

Ronald Clark, Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn

## Foreword

‘From Garden Art to Landscape Architecture – Traditions, Re-Evaluations, and Future Perspectives’ – an international symposium with such a title was predestined to be staged in Herrenhausen; hardly any other venue offers such fascinating and felicitous juxtapositions of garden art and landscape architecture, both in the grounds themselves and their underlying principles. The Herrenhausen Gardens, an ensemble comprising baroque, landscape and botanic gardens, are directly adjacent to Leibniz University Hannover’s Faculty of Architecture and Landscape with its Centre of Garden Art and Landscape Architecture (CGL), and the Conference Centre in Herrenhausen Palace, where since its opening in 2013 the Volkswagen Foundation has hosted numerous symposia and conferences, many among them devoted to landscape architecture and garden history – and could there be a lovelier setting for a post-prandial stroll than among the baroque glories of the Großer Garten?

This landscape and garden symposium was co-organised by the City and State Capital of Hannover’s Herrenhausen Gardens Division, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gartenkunst und Landschaftsarchitektur (DGGL), the Volkswagen Foundation, and the Centre of Garden Art and Landscape Architecture at Leibniz University Hannover, with some organisational support from the European Garden Heritage Network. Out of our collegial and fruitful cooperation evolved a symposium programme that generated a lively response in Germany and abroad; Herrenhausen Palace offered the ideal forum for outstanding speakers from many countries, whether internationally esteemed landscape architects or young academics and practitioners presenting new ideas and research findings. The latter were strongly represented during Session II, ‘Researcher’s Fair – Visions and New Research Projects’, with their ‘Lightning Talks by Early Career Scientists’.

Our particular appreciation for his generous support is due to Dr. Wilhelm Krull, former Secretary General of the Volkswagen Foundation, with heartfelt thanks to Anorthe Wetzels and Celina Adrion of the Foundation’s Conferences and Symposia department and their Head of Conferences and Symposia Katja Ebeling for their organisational talents and programme suggestions, along with the former CGL Managing Director Dr. Sabine Albersmeier, and Jens Spanjer, former President of the DGGL, for their proactive involvement in the preparation and running of the symposium. Special thanks, also, to Mic Hale, who has again translated some contributions for this volume into English and whose copy editing and sensitive mediation between the English and German languages have enhanced other contributions to this volume. We would also like to extend our

warmest thanks to those numerous helpers without whom the symposium could not have taken place so successfully nor the symposium proceedings have appeared in this form.

Ronald Clark, Jens Spanjer, Anorthe Wetzels, Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn

## Introduction “From Garden Art to Landscape Architecture”

The development of landscape architecture into a profession involving university training gradually took place during the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in connection with the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation.

Originally, the area of responsibility for landscape architecture was based on the premise that planning and creating open spaces such as parks and gardens was the business of garden artists. Today, it also incorporates the protection of natural resources and the environment, urban planning, tourism planning and other disciplines, or at least, there are significant overlaps with other planning disciplines. Professionals trained as landscape architects work in numerous places, for example in municipal administrations such as parks commissions and parks departments, city planning offices, in governmental agencies such as nature conservation agencies, departments for the conservation of historic buildings and in educational institutions like universities – as employees, civil servants or freelancers.

In the Early Modern Period this field of activity was indeed considered part of the arts, an art, moreover, that was closely connected to sciences such as mathematics.<sup>1</sup> Professionals of the Baroque era, e.g. André Le Notre, who created extraordinary gardens like Vaux-le-Vicomte, Sceaux and Versailles, were perceived as ‘garden artists’.

During the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, discussions related to garden art followed the shift from a formal baroque garden to landscape gardens. It was in this context that, in Germany, philosophy gained significance for garden art and vice versa, with philosophers acting as leading garden theorists. Beginning with Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten and Georg Friedrich Meier during the 1750s, aesthetics, as a science of sentiment – as opposed to reason – gained increasing significance as a philosophical field of reflection, culminating in Emanuel Kant’s “Critical Philosophy”.<sup>2</sup> Between 1779 and 1785, the professor of philosophy Christian Caius Laurentz Hirschfeld, one of the most important landscape garden theorists in Germany, published his five volume work “Theorie der Gartenkunst”. The Leipzig philosophy professor C. H. Heydenreich wrote his “System der Ästhetik” in 1790. In 1792, Wilhelm Gottlieb Becker, professor of philosophy in

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1 On this issue, see for example Volker Remmert, *The Art of Garden and Landscape Design and the Mathematical Sciences in the Early Modern Period*, in: Hubertus Fischer, Volker R. Remmert and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Eds.), *Gardens, Knowledge and the Sciences in the Early Modern Period* (= Trends in the History of Science), Birkhäuser/Springer International Publishing AG Switzerland, 2016

2 See Michael Lee, *The German ‘Mittelweg’: Garden Theory and Philosophy in the Time of Kant*, Routledge, New York & London, 2013

Dresden, wrote his famous work “Das Seifersdorfer Thal” (Leipzig), as well as the book “Der Plauensche Grund bei Dresden”. Johann G. Grohmann, professor for philosophy in Wittenberg, started publishing his widely distributed “Ideenmagazin für Liebhaber von Gärten”, a kind of sample book containing examples of architecture, grottos, bridges, benches, ruins, hermitages and more for utilisation in landscape gardens. In 1797, Grohmann wrote his work “Neue Theorie der schönen Gartenkunst” (Leipzig).<sup>3</sup>

In the context of this development, the garden increasingly became a subject of art history as well as of philosophy. Garden theory was strongly influenced by the intellectual debate that led to the establishment of aesthetics as a discipline between 1750 and 1790.<sup>4</sup> An important point of critique within this new discipline was that, owing to the image of nature cultivated by the natural sciences, too many aspects of humans’ experiences of nature went ignored.<sup>5</sup>

