The Garden as Art

A New Space for the Garden in Contemporary Aesthetics

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Abstract

Western art gardens have enjoyed a chequered relationship with philosophical aesthetics. At different times, they have been both lauded and rejected as exemplars of art, and, for most of the last 150 or so years, they have been largely ignored. However, during the last 25 years, there has been a welcome resurgence of philosophical interest in such gardens. This study situates the work stemming from this revival of interest in its historical context and assesses its adequacy in accounting for gardens in accordance with a range of pan-art criteria. The study argues that contemporary philosophical accounts of gardens are inadequate in some important ways, particularly with respect to gardens' temporality, ontology, and arthood, and the ways in which gardens are experienced.

In response to the arguments of Amie Thomasson, Dominic McIver Lopes, and some other contemporary philosophers, which advocate philosophical accounts of individual arts rather than pan-art accounts, the study develops a partial, new account of gardens that aims to remedy the perceived inadequacies in existing accounts. The new account claims that gardens are singular, not multiple, artworks and that they have an identity not unlike that possessed by humans and other animals; that, metaphorically speaking, our garden experiences may be helpfully illuminated by the application of theories developed in the context of contemporary, improvisatory dance; and that the "ordinariness" of many of gardens materials may be better understood in terms of Arthur Danto's claim that *esse est interpretari*, that is, that meaning and value derive from the interpretative process. The new account also proposes personhood as a potentially useful heuristic for understanding how gardens are experienced and understood.

The concept of "garden," and the related constitutive garden aspects, features, and issues are established at the opening of the study with reference to an actual garden. Thereafter, the sources on which the study draws, and which it critiques, are all archival. They include recent philosophical monographs by Mara Miller (*The*

Garden as Art), Stephanie Ross (*What Gardens Mean*), and David Cooper (*A Philosophy of Gardens*), and a range of historical and other contemporary monographs and papers written by philosophers, garden historians, and landscape architects and theorists.

Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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Too much thinking about "gardens" leads to perplexity and agitation.

– Robert Smithson, *Collected Writings*

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Note to the Reader

In the Introduction and Parts I and II of the thesis, I have used photographs of gardens, and parts of gardens, in order to identify a particular garden and to make clear what sorts of garden entities I am writing about. I have not used photographs or images elsewhere in the thesis because, while useful for the purposes just described, they can be unhelpful, and even potentially misleading, when it comes to conveying the reality of gardens and garden experiences.

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Introduction – Aims and Method

Background

My interest in the relationships between gardens and philosophical aesthetics is longstanding. It has its genesis in my practical experiences in the fields of landscape architecture and music and in my academic background in those fields and in philosophy.

I first wrote about the aesthetics of gardens in "Thawed Music?," my landscape architecture dissertation, at a time when analytic philosophy appeared uninterested in gardens. In it, I extrapolated from the American philosopher Susanne Langer's philosophy of art in order to account for gardens' *modus operandi*. I later rejected that as a possibility and in this thesis I give reasons for that rejection in reference to the writings of two philosophers who subsequently adopted Langer's ideas for similar purposes.

In "Thawed Music?," I also proposed some similarities between gardens and music in terms of their temporal natures. I developed that idea further in a jointly authored chapter entitled "Gardens, Music, and Time," in which I proposed that gardens may function rhythmically in a manner analogous to the way in which rhythm functions in music. I return to the theme of the temporality of gardens in this study, in particular with respect to the effects that temporality has on gardens' ontological status.

My reflections on gardens took a purely philosophical turn in 2012 in my MA thesis, "We Do Not Have an Adequate Conception of Art until We Have One that Accommodates Gardens." In reflecting on the survey of definitions and theories of art contained in that thesis, I became increasingly aware of the shortcomings of the

existing pan-art definitions and conceptions of art and this, indirectly, has lead me to the central task of this thesis.[1]

Aims and Significance

Primary and Secondary Aims

The primary aim of my thesis is to contribute to the development of a framework within which to theorize about and conceptualize art gardens as a unique and uniquely valuable art form. Gardens' distinctive qualities, features, processes, and aesthetic possibilities deserve their own philosophical exploration in preference to pan-art accounts of them, which tend to treat gardens' qualities as problematic or which fail to recognise or acknowledge gardens' distinctiveness. My concern in achieving this aim is not with the adequacy or otherwise of pan-art conceptions per se: it is rather with developing a conception which celebrates, instead of problematizes, gardens' unique qualities.

It is not my intention to offer an account of art gardens that in any way matches up to the substantial nature of accounts developed for some other arts, for example Peter Kivy's of music, Roger Scruton's of architecture, and Graham McFee's of dance.[2] My aim is much more modest: it is to contribute to the development of such an account of gardens, with particular reference to gardens' ontology, the experience of gardens, and the unique nature of gardens' principal materials.

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[1] For previous research see: Ismay Barwell and John Powell, "Gardens, Music, and Time," in *Gardening: Cultivating Wisdom* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); John Powell, "Thawed Music?: A Humanistic Study of Meaning in Western Gardens" (Dissertation, Lincoln University, 1988); "We Do Not Have an Adequate Conception of Art until We Have One That Accommodates Gardens" (MA thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 2012).

[2] See: Peter Kivy, *The Corded Shell* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980); Graham McFee, *The Philosophical Aesthetics of Dance: Identity, Performance and Understanding* (Hampshire: Dance Books Ltd., 2011); Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Architecture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

My account will be sited in the context of foundational accounts of art gardens by the philosophers Mara Miller and Stephanie Ross.[3] In doing this, I cannot underestimate the importance of their ground-breaking and comprehensive contributions. However, I claim that their accounts seek to engage with pan-art definitions, ontologies, and theories, according to which gardens often manifest as "problems" to be resolved or as objects to be massaged or squeezed into pan-art conceptions. I also acknowledge David Cooper's contribution in *A Philosophy of Gardens*, but necessarily contest his assertion that the philosophical issues gardens raise are "too close to similar and familiar ones asked about other artworks to raise novel issues."[4]

The secondary aims of my thesis fall into three broad thematic groups. The first group is concerned with an historical overview of philosophical aesthetic, and garden related materials from 1800 to the present. It aims to provide an overview of the changing relationships between gardens and philosophical aesthetics during the period 1800 – 2015; to assess key examples of recent philosophical writing on gardens; and to marshal recent philosophical evidence that supports the desirability of developing individual, genre-specific theories and ontologies of art, and to enlist that evidence as foundational support for my attempt to develop a framework for a distinctive theory and ontology of gardens.

A significant part of accounting for the changing historical relationships between gardens and philosophical aesthetics involves describing and ascribing the reasons for gardens' putative change in status from a high art in the 18th century to a non-art in the 19th century, and beyond. It is important to acknowledge this shift in status for two reasons. First, the changing philosophical attitudes to "art" and "nature" during the 18th and 19th centuries were highly influential in the contemporary changing status of gardens as art and the importance of this influence

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[3] Mara Miller, *The Garden as an Art* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993); Stephanie Ross, *What Gardens Mean* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[4] David E Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 12.

has remained largely unrecognized. And second, by clarifying why that phenomenon occurred, causes are in turn suggested for the 20th century's philosophical disregard of gardens and the predominant focus of most professional landscape architecture away from gardens.[5]

In pursuing my aim of assessing key examples of recent literature, I describe the ways in which this literature, including principally the monographs of Miller and Ross, has engaged with art gardens and, in particular, I assess how it has conceptualized gardens' arthood and their temporal and ontological natures. Whether or not appropriate gardens are (or can be) art and, if so, according to which definition or theory, is an important issue for both Miller and Ross. I examine their claims in this regard but end up proposing that a more fruitful approach to accounting for gardens *qua* art involves developing an account unique to them.

In addressing my aim of marshaling recent philosophical evidence that supports the desirability of developing individual, artform-specific theories and ontologies of art, I explore a range of philosophical positions developed by philosophical aestheticians from the mid-20th century to the present. I am convinced by their arguments, which may be summarized as expressing a preference for definitions, ontologies, and theories of individual artforms rather than their one-off, one-size-fits-all, singular equivalents, and I use them to confirm the need and to provide a firm foundation for my development of a framework for a theory and ontology unique to gardens.

The second thematic group of aims is concerned with gardens and temporality and sets out to review the theoretical and actual role(s) of time and temporality, including their relative aesthetic roles, in gardens and the arts in general. Perhaps the majority of historical and contemporary writers on gardens have conceptualized

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[5] Ross and Miller have proposed their own reasons for gardens' 20th-century loss of art status. See: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 69-71; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 189-208. However, I believe that while those writers' reasons throw some light on the issue, a consideration of the historical background will still prove useful and informative.

them as poetic, pictorial, or architectural entities, which means that they discuss gardens as if they were poems, paintings, or buildings. While it is unreasonable to deny that garden do, to varying degrees, function in these ways, I aim in this thesis to emphasize gardens' unique functional mode, which I claim is in good part temporal. Gardens' temporal nature has not been altogether ignored historically and there are exciting new potentials emerging today for synergies between a consideration of gardens as temporal entities and other fields of interest and study.

The third group of aims is concerned with gardens and ontology and sets out to assess three mainstream ontologies of art with respect to their ability to account adequately for gardens. In writing of the temporal nature of gardens, Miller and Ross inevitably and simultaneously raised issues to do with gardens' ontology. In doing this, they, and those who have followed in their path, grapple with the legacy of Kant's description of landscape gardening as "painting with nature's materials."[6] This description reinforced a contemporary view of gardens as painterly, non-temporal works of art. Kant's view then remained largely unchallenged until painting itself, and photography, challenged aesthetics. In the denouement that followed cubism and its more controversial descendants, gardens disappeared altogether from philosophical aesthetics, just as conventional landscape painting disappeared as a "valid" art genre. I believe that a contemporary acknowledgement of gardens' four-dimensional ontological reality may have avoided that change in status.[7]

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[6] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. J. C. Meredith (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), § 51.

[7] In this thesis, I use "four-dimensional" and "four dimensions" as convenient shorthand terms to signify the co-existence or involvement of both three-dimensional spatial factors *and* temporal factors in gardens and other works of art. Gardens exist and exhibit aesthetic features for which they are valued in virtue of their possessing features and qualities associated with three-dimensial arts, such as sculpture and architecture, as well as features and qualities associated with temporal arts, such as music and dance.

Significance

My thesis, and in particular my contribution to a framework for conceptualizing gardens as a unique art form, will contribute to the disciplines of philosophical aesthetics and landscape architecture and design in five ways.

First, it will contribute to securing a place for gardens on the list of arts for which philosophical accounts have been developed based on the subject art's unique and distinctive characteristics and values rather than on the characteristics and values that that art might possess, or lack, when conceived of in accordance with pan-art accounts of art.

Second, it will enable an enriched philosophical conceptualization and experience of gardens.

Third, it will offer a new dimension to the theoretical underpinning of the practices of garden and landscape design.

Fourth, it will inform the theoretical underpinning of new trends in landscape architectural practice, such as new urbanism and urban ecological design, in which planned and unplanned changes over time are important and welcome constituents of evolving visual-temporal design typologies.

And fifth, by emphasizing gardens' unique qualities, it will usefully contribute to a better understanding of some other art genres, such as environmental, street, computer, and installation art, which share some of gardens' qualities and features.

Limitations

My thesis has limitations in terms of its scope and theoretical perspective. In it, I do not engage with philosophies, arts, and theories of art which sit outside the Western tradition as broadly construed. And, within the Western philosophical tradition, my perspective is largely, though not exclusively, aligned with that of the contemporary, Anglophone, analytic school. Although I interrogate my topics within a theoretical framework derived from that analytic school, I do not mean to imply that other theoretical frameworks, such as those derived from American pragmatism,

Continental philosophy, landscape architecture, art history, and garden history may not generate important, interesting and sometimes different conclusions. However, it is from within the analytic tradition that I have gained insights regarding gardens and art, and it is the applicability and validity of those insights that this thesis explores.[8]

Sources and Method

The research resources for my thesis are archival, except for a description and analysis of an actual garden, Tupare, in Chapter 1. I have chosen Tupare as my exemplar garden because it typifies what for many visitors constitutes an artful garden. It was made by a man few would consider an "artist;" it is particularly rich in opportunities for multi-sensual experiences, and because it enjoys low "art" status within the lively, local avant-garde art world. And the implications of these features of the garden, its maker, and its status are drawn out in later parts of the thesis. The archival materials I engage with include monographs, journals, and websites drawn primarily from the discipline of philosophical aesthetics and secondarily from the disciplines of garden history and landscape architecture. Because the sources frequently have relevance across chapter and section divisions, I now introduce them in the context of the thesis' principal and secondary aims, which are also not necessarily confined by chapters.

A New Account of Gardens

Although there exist voluminous historical and contemporary literatures devoted to philosophical aesthetics and also to a wide range of garden-related topics, it is only comparatively recently – since about 1990 in fact – that the literature related to the

[8] The work of the pragmatist philosopher John Dewey, and others loosely aligned to his pragmatism, such as Arnold Berleant, is referred to occasionally in this study. However, a critique of it with respect to gardens is beyond the study's scope.

philosophical aesthetics of gardens has emerged from the quiescence into which it lapsed following its 18th-century heyday. During the last 25 years, three substantial monographs, two edited books, and a number of scholarly papers investigating the aesthetics of gardens, and gardening have been published.[9] These publications have treated the subject from a variety of points of view. The focuses of those dealing with "art gardens" have included the definition of art, gardens' temporal nature, their historical and current status as works of art, and the nature of the garden experience. However, it should not be understood from this that gardens have only recently become more philosophically interesting and challenging and, consequently, in need of explication. Gardens have always been thus, but developments in philosophical aesthetics have made the task of that explication timely and, perhaps, more feasible than before.

Running through much of this recent literature, and in particular the monographs and papers of Cooper, Ross, and Miller, is a pattern of assessing the art form of gardens through the lens of monolithic, one-size-fits-all definitions, theories, and ontologies of art and, in terms of gardens' meaningfulness and *modus operandi*, through the lenses of other arts, most notably painting and poetry. For example, both Miller and Ross analyze gardens in the context of pan-art definitions and theories of art. Furthermore, both invoke theories developed by Langer in respect of non-garden arts, and Ross devotes two chapters to presenting gardens and their modes of

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[9] For the monographs see: Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*; Miller, *The Garden as an Art*; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*. For a selection of the other materials on which I draw see: Jan Kenneth Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," *Landscape Review* 8, no. 2 (2003); M Conan, ed. *Contemporary Garden Aesthetics, Creations and Interpretations* (Washington, DC.: Harvard University Press, 2007); Thomas Leddy, "Gardens in an Expanded Field," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 28, no. 4 (1988); Mara Miller, "Gardens: Gardens as Art," in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, ed. Michael Kelly (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); "Time and Temporality in the Garden," in *Gardening: Cultivating Wisdom*, ed. Dan O'Brien (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); Stephanie Ross, "Gardens' Powers," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 33, no. 3 (1999); S Ross, "Nature, Gardens, Art: The Problems of Appreciation," in *Art and Essence*, ed. S Davies and A C Sulka (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003); Mateusz Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics* 5 (2013); Marta Tafalla, "Smell and Anosmia in the Appreciation of Gardens," *Contemporary Aesthetics* 12 (2014).

meaning in the light of gardens' "sister arts" of poems and paintings.[10] These approaches are all valid and offer interesting insights. However, there is a lack of a philosophical framework within which gardens' unique artfulness may be accepted as an irreducible given, and as a necessary starting point for an adequate consideration of gardens.

I have found support for my aim of presenting an individual, artform specific account of gardens in the writings of several 20th- and 21st-century philosophers, including Morris Weitz, Kendall Walton, Peter Kivy, Dominic McIver Lopes, Amie Thomasson, and Aaron Meskin.[11] Although they address the issue from a variety of standpoints and with various aims in mind, a reasonable extrapolation from their thinking is that artform-specific accounts of individual arts are more informative and useful than pan-art accounts of the arts.[12]

In developing my own account of gardens, I draw from a range of sources, including architect Jan Birksted's account of the experience of gardens, philosopher Curtis Carter's account of improvisation in dance, and philosopher Arthur Danto's

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[10] For pan-art definitions and theories see, for example: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 69-91; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 189-208. For adaptations and uses of Langer's theory of art see: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 121-31; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 176-78. Langer's philsophy of art proceeded importantly from her intimate, lifelong knowledge of and acquaintance with the arts and artists. Her theory of "virtuality" underlay her analysis of how the various artforms, and art itself, functioned. However, in the case of gardens in particular, her concept of virtuality proves unhelpful. For Ross's discussion of gardens *qua* poems and paintings see: ibid., 49-84 and 85-120 respectively. For Langer's seminal text see *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953).

[11] See: Peter Kivy, *Philosophies of Art: An Essay in Differences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Dominic McIver Lopes, "Nobody Needs a Theory of Art," *The Journal of Philosophy* 105, no. 3 (2008); D McIver Lopes, *Beyond Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Aaron Meskin, "From Defining Art to Defining the Individual Arts: The Role of Theory in the Philosophies of Arts," in *New Waves in Aesthetics*, ed. Kathleen Stock and Katherine Thomson-Jones (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Amie L Thomasson, "The Ontology of Art," in *Blackwell Guide to Aesthetics*, ed. Peter Kivy (Hoboken, NJ, USA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009); Kendall Walton, "Categories of Art," *The Philosophical Review* 79, no. 3 (1970); Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 15, no. 1 (1956).

[12] I note in passing that disjunctive definitions and theories of art also facilitate the development of separate definitions, ontologies, and theories for individual art forms. For a well-known example of a disjunctive theory see: B Gaut, "'Art' as a Cluster Concept," in *Theories of Art Today*, ed. N Carroll (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000).

overarching philosophy of art.[13] In addition, I introduce, as an heuristic device, a conception of personal identity.[14]

Birksted's account of the experience of gardens highlights their immersive nature and multi-sensual effects, and the perpetual four-dimensional mobility of their visitors, and Carter's philosophical account of "contact" improvisational dance highlights similar features in that practice. I draw from both these sources to develop my account of the ways in which we experience gardens.

Danto's philosophy of art asks the question: Why are some objects (or events) considered to be "art" in some temporal periods, places, and cultures, but "non-art" art in other temporal periods, places and cultures? His questioning came about in the face of confrontational, mundane objects, but the same questions may be raised in the case of gardens, whose materials typically include non-confrontational, even attractive, mundane materials. Gardens' materials, including hedges, grass, and trees, are mundane outside the garden yet they become potentially artlike within the garden. Danto explains how this can be so. Art objects, he argues, exist to be *interpreted*, whereas non-art objects do not. I claim that this insight usefully illuminates the case of the artfulness of gardens and their materials.

The field of personal identity is hotly contested in contemporary philosophy. From it, I extract a straightforward conception of personal identity and use it an heuristic device to illuminate how gardens are able to maintain a singular identity over time in spite of the fact that both they, and persons, change constantly.

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[13] See: Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool."; Curtis L Carter, "Improvisation in Dance," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 58, no. 2 (2000); Arthur C Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge, MA.: London: Harvard University Press, 1981).

[14] For an overview of the current, complex state of the philosophy of personal identity see: Eric T Olson, "Personal Identity," ed. Edward N Zalta, Spring 2016 ed., *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2016), http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/identity-personal/}}.

Gardens and Philosophical Aesthetics

There is considerable historical and philosophical material available concerning garden art during the 18th and early 19th centuries and a comparative dearth of material for the remainder of the 19th (and 20th) centuries. This paucity of material is unique to the art of garden making, the loss of status and consequent lack of historical and philosophical information of which has no equivalent in the other arts. I expect my research to be able to offer some insights into why this occurred.

The field of 18th- and early 19th-century garden studies is well traversed. Primary sources for this period include Alexander Pope, William Gilpin, John Claudius Loudon, James Thomson, Richard Payne Knight, and Humphry Repton. However, my research has concentrated on the secondary literature presented by 20th-century writers including garden historian John Dixon Hunt, architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner, landscape architect Geoffrey Jellicoe and writer and plantswoman Susan Jellicoe, and literary and landscape scholar Malcolm Andrews, each of whom has documented the gardens and garden writings of the period scrupulously and has invoked contemporary philosophies as necessary to support their positions.[15] I have relied on these sources in presenting my overview of this period.

I am not aware of any comparable scholarly, historical-philosophical interest in art gardens during the later Romantic Era and, although it is not my primary interest, I will be seeking to illuminate this lack of interest, especially as it pertains to gardens' status as works of art.

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[15] See, for example: Malcolm Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Aldershot, England: Scolar Press, 1989); John Dixon Hunt, *The Figure in the Landscape* (Baltimore, MD., London, U.K.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976); Nikolaus Pevsner, ed. *The Picturesque Garden and Its Influence Outside the British Isles*, vol. 2, Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture (Washington, D.C.: Harvard University, 1974). And, selected chapters from: John Dixon Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Geoffrey Jellicoe and Susan Jellicoe, *The Landscape of Man: Shaping the Environment from Prehistory to the Present Day*, Third ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995).

An important philosophical thread I follow is the differing attitudes to "art" and "Art," and "nature" and "Nature" that can be traced from Plato and the Neoplatonists, through Shaftesbury and Kant, on through Hegel and Nietzsche and finally to the attitudes to nature embraced by contemporary philosophers of the environment, such as Allen Carlson and Glenn Parsons, and to the aesthetic in general, by philosophers of "the everyday," including Yuriko Saito and Thomas Leddy.[16]

I have already introduced my primary sources for contemporary philosophical accounts of gardens. They include principally the monographs of Miller and Ross, and also the sources referred to above. (See FN 9, 19)

Gardens and Temporality

Historically, the notion of temporality in 18th-century gardens has been commented on in three respects. First, 20th-century writers, including Hunt, have commented on the passage of time being important for the growth of and our experience of 18th-century gardens.[17] Second, Andrews, has described how the inclusion of ruins in 18th-century gardens assumed increased importance as an historical-temporal device.[18] And third, Hunt has stressed the importance of the experience of

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[16] See: Allen Carlson, "Aesthetic Appreciation of the Natural Environment," in *Arguing About Art: Contemporary Philosophical Debates*, ed. A Neil and A Rodley (London; New York: Routledge, 2008); Paul Guyer, "Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics," in *A Companion to Aesthetics*, ed. Stephen Davies ... [et al.] (Chichester, U.K.; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009); Kant, *Critique of Judgement*; Thomas Leddy, *The Extraordinary in the Ordinary: The Aesthetics of Everyday Life* (Broadview Press, 2012); Glenn Parsons, *Bloomsbury Aesthetics: Aesthetics and Nature* (London: Continuum, 2008); Yuriko Saito, *Everyday Aesthetics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[17] See, for example: Hunt, *The Figure in the Landscape*, 92-93, 120-21, 43.

[18] Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800*, 41-50. For brief outlines of some recent, historically-focussed studies of ruins in gardens see: Luke Morgan, "Out of Time: Temporality in Landscape History: Introduction," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* 36, no. 4 (2016).

movement in the 18th-century garden, even crediting it with an influence "beyond the pale" on the work of the 18th-century poet of *The Seasons*, James Thomson.[19]

In the late 20th and the 21st centuries, an acknowledgement of the importance of the temporality of gardens presents interesting opportunities for new ways of positioning gardens in the wider cultural field. Ironically, the emergence of *non*-art and *non*-garden aesthetics, such as the aesthetics of the environment, and the everyday, has implicitly facilitated the possibility of gardens' being considered as temporal entities. However, while some philosophers, such as Mateusz Salwa and Miller, are addressing this possibility, it remains largely unexplored.[20] Salwa's claims in this regard are of particular interest. He introduces performance as a useful, metaphorical account of the ways in which gardens exist and are experienced. However, while agreeing with parts of his analysis, I end up rejecting his account because, I argue, gardens necessarily constitute a non-performance art form.

Traditionally, temporal arts have been assumed to be primarily performance arts, and certainly such arts have an inescapably temporal dimension. Increasingly, however, temporal dimensions of the creation, existence, and our experiences of all arts are being acknowledged.[21] Because I claim that gardens are temporal in a unique way, and because some others are claiming that all arts are temporal, it is necessary

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[19] See: Hunt, *The Figure in the Landscape*, 143. Hunt explores the role of walking further in: "The Time of Walking," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2016).

[20] Miller, "Time and Temporality in the Garden."; Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance." Miller claims that the ways in which gardens structure time(s) for the visitor are "one of [gardens'] most important and least studied contributions, and that this aspect of gardens "has rarely been acknowledged by scholars or designers." ("Time and Temporality in the Garden," 178-79.) Miller's concern here is not with "art" or "art gardens" and, while her text comprises a useful exposition of the different types of time obtaining in gardens, she does not, and nor does she need to, attempt to explain how these types of time might be accommodated in a philosophical account of art gardens.

