachers' magazine, *Words and Deeds*, in the spring of 1986, my fellow instructors reacted negatively and certain

archaeologists were very suspicious. Several of my supervisors and colleagues encouraged me, however, and were eager to help me continue my work in the same way.

'Lives without dreams?'

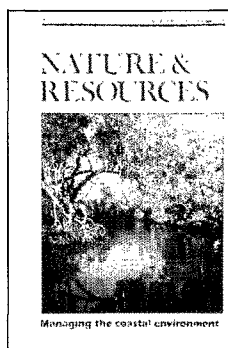
That is exactly what I have continued to do since, with the satisfaction of seeing other teachers in other schools follow suit. One thing I have discovered is that the 'pupil-activating' approach can be used with periods other than antiquity. Studying the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, my older pupils went out and found improbable (yet, in the final analysis, obvious) sources by visiting the shops of tradespeople who still work as they did in the 'good old days': a blacksmith, a coppersmith, an iceman, a milliner, and so on. These interviews linked up vividly with an exhibit on domestic architecture at the Folklore Museum of Macedonia. The overall result was knowledge about, and a real feeling for, the economic and social conditions and the everyday life in Greece at a time when the new Greek state had been established.

We have had similar results everywhere. The emotional maturation, the improvement of learning ability and the increased co-operation of the students are always evident. The message is encouraging. Teachers and museum educational workers can and should co-operate to achieve better standards in education. The stakes—to give pupils other options than the 'lives without dreams' lived by so many adults today—are certainly worth the effort. ■

If you have enjoyed this issue of *Museum* . . .

. . . then you will be interested to know that our sister review, Unesco's quarterly *Nature & Resources*, has been completely revamped, with a more modern layout and the use of colour. Editorially, an important change is the focus of each issue on a particular topic comprising five or six articles reviewing research on resource management for sustainable development. Remote sensing of the environment, managing the coastal environment and water management were the themes treated in the first three issues of 1990. Upcoming issues will focus on natural hazards, oceans and tropical forestry.

The English, French and Spanish editions of *Nature & Resources* are now co-published with The Parthenon Publishing Group in the United Kingdom. Subscriptions (£25 for individuals and £50 for institutions) may be sent to Parthenon Publishing, Casterton Hall, Carnforth, Lancs, LA6 2LA, United Kingdom. Special arrangements exist for readers in developing countries: consult Unesco. The Arabic, Russian and Chinese editions continue to be published away from Unesco Headquarters (subscription details available from Unesco).



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What next?

Mindful that the Olympic Games are not far off, *Museum* No. 170 takes a look at sports and museums. Issues examined include organization and conservation of sports and games collections in tropical countries, the presentation of sport and physical fitness from the historical angle, and management of sports museums as business enterprises. There are also case-studies on museums devoted to rugby, cricket and roller-skating as well as a feature telling the story of one museum's staff sports teams. Representations of ancient sports and games on objects in Greek museums are also reviewed. (*Museum* discovered in that article that 'Plato' means 'wide' and the nickname was given to the philosopher because of his broad-shouldered wrestling prowess.)

Happy reading!

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