Traditions that considered the field of garden design an ‘art’, as well as a corresponding image of the profession are clearly visible in Germany, up until the end of the 19th century at least regarding language use. In 1887, for example, the ‘Verein deutscher Gartenkünstler’ (VdG) (‘Association of German garden artists’) was founded in Dresden as the first professional interest group in landscape architecture. However, it is doubtful whether terms such as ‘Gartenkunst’ (‘garden art’) and ‘Gartenkünstler’ (‘garden artist’) were considered rather technical, understood as professional designations only that were no longer meant to refer to garden art as part of the fine arts/visual arts. In 1899, twelve years after the foundation of the ‘Verein deutscher Gartenkünstler’, the ‘American Society of Landscape Architects’ (ASLA) was formed in the USA. The designation and use of the term ‘Landscape Architect’, the internationally renowned title to this day, may indicate various lines of traditions and contexts of origin in different countries.

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3 Regarding the relationship between garden art and philosophy in the 18th century see in more detail the excellent work by Michael Lee, *The German „Mittelweg“. Garden Theory and Philosophy ...* (as note 2).

4 Friedrich Schiller and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe were also involved in the discussion on garden art as an art (form) (see, e.g., Friedrich Schiller, “Über den Gartenkalender auf das Jahr 1795”). Schiller’s writings on aesthetics are attributed to a phase of development “during which garden art had already lost its position of supremacy within the hierarchy of the arts” (see in more detail Stefan Groß, *Die Weimarer Klassik und die Gartenkunst: Über den Gattungsdiskurs und die „Bildenden Künste“ in den theoretischen Schriften von Goethe, Schiller und Krause*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt/M., 2009).

5 For example, aesthetics, as an attempt to capture and describe the poetic experiences and sensations during a sunset, was just as important and legitimate as scientific explanations of the same phenomenon. Confronted by a form of science which reduced the manifoldness of this and other natural phenomena to simple geometry, coordinates and general laws of nature, the founders of aesthetics endeavoured to systematically record these special experiences which could not be reduced to scientific models. Thus, from the very beginning, aesthetics as a scholarly discipline had a predisposition for natural beauty which eventually also favoured garden theories with affiliations to the English landscape garden.

It was only at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the ‘Verein deutscher Gartenkünstler’ converted from a professional interest group into the ‘Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gartenkunst’ (‘German Association for Garden Art’), the present-day Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gartenkunst und Landschaftskultur (German Association for Garden Art and Landscape Culture), which also accepted lay-people with an interest in gardens.<sup>6</sup> In the wake of these developments, the ‘Bund Deutscher Gartenarchitekten’ (BDGA) (‘League of German Garden Architects’) was founded in 1913 and the ‘Verband Deutscher Gartenarchitekten’ (VDG) (‘Union of German Garden Architects’) in 1914. Both institutions were reconstituted after the Second World War as the ‘Bund Deutscher Landschaftsarchitekten’ (‘Union of German Landscape Architects’).<sup>7</sup>

Nowadays in Germany, the term ‘Gartenkunst’ (‘garden art’) is restricted to historic parks and gardens, regardless of whether these met the artistic demands at the time of their creation, or because they have survived to this day. This retrospective view on garden art has probably become prevalent during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The question is whether there is such a thing as contemporary garden art. Which present-day parks and gardens would be regarded as garden art? Which criteria would have to be fulfilled in order to be classified as a garden artist? Who would be worth considering?

These issues were raised in September 2018 in an interdisciplinary discussion, as the question of art is relevant just as much to architecture as it is to many other areas. The international symposium “From Garden Art to Landscape Architecture – Traditions, Re-Evaluations, and Future Perspectives” invited representatives from different disciplines. It addressed questions which, based on the notion of garden art, should help to reconstruct, among other things, its historical development as well as the professional self-image in various phases of development, culminating in the question whether the term garden art can still possess relevance today.

One section examined the transformation of the term ‘Gartenkunst’ both nationally and internationally. One core theme to be constituted by the points of radical change during the 20<sup>th</sup> century during which contemporary garden art was replaced in favour of historic garden art.

The second section discussed, if contemporary garden art exists or even should exist. Do the fine arts/visual arts of today have the sole right of representation? Where is the boundary to architecture? Does such a thing as ‘Baukunst’ (‘art of

6 On the history of the VdG and the DGGL see Gert Gröning and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, *1887-1987. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Gartenkunst und Landschaftspflege (DGGL). Ein Rückblick auf 100 Jahre DGGL*, Boskett-Verlag, Berlin, 1987.

7 On the history of the BDLA see Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn and Gert Gröning, *1913-1988. 75 Jahre Bund Deutscher Landschaftsarchitekten BDLA. Teil I: Zur Entwicklung der Interessenverbände der Gartenarchitekten in der Weimarer Republik und im Nationalsozialismus*, Köllen Druck + Verlag GmbH, Bonn, 1988.

construction’) still exist in this discipline? What would denote a landscape architect as an artist?

For the third section, internationally renowned landscape architects whose work features distinctive characteristics were invited to self-reflexively take a stand on the question of whether their creations are garden art or not.

Apart from lectures by distinguished academics, this topic was discussed on an international level by young researchers. Following a call for papers, candidates were selected for a fellowship and received the chance to present their research projects in a three-minute lightning talk during the symposium. Moreover, several groups consisting of students of landscape architecture from selected German universities participated in the symposium and presented statements in form of lightning-talks. The symposium was also meant to provide both experienced and young researchers alike with the opportunity for intense debate and for networking.