[21] See, for example, Gerald Currie's "action type hypothesis," developed in his *An Ontology of Art* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1989). I discuss Currie's ontological claims in some detail in Chapter 6, 194-200. See also: David Davies, *Art as Performance* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

for me to explore temporality in the arts in some detail in order to assess in what way(s) gardens' temporality differs from that of the other arts.

I employ the taxonomy of conditions for temporal arts developed by the philosophers Jerrold Levinson and Philip Alperson in their "What is a Temporal Art?" to determine whether gardens are theoretically temporal works of art.[22] In their comprehensive account, Levinson and Alperson ignore gardens, and therefore it can be assumed that, for them, gardens are not a temporal art. However, I argue that they are indeed temporal works and I propose a new condition which may usefully be added to the authors' taxonomy to better accommodate the case of gardens and some other arts. I catalogue the wide variety of manifestations of temporality in "real" gardens. I support the authors' claim that assessing the aesthetic value of the contribution temporality makes to individual works of art and art genres is a worthwhile, though far from straightforward, aim to pursue, and it is with this challenge in mind that I briefly review manifestations of temporality in six non-garden arts and compare those manifestations with gardens' temporalities. I aim to explain why manifestations of temporality are more aesthetically valuable in some arts than in others. In doing this, I show that gardens are not only temporal works of art but that they are so in a way that is, until recently, unique among the arts. Gardens, because of their specific and unique temporal nature, cannot be accommodated in pan-art notions of art, even in those that acknowledge art's broadly temporal nature, and therefore a unique and distinctive account of their temporality and ontology needs to be developed.

Gardens and Ontology

The 20th and 21st centuries' avant-gardes have produced countless works that have challenged traditional ontological theories. In response to such works, significantly

[22] Jerrold Levinson and Philip Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 16 (1991).

revised ontologies of art have emerged and these have, albeit unwittingly, come closer to being adequate to the case of gardens. I engage with ontologies developed by three contemporary philosophers of art – Stephen Davies, Richard Wollheim, and Gregory Currie – and I propose amendments and alterations which would, were they of a mind to accept them, make their theories more accommodating of gardens.[23] However, I claim a preferable option is to develop an ontology unique to gardens and it is this option that I seek to validate.

Davies divides the arts up into "singular" and "multiple" art forms. Typically, singular works are largely unchanging and multiple works admit of considerable changes. I argue that gardens constitute an exception, being both singular and highly changeable. By arguing that artworks, or "aesthetic objects," may legitimately change over time, Wollheim's ontology would seem well suited to the case of gardens. However, his aesthetic-objects theory is inadequate to their case because it fails to accommodate the continuous, sometimes unpredictable, but aesthetically important and valuable changeability of gardens' living elements. Currie's complex ontology asserts that all artworks are capable of being multiply-instanced and that all artworks are the outcome of completed (mental) actions. I reject both of these claims with respect to gardens. Gardens cannot typically be multiply-instanced on different sites and nor is it reasonable to claim that the completed (mental) action of a garden artist has included being able to foresee and account for all the changes that may occur in a garden over the course of it life.

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[23] Currie, *An Ontology of Art*; Stephen Davies, "Ontology of Art," ed. Jerrold Levinson, *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/.../oxfordhb-9780199279456; Philosophical Perspectives on Art, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Richard Wollheim, *Art and Its Objects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

Some Key Terms and Concepts

In this section I provide general explanations of some of the key terms used in the thesis. These terms are all interrogated, refined, redefined, and contested at later stages in the study. However, it is reasonable at this stage to provide for the reader at least a basic indication of what I am meaning when I employ the terms. None of the following definitions defines a term in the pure philosophical, or Socratic, sense of providing a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for that term, but I do offer and comment on such definitions as the need arises during the course of the thesis.

The first term is "art." Unless otherwise specified or made clear by the context, when I use "art" I am referring to any one or more of the various branches of creative activity, such as music, poetry, and dance, which are sometimes collectively referred to as the fine arts. However, even at this general level, it is necessary to distinguish between two significantly different historical uses of the term.

This distinction is made clearly, if somewhat dogmatically, by the philosopher Ananda Coomaraswamy.[24] Coomaraswamy describes pre-Renaissance (and traditional Oriental) art-making as a "religious" activity whose function is, in the words of Aquinas, to "imitate Nature in her manner of operation."[25] On this view, an artist's function is not to represent reality but to use her skill (art) to invoke the ultimate reality, the Forms, from which, according to the Neo-Platonists and their medieval philosophical heirs, mundane reality and humanity derive their essence, meaning, and value.

By contrast, Coomaraswamy describes Renaissance and all post-Renaissance art as empty, materialistic – that is, concerned with materials instead of immaterial Forms – and all-too human. In this period, which extends into our own century, he

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[24] See: Ananda Coomaraswamy, "The Philosophy of Mediaeval and Oriental Art," in *Coomaraswamy*, ed. Roger Lipsey (NJ, USA; Surrey, UK: Princeton University Press, 1977); Vishwanath S. Naravane, *Ananda K. Coomaraswamy*, vol. 75, Twayne World Leader Series (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978).

[25] Coomaraswamy, "The Philosophy of Mediaeval and Oriental Art," 52.

claims that art objects are made not *per artem* but *pro arte*.[26] In other words, artists and their products are no longer made or valued for what they can show and teach us about God and Ultimate Reality. Instead, they are made and are to be valued for their own non-instrumental, aesthetic sakes. In this connection Coomaraswamy quotes approvingly these wonderfully apt lines of the art historian H. J. Spinden: "Then came the Renaissance. . . . Man ceased to be part of the universe, and came down to earth."[27]

It is Coomaraswamy's post-Renaissance conception of art which underlies all my discussions of art in this thesis. The art with which I am concerned not only falls historically within this period but also, and more importantly, it is the art of known individuals – artists – producing artefacts for themselves, patrons, or more general "consumers," which products are of intrinsic as much as instrumental interest and value: art, one could say, for art's, artists', and art-lovers' sakes.

The terms "aesthetic" and "aesthetics" have their etymological roots in the word *aisthetikos*, which for the ancient Greeks denoted sentience, or sensitivity to any sensations received through the bodily senses.[28] (This original sense of the word plays a role in its contemporary antonym, "anaesthetics.") The modern word "aesthetics" was coined in the early 18th century by the German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten, who used it to denote knowledge obtained through the senses rather than the intellect and, especially, to refer to the sensory experience of beauty.[29]

As the 18th century progressed, two significant changes occurred to Baumgarten's meaning of "aesthetics." First, the sensory experience of beauty was joined by the sensory experiences of the sublime and the picturesque as matters fit

[26] Suggested translation: not "through art" but "for art."(ibid., 58.)
[27] Quoted in: ibid., 432.
[28] "Aesthetic, N. And Adj.," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press., June 2016), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/3237.
[29] Darren Hudson Hick, *Introducing Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art* (London, New York: Continuum, 2012), 1.

for aesthetics.[30] Second, Baumgarten's original use of the term to apply to the sensory experience of beauty in nature *and* art changed so that by the early 19th century, and continuing for the following 130 or so years, "aesthetics" came to be used almost exclusively to describe the sensory perception of beauty and other qualities in works of art, not in nature.[31] In effect, "aesthetics" became a de facto contemporary term to describe what in the 20th century developed into the philosophy of art.

"Philosophy of art" emerged as a new term and discipline as 19th-century "aesthetics" became an increasingly inadequate concept to deal with troublesome activities and products of the avant-garde art world. Notorious artworks, such as Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* and John Cage's *4'33"*, dealt body blows to the 19th-century notion equating art with beauty, or the sublime or picturesque, at the same time as they called into question the very category of "art" itself.

In response to these challenges, the discipline of philosophy of art emerged. Its concerns ranged well beyond those it inherited from traditional aesthetics. The new discipline engaged, and indeed continues to engage, with art in all its geographical, cultural, and social variety, and it importantly and necessarily concerns itself with defining what art is and with ontological issues such as permanence, forgery, and authorship.

As the new discipline evolved, the old term "aesthetics" became co-opted to new uses. The traditional association of the term with art was overturned as new areas of aesthetic interest were studied. The two most important new areas of interest are the aesthetics of the human or built environment, including the aesthetics of the everyday, and the aesthetics of the natural environment. The aesthetics of everyday

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[30] James Shelley, "18th-Century British Aesthetics," ed. Edward N. Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/aesthetics-18th-british/>. § 2.1.

[31] Kai Hammermeister describes Hegel's (19th-century) aesthetics as constituting a "a veritable world history of *art*." [My emphasis.] Quoted in Stephen Houlgate, "Hegel's Aesthetics," ed. Edward N Zaltaibid. (Spring 2014 Edition), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/hegel-aesthetics/>. § 1.

life concerns itself with everyday places and activities, such as shopping malls, sport, housework, and even itching![32] The aesthetics of the natural environment is concerned with the natural world and at first glance appears to mark a return to part of Baumgarten's original use of the term to denote "beauty in nature." However, "nature," and our complex relationships with and scientific understanding of it have altered so deeply since Baumgarten's time that any perceived connections between the contemporary and his use of the term are largely illusory.[33]

Three philosophers have recently set out to define the term "garden." According to Cooper, the task of defining "garden" is unproblematic. In *A Philosophy of Gardens* he writes: "'Garden' is an entirely familiar term, and nearly every English speaker knows what it means. Pressed to say what I mean, my response would be 'The same as you who are pressing me mean by it – so you already know what I mean.'"[34] This definition may be adequate to Cooper's project, which focuses on the eudaimonic aspect of the experience of gardens, but it is too imprecise for my purposes, and in particular it is inadequate for underpinning the claims I make in Parts III and IV of the thesis.

In their respective books, Ross and Miller both provide "garden" definitions that are more useful for my purposes. I have argued elsewhere against the adoption of Ross's definition, which is based on what I claim is the flawed Wittgensteinian

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[32] See: A Berleant and A Carlson, "Introduction," in *The Aesthetics of Human Environments*, ed. A Berleant and A Carlson (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2007); Sherri Irvin, "Scratching an Itch," *Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism* 66, no. 1 (2008); Saito, *Everyday Aesthetics*; Wolfgang Welsch, "Sport Viewed Aesthetically, and Even as Art?," in *The Aesthetics of Everday Life*, ed. Andrew Light and Jonathon M Smith (New York; Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2005).

[33] For examples of contemporary views of nature see, for example: Carlson, "Aesthetic Appreciation of the Natural Environment."; R. W. Hepburn, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty," in *British Analytical Philosophy*, ed. Bernard Williams and Alan Montefiore (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); Parsons, *Bloomsbury Aesthetics: Aesthetics and Nature*; Martin Seel, "Nature: Aesthetics of Nature and Ethics," in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, ed. Michael Kelly (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[34] Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 13.

notion of family resemblance.[35] And for my purposes in this thesis I adopt a modified version of Miller's definition of "garden."

Miller's definition has two clauses and incorporates three "conditions." Miller does not identify the conditions as such and, consequently, the reader is not to know whether any or all of them are necessary or sufficient. She states that a garden is "[1] any purposeful arrangement of natural objects (such as sand, water, plants, rocks, etc.) with exposure to the sky or open air, [2] in which form is not fully accounted for by purely practical considerations such as convenience."[36] I accept that part of her first clause which states that a garden is "any purposeful arrangement of natural objects (such as sand, water, plants, rocks, etc.)."[37] It adequately identifies what a garden is even though it fails to point out some of their essential features, such as their inherent dynamism. But I do not accept the second part of her first clause because not all gardens need to have exposure to sky or open air. Interior gardens, at scales ranging from Victorian terrariums to large-scale municipal conservatories, and "winter gardens" are examples of types of gardens that do not have exposure to sky or open air but which I believe should not thereby be excluded by any adequate definition of gardens.

I reject the second clause of Miller's definition – "in which form is not fully accounted for by purely practical considerations such as convenience" – for two reasons. First, there is no good reason to deny that kitchen and herb gardens are gardens. Furthermore, it is appropriate to take aesthetic pleasure in, and make aesthetic judgments about them. Second, gardens laid out according to practical considerations, such as ease of maintenance or optimum productivity, may be beautiful because they are well suited to a purpose. In Kantian terms then, gardens

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[35] See: Powell, "We Do Not Have an Adequate Conception of Art until We Have One That Accommodates Gardens," 9-10.

[36] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 15.

[37] Along with Miller, I acknowledge that many gardens also incorporate unnatural objects, such as fibreglass sculptures, ceramic birdbaths, glass, mosaics, etc.

may exhibit free and dependent beauty. That is, they may be aesthetically pleasing both because they are "lovely to look at" and because they are "fit for purpose."

In this thesis, my interest is primarily in "art gardens" and Miller's shortened definition comfortably includes the gardens that are commonly considered to be works of art. Examples of such gardens are Monet's garden at Giverny, Ian Hamilton Finlay's garden, *Little Sparta,* at Dunsrye, Le Nôtre's gardens for the Palace of Versailles outside Paris, Henry Hoare's garden, Stourhead, in Wiltshire, Robert Irwin's gardens at the Getty Centre in Los Angeles, and the *Australian Garden* near Melbourne, designed by Taylor Cullity Lethlean and Paul Thompson. (See Figures 1-6 below) These gardens are all well known and highly regarded, and, like Miller, I am interested in them, their materials, and the arrangement of those materials. However, other, more "ordinary" gardens may also potentially demonstrate qualities by virtue of which they may be considered works of art and, accordingly, I am equally interested in such gardens. Examples of gardens of this sort may include municipal bedding displays and well-designed vegetable plots, and Miller's shortened definition comfortably includes gardens like these too.

Figure 1. Photo of part of Monet's garden near Giverny, France.
(Source: https://kathrynwarmstrong.files.wordpress.com/2011/09/1.jpg)

Figure 2. Photo of part of Ian Hamilton Finlay's garden, *Little Sparta,* at Dunsrye, Scotland.
(Source: https://thegrb.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/dsc_0435.jpg)

Figure 3. Photo of part of Henry Hoare's garden, Stourhead, in Wiltshire, England.

(Source: https://nz.pinterest.com/pin/457256168393162018/)

Figure 4. Photo of part of Le Nôtre's gardens for the Palace of Versailles, France.

(Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a1/Orangerie.jpg)

Figure 5. Photo of part of Robert Irwin's gardens for the Getty Centre, Los Angeles, USA.
(Source: http://stevebailey.us/yahoo_site_admin/assets/images/LA_Getty_Center_5.48175710.JPG)

Figure 6. Photo of part of the *Australian Garden*, near Melbourne, Australia, designed by Taylor Cullity Lethlean and Paul Thompson.
(Source: http://www.wikiwand.com/en/Royal_Botanic_Gardens,_Cranbourne)

Thesis Structure

My thesis comprises the present Introduction and eight chapters and is presented in four parts. In the Introduction, I have so far introduced the aims and anticipated contributions of the thesis, described its principal sources and methods and explained its key terms. Part I – Setting the Scene – comprises Chapter 1, in which I prepare the ground for the discussions in Part II of the thesis, extrapolating from the case of an actual garden to elaborate on the difficulties that the existence and experience of gardens have posed, and continue to pose, for aesthetics.

Part II – The Territory: A Survey – comprises Chapters 2 and 3. These chapters offer an historical-cultural-philosophical survey of aesthetics, art, and gardens during the Enlightenment, the Romantic age, and the periods of Modernism and Postmodernism. The survey is presented in order to give an historical and conceptual context for Part III, which is focussed on matters current in contemporary philosophical debate.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of philosophical aesthetics during the period 1700 – 2015. It describes the changing relationships between philosophical aesthetics, art, and nature during those years and provides an historical context for the inquiry into garden aesthetics.

Chapter 3 examines the changing relationships between philosophical aesthetics and gardens in the period 1700 – 2015. It pays particular attention to the change in gardens' art status that occurred around the beginning of the 19th century.

Part III – The Lie of the Land: A Critique – comprises Chapters 4, 5, and 6. It considers the adequacy of contemporary philosophy of art to the case of gardens. In particular, it critiques recent philosophical writing on gardens, assesses the adequacy of current theories of temporality to gardens and other arts, and evaluates contemporary theories of ontology with respect to their ability to account for gardens.

Chapter 4 critiques three books and a range of papers concerning gardens and gardening written by philosophers during the last twenty years. It finds much to praise in them, not least their pioneering spirit, but it finds each of them to be in

some ways inadequate in their treatment of gardens' art-definitional, temporal, or ontological aspects. The chapter thereby provides a background against which subsequent chapters dealing specifically with temporality and ontology are presented, and it also indirectly serves to introduce the need for addressing the thesis's primary aim of regarding gardens from the viewpoint of their constituting a unique art genre.

Chapter 5 employs Levinson and Alperson's "What is a Temporal Art?" to confirm that the garden is indeed a temporal art form. It suggests modifications to the details of some of the fourteen conditions comprising the authors' "taxonomy" of conditions for an art's being temporal, and proposes the addition to their taxonomy of a new condition adequate to the case of gardens and some other arts.

Chapter 5 continues by cataloguing the temporal changes to be observed in "real" gardens and commenting briefly on their significance(s). It takes up the challenge issued by Levinson and Alperson towards the end of their paper by investigating whether being temporal in some ways and in some arts may be aesthetically more significant, or valuable, than being temporal is in other ways or in other arts. The chapter assesses that challenge in the context of a variety of non-garden arts and comes to the conclusion that different manifestations of temporality indeed have different significances and value. It concludes that gardens' temporal features are not only important but that they are, at least in the context of traditional art forms, unique.

Chapter 6 critiques ontologies of art developed by three contemporary philosophers of art, Stephen Davies, Richard Wollheim, and Gregory Currie. It claims that their actual or implied ontological claims are all in part inadequate to the case of art gardens, and it suggests modifications to them to improve their applicability to gardens.

Part IV – Breaking New Ground – comprises Chapters 7 and 8. It endorses the idea that artform-specific theories and ontologies of art may be more useful than

pan-art ones and develops such an account of gardens, which accommodates their unique ontology, materials, and mode of experience.

Chapter 7 takes as its starting point Morris Weitz's mid-20th century paper, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics."[38] It then draws support for the notion of artform-specific theories and ontologies of art from a range of philosophers including Peter Kivy, Dominic McIver Lopes, Amie Thomasson, and Aaron Meskin.

Chapter 8 is conclusory in nature. It critiques and extends ideas and theories derived from philosophers Arthur Danto, Curtis Carter, Stephen Davies, Philip Alperson, and the architect and garden writer Jan Birksted, and it invokes personal identity as an heuristic device, in order to develop an artform specific account of gardens' ontology, materials, and mode(s) of experience.

[38] Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics."

PART I

SETTING THE SCENE

Chapter 1

A Problematics of Gardens

1.1 Introduction

Among its citations for "problematics," the Oxford English Dictionary includes this quotation: "Working out its problematics, i.e., the principal problems (conceptual, substantive and procedural)."[1] This citation is useful for my purposes because it highlights my aim in this chapter of not merely compiling a list of problems but rather of organizing, categorizing, and prioritizing the conceptual, substantive, and procedural issues gardens raise for philosophical aesthetics.

The acknowledgement of the existence of a problematics invites the question: for whom? The likely answers to this question are: the gardening public, the professional garden makers and landscape architects, and philosophical aestheticians. Of the gardening public, it is an often-remarked fact that in the Western world today gardening, for whatever purpose, in whatever style, and of whatever seriousness it may be, is extraordinarily popular.[2] However, while there is an apparently insatiable appetite for gardening books and magazines of varying quality, there appears to be little appetite among the gardening public for reading about the philosophical issues gardens raise.[3] Similarly, and for reasons that probably have much to do with the busyness and business of making a living, many practitioners of landscape design

[1] "Problematic, Adj. And N," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2015), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/151728.

[2] See Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 2.Also, see any number of horticulturally-based, and "lifestyle" garden magazines, and lavishly illustrated books.

[3] However, see: Dan O'Brien, ed. *Gardening: Cultivating Wisdom* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).This book, part of a series subtitled *Philosophy for Everyone*, is directed at the educated lay-reader.

appear largely uninterested in gardens' philosophical-aesthetic issues.[4] So it is for the third group, philosophical aestheticians, and some other "serious" garden writers, that the problematics may be said to exist, and in whose interest it is that the issues be resolved, even though such resolutions may be of potential interest and benefit to all gardeners, garden makers, and garden visitors.

The aestheticians' problematics stems from two sources. First, until quite recently, most aestheticians have considered gardens, when they have considered them at all, in terms of non-garden art forms, and they have thereby misconstrued, ignored, or simply missed gardens' unique qualities.[5] Second, and in part related to the first reason, aestheticians have not generally been *interested* in gardens, and they have therefore remained unaware that the new aesthetic theories that developed during the 20th century were, *mutatis mutandis*, often applicable to the case of gardens.[6] In this chapter, I examine issues stemming from each of these two sources of the problematics.

In Chapter 3, I chart the changing relationships between philosophical aesthetics and gardens, and in doing so I propose reasons why gardens have from time to time been judged to be inappropriate candidates for arthood.[7] These reasons generally stem from the fact that gardens possess qualities, aspects, and functions which place them outside the category of what has been historically defined as, or defined as acceptable for, art. These characteristics of gardens have not only

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[4] There are, however, some important, well-known exceptions. See, for example, the noted contemporary European practioners, Fernando Caruncho (Spain) and Gilles Clément (France) and, from last century, Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe in England.

[5] For an historical overview of aestheticians' treatment of gardens, see Chapter 3, 93-99 and 109-117.

[6] The account of gardens I develop in Chapter 8 owes a debt to recent aesthetic theories developed in other contexts by, among others, Arthur Danto and Curtis Carter.

[7] These reasons, which have been rehearsed in differing combinations by many, including Cooper, Hunt, and Miller, are: (i) gardens' potential utility; (ii) their lack of autonomy by virtue of their dependence on nature and ongoing maintenance; (iii) the immersive nature of the experience of them, which contrasted sharply with the preference for disinterest; (iv) their frequent lack of a single genius-artist-creator; (v) their non-privileging of sight as the primary aesthetic sense; (vi) their unfitness for museum display; (vii) the unfashionably pleasant, sensuous, non-intellectual demands they typically make of visitors; (viii) their unstable nature; and (ix) their undisguisable naturalness.

sometimes impeded gardens' acceptance as bona fide works of art, they have also counted, and continue to count, amongst gardens' most distinctive and aesthetically interesting and valuable characteristics. It is therefore important to examine them in more detail, so as to better understand the "problems" they have raised for philosophical aesthetics, which are addressed in Part III, and in order to prepare the philosophical ground for the "solutions" available to philosophical aesthetics, which are the focus of Part IV of the thesis.[8]

In this chapter, I focus on these distinctive characteristics of gardens with the intention of demonstrating how, why, when, and for whom, they, and some related characteristics, have contributed to gardens' problematic status. I begin by presenting a case study of Tupare, a garden that exemplifies some of the most important of these characteristics. I then build on the findings of the case study to reinforce why contemporary aesthetics finds gardens problematic and I suggest that, by using appropriate philosophical tools, we ought to be able to capture adequately the essential and distinctive characteristics of Tupare. Furthermore, such tools, I suggest, should prove to be adequate to account for the essential and distinctive characteristics not only of Tupare, but of art gardens generally.

My interest in the relationships between gardens and philosophical aesthetics has its genesis in my practical experiences in the field of landscape architecture, and I am therefore perhaps more than usually aware of the risk of posing philosophical questions that may have little or no relevance to the "real" world of gardens. By introducing Tupare as an exemplar, and thereby providing actual examples of some of the issues I raise and solutions I propose, I hope to at least in part forestall that potential objection, and to add further (non-philosophical) weight to my arguments.

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[8] In the previous sentence, I have contained the term "problem" in inverted commas in order to convey the ambivalence of the term in its present context. However, for the sake of simplicity of reading, for the rest of this chapter I will not use inverted commas when I use the term in this way unless not doing so would lead to confusion.

1.2 Tupare: Description and Analysis

Tupare is a 3.6 hectare garden located in New Plymouth, on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand.[9] Figure 7, below, shows the extent of the garden and its relationship with the river along part of its boundary. It is one of several exceptional gardens in a geographical area that possesses a climate and soils well suited to many styles of gardening. The garden was developed by the Matthews family and remained in its ownership for 50 years, until ownership was transferred to the Queen Elizabeth II Trust in 1983 and then to the Taranaki Regional Council in 2002.[10]

Figure 7. Aerial photo of Tupare garden.
(Base aerial photo: New Plymouth District Council)

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[9] See: Taranaki Regional Council, "Tupare: Relive the Splendour," Taranaki Regional Council, http://www.trc.govt.nz/tupare-home/. "Tupare" is a Maori word meaning "garland of flowers."

[10] For a short general introduction to the garden see: Judy Siers, *The Life and Times of James Walter Chapman-Taylor* (Napier, New Zealand: Millwood Heritage Productions, 2007), 279.

Its site is in many ways unlikely for a garden. It enjoys a pleasing aspect towards a river on part of its north-east and south-east boundaries, but the site's predominant topographical characteristic is its extremely steep slopes up to the north, west, and south-west boundaries, which, in southern hemisphere terms, makes the site far from ideal for gardening. (See Figure 8) The flatter areas of the site are occupied by a house, auxiliary buildings, and tennis court and, some 22 metres below the house site, by an area of un-gardened river flats.

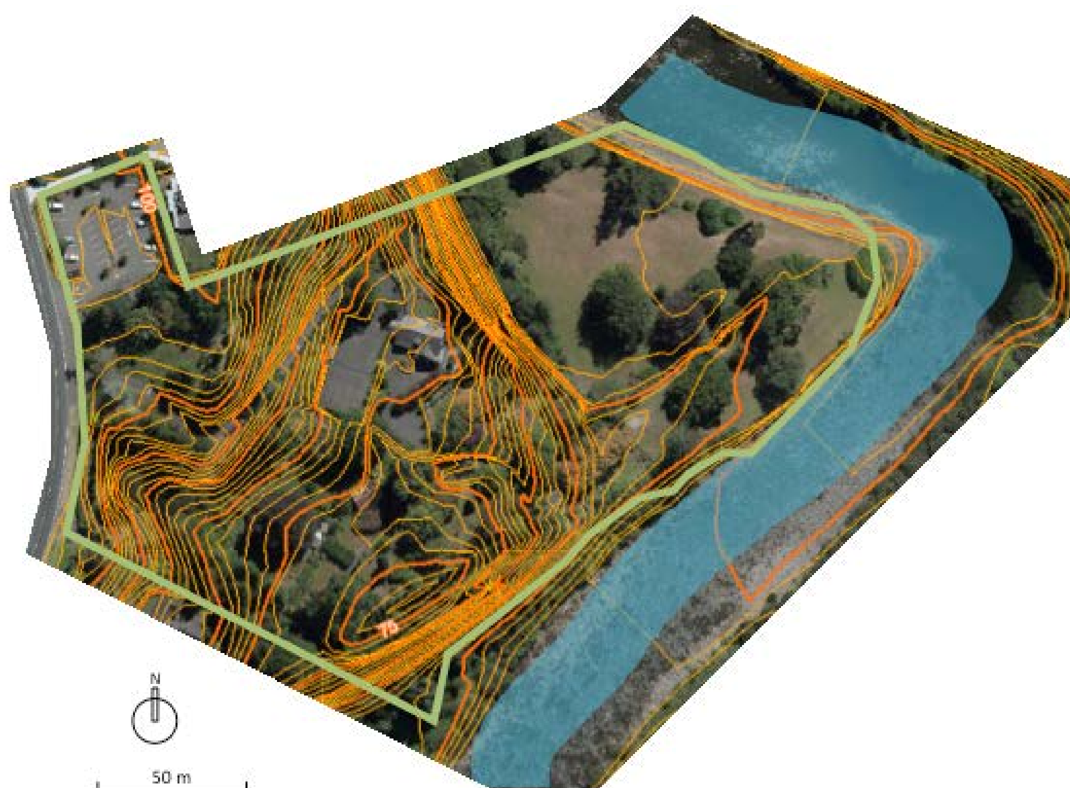

Figure 8. Aerial photo of Tupare garden, showing contours at 1 m. intervals. (Base aerial photo, and contour information: New Plymouth District Council)

The evolution of Tupare has not been examined in any depth. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the garden developed its particular characteristics and flavour as a result of four influences.[11] First, Sir Russell Matthews was a keen

[11] For background historical information concerning Russell Matthews, his garden, personality, and his professional life see: Elizabeth M Benney, "Tupare," in *The New Zealander's Garden*, ed. Julian

plantsman with an eye for the new and the fashionable. Second, he was a successful roading contractor who was able to command the services of his workers during the off season to construct paths, driveways, walls, and so on, in order to make pedestrian and vehicular movement possible around an otherwise inaccessible site. Third, like many of his contemporaries, his social ambitions were founded in a preference for a certain type of Englishness. And fourth, his "English" house, designed in the arts and craft style by the noted architect J. W. Chapman-Taylor, required an appropriate, gardenesque garden to set it off.

In the following analysis of Tupare, I necessarily ignore much of significance in, and concerning, the garden. My analysis concentrates on those aspects of the garden that are germane to the arguments of this study, namely, Tupare's mutability, multi-sensuality, and indistinct boundaries, and visitors' experiences of those features, Tupare's authorship, and its arthood.

Any attempt at describing or re-presenting Tupare in words and static images must fail to provide an adequate account of the garden and the range of sensory experiences it offers. Although this limitation applies to descriptions of all gardens, in the case of relatively unchanging, formal gardens on flat terrain, such description or re-presentation may be more or less successful, although still inadequate. However, in the case of highly changeable, highly sensual gardens sited on dramatically sloping topography, such as Tupare, such descriptions and re-presentations are not only inadequate, they may be misleading. So, with that necessary ekphrastic caution firmly in mind, let us begin.[12]

Matthews and Gordon Collier (Auckland, NZ: Endeavour Press, 1985); Richard Matthews, *To Whom It May Concern: A Romp through the Life of Richard Matthews* (New Zealand: R Matthews, 2009). For information concerning the garden and, particularly, the house, see: Siers, *The Life and Times of James Walter Chapman-Taylor*.

[12] For an amusing description of John Dixon Hunt's opinion on the use of text to describe phenomena such as scent and sound in the garden see: Phyllis Odessey, "I Want to Kill Words," https://phyllisodessey.wordpress.com/2014/05/14/i-want-to-kill-words/. Beyond the ekphrastic concerns, Hunt writes of other aspects of gardens that are difficult, if not impossible, to convey in words and static images, such as the designers' hoped for awareness of "ambiguous boundaries of

Tupare is almost overwhelmingly multi-sensual in its appeal. It is rich in opportunities for tactile, olfactory, visual, aural, and kinaesthetic experiences, and, at least in the kitchen garden, for actual or promissory gustatory experiences. I have singled out for comment three categories of sensory experiences that are particularly strongly present in the garden: the aural, and what I call the pure and the mixed kinaesthetic experiences.[13]

Tupare shares the usual range of opportunities for aural experiences offered to varying degrees by most gardens. At Tupare, you can hear birds' songs, listen to the sounds of wind in the trees, and hear the sounds of your own and other visitors' progress around the garden. But Tupare offers a further, unusual sonic treat. It is permeated by the aural presence of the Waiwhakaiho River, which forms part of its boundary. (See Figures 7 and 8) The Waiwhakaiho's riverbed is strewn with boulders and this gives the fast flowing, shallow river a distinctive, noisy presence. (See Figure 9)

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sites, edges that cannot function like pictures frames … to screen off unwanted and unattractive elements; and designers' appreciation of zones of transition that are the very essence of garden spaces but which the camera does not narrate and the static image fails to signal." (See: Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 131.)

[13] Kinaesthesia has been studied in the appreciation of dance. See: N. Carroll and W. P. Seeley, "Kinesthetic Understanding and Appreciation in Dance," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 71 (2013); R. M. Conroy, "Responding Bodily.," ibid., no. 2. The focus in these papers is on what might be called "sympathetic experiences," that is, the reflexive response of audience members to the bodily movments of the dancers; whereas, in the case of gardens, any kinaesthetic experience is typically direct, not sympathetic.

Figure 9. Photo of Waiwhakaiho River and its source, Mt. Egmont/Taranaki, taken from upstream of Tupare garden.
(Photo: Taranaki Regional Council)

Although the river cannot be seen from most of the garden, its sound spreads everywhere. A sensitive visitor remains aware of it even when she is looking at smaller water features within the garden. The river's sound functions somewhat in the nature of a sonic "view" – let us call it a hearing – around which the garden is assembled in the manner of a garden assembled around an external (visual) view, and the garden's topography plays its role in amplifying or diminishing, and containing or excluding the sound. This phenomenon is, besides, a reminder of the permeability and indistinctness of gardens' boundaries, which characteristics are usually assumed to have visual implications only.[14]

I understand pure kinaesthetic sensation to be the experience of the sensations provided by the body's proprioceptors, which are the sensory organs that provide information about the movement and position of the body. On Tupare's extremely varied topography, the sensations on offer are rich and various. Steep, regularly and

[14] The sonic qualitites of gardens have received attention by the sound artist and spatial thinker Michael Fowler. Adopting the terminology of the Canadian accoustic ecologist, R Murray Schafer, Fowler would (possibly) describe the sound of the Waiwhakaiho River as a "keynote." (See: Michael Fowler, "Soundscape as a Design Strategy for Landscape Architectural Praxis," *Design Studies* 34, no. 1 (2012): 3.

irregularly ramped paths, steps, gently sloping river flats, and boulder hopping in the river provide the visitor with an unusual variety and juxtaposition of pure kinaesthetic experiences in a relatively small area, and the garden is to be valued on this account. (See Figure 10)

However, the opportunities for mixed kinaesthetic experiences afforded by the garden are more valuable still. The contemporary architect and garden writer Jan Birksted describes a garden visitor, or, to use his term, beholder, as being "(extra)visual and mobile . . . in gardens' three-dimensional space and time."[15] In the context of Tupare, this means that besides changes in the garden's living elements (plants), and other changes attributable to weather and season, a visitor's location is itself constantly changing in time and space. Add to this Tupare's topographical variety, and the result for the visitor is a sensory experience that is almost impossibly rich in potential. Thus, a view from a narrow, winding, sloping path may be obliterated at a single step by the uppermost leaves of a tree growing from four metres below the level of the path, only to be revealed two steps later once the treetop is passed; during a short walk the same tree may be experienced at its base, middle and top; the scent and sight of flowers growing at the top of a tall tree may be available, at some times of the year, from a path high above the tree's base; a tree's weeping branches may descend on the viewer's path from a tree planted higher up the slope, allowing tactile and close visual and olfactory examination of, say, a conifer's unusual cone. (See Figure 11) All such experiences may be expected and found in many gardens, but they exist in peculiar abundance on the hillsides of Tupare.

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[15] Jan Kenneth Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," *Landscape Review* 8, no. 2 (2003): 6. See Chapter 8, 249 for further discussion of this quotation.

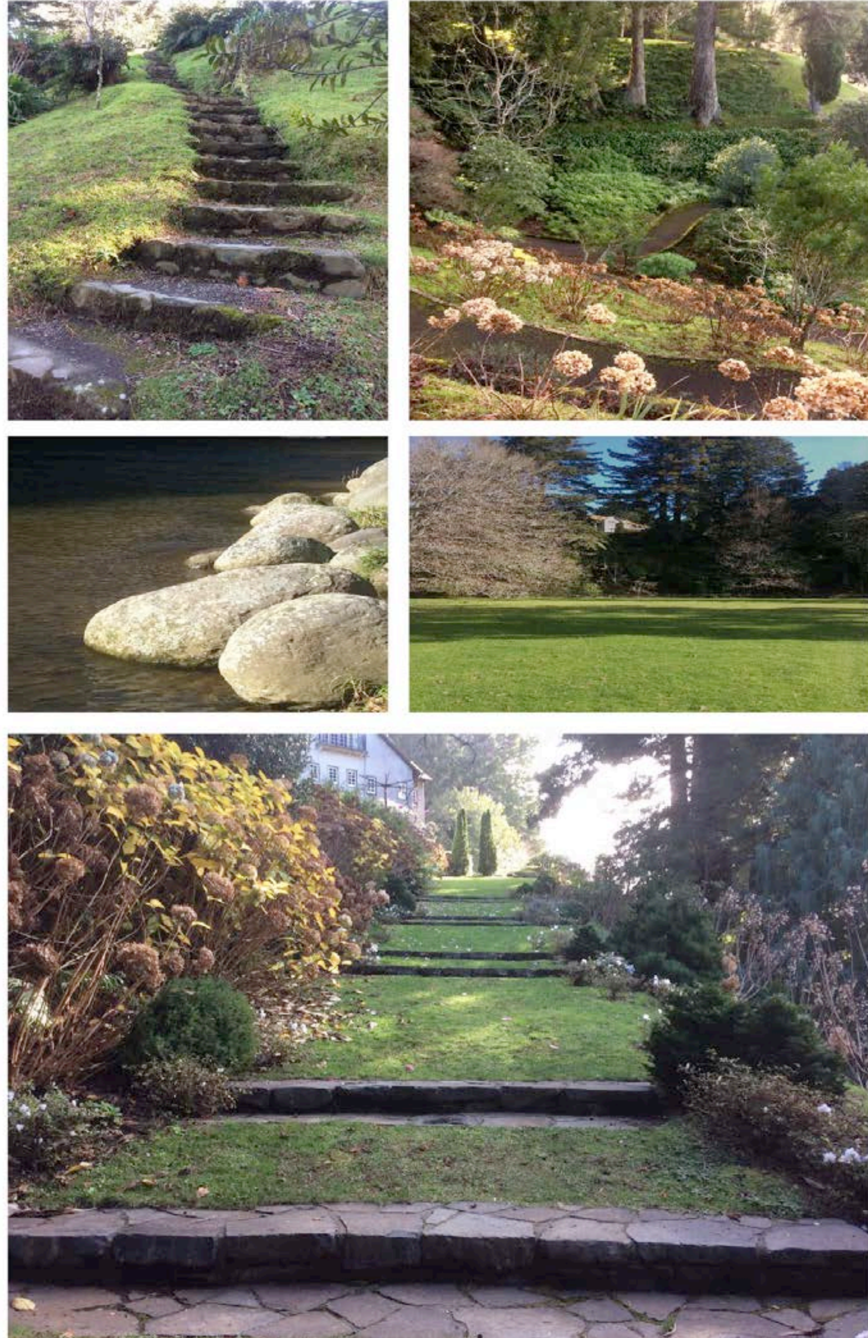

Figure 10. Composite image of paths, steps, river flats, and river boulders in Tupare. These features suggest a wide range of “pure” kinaesthetic experiences. (Photos: J Powell)

Figure 11. Photo of a magnolia and rimu growing from a lower level and overhanging a higher level path at Tupare. This illustrates one instance of many the garden offers for "mixed" kinaesthetic experiences. (Photo: J Powell)

The question of authorship is both simple and complex. It is simple in that the garden is the vision of Sir Russell Matthews, who bought the land, commissioned and fought with the architect of the house, and caused the garden to be laid out and planted. Therefore, it is his garden. However, leaving aside the complications of Lady Matthews' almost certain involvement, and the recorded, enforced involvement of his children, what are we to make of the indispensable contributions made to the garden by Sir Russell's seconded road-making employees?[16] To what

[16] For descriptions of the family's and others' contributions to the evolution and maintenance of the garden see: Benney, "Tupare," 27-29; Matthews, *To Whom It May Concern: A Romp through the Life of Richard Matthews*, 15.

extent were they directed, or were they relatively free agents? No records exist to clarify this. And what was the role of the Queen Elizabeth II Trust in influencing the evolution of the garden during its 19 year tenure? Since 2002, under the ownership of the Taranaki Regional Council, it is clear that significant changes have been and continue to be made. For example, trees have been felled, replacements and other trees have been planted, and some complex, labour intensive underplantings have been replaced by more easily maintained mass plantings of ground cover plant species. So, in other words, while Russell Matthews' role as the original "author," or originating artist, of the garden is unlikely to be challenged, Tupare exemplifies a pattern of continual (re)-creation, maintenance, and replanting, carried out by a range of contributors and subsequent authors, that is typical of all but the shortest lived and simplest gardens.

I have so far treated Tupare as if it were firmly established in its arthood, but such is not the case. Rather, Tupare is an example of the sort of garden which Mara Miller and Stephanie Ross, each invoking philosopher George Dickie's definition of art, would seek to describe as non-art.[17] It suffers from many of the disadvantages that traditional gardens continued to exhibit in the face of the preferences, if not requirements, for art that were espoused by practioners, theorists, apologists, and philosophers associated with the major art movements of the latter part of the 20th century. Instead of being challenging, densely intellectual, and egalitarian, Tupare is beautiful and sensuous, and smacks of private wealth and power. Furthermore, in a city with an exceptionally healthy, progressive (visual) arts community and a noted

[17] In Chapter 4, 131-145, I examine in detail, and reject, Miller's and Ross's claims in this regard. Briefly, Miller' argument is not straightforward. She (a) argues that Dickie's definition is inadequate because it does allow for the demotion gardens from their 18th-century art status to what she considers to be their non-art status today; and (b) she invokes Dickie's "inadequate" definition to confirm that gardens are not art today because the artworld ignores them. Ross argues that today's gardens are non-art because garden art has become moribund and been replaced, in a evolutionary sense, by its more vital offspring, which include environmental and land art.

public gallery, Tupare has found no place as "art" – and perhaps not least because it cannot be exhibited in that, or indeed any, gallery.[18]

There are four aspects and features of gardens which I believe are centrally relevant to a proper understanding and appreciation of gardens and with which, therefore, the philosophical literature ought to engage. They are: definitions of "garden," gardens' ontology, the experience of gardens, and gardens' arthood and the artistic status of their makers. I argue below that although existing definitions of "garden" are adequate to the case of Tupare, philosophical aesthetics' accounts of gardens' ontology and experiences fail to capture the aesthetically relevant and interesting features of the garden, nor are they able to come to terms adequately with its art status, or its originator's artist status.

Tupare and Definitions

In the Introduction, I quoted Cooper's definition of "garden": "'Garden' is an entirely familiar term, and nearly every English speaker knows what it means. Pressed to say what I mean, my response would be 'The same as you who are pressing me mean by it – so you already know what I mean.'"[19] Admirably straightforward and inclusive as this definition may be, it is appropriate to seek a dictionary-type definition of the term to assess whether such a definition includes Tupare. Dictionary makers tend to focus on the intuitions of the layperson and it is important for philosophers that, however they understand gardens, their conception coincides with ordinary intuitions.

In the Introduction, I introduced Miller's dictionary-type definition of "garden," and adopted for my own use that part of it which reads, "any purposeful

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[18] The gallery referred to is the Govett-Brester Art Gallery, incorporating the Len Lye Centre. See: http://www.govettbrewster.com/len-lye/

[19] Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 13.

arrangement of natural objects (such as sand, water, plants, rocks, etc.)."[20] At the same time I acknowledged, along with Miller, that many gardens may also incorporate unnatural objects, including fibreglass sculptures, concrete paths, and so on. Such a definition clearly accommodates Tupare.

Tupare and Ontology

Standard ontological accounts of gardens have concentrated almost overwhelmingly on the visual dimension of gardens.[21] Furthermore, such accounts have usually ignored the permanent mutability of all garden elements or, at best, they have acknowledged major seasonal changes only. However, my account of Tupare has highlighted not only the changeability of that garden's visual elements but also, and more importantly, it has drawn attention to that garden's non-visual, and also changing, elements, including sound and scents. I claim that, by failing to account for gardens' life-long, multi-sensual, multi-scaled mutability, standard ontologies of art fail to accommodate Tupare and most other gardens. Furthermore, such ontologies needlessly problematize the retention-of-identity-through-change that is characteristic of Tupare and other gardens.

Tupare and Experience

My necessarily selective account of the experience of Tupare highlighted that garden's potential for temporally open-ended, multi-sensual, and, in particular, kinaesthetic experiences.[22] An adequate philosophical account of the experience of

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[20] Miller's complete definition reads: "[A garden is] any purposeful arrangement of natural objects (such as sand, water, plants, rocks, etc.) with exposure to the sky or open air, in which form is not fully accounted for by purely practical considerations such as convenience." See: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 15.

[21] There are some notable exceptions. See, for example: Tafalla, "Smell and Anosmia in the Appreciation of Gardens."

[22] In an interesting recent paper, philosopher Bence Nanay argues that multimodal appreciation of art is the norm. See: Bence Nanay, "The Multimodal Experience of Art," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 52, no. 4 (2012).

gardens needs to acknowledge and be able to account for these typical aspects of the garden experience. Traditional experiential accounts of gardens typically fail to acknowledge or account for such phenomenological riches and complexities, which is perhaps unsurprising given the related ontological lacuna described above, and they therefore remain inadequate to the case of Tupare. Furthermore, the complex interrelations between the temporal nature(s) of a garden's materials and of the process of a visitor's experience of that, or any, garden, has remained outside the scope of standard experiential accounts of art.

Tupare and Art, and Artists

I have described Tupare as a beautiful, artistic garden, whose existence is attributable in large part to the vision, energy, and resources of Sir Russell Matthews. I have also noted that it is not recognized as a work of art by what might be called the professional, local "artworld" and that, according to standard accounts of artistic authorship, the role of Russell Matthews, and, indeed, any garden maker, *qua* artist, is questionable.[23] In other words, philosophy's standard answers to the two related questions, what is a work of art? and who is the artist of this work? are unfavourable to the case of Tupare and its maker.

The classification of Tupare as art, or otherwise, depends on the prior definition of art adopted by the classifier. As I explain in Chapter 3, gardens have been art from time to time during their long history. However, the 20th century's definers of art did not have gardens in mind when formulating their definitions. Or, rather, they may have had, but the application of the definitions generated during the late 20th century, such as those of Dickie and Monroe Beardsley, have been used

[23] For my discussion of the possible co-existence of *multiple* artworlds, see Chapter 4,137-140.

by other philosophers to exclude gardens from the category of art. I discuss this state of affairs in detail in Chapter 4, with respect to the views of Miller and Ross.[24]

The question of authorship, or "artistship," has two aspects. First, it is necessary to make a distinction between the originator-artist of a garden and his contributors, and, second, there is the question of the artist status of a garden's originator. In the first case, Matthews is the artist of the garden while his family, gardeners, and other contractors are contributors; just as, say, set painters, lighting technicians, make-up artists, costume designers, dancers, and musicians contribute to the artist-choreographer's ballet. These relationships have been acknowledged by philosophers of art. However, the intricacies of their interrelationships have not been adequately explored, especially in the case of gardens. In gardens, the matter is complicated because maintenance, and, in the case of Tupare, changing ownership, in conjunction with gardens' continuous mutability, may result in the "same" garden changing quite radically over a period. Philosophical aesthetics appears to accept that this is the case, but does not delve too deeply into why or how this may be acceptable when, in other traditional arts, it is not.

In the case of the "artist" status of a garden's originator, it should be noted that the 19th-century's preference for a solitary-genius-artist cast a long shadow deep into the 20th century.[25] And even today, "artist," when used in folk parlance and/or without further qualification, conjures up aspects of the 19th-conception of an artist. Clearly Russell Matthews, the first and most prolific layer of macadam in New Zealand, and a highly practical man to boot, did not fit that mould, and may well have been embarrassed by attempts to style him "artist."

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[24] The views of these philosophers that I critique are presented in: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*.

[25] See Chapter 3, 98-100, for a discussion of the 19th-century's concept of "artist," and its implications.

1.3 Tasks for Philosophical Aesthetics

It *appears* that Tupare is not easily accounted for by existing accounts of the ontology, and experience of artworks, nor do it and its artist *appear* to be easily accommodated within current definitions of art and notions of authorship (or, "artistship"). Aesthetics, as traditionally practised, has largely failed, or chosen not, to engage with these aspects of art gardens. However, I have italicized "*appears*" above because I contend that philosophical aesthetics does indeed have the resources to deal effectively with gardens. The fact is that, as noted earlier in the chapter, aesthetics has largely turned away from gardens, even while it has pursued with some passion new arts whose ontological, experiential, and arthood features and aspects gardens have exemplified for centuries. In the following paragraphs, I present the areas of aesthetic enquiry that have particular relevance to the case of art gardens, and comment briefly on the ways in which they have been engaged with in the current literature.

Ontology

The ontology of gardens concerns the ways in which gardens exist and persist, and the nature(s) of their physical materials. I have already noted that gardens' ontologies are intertwined with their experiential and temporal dimensions and, perhaps for this reason, much ontological writing on gardens has concentrated on these dimensions. The subject of gardens' continuously changing material composition, and visitors' experiences of it, has been widely canvassed. For Hunt, gardens are about process and change. They are never finished, and nor do they even "allow the illusion of a stable and coherent object of study."[26] Cooper writes that, "it is in this relationship [between gardens and temporality and ephemerality] that the

[26] John Dixon Hunt, "Gardens: Historical Overview," in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, ed. Michael Kelly (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 272.

distinctiveness of garden aesthetics lies."[27] And Miller agrees that a distinctive aspect of gardens' ontology lies in their essential changeability.[28]

There have also been some investigations into the important ontological questions of whether gardens-*qua*-art are physical-, mental-, or action-type entities, and whether the worlds we explore in them are real or virtual. Both Miller and Ross make differing claims for gardens' being virtual worlds, and Hunt contrasts the inescapable physicality of gardens with what he calls their metaphysical aspect.[29] I address the question of whether gardens are virtual worlds in passing in my critique of recent literature in Chapter 4 and return to the topic in Chapter 8, where I discuss it in the context of the nature of gardens' materials. I also consider the question in Chapter 7, in tandem with an extended consideration of whether gardens are physical-, mental-, or action-type entities.

Epistemology and Experience

Once gardens' ontological realm has been extended beyond the visual, as I have proposed is appropriate in the case of Tupare, and especially once the mutability of gardens' materials has been recognized, then a range of epistemological questions present themselves, the underlying one of which is: what sort of art works are gardens? Are they like poems and paintings, as Ross suggests?[30] Are they like music, dance, or drama, as Salwa and others have proposed? Or are they a type of building or mobile sculpture?[31] These questions relate to how we experience gardens, and

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[27] David E Cooper, "Foreword," in *Gardening: Cultivating Wisdom. Philosophy for Everyone*, ed. Dan O'Brien (2010), ix.

[28] See, for example: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 38-49; "Time and Temporality in the Garden," 178-91.

[29] See: Hunt, "Gardens: Historical Overview," 272; Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 127-31; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 175-88. Extended examinations of some of (non-art) gardens' metaphysical aspects are to be found in O'Brien, *Gardening: Cultivating Wisdom*, Chapters 12-14.

[30] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 49-84, 85-120.

[31] For a comparison of gardens with music see: Barwell and Powell, "Gardens, Music, and Time," 142-47. For comparisons with music, dance, kinetic sculpture and environmental art see: Powell, "We Do Not Have an Adequate Conception of Art until We Have One That Accommodates Gardens," 86-94.

answering them is an important theme throughout the rest of this study. In their turn, they imply further questions, such as, what senses do (ought) we exercise in an appropriate experience of a garden?[32] Are gardens meaningful in the way of poems or paintings or something else? Are gardens performances? Should we experience gardens in pre-ordained sequences or should visitors just wander about as they fancy? Do gardens "include" the view of the church spire or petrol station that is clearly framed between the trees? Where and when are a garden's spatial and temporal boundaries? Although I do not devote significant attention to any one of these questions individually, my responses to the combination of issues they raise forms an important thread running through the rest of this study.

Experience and Temporality

I claim that gardens' temporal qualities constitute a uniquely important aspect of them and provide an important reason for our valuing them. Gardens' temporality is, of course, an important aspect of their ontology, and I have referred to that above. However, my interest in temporality is as much experiential as it is ontological, and it is to experiential questions that I now turn. I begin by quoting in full a remark of Cooper's, part of which I quoted earlier. It is supportive of my claim that temporality is of fundamental importance to gardens and our experiences of them.

> For it is in this relationship [between gardens and temporality and ephemerality] that the distinctiveness of garden aesthetics lies – in the manner, say, that a garden "presents," or makes mindful of, time, or perhaps in an "enchantment" that unexpected changes in the process of experiencing a

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For comparisons with drama and other performing art see: Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," 373-83.

[32] Miller calls gardens *Gesamtkunstwerk*e. (Mara Miller, "Gardens: Gardens as Art," in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, ed. Michael Kelly (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 274.)) She is not alone in celebrating gardens' multi-sensuality. See, for example: Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," 9-10; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 156-63.

> garden may trigger. If this is right, then the familiar image of the garden "mediating" between human creativity and the natural order needs to make proper room for nature's fourth dimension, and not just its spatial aspects. An interesting garden may "borrow" the weather's impending change as much as the distant mountain scenery.[33]

How a visitor experiences a garden on a first or subsequent visit is necessarily influenced by the facts that the visits themselves are temporal events and gardens are temporal objects. I believe that the implications of both of these facts have been underplayed, certainly in historical but also in some recent philosophical garden writing, and I address this issue in the context of Miller's and Ross's books in Chapter 4.

Straightforward questions that gardens' temporality invite include: why have the roses (not) been dead-headed? Is this garden finished yet? What time of the day/year/month is the best time for visitors to see the garden? Why are the Kangaroo Paws not flowering today? Straightforward questions that the experience of gardens invite include: which direction(s) should I walk in along this path? And, how long does it take to see this garden? Questions such as these, and their answers, are taken for granted by gardeners and garden visitors, but the questions, answers, and their implications, have only recently attracted any serious philosophical interest.

Finally, an encounter with a garden is not merely one single durational event. Within the overall duration of a visit, a visitor is constantly making temporal decisions at a shorter scale, at the same time as she is making locational decisions. To paraphrase Birksted's words quoted earlier, a garden beholder is perpetually and freely moving in four dimensions.

In Chapter 5, I begin my examination of temporal matters. I test gardens against the conditions for temporal art presented by Levinson and Alperson in

[33] Cooper, "Foreword," ix.

"What is a Temporal Art?," I continue with a detailed exposition of the varieties of temporality at play in gardens and I compare the temporality of gardens with those of some other traditional art forms.[34] In Chapter 8, I contest some of the temporal and performative theories Salwa presents in his recent paper, "Gardens as Performance."[35] Then, later in that chapter, I attempt to formulate an adequate account of the experience of gardens.

Art

The final problems to be considered relate to gardens' art status, and the related artist status of garden makers, in the world of contemporary philosophical aesthetics. These problems are ones that to varying degrees are understood to frustrate the application of the term "art" and "artist" to gardens and (art) garden makers. These are not new matters for gardens and garden makers to deal with. They are problems that have persisted, albeit for differing reasons, for 200 or so years.

However, my concern at this point is not with the historical but with contemporary definitions of art, by which I mean the relational-historical-institutional definitions of art which have emerged over the last 50 years. My concern with these stems from the fact that it is in the context of such definitions that gardens have, until most recently, remained outside the category of art. That this has happened is puzzling because I believe that representative examples of these definitions, such as those developed by the contemporary philosophers George Dickie, Jerrold Levinson, Noël Carroll, and the late Arthur Danto, allow in theory for garden-like objects to be works of art. In spite of this, the definitions of Danto and Dickie have been used by at least two philosophers to support their claims that gardens are not art.[36] I address the claims of these two philosophers in detail in

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[34] Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?."

[35] Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance."

[36] For Miller's invocation of Dickie's definition and Ross's of Danto's see: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 69-71; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 189-208.

Chapter 4 and I return to the matter in a broader context in Chapter 8, where I also comment on the usefulness of Danto's notion of "the transfiguration of the commonplace" in relation to gardens' materials.[37]

The fact that these recent definitions can admit gardens to the category of art but have, with the two negative exceptions noted above, not been applied in this way, suggests that the question of gardens-as-art is not so much a matter of theoretical difficulty as a matter of uninterest for philosophers of art. From the philosophers' point of view, there are plausible reasons for their uninterest. After all, gardens tend to be attractive and direct rather that confrontational and ironic, and pleasingly sensual rather than densely intellectual. In fact, understood in these terms, most gardens appear somewhat quaint and old-fashioned, not at all the sort of art objects contemporary aestheticians should be troubled by. To be plain, they are not fancy-pants art.[38]

However, this apparent uninterest in gardens has been to philosophy's disadvantage, and not only because it has resulted in philosophers' misunderstanding and neglecting gardens themselves. I claim that the very qualities that gardens have always possessed, such as instability, lack of distinct spatial and temporal boundaries, multiple authorship, multi-sensuality, and ordinary "objectness," are all hallmarks of much of the "new" avant-garde, or should that be avant-garden, arts of the 20th and 21st centuries. Thus, an adequate understanding of gardens can be a useful tool for advancing the understanding of some new, challenging art forms, such as computer and street art, and it is regrettable that philosophy has not made use of this tool.

[37] Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*. (For further discussion, see Chapter 8, 256-261)

[38] I am indebted to one of my supervisors, Dr Sondra Bacharach, for this apt descriptor.

Artists

The status of, say, Mozart as composer-artist of *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Mies van der Rohe as architect-artist of the Barcelona Pavilion, are well established. Equally, the roles of their respective collaborators and contributors, such as musicians, librettist, builders, stone-masons, and so on, are acknowledged, without thereby undermining Mozart's and Mies van der Rohe's status as artists. However, for three reasons, the case of the garden-artist is more complex, and deserving of philosophical attention. First, the installation of gardens does not always – even usually – result from a fully detailed set of drawings or other instructions produced by a designer-artist and covering all aspects of the project. Much, unspecified detail is left to the expertise and experience of builders and gardeners. This is similar to the case of, say, mounting an operatic production, except that in the case of opera, the principal musical details are well-specified and deviations from them are only tolerated within fairly strict, commonly agreed limits. Second, unlike the first performance of a play, or the completion of a building, painting, or poem, the initial installation of a garden almost always bears only slight resemblance to its "final" mature instance.[39] In a garden, decisions are made and interventions are carried out continually, sometimes over centuries, by those other than the garden's originator, and these can have profound effects on the appearance, and our experiences of a garden. Third, left to its own devices, the Barcelona Pavilion would have deteriorated but still have remained, for a long time, recognizable as the same building.[40] The case of gardens is different. Left to their own devices, many, even most, would become unrecognizable in a relatively short time. Disease, death, weeds, and climate would all ensure that. The ongoing contributions of managers, owners,

[39] Of course there is no such thing as a final version of a garden.

[40] Interestingly, the Barcelona Pavilion was pulled down and then reconstructed 56 years later. It looked exactly the same when reconstructed as it had originally. In the case of gardens, this is not a possibility.

gardeners, horticulturalists, pedologists, and so on, are essential to the survival of a garden if it is to remain similar to that envisaged by the original garden maker-artist. Because of this, gardens, garden-artists, and garden contributors and collaborators occupy a niche which, until recently, they have had to themselves. However, new developments in some arts, including architecture, and the appearance of new artforms, including environment or land art, and the computer and street art referred to earlier, mean that these "problematic" characteristics of garden art and artistship are now being addressed by philosophy, albeit in the context of these new, emerging artforms, rather than in gardens.

1.4 Conclusion

Gardens have been, and for some philosopher-aestheticians continue to be, problematic members of the art category. Stumbling blocks to full membership of the category, as traditionally construed, include gardens' ontology, their typically wide sensory range, their unique temporal-experiential qualities, and the difficulties they have posed for definitions of "art" and for the application of the term "artist." In this chapter, I have grounded my analysis of these philosophical issues in a careful analysis of an actual garden because I believe that an adequate philosophical account of gardens is only useful if it does justice to the case of real gardens and our experiences of them. This preference, for a concurrence between philosophical accounts of gardens and the outcome of informed analyses of actual gardens, and experiences, will guide my assessments of the literature in Part III, and my proposals for an adequate account of gardens in Part IV.

PART II

THE TERRITORY: A SURVEY

Chapter 2

Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art (1700 – 2015)

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3, I describe how gardens are often ignored or misunderstood by philosophical aesthetics and how this has been the case, at least intermittently, for the last 200 years. As a prelude to the presentation of that material, in the present chapter I locate the fraught relationship between gardens and aesthetics in the context of the wider philosophical aesthetic endeavours during that period. This wider survey shows how gardens' status was influenced as much by what was going on "beyond the pale" as it was by changes occurring in gardens themselves.

The chapter provides an historical-philosophical context for the detailed discussions of aspects of 20th- and 21st-century aesthetics that comprise Part III of the thesis. The period 1700 – 2015 encompasses the beginning of modern aesthetics, the rapid development of aesthetics during the 18th century, aesthetics' relative quiescence during the 19th century, and its new flourishing in the 20th century. This overview presents the aesthetics of the period by way of examining the aesthetics associated with the different paradigm object categories preferred for aesthetic attention at different times during the period, namely nature and the natural environment, the human environment, including everyday objects and activities, and art.

The discussion of the aesthetics of each of the paradigm object categories focuses on three broad, interrelated themes: the objects of aesthetic activity themselves, the mental processes and attitudes involved in aesthetic activity, and the aesthetic qualities and sensory modes of aesthetic activity.

In tracing the overview, I invoke the traditional historical divisions of the Enlightenment, the Romantic Era, and Modernism and Postmodernism. These divisions offer useful temporal signposts along the way even while they admit of interconnectedness and approximation in their extents. For my purposes, I associate the Enlightenment, the Romantic Era, and Modernism and Postmodernism with the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries respectively.

The chapter opens with a brief, historically structured introduction to aesthetics. This is followed by discussions of each of the object categories described above. The discussion of the art object category concludes with a survey of four historically significant conceptions of art, an understanding of which informs subsequent chapters of the thesis.

2.2 Aesthetics – A Brief Survey

The term "aesthetics" was coined in its modern usage by the philosopher Alexander Baumgarten in the early 18th century.[1] Baumgarten employed the term to mean the ability to not only experience but also to judge sensory data, particularly with regard to whether or not the object or event being perceived exhibited beauty. This exercise of judgement he called "taste." It was a judgement made via the senses, not via the intellect. Put very simply, a judgement of beauty with respect to an object or event was understood to be based on whether the experience of that object or event gave rise to sensory pleasure of the appropriate kind in the perceiver. Furthermore, it was hoped that, on the basis of a careful assessment of individual experiences of taste, principles or rules of what constituted beauty might be able to be generated.[2]

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[1] Hick, *Introducing Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art*, 1.

[2] For a summary, philosophical account of "taste" in the context of 18th-century Britain see: Shelley, "18th-Century British Aesthetics," Introduction. For a seminal contemporary text on "taste" see: David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste," ed. Charles W Eliot, 2001 ed., vol. XXVII The Harvard Classics, *English Essays: Sidney to Macaulay* (New York: P F Collier & Son, 2001), http://www.bartleby.com/br/02701.html. For an in-depth, historical study of 18th-century cultural

During the 18th century, inquiry into the theory and practice of aesthetics flourished and activity was focussed equally on each of the areas noted above, namely, the mechanisms involved in judgements of taste, the aesthetic qualities themselves, and the paradigmatic objects of aesthetic attention. In the following paragraphs I comment on each of these areas in turn.

Technical philosophical arguments concerning the details and nature of the mechanism(s) by which judgements of taste were made proliferated during the 18th century. Were such judgements purely sensory, were they intellectual, or imaginative, or did they involve some combination of these faculties? For example, the philosopher Joseph Addison argued that aesthetic judgements involved the imagination, Shaftesbury that they were importantly mental processes, and Kant that they involved the free play of both the understanding and the imagination.[3]

The 18th century was witness to an expansion in the range of sensory qualities deemed to be of aesthetic interest and importance. As the century progressed, the sensory experience of beauty described by Baumgarten was joined by sensory experiences of the sublime and the picturesque as matters fit for aesthetic experience.[4] During the 18th century, varying opinions were held regarding what object, or objects, were the paradigmatic objects of aesthetic attention. For Baumgarten, nature and art were equally plausible candidates for this role and most 18th-century aestheticians thought similarly. However, by the end of the century, the publication of Kant's influential *Critique of Pure Judgement* in 1790 ensured that that

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life, see: Jeremy Black, *Culture in Eighteenth-Century Englandl a Subject of Taste* (London: Hambledon and London, 2005).

[3] Succinct accounts of Kant's, Shaftesbury's, and Addison's respective positions are to be found in: Hannah Ginsborg, "Kant's Aesthetics and Teleology," ed. Edward N Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/kant-aesthetics/>. § 2.3.2; James Shelley, "18th-Century British Aesthetics," ed. Edward N. Zaltaibid., <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/aesthetics-18th-british/>. § 1.2, § 2.1.

[4] For a thorough account of the sublime and the picturesque in the context of 18th- and early 19th-century garden theory and practice see: Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 121-52. For an account of the picturesque, including the problems it has raised for the appreciation of nature in the 20th and 21st centuries, see: Carlson, "Aesthetic Appreciation of the Natural Environment," 160-62.

philosopher's view, that nature was the preeminent and paradigmatic aesthetic object, appeared as the authoritative, if retrospective, last word on the matter for that century.[5]

In his *Critique of Pure Judgement,* Kant distinguishes between experiences of the beautiful and the sublime on one hand – Kant did not treat the picturesque – and the merely agreeable on the other. Further, the *Critique* distinguishes between experiences of what Kant called pure beauty and adherent beauty. There is not space here to elaborate on these important distinctions other than to note the important role the concept of "disinterestedness" plays in establishing and underpinning them.[6] That concept has remained a fundamental if contested notion of the philosophy and, at least in theory, the experience of art, and of nature, from the 18th century until the present day.

Put simply, disinterestedness characterizes a preferred mode of aesthetic attention to an object or event. It involves paying attention to that object or event without any thoughts with regard to the object's or event's usefulness, desirability, value, or fitness for function. While such detachment may be comparatively easily achieved by someone experiencing a beautiful natural event, such as a sunset, it appears more difficult to achieve the desired detachment when experiencing a beautiful painting, teapot, or person. I refer to the concept of "disinterestedness" later in this chapter with respect to its roles in the appreciation of nature, the human environment, and art.[7]

Kant's writings effectively brought 18th-century philosophical aesthetics to a magisterial close. They continue to be influential and much-debated to this day. However, Kant's status as the preeminent aesthetician of his time was not long lived.

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[5] Kant, *Critique of Judgement*.

[6] Douglas Burnham, "Immanuel Kant: Aesthetics," ed. James Fieser, *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2014), http://www.iep.utm.edu/,. § 2a; Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, § 6, § 7.

[7] For an account of some problems associated with the concept of disinterestedness in the context of the experience of 19th-century gardens, see Chapter 3, 107-108.

In 1818, G. W. F. Hegel delivered his series of lectures on aesthetics for the first of many times.[8] Kant and Hegel differed with respect to their accounts of the nature of aesthetic judgements and also, and more importantly for this study, they differed with respect to what each regarded as the paradigmatic object of beauty. Kant, as discussed above, proposed nature, but Hegel now proposed art. This chance of focus was highly influential; so much so that for the following 130 or so years, "aesthetics" came to be equated almost exclusively with the sensory perception of beauty and other qualities in works of art, not in nature.[9]

After the heyday of philosophical aesthetics, which stretched for 100 or so years from the time of Baumgarten and culminated in the work of Kant and Hegel, philosophical aesthetics went into a period of relative inactivity from which it was only roused by the upheavals that began to occur in the world of art in the late 19th century and that continued into the first half of the 20th century.[10]

When philosophical aesthetics re-emerged at that time, its focus remained firmly on art, as opposed to nature, but its concerns with art were different to those which had concerned aestheticians a century earlier. In particular, aesthetics became increasingly concerned with providing a framework adequate to understanding the new abstract and, later, the seemingly non-art works being produced by visual and other artists.

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[8] Houlgate, "Hegel's Aesthetics," § 2.

[9] For accounts of the Hegel's preference for art over nature as the paradigmatic art object, see: Burnham, "Immanuel Kant: Aesthetics," § 2d; Allen Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics," ed. Edward N Zalta, Summer 2012 ed., *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2012), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2015/entries/environmental-aesthetics/>. § 1.2.After aesthetics' post-Hegelian quiescence, philosophical aesthetics re-appeared with its focus fimly on art, not nature, and styled itself "the philosophy of art." Furthermore, as the 20th century progressed, "aesthetics" was co-opted by others, including philsophers of the environment and the everyday, and cosmetic surgeons and dentists. For an account of the effects this change in paradigmatic object had on philosophy's interest in gardens, see Chapter 3, 96-98. For further discussion of the effects of this change with respect to art, see this chapter, 82-84.

[10] For a singular account of the changes that occurred in the world of art around this time see: Werner Hofman, *Turning Points in Twentieth-Century Art* (London: Allen Lane-The Penguin Press, 1969).

Around the middle of the 20th century, when the philosophy of art was grappling with its "anxious objects" and was moving towards an aesthetics of art based on non-traditional, *extrinsic* properties of artworks, new schools of aesthetics were emerging which, at least initially, maintained a more traditional interest in the *manifest,* or *intrinsic*, properties of objects and events.[11] There were three of these new schools: the first revisited, albeit with very different conceptions and assumptions, the 18th-century interest of aesthetics in nature and our experiences of it, and in time this school became part of the larger discipline of the philosophy of the environment; the second school was interested in the aesthetics of the human (or built) environment and shared this interest with the philosophy of architecture and, by extension, in part with the philosophy of art; and the third school broke completely new ground by taking as its objects of interest everyday objects, practices, and events.[12]

These three new schools of aesthetics all contested, to different degrees and with differing emphases, the concept of "disinterestedness," or "psychical distance," which had long been a foundational concept in art aesthetics. They also contested the primacy that traditional aesthetics had accorded the senses of sight and hearing, and they brought taste, touch, smell, and kinaesthesia into the fold of aesthetically acceptable senses.[13] The challenging of these concepts mirrored similar concerns beginning to occur during the latter part of the 20th century in the philosophy of art

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[11] The useful term, "anxious object," was introduced in: Harold Rosenberg, *The Anxious Object: Art Today and Its Audience* (New York: Horizon Press, 1964).

[12] Overviews of the evolution and current state of these disciplines include: E Brady, *Aesthetics of the Natural Environment* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003); A Carlson and A Berleant, eds., *The Aesthetics of Human Environments* (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2007); Leddy, *The Extraordinary in the Ordinary: The Aesthetics of Everyday Life*.

[13] Note, however, that the immersive, multi-sensory aesthetics I refer to here had not been unknown to philosophers of art within the pragmatist school. A pioneering exposition of it was first published in 1934 by the American pragmatist John Dewey. See: J Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Putnam Capricorn, 1958).

and had important implications for what came to be counted as an adequate, or valid, experience of art.[14]

2.3 Aesthetics of Nature

In her 2006 paper, "Paradoxes and Puzzles: Appreciating Gardens and Urban Nature," Ross writes: "Before turning to the aesthetics of nature, we must settle the prior ontological question, 'What is nature'? – or more practically, 'Where is nature'?"[15] Her second question is the less interesting one, and an adequate answer to it depends on how the first one is answered. But her first question invites a detailed response. I propose, however, that an adequate answer to it cannot be given without a simultaneous consideration of the *aesthetics* of nature, because the two components, that is, nature's aesthetics and its ontological status, are intimately interconnected. Thus, how we aestheticize nature is inseparable from how we conceptualize, and therefore how we value, understand, and use it. So, in answering Ross's question, "What is nature?," I endeavour to weigh equally the importance of and the changing balances between nature's aesthetic and ontological aspects.

I present my response by way of an historical survey of nature during the Enlightenment, the Romantic Era, and the Modern and Postmodern Periods. But, before setting out on that survey, I begin with a brief historical review of the meaning of the term "nature" in the Platonic era because, although aspects of its meaning changed through the period of Neo-Platonism and the Neo-Platonic revival

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[14] For contemporary expositions of differing versions of immersive, multi-sensory aesthetics from outside the mainstream analytic tradition, see, for example, the work of the pragmatist-influenced American philosopher Arnold Berleant and the work of the American neo-pragmatist Richard Shusterman: Arnold Berleant, *Art and Engagement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Richard Shusterman, *Body Consciousness: A Philosophy of Mindfulness and Somaesthetics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).References to gardens' multi-sensory, immersive nature are to be found throughout this study. See, for example, Chapter 8, 248-256.

[15] Stephanie Ross, "Paradoxes and Puzzles: Appreciating Gardens and Urban Nature," *Contemporary Aesthetics* 4 (2006): 9.

at the time of the Renaissance, the original Platonic meaning of “nature” generally persisted and was influential right through until the 18th century and beyond.

Although Plato and Aristotle had strongly contrasting views on the *value* of the representational, or mimetic, activity that came to typify art through until the late 19th century, they were agreed that representation, and in particular the representation of what they referred to as nature, was the essential activity of art.[16] To Plato and Aristotle, what was represented in art was not, say, the person depicted in a painting, nor the real or imagined person who served as the model for the painted depiction of the person. Rather, what was represented was an originary or *ur*-person – in other words “person-ness,” or human nature.[17] And the role of this representation was not merely aesthetic. It was also in part didactic. For Aristotle, such representation concerned human nature as it *ought* to be, “raised . . . above all that is local and accidental, so as to be in the highest sense representative.”[18]

This idea, that mimesis in art is a representation of some originary object, quality, form, or designing mind rather than of the mere object or representing object available to the immediate senses, was enormously influential through to and beyond the 18th century. Thus, when 18th-century aestheticians and philosophers talked of art imitating nature, they were still referring to what I will henceforth distinguish from its everyday use by using an uppercase initial “N,” Nature. For them, Nature did not refer merely to their surroundings of plants, animals, mountains, and so on. For them, imitated Nature encompassed not only “natural”

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[16] For Plato, art (merely) represents nature and therefore it “ranks far below the truth. . . . [It] corrupts the soul,” and ought to be banned from well-functioning cities. (See: Plato, "The Republic: Book X," 596e-608b.) For Aristotle, mimesis represents nature and is therefore to be valued because it enlightens us by depiction, from which we can learn about the world, and how better to behave. (See: Aristotle, "Poetics," 1148b 4-24.

[17] See: Plato, "The Republic: Book X," 595a-608b.

[18] Quoted in: Rensselaer W Lee, *Ut Pictora Poesis: The Humanistic Study of Painting* (New York: Norton, 1967), 9.

nature but also human nature, divine nature, and the nature of the universe.[19] And this was, in part, what the poet Alexander Pope had in mind when, in his *An Essay on Criticism* (1710), he famously advised would-be artists "to copy Nature."[20]

This received conception of Nature was still largely in place around the beginning of the 18th century. However, that same time marked the start of the decline and final disappearance of it and, simultaneously, the rise of the acceptability of nature *tout court* as something worthy of artistic representation and, most importantly for aesthetics, as something that potentially exhibits beauty. The philosopher Glenn Parsons offers reasons for this change in nature's status.[21] Interestingly, each of the reasons he offers seeks to explain not why nature rose in importance after 1700 but rather why that rise in importance was unable to occur earlier. He claims that earlier views of beauty – an essential element of the 18th-century view of nature – were based on mathematical harmonies that were hard to find in nature, especially in a world where microscopes were rare. He claims, furthermore, that there were few opportunities for most people to experience nature before 1800. And finally, he claims that religious beliefs, such as the belief that mountains were unattractive debris left behind after the Biblical flood, mitigated against seeing beauty in nature. Parsons then offers reasons why nature became an acceptable aesthetic object during the 18th century.[22] I do not find his reasons for this

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[19] For varying accounts of an historical overview of the transition from "Nature" to "nature" see: Steven Heyde, "The Historical Roots of 'Aesthetics' in Landscape Architecture: An Introduction," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes.* 34, no. 2 (2014): 124; Tom Turner, *Garden History: Philosophy and Design 2000 B.C. – 2000 A.D.* (London, New York: Spon Press, 2005), 226. See also: Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 219.

[20] Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7409/7409-h/7409-h.htm. Part I, 133-40.

[21] Parsons, *Bloomsbury Aesthetics: Aesthetics and Nature*, 7-8.

[22] Parsons' reasons are: (1) a new appreciation of positive aesthetic qualitites of the Alps, stemming from the resumption of the "Grand Tour" after the conference of Utrecht; (2) the influence of the paintings of Rosa, Lorraine, and Dughet, also as a result of the resumption of the Grand Tour; and (3) developments in geology, and that science's conception of mountains as natural phenomena, rather that Biblical detritus. Ibid., 8-9.

enfranchisement of nature as compelling as his reasons for its neglect prior to that time. However, there exists ample other evidence from philosophy, for example in the writings of Kant and the philosopher-botanist Rousseau, and from art, for example in the poems of Wordsworth and the paintings of Constable, that such was the case.[23]

I have outlined above how modern aesthetics emerged with Baumgarten in the early 18th century, and it is therefore not surprising to learn that the newly admired and enfranchised nature that rose to prominence at the same time also played an important role in aesthetics from its new beginning. Nor is it surprising that, by the end of the century, nature had become so essential a part of contemporary philosophical aesthetics that it was considered by some to be the paradigmatic object of aesthetic interest.[24]

Perhaps nature's most significant role during the century was that of exemplar of those most important 18th-century aesthetic qualities: the beautiful, the sublime, and the picturesque. Environmental philosopher Allen Carlson usefully summarizes the differences between these three aesthetic qualities as they appeared to the 18th-century mind:

> Objects experienced as beautiful tend to be small and smooth, but subtly varied, delicate and "fair" in colour, while those experienced as sublime, by contrast, are powerful, vast, intense, terrifying, and "definitionless." Picturesque items are typically in the middle ground between those experienced as either sublime or beautiful, being complex and eccentric, varied and irregular, rich and forceful, and vibrant with energy.[25]

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[23] For an acknowledgement of nature's importance to Rousseau, see: Christopher Bertram, "Jean Jacques Rousseau," ed. E N Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2012), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/rousseau/>. Introduction. For reference to Kant's privileging of natural beauty over art as the paradigmatic aesthetic object see this chapter, 69.

[24] See: Burnham, "Immanuel Kant: Aesthetics," § 2d.

[25] Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics," § 1.1.

Carlson goes on to say, "the idea of the picturesque, rather [than] that of the beautiful or the sublime, achieved the greatest prominence concerning the aesthetic experience of nature."[26] This was the case, he argues, because, to the 18th-century mind, nature more readily and obviously reflected the picturesque characteristics outlined above. Furthermore, he suggests that the 18th-century's emphasis on the importance of disinterestedness in aesthetic experience required that nature be stripped of any personal associations, pleasures, or uses it may have had for a viewer and that this in turn paved the way for landscapes' being appreciated picturesquely, that is, as pictures.

Although Kant wrote extensively on beauty and the sublime, he did not consider the picturesque, the promotion of which fell to the Englishmen William Gilpin, Uvedale Price, and Richard Payne Knight.[27] Popularized by the later 18th-century writings of these men, which ranged from travel guides to philosophical essays and poetry, the picturesque became the dominant mode of the aesthetic appreciation of nature for the next 150 or so years.

Once nature was displaced by art as the paradigm object for aesthetic attention, the philosophical aesthetics of nature remained largely unaddressed during the remainder of the 19th century and, in fact, until the middle of the 20th century. However, although nature was ignored by philosophers of aesthetics, it was eagerly taken up as a subject appropriate to art by painters, composers, poets, and novelists. Nature, in the form of landscape, was still co-opted for its traditional aesthetic values, particularly for its sublimity, but landscape was equally employed as an expressive, symbolic, or metaphorical participant in and setting for human

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[26] Ibid.

[27] See, for example: William Gilpin, *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; on Picturesque Travel; and on Landscape Sketching: To Which Is Added a Poem on Landscape Painting.* ([electronic resource] London: R. Blamire, 1792); Uvedale Price, *Essays on the Picturesque, as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful; and, on the Use of Studying Pictures, for the Purpose of Improving Real Landscape*, 2 vols. ([electronic resource] London: J Mawman, 1810); Richard Payne Knight, *The Landscape: A Didactic Poem in Three Books : Addressed to Uvedale Price, Esq.* ([electronic resource] London1795).

activities. According to the art historian Kenneth Clark, landscape painting was "the chief artistic creation of the nineteenth century."[28] And landscape flourished as subject matter for other art forms also: witness, for example, the stream in Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin,* the daffodils in Wordsworth's eponymous poem, the heath named Egdon in Hardy's *The Return of the Native* and, in the 20th century, the waterfall in Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater house.[29] In each of these examples, nature is more than a mere backdrop: it has become an important participant in the work, a *dramatis persona* in its own right, as well as, in some cases, an amplifying reflector of the moods and emotions of the works' human protagonists. And it is not hard to foresee the progression from here to the situation which the philosopher Ronald Hepburn describes with respect to the 20th century, when artists came to prefer the "inner landscape of the human psyche" to that of the natural world.[30]

At this time of transition between Enlightenment and Romantic values and aesthetics, the meaning of "nature" moved from referring to the world of universal forms to what Tom Turner has called "the world of particulars." It was, he says, "a change from the '*nature* of the world' to the 'world of nature.'."[31] Although he is describing a particular change of focus that occurred in the world of aesthetics, that change was reflective of bigger changes occurring in the worlds of philosophy and, increasingly, science. This transition from the Enlightenment to the Romantic Era was marked not only by a shift from aesthetic neo-classicism to romanticism: equally important at that time was the increasing dominance of empiricism over rationalism in the fields of philosophy and the natural sciences.

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[28] Kenneth Clark, *Landscape into Art* (London: J. Murray, 1976), 15.

[29] However, there was a strand of romanticism which, while still revelling in the natural world, believed that happiness was to be found anywhere other than the (natural) place in which one found oneself. This strand reached one of its apogees in von Lübeck/Schubert's famous lied, *Das Wanderer*, which reaches it climax with the line, *"Dort, wo du nicht bist, ist das Glück."* (Literally: "There, were you are not, is happiness.") Such an attitude *may* have contributed in part to the 19th-century's diregard for gardens, which are, if nothing else, actual, natural places where one might expect to be happy. (See Chapter 3, 97-98, for a discussion of gardens in the context of Romanticism.)

[30] Hepburn, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty," 287.

[31] Turner, *Garden History: Philosophy and Design 2000 B.C. – 2000 A.D.*, 190.

According to Carlson, the increasing importance of the empirical natural sciences from this time was a vital component in the early development of what grew into one of the dominant strands of late 20th-, and 21st-century philosophy: the philosophy of the environment.[32] He claims that contemporary developments in the natural sciences, including geography, were increasingly an influence on the “nature writing” of Thoreau and others, that was emerging in North America in the first half of the 19th century. This nature writing began with a picturesque point of view but ended up representing a new way of appreciating nature, exemplified for Carlson in the writing of the naturalist John Muir. In his writings, Muir explicitly rejects the validity of a picturesque appreciation of nature. To him, all nature was beautiful, whether it looked like a picture or not. Near the end of the 19th century he wrote, "God never made an ugly landscape. All that the sun shines on is beautiful, so long as it is wild.”[33] Carlson calls this point of view “positive aesthetics,” and describes it as “the converse of aesthetic appreciation influenced by the picturesque, which finds delight in evidence of human presence.”[34] Muir therefore emerges as an important precursor of the environmental movement and as a pivotal figure in the development of the philosophy of the environment in the 20th century.

During the first half of the 20th century, philosophical aesthetics continued largely to ignore the aesthetics of nature. Aestheticians were preoccupied by the exciting, dynamic, problematic nature of contemporary art and they had no inclination to pay regard to “unproblematic” nature, whose “problems” appeared to have been sorted out already. And those who did pay any attention to nature did so through the filter of the aesthetics of art. However, the inclinations to ignore nature, or to treat it *qua* art, began to be reversed from the 1960’s onwards. Contributing to this reversal was the birth of the environmental movement, whose concern was to

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[32] Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics," § 1.2.

[33] John Muir, "The Wild Parks and Forest Reservations of the West," *The Atlantic Monthly* 81, no. 483 (1898), http://vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/writings/favorite_quotations.aspx.

[34] Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics," § 1.2.

halt, limit, or even reverse damage to the natural world, and, in the world of philosophical aesthetics, the publication of Hepburn's landmark 1966 paper, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty."[35]

Hepburn's paper may uncontroversially be seen as representing the turning point when philosophical aesthetics began to have a renewed and invigorated regard for nature – a trend which continues apace today.[36] My own interest in Hepburn's paper acknowledges its importance for environmental philosophy, but I am equally concerned to demonstrate the paper's importance for the philosophy of art and, in particular, for the philosophy of gardens and some contemporary art forms, including installations, and land art.[37]

Hepburn offers two principal reasons why what he considers an appropriate appreciation of nature ought to differ from the earlier, aesthetic approach to nature appreciation. First, nature surrounds and engulfs us. We are in it and it is in us. We move in it. We depend on it and we cannot easily be disinterested, traditionally aesthetic observers of it. Second, nature is frameless. *We* draw the boundaries of our perceptual experiences of nature. It is not formally complete. We set the contexts and limits for our spatial experiences of it. It is therefore inappropriate to experience nature as a standalone, self-sufficient, clearly defined, static, traditional aesthetic object.

Hepburn goes on to elaborate on the notion of contextualism in a way that is interesting for my purposes: he extends his concept of spatial expansion of context to what might be called a temporal expansion of context. In doing this he importantly acknowledges that natural objects can equally be seen as natural *processes*. For example, Hepburn writes of walking across an expanse of sand and mud with the

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[35] Hepburn, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty."

[36] Parsons dates analytic philosophy's renewed interest in nature and its new interest in the environment from the publication of Hepburn's paper: G Parsons, "The Aesthetics of Nature," *Philosophy Compass* 2, no. 3 (2007): 358. And another important philosopher of the environment, Allen Carlson, describes Hepburn's paper as seminal: Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics," § 2.2.

[37] See my account of the experience of gardens, Chapter 8, 248-256..

knowledge that he is walking in a tidal basin at low tide. That knowledge, he writes, "is not aesthetically irrelevant. I see myself now as . . . walking on what is for half the day sea-bed. The wild emptiness may be tempered by a disturbing weirdness."[38]

In sum, Hepburn claims that our experiences of nature are immersive and spatially and temporally open-ended. Furthermore, our experiences of nature are always provisional, and depend on the contexts and focuses that we, as participants, set up. These claims have been of considerable significance in the development of environmental aesthetics and nor have they been without influence in the developments of the new fields of aesthetics discussed below.

2.4 Aesthetics of the Human Environment and the Everyday

Once the aesthetic appreciation of nature was finally divorced from a foundational reliance on picturesque aesthetics and new, more appropriate ways of describing the natural environment and our interactions with it were being established, the time was ripe for the new aesthetics to be extended to fields never before considered worthy of aesthetic attention, namely the human, or built, environment, and everyday objects and activities. The aesthetics of the human environment involves settings as diverse as farms, shopping malls, sports stadiums, funeral parlours, and airports. And everyday aesthetics embraces activities as different as wine tasting, dusting, sex, sport, and cosmetic surgery.[39] Just as was the case for the revolutionary nature aesthetics that enabled it, this extension of aesthetics' fields of interest has had important implications for the understanding not only of the built environment and everyday activities but, more importantly for my purposes, for the aesthetics of art in general and gardens in particular.

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[38] Hepburn, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty," 295.

[39] There is a rapidly increasing amount of material available in these fields. Good overviews include: Berleant and Carlson, "Introduction."; Leddy, *The Extraordinary in the Ordinary: The Aesthetics of Everyday Life*; Saito, *Everyday Aesthetics*.Recent writing on individual activities includes: Irvin, "Scratching an Itch," 25-35; Welsch, "Sport Viewed Aesthetically, and Even as Art?," 135-53.

One of the leading figures in the aesthetics of the human environment and the everyday is the philosopher and composer, Arnold Berleant.[40] Principal among his claims is that disinterestedness has never been an adequate way of characterizing the aesthetic attitude, whether that attitude be directed towards art, nature, or anything else. Instead he argues for what appears, at least superficially, to be the exact opposite of disinterestedness: total engagement. He characterizes aesthetic engagement in this way: "Aesthetic engagement emphasizes the holistic, contextual character of aesthetic appreciation. Aesthetic engagement involves active participation in the appreciative process, sometimes by overt physical action but always by creative perceptual involvement."[41] Furthermore, aesthetic engagement ensures that "perception itself is reconfigured to recognize the mutual activity of *all* the sense modalities, including kinaesthetic and somatic sensibility more generally."[42] (My emphasis) My claim is that these characteristics of aesthetic engagement are important tools for understanding our experiences of not only the human environment and everyday activities but also gardens and some other contemporary arts. I refer to them in my discussion of art below and I draw upon them in more detail in my account of the experience of gardens in Chapter 8.[43]

2.5 Aesthetics of Art

I begin this section by considering the concept of "the fine arts." I then chart the changing relationships between philosophical aesthetics and art between 1700 and 2000. Finally, I examine how, during the same period, aesthetics dealt variously with the question of how art functions – that is, how and why art does what it does – and

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[40] For an overview of Berleant's work see: Larry Shiner, "Berleant," ed. John R Shook, *Dictionary of Modern American Philosophers* (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2005).

[41] Arnold Berleant, "What Is Aesthetic Engagement," *Contemporary Aesthetics* 11 (2013), http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=684.

[42] "What Is Aesthetic Engagement?," *Contemporary Aesthetics* 11 (2013).

[43] However, a detailed engagement with Berleant's pragmatically and phenonmenologically influenced aesthetics is beyond the scope of this study, the primany focus of which is the aesthetics of philosophers in the analytic tradition as traditionally defined.

the interrelated question of what art is. I do this by way of investigating four influential conceptions of art.

In his famous treatise of 1746, *Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe,* the Abbé Batteux gives the first comprehensive account of a unified system of the arts.[44] Although earlier writers had been moving in this direction, it was Batteux who, according to the philosopher Oskar Kristeller, finally gave clear and coherent expression to the formulation we still take for granted as the basis of the modern system of the fine arts.[45] Batteux's fine arts included music, poetry, painting, sculpture, and dance. He claimed that the unifying factor, the *raison d'être*, shared by these disparate activities was their purpose in affording an "imitation of beautiful nature."[46] In making this claim, Batteux set important parameters of inquiry for the aesthetics of art. The questions that he sought to answer, namely "What is art?" and "What does art do?," are among the questions that have been repeatedly asked and variously answered by aestheticians right to the present day. However, while aestheticians have continued to ask similar question of art, the contextual settings of their questionings have varied significantly during the periods under review.[47]

During the early Enlightenment, aesthetics, as formulated by Baumgarten, applied equally to works of art and nature.[48] Answers to any aesthetic question regarding art could be adequately answered, *mutatis mutandis*, with reference to either art or nature, and, almost exclusively, aesthetics related to data perceived through the sense of sight only. However, that situation was about to change, as I have outlined above and now describe in more detail.

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[44] See part translation in: Susan L Feagin and Patrick Maynard, eds., *Aesthetics*, Oxford Readers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 102-04.

[45] Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts," in *Renaissance Thought 2; Papers on Humanism and the Arts* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 163-227.

[46] Feagin and Maynard, *Aesthetics*, 103.

[47] For a recent, interesting critique of Batteux's unified system of the arts see: John Macarthur, "Architecture and the System of the Arts; or, Kant on Landscape Gardening," in *Architecture, Disciplinarity, and the Arts*, ed. Andew Leach and John Macarthur (Ghent: A & S Books, 2009).

[48] For a brief desciption of Baumgarten's formulation, see Chapter 2, 66.

Kant, at the time of the publication of his third *Critique* in 1790, can be seen to have come down firmly on the side of nature as the paradigmatic aesthetic object.[49] For Kant, art was a secondary concept which borrowed its qualities of beauty or sublimity from nature. He argued that sight was not necessarily the preferred aesthetic sense organ and considered hearing as a potentially valuable receiver of aesthetic sensory data.[50] However, it would be unwise to infer from this that Kant was a serious music lover. His musical taste did not extend beyond marching music, which is a surprising state of affairs for one whose contemporary countrymen included Haydn and Mozart. For Kant, music was something capable of beauty but something that was, in the end, trivial when compared with the other fine arts. Kant also extended his regard to the sense of smell, and the philosopher Marta Tafalla has recently interrogated his account of smell in the context of gardens.[51]

According to Hepburn, the 18th-century aesthetic treatment of art had been secondary and derivative.[52] However, this situation changed shortly after Kant's death, when his role as the leading philosophical aesthetician of the day was assumed by Hegel. Hegel was a sophisticated, artistically literate man, and his work contains important assessments of most of the fine arts as well as accounts of individual works of art in the Western tradition from ancient times onwards. The delivery of his lectures on art, and their later publication by his students, mark an important turning point in aesthetics. Their publication coincides (roughly) with and reinforces the transition between (neo)classicism and romanticism; and it coincides with and reinforces the emergence of the individual as an important element in society and art, and with the emergence of new political orders.[53] At this time, the (neo)classicism of the 18th century gave way to an impatient, emotional,

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[49] See: Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, § 45.

[50] See: ibid., § 53.

[51] Tafalla, "Smell and Anosmia in the Appreciation of Gardens." For discussion of this paper, see Chapter 3, 113-114.

[52] Hepburn, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty," 288.

[53] Houlgate, "Hegel's Aesthetics," § 2.

individualized romanticism, and Hegel's claim that art represented the highest expression of an individual artist's and a culture's spirit was well suited to its time, and has remained enormously influential into the 21st century.

Hegel's work also marks a turning point between the representative, or mimetic, conception of art, which had been dominant since Ancient Greece, and the new expressive conception of art which replaced it.[54] The expressive conception of art that Hegel and other 19th-century philosophers subscribed to stressed the interrelationships between art and human emotions, aspirations, and spirituality, and it remained dominant throughout the Romantic era.[55] However, around the turn of the 20th century, Hegel's view of art was being supplanted by formalist conceptions. This was the period of "art for art's sake." Art was to be understood, valued, and experienced as standalone, "formal," aesthetic objects or events, without reference to any narrative or representative qualities those objects or events might possess.[56] And art was by now the sole interest of philosophical aesthetics.

The formalist Clive Bell's *Art* appeared early in the 20th century.[57] Bell was a champion of contemporary impressionist and post-impressionist art and his conception of art as significant form was developed, at least in part, to facilitate the comprehension of the increasingly abstract visual art being produced by painters belonging to these schools. However, the notorious artworks which subsequently began gradually to appear dealt body blows to 18th-, 19th-, and early 20th-century notions that equated art with beauty, significant form, or the expression of an artist's inner world. These new works called into question the very category of "art" itself.

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[54] For a description of the different conceptions of art referred to here and below, see 84-89.

[55] For an account of this in the context of gardens, see Chapter 3, 96-98.

[56] However, the 19th-century conception of art as expression did not disappear. It continued to be promoted well into the 20th century by Croce and Collingwood, for whom it was a fundamental component of their conception of art as mental product and activity. But, by this time, the scope of "expression" had been expanded to include much more that merely the expression of an artist's felt emotions.

[57] Clive Bell, "Significant Form (Extracts from Chapter One and Chapter Three of *Art)*," in *Aesthetics: Twentieth Century Readings*, ed. E Hirst (Boston, MA: Beacon Books, 1986).

As a consequence of trying to comprehend these and similar avant-garde works, the aesthetics of art transformed itself into the philosophy of art, the focus of which was increasingly on the ways in which a work *exists* and the ways in which it *relates* to its society and to the history of art. Thus, aesthetics, or the philosophy of art, came to concern itself with the ontological, relational, and extrinsic properties of a work of art rather than with a work's manifest properties, which had been seen as the proper subject of investigation in 18th-, 19th-, and earlier 20th-century aesthetics.

The philosophy of art became increasingly focussed on questions, the answers to which could, up until that time, have been taken for granted. For example: What is a work of art? Can a work of art be created by chance? Is there a single definition of art? Can music be silent? How can we identify a work of art? How do works of art exist? Are disgust and ugliness valid aesthetic properties? And, as described above, it was at about this time that the term "aesthetics" was taken up by other philosophers and applied to the fields of the environment and the everyday.

2.6 Conceptions of Art[58]

In this section, I discuss four of the principal conceptions of art that have been current between 1700 and 2000 because an understanding of them is presupposed by the material of later chapters.[59] The conceptions are mimesis, the expression theory, modernism or formalism, and what I term the "relational theory," and they are in turn approximately coterminous with the Enlightenment, the Romantic Era, and the first and second halves of the 20th century.[60]

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[58] Some of the material in this section appears in different forms elsewhere in the study. However, it is presented here in a way that facilitates comparative historical and theoretical assessments of the conceptions.

[59] I have ignored the aesthetic functionalism promoted by Beardsley and others because a consideration of it in the context of gardens does not raise or solve any particular issues not raised or solved by the other four conceptions.

[60] See, however, FN 56, 83, which comments on the persistence of the expression conception of art well into the 20th century.

For my purposes, I am using the terms "conception" and "theory" to describe what has been identified in each of the four periods as being art's essential nature. In other words, I am seeking to answer the questions, "What is art, and what does it do?" And, at the simplest level, the answers to this question might be: mimetic art represents something; expressive art expresses something; formalist art exhibits form; and, according to the relational theorists, individual works of art relate to culture and society in particular ways.

A discussion of gardens with respect to conceptions of art is not a primary focus of this thesis.[61] However, it is important to remember that art gardens, just as much as, say, poems, paintings, and music, have always had the potential to be fully "contemporary," by which I mean expressive of the social and intellectual milieu in which they were first formed. Thus, the four conceptions of art I describe below can each easily be paired with different paradigmatic art gardens which seem to express their particular values and emphases. (See Figures 12-15 below)

Mimesis was the dominant conception of art in the Western world for by far the greatest part of Western art's history. It emerged in Ancient Greece and lasted relatively unchallenged until the end of the 18th century. In *The Republic*, Plato identified mimesis, or image making, as the essence of a collection of practices that we now think of as the fine arts.[62] For Plato, an object was an image of, say, a person because it was perceptually similar to that person. In other words, the image *looked like* the person it resembled. However for Plato, and for aestheticians right through to the 18th century, the perceptual resemblance did not stop at that simple level. Although the details of accounts vary depending on their historical positioning, mimesis also typically involved not only the resemblance between the image and the person depicted, but also the resemblance between the person depicted and

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[61] For an account of this see: Powell, "We Do Not Have an Adequate Conception of Art until We Have One That Accommodates Gardens."

[62] Plato, The Republic: Book X, (MIT), http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.11.x.html.

personhood, or the *ur*-person, and the resemblance between personhood, or the *ur*-person, and God, the gods, the Designing Mind, or the Ultimate Forms.

On this conception, 18th-century mimetic art represented not simply what it depicted in the first instance. It also represented – or perhaps re-presented is a more apposite term – objects and events at increasingly distant metaphysical levels from the actual physical objects and events with which a viewer was engaging. Appropriate engagement with this art entailed aesthetic, intellectual, and didactic experiences. (See Figure 12)

Figure 12. Photo of part of Capability Brown's 18th-century, "mimetic" gardens at Stowe, England. The garden uses plants, topography, texts, and structures to represent a range of political, spiritual and artistic concepts. (Source: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/stowe)

The expression theory replaced mimesis as the predominant de facto conception of art as the 19th century progressed, though representation did not disappear as a significant feature of many art forms. Representation, and the meanings associated with it, could not disappear completely without taking with them a cornerstone of the way in which all literature functions. Although the expression theory became the predominant theory of art, it coexisted with mimesis and, later, with modernism. The expression theory conceived of the essence of art as being concerned with the

expression of an artist's emotion or imaginative vision suffused with emotion. Not surprisingly, the theory's rise coincided with the rise in importance of the individual in society and of the individual artist and her personal, emotional world. What an individual artist felt or understood about something was deemed valuable and worth expressing in a work for the personal, emotional, or intellectual benefit of the person reading, viewing, or listening to the work.[63] (See Figure 13)

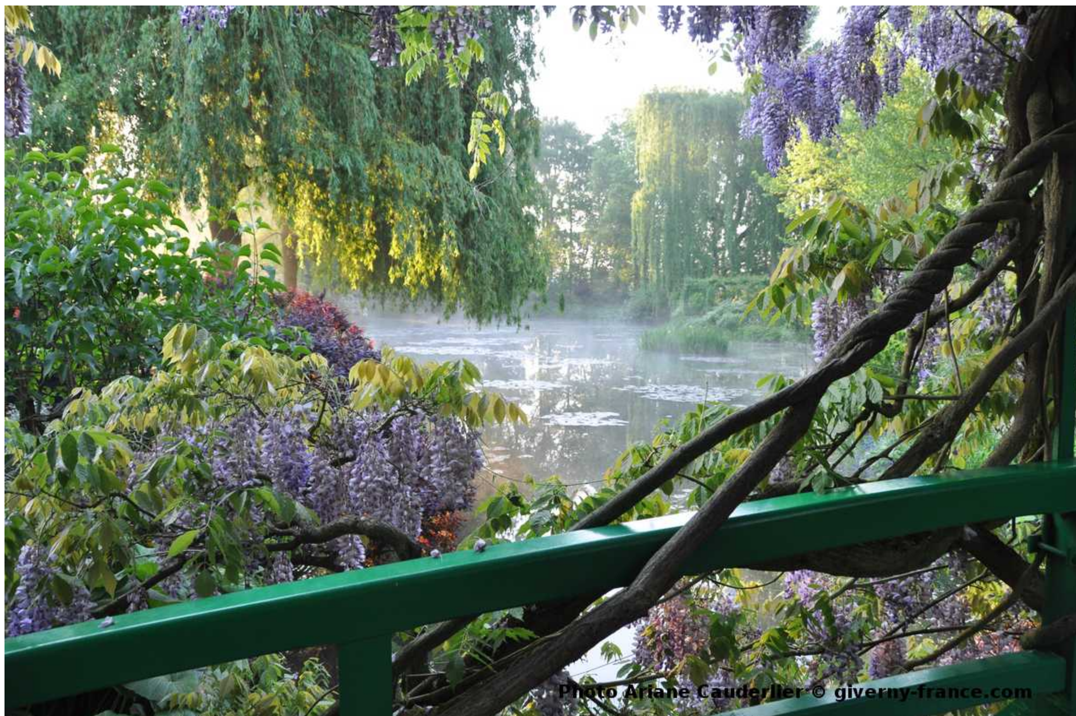

Figure 13. Photo of part of Monet's "expressive" garden, established from the late 19th century onwards, at Giverny, France. The garden uses plants, water, light, and structures to express, and thereby communicate, Monet's way of seeing and understanding the world.
(Source: http://giverny-france.com/#jp-carousel-41)

Modernism eventually succeeded the expression theory as the dominant conception of art for its time, although both conceptions co-existed well into the 20th century. Eduard Hanslick's pioneering formalist theories had appeared as early as 1854 in *The*

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[63] See: G. Gordon, "Expressivism: Croce and Collingwood," in *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, ed. B Gaut and D McIver Lopes (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2005), 156-63; John Spackman, "Expression Theory of Art," ed. Michael Kelly, 2 ed., *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* (Oxford University Press, 2014), http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195113075.001.0001/acref-9780195113075-e-0204. § 1.For good accounts of the expression theory in its 19th- and 20th-century guises see: ibid., Introduction, § 1, § 3.

Beautiful in Music, but it was not until the visual arts largely gave away representation, and a new rationale for their existence became necessary, that the theory of modernism emerged fully.[64] Modernism was not a single, homogenous conception of art. It had two main strands: art for art's sake (autonomous modernism) and what might be termed art for society's sake (engaged modernism). Because I have not found evidence to suggest that engaged modernism had more than slight effects on landscape and garden arts, I do not discuss it further.

Autonomous modernism claimed that art was self referential and that its value was independent of, and as important as, other values, such as truth or beauty. Very often modernist art was abstract, but even when it was not, any representational or narrative or emotional content the works exhibited was deemed irrelevant. According to autonomous modernist theories, the *raison d'être* of art was the creation of works which exhibited aesthetically satisfying forms ("significant form"), disinterested contemplation of which gave rise to an intrinsically valuable aesthetic experience for the perceiver.[65] (See Figure 14)

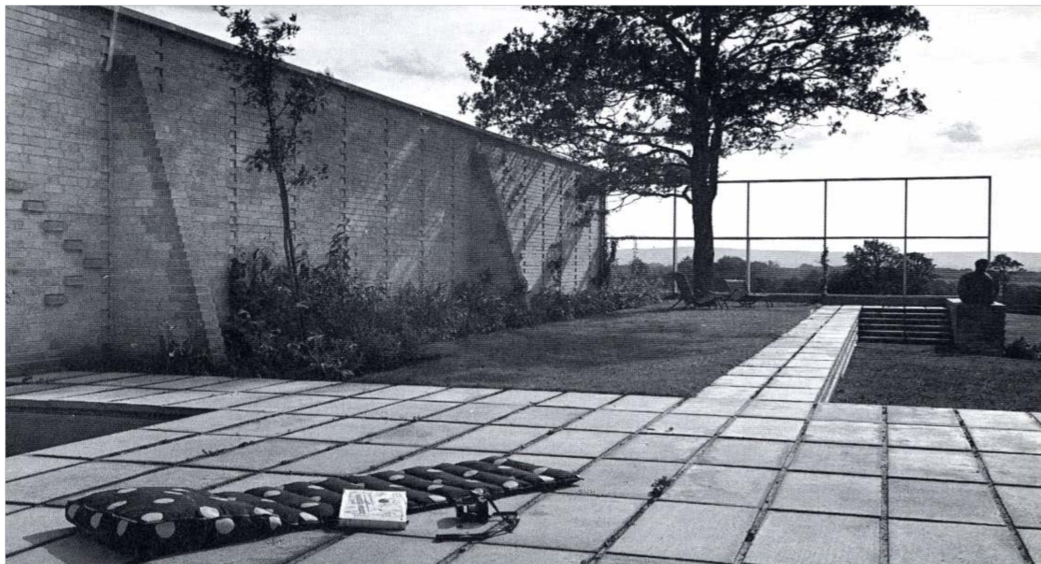

Figure 14. Photo of part of Christopher Tunnard's original 1928, "modernist" garden at Bentley Wood, England. Tunnard's garden exhibits the clear, precise, unadorned lines, shapes, and volumes preferred, for their intrinsic qualities, by modernist critics.
(Source: http://alchetron.com/Christopher-Tunnard-1365696-W#demo)

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[64] E Hanslick, *The Beautiful in Music*, trans. G Cohen (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957).
[65] Bell, "Significant Form (Extracts from Chapter One and Chapter Three of *Art)*."

The three conceptions discussed so far all focus on *manifest* properties, or relationships that depend on manifest properties of works of art.But the fourth conception to be considered, the relational theory of art, is concerned only with a work's extrinsic and relational properties. To the relational theorist, what defines the *Mona Lisa* or Duchamp's urinal (*Fountain*, 1917) as art has nothing to do with any visual or other manifest properties those objects may possess. Instead, the relational theorist acknowledges something to be art on the basis of the relationships that object or event enjoys with respect to the history and theory of art, or its relationship to what Danto christened the "artworld."[66]

According to differing versions of the relational conception, absolutely any object or event, including thought, can be art as long as it can be conceptually accommodated into the narrative of art history or the world of art theory. Or, alternatively, an object or event may be deemed to be a work of art if a suitably qualified person acting on behalf of the artworld acts towards it in appropriate ways or with certain appropriate regards. The relational concept's concentration on extrinsic properties of works of art means that it is not concerned with what manifest properties a work has or with how a work communicates. Nor is it concerned with what an appropriate experience of a work might be. Clearly it marks a complete break from the three earlier conceptions. (See Figure 15)

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[66] Arthur Danto, "The Artworld," *The Journal of Philosophy* 61, no. 19 (1964).

Figure 15. Photo of Martha Schwartz's 1979 *Bagel Garden*, in Boston, USA. The garden's arthood derives not from the artist's selection and arrangement of her materials but, rather, from the ways in which the garden relates to the history of art and to the contemporary artworld.
(Source: https://www.toposmagazine.com/bagel-marthas-shop/#!/foto-post-84-1)

2.7 Conclusion

The period 1700 – 2015 saw developments in philosophical aesthetics in four important areas. First, there were changes in preferred objects of interest. Second, aesthetics' early focus on beauty was broadened to include the sublime and the picturesque. Third, in some quarters of the philosophy of art there occurred a revolutionary change of focus from manifest to extrinsic qualities and features of artworks. Fourth, there were continual changes in conceptions of art.

Changes in all these areas have necessarily affected the ways in which gardens have been considered by philosophical aesthetics. I claim that the influence of these "external" factors has affected gardens' philosophical fate as much as "internal" changes in gardens and garden styles themselves. In the following chapter I examine the interrelationships between these internal and external factors and describe the effects they had on gardens' philosophical status.

Chapter 3

Gardens and Philosophical Aesthetics (1700 – 2015)

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I trace the changing relationship between philosophical aesthetics and gardens during the period 1700 to the present. I suggest that some of the changes in that relationship were triggered not only by changing focuses and new conceptions of art within aesthetics itself but also, indirectly, by changes in contemporary society and garden fashions. The chapter's materials are presented in three main sections. First, I examine the position of the garden during the 18th and early 19th centuries, focussing in particular on its treatment by Kant and Hegel. Second, I elaborate on the garden's apparent change of art status that began to occur from the early 19th century onwards. And third, I describe some recent manifestations of aesthetics' engagement with gardens, concluding that activity and interest in the field is significant and growing.

Before beginning the historical survey it is appropriate to consider which writers on aesthetics and related garden topics are relevant for my purposes. In *Greater Perfections*, Hunt writes of the "marginality of gardens in the academy."[1] He quotes art historian Craig Clunas to the effect that, "as 'a site of contested meanings,' . . . the garden is 'subject to the pull of a number of discursive fields'."[2] In making my selection of writers to be quoted or considered in the historical overview I have limited myself to a small but representative range of philosophers, whether

[1] Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 217.
[2] Ibid.

professional or de facto, whose comments on aesthetic matters relate, either directly or by inference, to the aesthetics of gardens during the period under consideration.

3.2 Nature vs. Art: Kant and Hegel

In *What Gardens Mean*, Ross takes 18th-century English gardens as her paradigmatic case of gardens-as-art or, as she phrases it, "high art."[3] She provides historical evidence to support that claim and selects a quotation from the 18th-century art historian and man of letters Horace Walpole to reinforce her point: "Poetry, Painting, and Gardening, or the Science of Landscape, will forever by men of Taste be deemed Three Sisters, or The Three New Graces who dress and adorn nature."[4] According to Ross, 18th-century gardens constituted a fully-formed contemporary art form and they and their makers were celebrated, examined, and argued over by contemporary philosophers and writers. In other words, their stake in philosophical aesthetics was high.

Ross's view of the important artistic role gardens played in 18th-century life has been supported by many including, most recently, Steven Heyde, author of a 2014 paper that provides important insights into the origins of landscape architecture's conceptions of the aesthetic. In the paper, he writes that the "status of a garden as a worthy form of art was at this point in its history [the 18th century] not only proclaimed by a few professionals, but supported by a wider cultural elite of owners, philosophers, poets, architects, and artists." And he adds further that "for many of them," the landscape garden was "a unique form of art, if not a superior form of art."[5]

However, by the end of the 18th century, Kant had cast his considerable shadow over aesthetics. Kant classified gardens ("landscape gardening") as a subset

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[3] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, xiii.
[4] Ibid., 49.
[5] Heyde, "The Historical Roots of 'Aesthetics' in Landscape Architecture: An Introduction," 139.

of the art of painting, which "consists in no more than decking out the ground with the same manifold variety . . . as that which nature presents to our view, only arranged differently, and in obedience to certain forms." And, further, "the beautiful arrangement of corporeal things [i.e. landscape gardening] . . . is also a thing for the eye only, just like painting."[6] On the surface these remarks appear helpful to the status of gardens as art but a closer reading belies this judgment.

In comparing the art practices of gardens and painting Kant is not saying anything new. The English poet Alexander Pope, for example, had said something similar as early as 1734 when he wrote, "all gardening is landscape-painting; just like a landscape hung up."[7] And a similar remark is attributed to Pope's celebrated garden designer, William Kent. But, in Kant's case, because of his almost continuous influence over 19th- and 20th-century aesthetics, and because the description appears in that part of his *Critique* where he is explaining with typical thoroughness the different ways in which the various fine arts function, his equation of gardens with landscape paintings can be understood as a rejection of the garden as anything other than a static, visual entity. And this conception of gardens – a consideration of the inadequacy of which is a thread running through this thesis – has dominated philosophical aesthetics until the last three or so decades.

There is another remark of Kant's that initially appears helpful to the understanding of gardens as works of art. He writes, "nature proved beautiful when it wore the appearance of art; and art can only be termed beautiful, where we are conscious of its being art, while yet it has the appearance of nature."[8] However, as

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[6] Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, § 45.

[7] Quoted in: Katherine Myers, "Visual Fields: Theories of Perception and the Landscape Garden," in *Experiencing the Garden in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Martin Calder (Oxford; New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 252.

[8] Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, § 45.

the 19th century advanced, it was the very naturalness of gardens that turned out to contribute significantly to their reduced status as works of art.[9]

Kant's remark on the necessary co-dependence between art and nature differs in intent from those made by earlier writers. Heyde notes that when the garden designer Stephen Switzer, an early practitioner in the English landscape school, wrote admiringly of a garden as a place where "nature is truly imitated," or, when the 18th-century philosopher the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury encouraged the use of natural features for gardens, such as "rude Rocks" and "broken Falls of Waters," in order to best represent "Nature," it is not the imitation of Kant's "nature" that they had in mind.[10] Rather, it was the nature of Nature, in the widest sense, that they were concerned to represent, and the subsequent realignment of mimetic intent incorporated in Kant's writings is a further significant contributing factor to gardens' changed status as works of art in the 19th century.[11]

Furthermore, Kant's characterization of the garden as partaking of both art and nature required him to distinguish its appreciation from the appreciation of works of art in other artforms. It required that he "factorizes" his appreciation: that he appreciates gardens *separately* as nature and as art, thereby missing out on what I believe is an essential character of gardens. That essential characteristic centres on the deliberate blurring of the boundaries between and, alternately and simultaneously, the parrying and thrusting between art and nature that gardens continuously enact.[12]

After Kant, the next canonical philosopher to comment directly on gardens was Hegel. He anointed art, rather than nature, as the paradigmatic object of

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[9] For a discussion of the problems that arose for art gardens in the context of their "new" naturalness, see 100-108.

[10] Heyde, "The Historical Roots of 'Aesthetics' in Landscape Architecture: An Introduction," 125-26.

[11] For accounts of the change in the mimetc intent of art with respect to "Nature" and "nature," and the contemporary transition in paradigmatic art object from nature to art, see Chapter 2, 72-77, 68-69.

[12] For a comprehensive statement of this view, see: David E Cooper, "In Praise of Gardens," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 45, no. 2 (2003): 103-07.

aesthetic interest and one might therefore expect that art gardens would thereby enjoy high aesthetic status.[13] However, Cooper cites him as describing gardening as an "imperfect art," and gardens as being "welcome if they provide 'cheerful surroundings' . . . [but they are} 'worth nothing in themselves'."[14] Hegel conceptualized art as the expression of Spirit and gardens' unavoidable, "natural" physicality proved their undoing. According to the Polish philosopher Mateusz Salwa, for Hegel, "gardens were too close to nature and not permeated by the Spirit enough to be regarded as art."[15] After Hegel, I am not aware of any philosophers of aesthetics having or expressing significant views regarding art gardens until the last few decades, during which a renewed interest in them has surfaced.[16]

3.3 A Changed Status

Around the beginning of the Romantic Era, an important change occurred in gardens' art status. I believe this change represents the pivotal "moment" when gardens became non-art in the eyes of philosophical aesthetics. Had this change not occurred then, and for the reasons it did, this study may indeed have been rendered superfluous.

Some garden writers and philosophers refer to or appear to take for granted this loss of gardens' art status and sometimes they offer some reasons for it.[17] But I

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[13] See: Burnham, "Immanuel Kant: Aesthetics," § 2d; Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics," § 1.2.

[14] Quoted in: Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 9.

[15] Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," 376.

[16] Cooper names Schopenhauer, Wittgenstein, and Heidegger as other philosophers who had something to say about gardens. (See: Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 7.) Schopenhauer ranked landscape gardening immediately above his and Hegel's "lowest" art, architecture, and believed that its aim was to promote scenic beauty, which beauty owed more to nature that the artist. (See: Sandra Shapshay, "Schopenhauer's Aesthetics"," ed. E N Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2012), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2012/entries/schopenhauer-aesthetics/>. Heidegger wrote approvingly of the activity of gardening. (See: Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 158-61.) I have not found any Anglophone references to Wittgenstein and gardens.

[17] For example, Ross claims that gardens are no longer art in the late 20th century while, for her, they certainly were in the 18th century. (See: Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 201-08.) In Chapter 4, I reject her

am not aware of the existence of a comprehensive overview of contributing factors such as I present below. Those factors resist easy categorization and they overlap (frustratingly) in terms of their individual causes and effects. I have grouped them into categories which concern changes in philosophical aesthetics, changes in society, including the emergence of the profession of landscape architecture, and changes in garden fashions and experiences.

Changes in Philosophical Aesthetics

Around the turn of the 19th century, three changes occurred in philosophical aesthetics that had important consequences for art gardens. First, there was the change in paradigmatic art objects, as exemplified in the philosophies of Kant and Hegel, with Kant proposing nature and Hegel proposing art.[18] And second, there was a change in the conceptual emphasis for art from a mimetic concern with Nature to a concern, when it was interested in nature at all, with nature *tout court*.[19] In gardens, these two changes interacted with the result that gardens became doubly less art-like. In the first place, when 18th-century gardens left behind their emblematic and painterly associations and became, in the hands of Capability Brown, naturalistic, they became in effect abstract art.[20] Whatever else it might have been starting to think at the time, contemporary aesthetics still assumed that art was

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particular claim in this regard but note for now that it omits any consideration of changes in gardens, or their arthood, during the intervening 19th and early 20th centuries.

[18] See: Burnham, "Immanuel Kant: Aesthetics," § 2d; Carlson, "Environmental Aesthetics," § 1.2. The Kantian scholar Paul Guyer argues that while Kant typified his era in preferring nature over art as the paradigmatic object of aesthetic attention, Kant's reasons for doing so differed importantly from those of his contemporaried. Guyer writes: "Kant glorifies the aesthetic appreciation of nature and downplays that of art precisely because he thinks that the former displays the fundamental autonomy of the human will far better than the latter." Paul Guyer, "Nature, Art, and Autonomy," in *Kant and the Experience of Freedom* (Cambridge, UK; New York, USA; Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 229.

[19] I discuss these two changes and their effects in more detail and set them in their historical, philosophical aesthetic context, in Chapter 2, 68-77.

[20] Although Hunt does not go so far as to call Brown's gardens abstract, for some support of this view see: Hunt, *The Figure in the Landscape*, 247.

mimetic – that it imitated the Nature of the World. When gardens started to represent "nothing" except nature, their arthood appeared to be diminished and contemporary aesthetics was no longer interested in them, nor did it find it necessary to account for them. In the second place, while Hegel was promoting art over nature as the paradigmatic object of aesthetic interest he was required at the same time to demote gardens to the status of an imperfect art because gardens are unavoidably natural and irredeemably material; they are not of the Spirit, and therefore, according to Hegel's theory, they are necessarily at best an imperfect art.[21]

As the Romantic Era advanced, the third change in philosophical aesthetics to influence the arthood of gardens emerged. It was the change in the dominant *conception* of art. The new conception of art understood art to be an expressive rather than mimetic endeavour, and that conception profoundly influenced all art that was produced under its influence. Gardens were unlikely candidates for art status under the expression theory. Although they had recently largely ceased being mimetic, mimesis had been a role to which they were well suited. They were much less well suited to the expression theory. According to one standard account of it, the expression theory is centrally concerned with an artist's feelings about an object or event, her infusion of her work with those feelings and, in turn, the reciprocal experience of the *artist's* feeling by the viewer, listener, or reader.[22] All these stages are difficult to imagine in the case of the post-Enlightenment because a garden's continuously unfinished and evolving nature makes it an unlikely conveyor of a fixed set of emotions. Furthermore, a garden is most often the ongoing product of a range of creative and practical minds and hands. The idea that it can transmit the emotional content of a single artist's single experience is therefore unlikely. And, finally, the temporal and spatial opportunities for experiencing a garden are theoretically infinite. Therefore, unless the artist has foreseen all those limitless

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[21] Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 9.
[22] Gordon, "Expressivism: Croce and Collingwood," 156-63.

possibilities, how can any particular temporal-spatial experience of a garden be known to equate to the artist's preferred temporal-spatial experience and its own ensuing emotional content? In sum, these reasons show the difficulties gardens faced under an expression conception of art and explain further why gardens lost their art status at this time.

Changes in Society

When the power of absolute monarchy began to lessen in Britain in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 it was accompanied by a gradual, slow increase in the rights and importance of the "ordinary" individual in that society. What was slow and gradual in Britain was considerably more precipitate in France when the French Revolution occurred almost exactly 100 years later. These seminal events set in train movements and further political events that had a profound effect not only on society but also on the arts, including gardens. For the purposes of this study I identify and elaborate on four matters which have their roots in these societal changes: the rise of the individual artist as a contemporary hero, the rise of the middle-class and its enthusiasm for gardens, the popularizing of museums, and changes in the design "profession."

The improving status of the "ordinary" individual, coupled with the decline of royal and aristocratic patronage, encouraged the emergence of the perception of the artist as an individual, heroic genius-seer, or, in the memorable phrase of the art critic Lucy Lippard, as a "hero and visionary nut."[23] The personal visions such artists produced and the emotions and insights they expressed were deemed valuable by the aristocracy and the emergent middle class.[24] However, gardens, in spite of the

[23] Lucy R. Lippard, "Gardens: Some Metaphors for a Public Art," *Art in America* 69, no. 11 (1981): 138.

[24] The philosopher and historian Isaiah Berlin writes of the romantic artists' "passionate belief in spiritual freedom, individual creativity." Their goals represent "the self-expression of the artist's own unique, inner vision, to set aside which in response to the demands of some 'external' voice — church, state, public opinion, family friends, arbiters of taste — is an act of betrayal of what alone justifies their existence for those who are in any sense creative." Isaiah Berlin, *The Crooked Timber of*

inspiration and heroics that may be involved, are almost never the unaided work of a single individual. Gardens are usually the evolving product of a team, and they are therefore inimical to the contemporary notion of the individual artist as a contemporary hero whose singular view and personal, emotional insights are to be valued.[25]

Members of the emergent middle class were enthusiastic consumers of art and, while works in some artforms translated relatively easily to the more restricted confines of middle-class life (see, for example, Schubert's songs and piano duets, Wordsworth's poems, and Dickens's novels), gardens did not. The restricted scale of the new middle-class gardens, compared to their princely and aristocratic forbears, and the new horticultural and artistic ambitions of their middle-class owners discussed below, both contributed to the loss of gardens' status as works of art.[26]

The 18th and 19th centuries' emphasis on the development of public museums stemmed in part from the notion that middle class (but not lower class) people would profit from being able to see great art and other cultural artefacts which previously had not been available to them. In this way, a classification system was subtlely erected: what could be displayed in museums was art and what could not was not. By their very nature, gardens were unable to be displayed and their arthood was in this way diminished.[27]

During the same period there was occurring a gradual transition from amateur art-garden making to the practice of what might be called craft-garden

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Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas (London: John Murray, 1990), 57-58. An important philosophical underpinning of the related concept of genius as a necessary component of fine art is to be found in: Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, § 46.

[25] The wide range of contributors to the making and maintaining of a garden is not always adequately acknowledged. See my description of the evolution of Tupare in Chapter 1, 50-51.

[26] See: F R Cowell, *The Garden as a Fine Art: From Antiquity to Modern Times* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1978), 187; Laurence Fleming and Alan Gore, *The English Garden* (London: Spring Books, 1979), 171-73.

[27] Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 8-9.

making, and the emergence of the profession of landscape architecture.[28] Although craft-garden making and landscape architecture became dominant in the latter half of the 19th century, the seeds of the non-art status of their products were sown at the beginning of the Romantic Era. During the 18th century and into the early 19th century, art gardens had by definition been produced by artists, whether they were professional, like Brown and Repton, or gifted amateurs, like Hoare. However, the cloak of the romantic, heroic genius-artist did not sit easily on the shoulders of the later 19th-century garden makers, who, as I have explained above, were no longer making "art" anyway.[29] So, as gardens continued to be made throughout the 19th century, the making of them was transferred to the craft gardeners, such as Gertrude Jekyll and William Robinson, and, to the limited extent to which they were interested in them, to the early pioneers of professional landscape architecture, such as Andrew Jackson Downing and Frederick Olmsted.[30]

Changes in Garden Experiences and Fashions

From the 18th century onwards, a growing emphasis on *movement* through and around gardens became apparent. The experience of gardens in this way was not new. It had been documented from ancient times and has been widely

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[28] For a clear exposition of this see: Heyde, "The Historical Roots of 'Aesthetics' in Landscape Architecture: An Introduction."According to Heyde: the first use of the term landscape architect (*architecte paysagiste)* occurred in France at the start of the 19th century; during the 19th century, what gradually turned into the profession and discipline of landscape architecture took over from the earlier practice and practioners of garden design; that profession was more aligned to the science of horticulture than the art of design; and, garden design became increasingly a matter of applying "rules" of design and style.

[29] I do not mean to imply the "craft" gardeners such as Gertrude Jekyll and William Robinson were not artists. I mean, rather, that they weren't *soi-disant* romantic artists and therefore, judged by contemporary criteria, they were non-artists. (It may prove interesting to study the rise of female garden artists, from Gertrude Jeykll right through to, say, Penelope Hobhouse and Beth Chatto in recent times, from a gendered perspective. Has the gender of these practioners militated against their productions being considered "art"? For an exploration of the gendered world of 18th-century gardens, as presented in contemporary women's writings, see: Stephen Bending, *Green Retreats: Women, Gardens and Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013).)

[30] Turner, *Garden History: Philosophy and Design 2000 B.C. – 2000 A.D.*, 244.

acknowledged.[31] However, there was a renewed emphasis on it on the part of 18th-century garden writers and visitors.[32] Furthermore, it was an essential element of an adequate experience of contemporary "circuit" gardens such as Stourhead, where the visitor not only moved from one set-piece tableau to another but was presumably not unaware of the continuously changing visual materials she encountered on the journeys between the set-piece viewpoints.[33] This "new" experience involved experiencing a garden from a continuously changing, self-motivating, unstable viewpoint, or series of viewpoints. However, although there was a renewed awareness of this phenomenon on the part of garden writers, theorists, and visitors, philosophical aestheticians remained unchallenged in their assumption that an appropriate experience of a garden *qua* work of art involved static, stable views of non-dynamic, framed, garden vistas.

Fashions in garden design altered quite dramatically between the Enlightenment and the Romantic Era. As in the case of the changed conception of art discussed above, it is hard to untangle the causal relationships between the changes in garden fashions and the extra-garden factors that (may have) determined them; moreover it is not within the scope of my project to do so. I have for my purposes settled on three sets of factors which seem to have had a significant effect of the world of gardens during the 19th century. They are the development of gardens to

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[31] See, for example, an entertaining description by the Australian philosopher Damon Young of Ancient Greek philosophers walking about in their gardens: Damon Young, "Philosophy Alfresco," in *Voltaire's Vine and Other Philosophies: How Gardens Inspired Great Writers* (London: Ebury Digital, 2014).

[32] For an account of the importance ascribed to movement in the work of a seminal 18th-century garden theorist see: Linda Parshall, "Motion and Emotion in C.C.L. Hirschfeld's Theory of Garden Art," in *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion*, ed. M Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2003). See also the recently published: Hunt, "The Time of Walking." Hunt considers the practice and theory of walking in both historical and contemporary landscape settings.

[33] For an analysis of some differing accounts of movement around Stourhead, and of the relative importance and relevance of those accounts to an adequate experience of the garden, see: "Stourhead Revisited & the Pursuit of Meaning in Gardens," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* 26, no. 4 (2006): 330, 32.

suit the needs of the new middle-class owners, the rise in the importance of botanical aspects of gardens, and the effects of the new gardens on the experience of gardens.

Members of the emerging middle-class became enthusiastic owners of gardens and, in some cases, enthusiastic gardeners too. To meet their needs, a range of what might be called *prêt-à-horter* designs was published by enterprising designers in books and magazines.[34] These designs could be installed wholly or in part in average sized suburban lots by gardeners or owner-gardeners. The layouts and styles could be applied to a site willy-nilly, and they generally lacked any "specific cultural resonances" for the client or the public.[35] The gardens that typically resulted from such designs lacked the arthood of their 18th-century predecessors. They also lacked the pretensions to expressivity of works in other 19th-century art forms. It is, in fact, fair to say that they lacked pretensions to arthood generally.[36] (See Figure 16)

There is one aspect of these gardens which on its own was enough to disqualify them from being considered as art: their utility. Utility was anathema to contemporary aesthetics. Whatever changes had occurred in aesthetics over the previous century, disinterestedness was still an essential component of the aesthetic experience. Therefore, gardens which included vegetable plots, cutting gardens, spaces for games, etc., such as Loudon and others offered their clients, were unequivocally non-art.

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[34] See, for example, the plans and sketches in: : J. C. Loudon, The Suburban Gardener, and Villa Companion., ([electronic resource] London: The author, 1838), https://archive.org/details/suburbangardene00loudgoog.

[35] See: Heyde, "The Historical Roots of 'Aesthetics' in Landscape Architecture: An Introduction," 135-36.

[36] Cowell, *The Garden as a Fine Art: From Antiquity to Modern Times*, 201-04.

Figure 16. Contemporary advertising image for a typical, off-the-shelf, 19th-century villa garden plan, offering potential owners opportunities for satisfying their social, utilitarian, and aesthetic ambitions. . The utilitarian features of such gardens were themselves enough to disqualify the gardens from being "art."
(Source: http://cdn.spectator.co.uk/content/uploads/2014/07/Amateur-Gardener-1890.jpg)

During the 19th century, there was a growing movement away from gardens being valued for their emblematic or expressive content, that is, in effect, for their potential arthood, toward their being valued for their botanical content.[37] I believe there are three factors that were contributing to this state of affairs, namely, the influence of botany itself, the influence of other physical science in the form of engineering, and the influence of travel. It is difficult to unravel the interconnections between these three factors in the space available so I consider them jointly.

Although plant hybridizing was not new, it was pursued vigorously during this century and gardeners sought eagerly to install the most novel, biggest flowered,

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[37] Ross proposes two different reasons, both taken from Hunt, why the poetic, allusive garden began to be replaced by less artful gardens, whose aesthetic properties were dependent to a much greater extent than previously on purely visual qualities: first, garden visitors were less well (classically) educated, and therefore gardens' allusive poetic and emblematic content was not understood; second, the influence of "Lockean epistemology[,] with its seeming emphasis on subjectivity and personal response as the groundwork of our knowledge," militated against the appropriate appreciation of the older style, poetic allusive garden. See: Ross, "Gardens' Powers," 11-12.

most "improved," most highly scented cultivars in their gardens. Among the most highly prized cultivars were those developed from plant material of exotic origin. Such material was "discovered" on botanical expeditions, which were undertaken by professional botanists and naturalists and by wealthy amateurs alike. The new cultivars produced in this way, as well as the original and other exotic species imported, were able to flourish in their new settings thanks to the increased availability of conservatories, glass houses, and heating systems. The increased availability and efficiency of these structures and systems can be traced to the Industrial Revolution's contemporary stimulation of the disciplines of structural and systems (heating) engineering, and to the growing availability of the necessary materials. These advances in botany and engineering meant that the palette of attractive plants available for use in gardens was much increased.[38] (See Figure 17

Figure 17. Humphry Repton's 1816 aquatint, *Forcing Garden, in Winter*, shows colourful, possibly exotic, plants flourishing in a heated environment under the shelter of a glass and steel structure. The increasing availability of such "over-wintered" plants contributed much to the increased emphasis on botanic novelty in 19th century gardens.
(Source: http://www.rhsprints.co.uk/image/380950/repton-humphry-1752-1818-artist-forcing-garden-in-winter)

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[38] Cowell, *The Garden as a Fine Art: From Antiquity to Modern Times*, 193-202.

This increase in plant stock might have been expected to enhance the opportunities for gardens to be considered as works of art. However, the reverse was the case. The increased emphasis on botanical variety and the fondness for the novel products of plant breeding programmes meant that individual plants became an important focus of attention in the garden, and this came at the expense of a focus on the whole, or at least a significant part of, the garden as an art object. Furthermore, this focus on the close-up experience of individual plants came at the expense of the contemplation of distant views and objects that had typified the 18th-century experience of gardens as art. And finally, as I have discussed above, the heightened focus on individual plants and their aesthetic qualities came at the cost of the garden's potential for mimesis and expressivity, and in this way too the 19th-century garden's arthood was diminished.[39]

Figure 18. Photo of an extreme, 20th-century example of a garden in the 19th-century gardenesque manner. (Source: https://farm5.staticflickr.com/4028/4640170456_8107d84f27_b.jpg) The overwhelming focus on individual colours, shapes, and especially flowers in this garden undermines any claims it might have to being considered a traditionally-conceived coherent artistic entity.

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[39] Landscape architect and garden writer Tom Turner says of this period: "Garden designers . . . neglected the quest for art to imitate 'the nature of the world.' . . . They saw only the superficial 'world of nature'." See: Turner, *Garden History: Philosophy and Design 2000 B.C. – 2000 A.D.*, 226.

One consequence of all the changes that were influenced by botanical innovations was the emergence of a new garden style called the "gardenesque."[40] (See Figure 18) The gardenesque replaced the picturesque as the dominant garden style and the name change was significant in two different ways. First, it marked a change in the appearance of gardens. Picturesque gardens had, however loosely and with whatever nuances the term might have been applied during the previous 100 years, shared a conception of the garden as in some way being associated with the pictorial arts. On this basis, a garden was artistically successful to the degree that it successfully reproduced aesthetic qualities and formal arrangements found in contemporary pictorial arts, or in nature as seen through art's "eyes." However, the new emphases on botany and horticulture that characterized the gardenesque style meant that a successful garden was to be judged on its botanical and horticultural merit rather than on the old picturesque values. Second, the very adoption of the term "gardenesque" necessarily involved the simultaneous rejection of "picturesque," a term that had enjoyed wide currency and that had theretofore been applicable to all the visual arts and to nature. In this way, gardens moved themselves away from the worlds of art and nature appreciation, and the art status they had shared with other arts was consequently diminished.

The gardenesque style resulted not only in gardens that looked different but in gardens that were differently experienced and, for two reasons, these altered modes of experience were inimical to gardens' being considered works of art.

First, at this time gardeners and garden designers were able to furnish their gardens from a greatly enlarged palette of plants. The resulting *embarras de richesses* was one factor that lead to the increased popularity of planting for seasonal effects and for bedding out, that is, the planting of garden beds in accordance with schemes based on rotating changes of plants selected for their ephemeral aesthetic

[40] The Oxford English Dictionary's earliest citation for "gardenesque" is from John Claudius Loudon's *Arboretum et Fruticetum Britannicum* of 1838. ("Gardenesque, Adj.," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, June 2015), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/76731.)

attractiveness. In support of this style of gardening, Loudon wrote that "one of the greatest of all the sources of enjoyment resulting from the possession of a garden, is the variety which it produces."[41.] While the ephemerality and changeability of these garden scenes was well suited to the horticultural displays that the gardenesque style favoured, their instability entailed that visitors could have no fully determined, unchanging experience of gardens containing them. Such gardens necessarily lacked a stable, finished form and were therefore inadmissible as art according to contemporary aesthetics, which continued to require that any work of visual art needed to have an unchanging, fully determined form.

Second, gardens in the gardenesque style encouraged an interest in the botanical details of individual plants and thereby offered increased opportunities for the experience of non-visual and, in particular, olfactory sensations. These developments potentially increased the aesthetic enjoyment of gardenesque gardens, but at the same time they diminished the arthood of those gardens because they offered pleasures which ran contrary to the foundational art-aesthetic notion of disinterestedness. Thus, it is not possible to appreciate, say, a dahlia with disinterest while admiring it as a product of the hybridizer's skill, or even, to be pedantic about it, while admiring it as a dahlia.[42] Whereas art, at least in the 18th and 19th centuries, always required that it be experienced disinterestedly. Furthermore, it is not possible to enjoy the scent of, say, a rose with disinterest. Disinterest requires a certain distance to be maintained between viewer and art object. Manifestly this is not possible in the case of scent, which must physically enter the body before it is perceived, at which time, disinterest, or psychical distance, is no longer possible. In addition, scent is an unstable, formless sensation. In Hegel's words, "a smell does not remain stable so that a person can contemplate it" – an assessment with which Kant

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[41] Loudon, *The Suburban Gardener, and Villa Companion.* 49.
[42] Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, § 4.

would have agreed.[43] Therefore, according to contemporary aesthetic theory, enjoying the scent of a rose can play no role in the appreciation of a work of garden art because scent is an unstable, frameless phenomenon and because it cannot be contemplated with disinterest. Again, any arthood pretensions gardenesque gardens may have entertained are on these grounds diminished.[44]

3.4 A Revived Status

During the last few decades, there has been a welcome revival of interest in garden aesthetics. This revival has two sources. First, philosophers of art have examined gardens in the context of contemporary aesthetic theories. And second, philosophers interested primarily in aesthetics of the natural and human environments, and in the aesthetics of the everyday have expressed views on the matter. I am interested in the work of the former group of philosophers because their work is focussed primarily on art gardens.

In his Foreword to a recent book written by a range of authors on the general topic of gardens and philosophy, Cooper comments on the lack of interest that 20th-century philosophy, and some other disciplines, have shown towards the garden. He writes:

> The failure, for the most part, of twentieth-century philosophers, cultural historians, and social scientists seriously to attend to the garden was a caesura, a lapse. In earlier centuries, in the traditions of both East and West, the garden occupied an honorable and important place in "the realm of intelligent public

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[43] However, see: Marta Tafalla, "Anosmic Aesthetics," *Estetika: The Central European Journal of Aesthetics* 50, no. 1 (2013): 519, 16-20.Tafalla makes a case for smell being an acceptable sensory input in terms of Kantian aesthetics.

[44] The problem of disinterested appreciation in the garden, and nature, has been well canvassed. For varying perspectives on the matter see: Arnold Berleant, "The Aesthetics of Art and Nature," in *The Aesthetics of Natural Environments*, ed. A Carlson and A Berleant (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2004), 76-88; Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 93-116; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 13-14.

> discourse" – a discourse engaged in, of course, by philosophers, who had yet to fall victim to the professionalization and specialization that philosophy was to undergo during the last century.[45]

And, in the Introduction to his own monograph on the subject, Cooper warns that, "in neglecting the garden, philosophy is . . . ignoring not merely a current fashion, but activities and experiences of abiding human significance."[46]

On a more positive note, the two volumes which Cooper's comments introduce are part of a growing collection of books and papers that have appeared in the last two decades and that are redressing the inaction on the part of philosophers of which he complains. These publications have appeared in two overlapping "waves." Thomas Leddy, Miller, Ross, and Cooper comprised the first wave, and they have been followed by Salwa, Tafalla, and others representative of an exciting new wave of development in the philosophy of gardens that has been building during the last three years.

To understand all this recent activity in the light of the "lapse" of which Cooper speaks it will be useful to begin by noting some reasons related to gardens' arthood that may have contributed to this philosophical disdain. Among other reasons, Cooper notes that gardens are "typically and strikingly different . . . from those artworks which have tended to be regarded as paradigmatic;" that, unlike other works of art, they can be put to "practical, utilitarian uses;" that they lack autonomy because of their "high dependence on environmental factors;" that they are inadmissible according to what Dewey called the "museum conception of art;" and that they are out of tune with contemporary art's concerns and agenda.[47] To this

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[45] Cooper, "Foreword," x.
[46] *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 3.
[47] Ibid., 8-9.

list, Hunt adds they are "antithetical to modernist aesthetics . . . [because] no garden is ever "complete" or coherent at any one time."[48]

I have cited all these reasons because they have influenced the lines along which the philosophy of (art) gardens developed in the two books with which the renewed period of activity was heralded. In both those books – Miller's *The Garden as an Art* and Ross's *What Gardens Mean* – an important concern was to make a case for gardens' retention in or removal from the category of art.[49] In other words, one of each author's concerns was whether contemporary gardens, in spite of all their differences from other artforms, are or can be art. The art-definitional projects contained in these books were in tune with the contemporary philosophical aesthetic concern over what constituted a work of art in a *relational* sense, with explaining how something could be a work of art in spite of its possessing none of the attributes traditionally ascribed to works of art. They were also in tune with the concomitant comparative disregard for the *intrinsic* aesthetic components of a putative work of art. I discuss the writings of Miller and Ross in detail in Chapter 4. For now, I quote parts of their claims, and offer some brief commentary on them and on Leddy's *Gardens in an Expanded Field*.[50] These three contemporary philosophers have each presented carefully argued though divergent claims concerning gardens' status as works of art.

In *The Garden as an Art*, Miller examines the putative arthood of gardens by way of an examination of George Dickie's and Munro Beardsley's definitions of art. Her claim is that if gardens in fact are art then they should be able to be accounted for by the art definitions of these two important 20th-century philosophers of art. Miller argues that Beardsley's definition does not accommodate gardens and, thereby, gardens are not art. She writes that gardens, having experienced what she considers to be a 20th-century "fall from grace," are no longer art, although, at least in USA, they are "aesthetic," and, therefore, Beardsley's theory should account for

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[48] Hunt, "Gardens: Historical Overview," 273.
[49] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*.
[50] Leddy, "Gardens in an Expanded Field."; Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 8-9.

them but it does not, because they are not thought of as art.[51] In other words, gardens could be art but Beardsley's influential definition disallows that.

Miller then tests the arthood of gardens against Dickie's definition. Again she finds that gardens are deemed to be unacceptable as works of art. She argues that Dickie's definition does not allow for the demotion of 20th-century art gardens from their 18th-century pinnacle to what she claims to be their non-art status of today. Therefore, on Dickie's influential account, gardens are not art. "Ironically," she writes, "the garden has to be rejected as an artkind precisely on the theory designed to be the most generous and inclusive – George Dickie's 'institutional' definition of art."[52]

Miller's view of the arthood of gardens has changed by the time of her "Gardens: Gardens as Art" of 1998, but there is insufficient argument in that encyclopedia entry to understand the reasons for her changed view. She writes that "Munroe's Beardsley's generous principle [for assessing arthood] would clearly include gardens." And, "similarly, George Dickie's 'institutional definition' … would also accommodate gardens."[53]

In *What Gardens Mean*, Ross writes that "it may well be that the *art* of gardening has come to an end. Major artists do not make statements in this medium, and our sense of gardening's kinship to painting and poetry has been lost."[54] And, following what she describes as a Danto-Hegelian view of art's progress, she suggests that "some arts die when supplanted by more vigorous successors" and proposes those successors to be environment art and land art.[55] However, she revises this gloomy prognosis in her 2006 paper, "Paradoxes and Puzzles: Appreciating Gardens and Urban Nature," in which she claims, albeit without providing reasons

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[51] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 70.

[52] Ibid. Miller's use of "institutional" refers to what I describe as "relational". (See 89-90)

[53] "Gardens: Gardens as Art," 277.

[54] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 202.

[55] Ibid., 193.

to explain her change of view, that appropriate gardens, including, presumably, contemporary ones, might be candidates for art status if considered according to the theories of Danto, and two other contemporary philosophers.[56]

In his 1988 paper "Gardens in an Expanded Field," Leddy claims that "gardening [i.e. the garden] has a future as a medium for fine art," but that, if this is to happen, "gardening needs to be discussed in relation to such contemporary art practices as landscape architecture, environmental art, and what has come in the U.S. to be called public art."[57] I agree that gardens share some features and characteristics with the arts Leddy mentions. However, given the vast amount of historical written and visual materials concerning gardens and the vast number of gardens in existence, perhaps the practice and critique of these new arts might equally profitably learn from the case of gardens.[58]

I believe that the most important work now occurring in the field of garden aesthetics does not have its focus on definitional matters. Instead, it has its focus on the positive values of the unique intrinsic components and functions of gardens. In other words, the garden is no longer being examined in order to squeeze it with some difficulty into, or to exclude it from, definitions of art. Instead, gardens are being examined in the light of their own particular aesthetic features and qualities and on account of the unique contributions and insights they may offer to philosophical aesthetics in general. There are four such investigations that I comment on briefly here. All of them have been published since 2013. They concern the

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[56] "Paradoxes and Puzzles: Appreciating Gardens and Urban Nature." In this paper, Ross describes Charles Jencks's and Maggie Keswick's *Garden of Cosmic Speculation* as one of those that "properly claim to be works of art." (ibid., § 11.) And, in the same paper, she implies that Robert Irwin's Getty Museum gardens may be considered a work of art. Again, these claims appears to contradict what she says of contemporary gardens in *What Gardens Mean*. (See also her comments on the *Garden of Cosmic Speculation* in: "Gardens' Powers," 16.)

[57] Leddy, "Gardens in an Expanded Field," 327.

[58] See Chapter 4, 145-150, where I discuss Cooper's views on the relationship between the philosophical understanding of gardens and some new, contemporary artforms.

"performance" of gardens, gardens' temporality, and the extent of gardens' sensory repertoire.[59]

Salwa published his paper, "The Garden as a Performance," in 2013.[60] In it, he argues that our experience of a garden is akin to our experience of other performance arts, such as theatre and music. According to him, the contributors to this experience are (a) the landscape architect or designer who creates the work, (b) nature and art (culture), which play out a continuous dialectical "drama," and (c) the visitors, who are the audience witnessing the "drama." Salwa also offers an alternative version of the garden *qua* performance, in which he retains the landscape architect as the creator of an audience-less work in which nature, art, and garden visitors are all performers.

Many other philosophers and writers have compared gardens to different art genres, most commonly to paintings and poems, but I am not aware of any making claims similar to Salwa's. On those grounds alone I find his ideas stimulating and refreshing. In particular, I find his temporal/performative conception of the *experience* of gardens illuminating. However, for reasons I outline in Chapter 8, I believe that performance is in the end an inappropriate metaphor for the experience of gardens and nor does it help to explain gardens' unique ontological status.[61]

In 2014, the Spanish philosopher Marta Tafalla published "Smell and Anosmia in the Appreciation of Gardens," preceded, in 2013, by "Anosmic Aesthetics."[62] A contributory factor to the production of these two papers is surely the author's own

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[59] See: "Special Issue on Time," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (2014); "Sound and Scent in the Garden: Garden and Landscape Studies Symposium at Dumbarton Oaks," http://www.doaks.org/research/garden-landscape/scholarly-activities/past/sound-and-scent-in-the-garden/abstracts; Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance."; Tafalla, "Smell and Anosmia in the Appreciation of Gardens."

[60] Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance." I examine Salwa's primary claims in detail in Chapter 8, 240-243.

[61] To be fair, Salwa is clear that his performance theory does carry with it ontological implications.

[62] Tafalla, "Anosmic Aesthetics."; "Smell and Anosmia in the Appreciation of Gardens.") Tafalla's papers provide robust philosophical support for the acceptability of multi-sensual accounts of gardens, such as I present in Chapter 8.

anosmia. In her 2013 paper, Tafalla made several claims important for the purposes of this study, including that philosophical aesthetics has traditionally favoured sight and sound over taste, touch, smell, and kinaesthetic experience; that, according to traditional aesthetics, it is not possible to smell with disinterest and therefore smells cannot be part of a traditionally-defined art experience; and that the aesthetics of the everyday has given a new, and appropriate, aesthetic status to the sense of smell. In her 2014 paper, Tafalla does not go so far as to agree with Kant that the proper experience of a garden *cannot* involve attention to smells but she does agree with him that the proper appreciation of a garden necessarily involves paying attention to its form. Having made this point she goes on to argue that smell is indeed a contributory factor in our appreciation of form and it is therefore an appropriate and necessary sense to employ in the proper appreciation of gardens.

Tafalla's claim that olfaction can be a valid component of the traditionally conceived notion of aesthetic appreciation of form is welcome and her argument opens up an opportunity for others to enlist the other non-visual and non-aural senses onto the roll of "valid" receivers of "valid" aesthetic information in works of art.[63]

Finally, two events that are important for my project occurred during 2014, both at the landscape school of Dumbarton Oaks. As best as I can tell, there were no philosophers involved in either event. However, the influence of the school and its scholarly work are such that its outputs can hardly be ignored by those with a serious interest in gardens, whether that interest be philosophical or not. The first event was an international symposium organized on the theme of "Sound and Scent

[63] Tafalla is not alone in her philosophical interest in gardens' non-visual pleasures. (See, for example: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 32, 47-48; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 156-63.) And nor is she alone in paying philosophical attention to the aesthetic values of the olfactory sense. (See, for example: Larry Shiner, "Art Scents: Perfume, Design and Olfactory Art," *British Journal Of Aesthetics* 55, no. 3 (2015).) However, Tafalla is unique in proposing a positive philosophical account of how non-visual, in her case, olfactory, sensations in the garden function in the context of received (Kantian) philosophical accounts of art.

in the Garden," and the second was the publication of an issue of *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* devoted solely to time.[64] I note here in passing the occurrence of the symposium because it offers further proof of the growing interest that garden scholars from many disciplines have in the wide range of sensory opportunities that gardens provide. I return to this theme in later chapters. In the case of the journal issue, a range of non-philosopher scholars identify time and temporality as central issues for consideration in the design, experience, and assessment of gardens and designed landscapes. In Chapters 5 and 8 I respond to their implied challenge to philosophers and I attempt to provide some conceptual underpinnings in support or contradiction of some of their claims.[65]

3.5 Conclusion

The recent work in the field of garden aesthetics described above is attempting to capitalize on gardens' unique aspects, to treat those aspects as the feathers in gardens' artistic cap, so to speak, rather than as impediments to gardens' being considered fully-fledged works of art. And, although I have shown in this chapter that gardens' unique characteristics and features were not the only contributors to gardens' loss of art status at the turn of the 19th century, some of those same features certainly played an important role with respect to philosophical aesthetics' changed view of gardens. My claim is that these features of gardens, including their ontological, temporal, and experiential characteristics, which features gardens share increasingly with some new contemporary artforms, ought to be of paramount importance in any adequate 21st-century philosophical account of gardens. In Part III, I assess the

[64] For a brief review of the conference see: Nadine Schütz, "Sound and Scent in the Garden," *Journal of Landscape Architecture* 9, no. 3 (2014): 90-91. For abstracts of papers presented see: "Sound and Scent in the Garden: Garden and Landscape Studies Symposium at Dumbarton Oaks". For the journal article see: "Special Issue on Time."

[65] I note also the recent publication of "Out of Time: Temporality in Landscape History," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2016). The journal issue assesses its subject from a range of interesting, primarily historical perspectives.

adequacy of recent accounts of gardens in meeting this goal, and I assess recent accounts of art's temporal and ontological natures in terms of their adequacy to the case of gardens.

PART III

THE LIE OF THE LAND: A CRITIQUE

Chapter 4

Art and Gardens

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on recent philosophical writing on gardens. In particular, I critique the three recent, book-length contributions to the field. I also refer occasionally to individual papers relevant to the matters under discussion. The book-length studies are Mara Miller's *The Garden as an Art*, published in 1993, Stephanie Ross's *What Gardens Mean*, published in 1998, and David Cooper's *A Philosophy of Gardens*, published in 2006.[1]

I critique these books from the perspective of my own conception of gardens.[2] I find some claims presented in the books to be inadequate or incorrect, especially in the fields of definition of art, gardens' *modus operandi*, and our experiences of gardens. However, I acknowledge the historical antecedents, outlined in Part I, for the authors' claims in these regards. Such claims stemmed from gardens' essential nature and materials being ignored, misunderstood, or massaged to fit into the historical definitional, ontological, experiential, and temporal theories of art. In subsequent chapters of Part III I examine gardens' temporal and ontological characteristics in some detail and in Part IV I propose a partial account of gardens which I claim is adequate to their four-dimensional, living reality and to our experiences of them.

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[1] See: Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*; Miller, *The Garden as an Art*; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*.

[2] In brief, my conception of gardens entails that: gardens constitute a unique and uniquely valuable art form; that gardens possess ontological and temporal qualities which, until recently, they have shared with no other art forms. Consequently, attempts to harness gardens within the constraints of other arts, or of art *tout court,* will generally be unsuccessful.

The three books exhibit different approaches to the issues art gardens raise for philosophy and their findings differ accordingly. In brief, Ross ends up claiming that gardens "are dead in the sense that artists today no longer produce major works in [this genre]."[3] Miller ends up claiming that "[i]f gardens are works of art, as it now seems they are, they are so in spite of the fact that they do not fit our definitions of art."[4] And Cooper claims that the art status of gardens is philosophically uninteresting because the questions it raises are "too close to similar and familiar ones asked about other artworks to raise [any] novel issues."[5] In this chapter I dispute each of these claims.[6]

4.2 Gardens and Meaning

Ross's study uses the gardens of a specific time and place – 18th-century England – as case studies for many of the philosophical claims it makes and in this way it differs from Miller's study, which addresses gardens from many different cultures and historical periods. However, both authors share a concern with the philosophies of art of Dickie and the mid-20th-century American philosopher Susanne Langer.

Ross uses the gardens of the so-called English landscape school because they provide her with rich source material for her principal claims that: (a) gardens were once a "high art;" (b) gardens can function in the manner of poems; (c) gardens can function in the manner of paintings; (d) gardens offer a distinctive range of meanings and experiences; and (e) the art of garden making is now dead. In the following paragraphs I examine each of these claims. In discussing (c) and (d), I acknowledge

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[3] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 193.

[4] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 178.

[5] Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 12.

[6] However, these three writers, whose views with respect to gardens' potential for meaningfulness might loosely be characterized as "positive," have not had the field altogether to themselves. For contrary views see: G R F Ferrari, "The Meaninglessness of Gardens," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 68, no. 1 (2010); Jane Gillette, "Can Gardens Mean?," in *Meaning in Landscape Architecture and Gardens: Four Essays; Four Commentaries*, ed. Marc Treib (New York: Routledge, 2011).

that Ross's claims are appropriate in the historical settings described in Part I of the thesis, at which time the existence of four-dimensional visual art was unacknowledged by philosophy.

Ross's first claim, that 18th-century landscape gardens were considered high art by contemporary writers and philosophers, appears irrefutable. She provides ample written evidence to support this claim and she selects the following quotation from the 18th-century historian and man of letters Horace Walpole to reinforce her point and introduce the relevant section of her book: "Poetry, Painting, and Gardening, or the Science of Landscape, will forever by men of Taste be deemed Three Sisters, or *The Three New Graces* who dress and adorn nature."[7] Further, she provides evidence to show that garden makers such as "Capability" Brown, Humphry Repton, William Kent, and Henry Hoare, and gardens such as Stowe, Stourhead, Rousham, and Chatsworth, were celebrated at that time as, indeed, the gardens continue to be today.

Ross's second claim, that gardens can function in the manner of poems, leads her to consider the adequacy of gardens to the tasks Aristotle sets down for poetry in the *Poetics*. "In particular," she wants to know "how can gardens deal with great human subjects and represent significant human actions?"[8] This leads her to a consideration of how gardens may function as meaningful entities.

Many important 18th-century gardens, such as Stowe and Stourhead, were laid out as pedestrian circuits, progress around which led visitors through quite complex iconographical systems, and an experience of such a garden was sometimes described by contemporaries as a "reading" of the garden.[9] According to Ross, these iconographical systems comprised views, scenes, benches, inscriptions, sculpture, architectural ensembles, and monuments (but not, I note, trees, shrubs, or flowers). Progress around such gardens was "poetic" because the iconographic components

[7] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 49.
[8] Ibid., 50.
[9] Ibid., 51.

were experienced in a pre-ordained temporal sequence and because the components themselves were semantically or otherwise referential.[10]

According to the landscape historian John Dixon Hunt, the garden at Stowe offered "constant examples of visual exhibits, often accompanied by inscriptions or mottoes, the full meaning of which depends upon the exact encounter of word and image that we find in the emblem book."[11] Emblem books had been common in Europe from the 1500s. According to Ross, they "were intended to assist the inspiration of poets, painters, and orators, and their association of word and image soon became common coinage. Educated people, seeing a particular phrase or image, would know its traditional meaning and associations."[12] The meaning and associations were typically drawn from "classical culture, the Bible, and more primitive lore and superstition."[13]

For Ross, therefore, an 18th-century garden's referential meanings are conveyed in one or both of two ways: first, words appearing on tablets, monuments, and so on are referentially meaningful *qua* words, and second, visual images, such as those recognized through familiarity with emblem books, are referentially meaningful *qua* visual images. Ross calls gardens containing such references poetic because their words and their emblematic visual images are all to be experienced in a pre-ordained temporal sequence.

Granted a licence perhaps acceptable during the pre-Laocoönian period of which Ross writes, she has shown that gardens of that time can be seen to function in the manner of poems even though the mechanism of visual representation which that involves, in the case of the emblems, belongs to painting and sculpture. And, I accept Ross's claim in this regard. However, my interest is in what makes gardens

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[10] For a further strong case for the similarity in functioning between poems and gardens see the English translation of the abstract for: Rosario Assunto, " I Giardini Della Parola E La Parola Dei Giardini," *Artibus et Historiae* 3, no. 5 (1982), http://www.jstor.org/stable/1483141.

[11] Quoted in: Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 51.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid., 54.

distinctive as an art and, while her analysis and presentation of this information is excellent, her implied conclusion that gardens are a type of *poème-en-plein-air*, in which plants – surely the most distinctive and characteristic component of gardens – are not necessarily present or relevant, remains unhelpful to my project. Her acknowledgement of the sequential element in the experience of gardens is nonetheless welcome.

Ross's third claim is that gardens can function in the manner of paintings. She notes three ways in which this can come about: "a garden can recreate or copy a landscape painting; a garden can allude to, evoke, recall, or remind us of a painting; and . . . a garden can *function* as a landscape painting if it represents some other piece of land, either real or ideal."[14] Certainly, in the 18th century, gardens were often created with one or more of these aims in mind. And this should not be surprising because then, as now, garden making, in the professional, philosophical, and popular minds, was commonly associated with notions of pictorialism. However, that connection was especially strong in the 18th century, when the design of gardens was much influenced by the experiences garden owners had while on their "grand tour." In this way, gardens came to be created which reflected ancient sites, complete with exotic trees and ruins and, equally, they were created to imitate paintings, such as those by Claude and Poussin, which in turn reflected real or imagined ancient sites.[15]

According to Ross, these painterly gardens were designed primarily to facilitate visitors' sensory, non-intellectual experiences and to satisfy their sensory, non-intellectual needs. Writing of Charles Hamilton's famed painterly garden at Painshill, she says that it "offered visitors a series of engaging visual scenes with

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[14] Ibid., 91.
[15] Ibid., 91-93.

contrasting emotional tones and carefully composed visual surprises, but it did not have a complex meaning that visitors were to puzzle out."[16]

I do not disagree with Ross's position regarding gardens that function in the manner of paintings. It is part of a well established tradition, both in the scholarly literature and in folk traditions. However, that position tells only part, and, to my mind, not the most important part, of the story about gardens. Because, gardens are not two-dimensional or even three-dimensional works of art. They are in fact four-dimensional arts and therein lies their distinctiveness and their particular aesthetic interest and values.[17] Furthermore, as I noted above in connection with gardens considered as poems, Ross here again downplays the importance of plants in gardens. In the case of painterly gardens, she denies plants a presence as living, changing, unavoidably four-dimensional objects, thereby reducing their role to that of static contributors to an unchanging scene.

Ross's fourth claim is that gardens offer a distinctive range of meanings and experiences. I accept much of what she has to say about gardens' experiences but I take issue here with what she claims with regard to gardens' meanings. In doing so, I necessarily also take issue with what Miller has to say in this regard because both she and Ross refer to the philosophy of Langer in support of their positions.

I first made a link between gardens and Langer's philosophy in "Thawed Music?," at which time it seemed to me that her philosophy could usefully be extended to provide a framework for understanding what (art) gardens might mean and how they might function as meaningful objects.[18] And, as already noted, Miller and Ross have made similar links. However, I now believe any such link is unhelpful because, as I explain below, Langer's notion of living, or significant, form cannot accommodate the constantly changing, four-dimensionality of gardens. Or, to put it

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[16] Ibid., 87.

[17] See Chapter 5, 168-175, for an introduction to the conception of gardens as four-dimensional works of art, which theme is interwoven through subsequent chapters of the study.

[18] Powell, "Thawed Music?: A Humanistic Study of Meaning in Western Gardens."

another way, Langer's theory of art evolved firmly within the context of the historical attitudes to art described in Part I, and, as I have already mentioned, such accounts necessarily excluded the messy reality of gardens.

In her 1953 volume, *Feeling and Form,* Langer developed a general philosophy of art and detailed philosophies of eight artforms and some sub-artforms.[19] Her list of artforms included architecture, but not gardens. In that volume, she defined art as "the creation of forms symbolic of human feeling."[20] By this she did not intend to claim for art anything like that claimed by 19th-century expression theories, a typical example of which might state that art is about the expression of an artist's emotions. Rather, she meant to claim that an artist expresses "what he *knows about* the so-called 'inner life,'" [my emphasis] and not his own emotions, in a work.[21]

The tool by way of which this knowledge about the inner life was transmitted was unvarying across the arts. In each case, that function was fulfilled by the "logically expressive, or significant, form," which was to be apprehended in the "primary illusory field" of each artform. For example, in painting, the form was to be apprehended in the virtual three-dimensional scene created on a two-dimensional canvas and, in architecture, the form was to be apprehended in the virtual ethnic domain, or image of a culture, formed by the architect's created space.[22]

Langer also described significant form as living form and I will adopt this nomenclature to avoid any confusion with the early 20th-century art theorist Clive Bell's significant form, from which Langer's differs in important ways. Langer's living form involves the creation of a symbol of our felt life. This symbol does not express an artist's emotions and nor does it stimulate emotions in the perceiver. Rather, the living symbol mirrors aspects of our inner life and, accordingly, we are enriched by coming to know more about that life. Now, in all the artforms Langer

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[19] Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*.
[20] Ibid., 40.
[21] Ibid., 28.
[22] For Langer's discussions of painting and architecture see: ibid., 69-88 and 92-102 respectively.

talks of, this symbol is presented complete and unchangeable at the time the work is finished. In the case of singular works, like *Mona Lisa*, the canvas contains the unchanging living form which viewers detect and experience. In works for performance, like *Messiah*, the score provides more or less accurate instructions for a successful presentation of the unchanging living form, which is brought to life by the performers and detected and experienced by listeners in any adequate performance of *Messiah.* But Langer offers no way in which a living form may be incompletely or inadequately presented as a work of art in the way in which a garden making artist inevitably first leaves her work. Nor can her living form accommodate the myriad of changes that, intentionally or otherwise, inevitably occur in gardens, some of which endure for centuries. In other words, Langer's theory can not account for works that are ontologically incomplete and to which our epistemic access is also incomplete. And nor does she envisage works, such as gardens, which not only change but which may, unlike, say, painting and sculptures, go out of existence of their own accord. Therefore, Ross's use of Langer's theory to support her own claim, that the living form of a garden is to be apprehended in that garden's virtual world, is inappropriate, as is Miller's similar use of that theory.

There is a second way in which Langer's theories cannot be validly invoked and this concerns a further claim that Ross makes. Ross claims that Langer's concept of a work's illusory field is a useful basis for arguing that although a garden is inevitably real, a garden also needs to function as an illusory field if it is to be art. Ross bases her claim on an extrapolation she makes from Langer's theory of architecture. Langer conceptualizes architectural buildings as if they are stand-alone objects, which, with appropriate detachment, we experience *qua* art. Now, this is not generally how we experience architecture and, in this way, our experiences of architecture, and gardens also, are importantly different from our experiences of all the other arts. Because, in the case of novels, film, paintings, symphonies, and so on, it is *relatively* clear what constitutes the work, what its limits are, what an appropriate experience of it consists in and how much of it we need to see or hear or read before

we can say we have experienced the work. However, this is not the case in architecture and it is certainly not the case in gardens. The spatial extent of gardens is both uncertain and, typically, large, and their temporal extent is open ended. How do we know if we have seen the (whole) garden? In what order, and therefore via which transitional zones, should we experience the garden? Do we need to see it in four seasons? At what stage(s) of growth should we see the garden? Should we see the garden by moonlight? Should we *smell* the plants? And so, acknowledging the existence of all these possibilities, how are we to know whether we have apprehended the "correct" version of the architect's illusory ethnic domain or the garden maker's garden's virtual world? Langer offers no solution to this dilemma in the case of architecture and I believe that her understanding of how architecture is experienced is, on this basis, flawed. Therefore, any extrapolation from that theory to the case of gardens is similarly, if not more seriously, flawed.[23]

There remains a third way in which Ross's use of Langer's philosophy is perhaps unhelpful to her project. In arguing for *her* extrapolation of Langer's theories to include gardens, Miller writes that such "extrapolation of her theory . . . is justifiable on the basis of the theory itself, particularly in the light of her discussion of the principles of generalization."[24] I agree with Miller and find her and Ross's extrapolation to the case of the garden artform acceptable, although some of their conclusion remain, for me, unconvincing. However, Ross makes important claims earlier in her book regarding gardens' ability to function as both poems and paintings and these claims are antithetical to Langer's position. For Langer, each art has a *unique* illusory field through which it conveys the living form that is constitutive of its meaning. For Langer, the idea of gardens as poems or paintings is unacceptable. This does not mean that Ross's treatments of these topics is invalid. As I have already noted, those treatments are highly interesting and informative.

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[23] I also reject the notion of the garden's being a *virtual* world. See 127-128 and Chapter 8, 257-260.
[24] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 121.

Nevertheless, the question can still be reasonably raised as to whether Langer's philosophy can usefully be employed to bolster one part of Ross's book while its implications are importantly contravened in other parts of the same book.

Before leaving Langer, it is worth pointing out that however her philosophy of art has been used by Miller, Ross, and others, it remains a philosophy reliant on historical conceptions of art and art experience and is, therefore, a philosophy essentially ill-suited to the four-dimensional, living reality of gardens.

To build on Langer's concept of the garden as a virtual world, Ross goes on to invoke concepts taken from the contemporary philosophers Richard Wollheim, Danto, and Nicholas Wolterstorff.[25] From Wollheim she takes the idea of "twofoldness," from Wolterstorff the idea of the "world of the work," and from Danto the idea of the "material counterpart" of a work of art.[26] She is then in a position to make her final claim in this regard, that "gardens are simultaneously physical and virtual worlds and are experienced as such by us." And further, "though we may each have different thoughts and feelings as we stroll through a given garden, we enter a shared virtual garden, one composed of the maximally compossible set of experiences elucidated and extrapolated from that physical realm."[27] While acknowledging that a greater emphasis on the uniquely temporal nature of the garden experience and the unique mutability of gardens themselves would enhance Ross's overall account, I agree with her that our experiences of a garden involve our interactions with the "maximally compossible set of experiences" a garden has to offer.[28] But I see no reason why that necessarily involves the garden world's virtuality, and in Chapter 8 I invoke Danto's notion of

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[25] See Chapter 8, 258-261, for my discussion of the theories of these three philosophers in the context of gardens' materials.

[26] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 178-86.

[27] Ibid., 186.

[28] Gardens' mutability and the temporal nature of the garden experience are themes woven throughout the remainder of this study. See, for example, my discussions of the temporality of gardens in Chapter 5, 168-175, and of the temporal nature of the garden experience in Chapter 8, 248-251.

"the transfiguration of the commonplace" as a preferable theory to explain the (actual) world of the garden.[29]

Ross's fifth claim is that the art of garden making, along with tapestry and stained glass, is now dead.[30] She clarifies what she means by this when she writes that "all three arts . . . are dead in the sense that artists today no longer produce major works in these genres," and that "we do not consider gardening a high art, and artists do not make major statements in this medium."[31] I believe that this claim is incorrect.

The evidence for the arthood of gardens since the turn of last century is extensive and, I claim, irrefutable. A roll call of garden makers that includes architects Le Corbusier, Christopher Tunnard, Richard Neutra, Charles Jencks, Thomas Church, and Gunnar Asplund, filmmaker Derek Jarman, and garden designers and landscape architects Geoffrey Jellicoe, Roberto Burle Marx, Brenda Colvin, Russell Page, Martha Schwartz, Ian Hamilton Finlay, and Gilles Clément, to name but a few, cannot be lightly dismissed as a reason for considering garden making an alive rather than a dead art. Ross herself cites two names from this list when she refers to Martha Schwartz's *Stella Garden* and Ian Hamilton Finlay's *Little Sparta.*[32] This being the case, it seems that, for Ross, a certain, unspecified amount of activity may be necessary before a moribund art can in fact be considered vital.

Perhaps, given the evidence just presented for contemporary garden making's artistic vitality, and given garden making's well documented contemporary "folk" vitality, this claim of Ross's – that garden making is a dead art – should rather be that garden making has been, until most recently, a dead or unfashionable art for *philosophers*, and that that is the case because, for whatever reasons, almost all contemporary philosopher have chosen to ignore it.

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[29] For Cooper's rejection of garden as virtual worlds see: Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 18.
[30] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 192.
[31] Ibid., 193, xii.
[32] Ibid., 206-07.

Moreover, it is hard to accept Ross's concomitant claims that tapestry and stained glass are also dead. As I write, one of New York's foremost dealer galleries – and part, surely, of any artworld – has advertised for sale tapestries created after designs by Lichtenstein, Le Corbusier, Chagall, Stella, Picasso, and many others.[33] And, although stained glass production is now at a comparatively low level, possibly because of its traditional association with places of traditional worship, artists continued to produce work in this artform as the 20th century progressed. Once again, a roll call that includes artists Marc Chagall, John Piper, Henri Matisse, and architect Frank Lloyd-Wright, and extends to the work of the important contemporary artist Olafur Eliasson cannot easily be disregarded.[34] Nor, I claim, is it reasonable to ignore the burgeoning of new techniques and styles in the medium that developed as the great European and English churches were rebuilt after the Second World War, and which continues in residential, ecclesiastical, and commercial architectural work to this day.

The point I wish to make here is not that Ross is simply incorrect in making these claims about "dead" arts. Perhaps, as I have already suggested, it is just a matter of degree and Ross may require a higher threshold than I do for assessing whether an art form is vital or not. The point I do wish to make is that her claim that gardens are dead entails that gardens *must* be dead because her argument requires them to be dead. This is so because her book ends up supporting her suggestion that "some arts die when supplanted by more vigorous successors."[35] In the case of gardens, she claims these vigorous successors are environment art and land art.

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[33] See: "Jane Kahan Gallery," http://janekahan.com/tapestries/. [Accessed 26 August, 2016.] See also the retrospective exhibition of 20th century tapestry mounted at Kunst Haus in Vienna in 2000: "Masters of the 20th Century. ," https://www.kunsthauswien.com/en/exhibitions/archive/38-2000/136-tapisserie.

[34] For an example of Eliasson's stained glass work see: Olafur Eliasson, "Your Rainbow Panorama," http://en.aros.dk/visit-aros/the-collection/your-rainbow-panorama/.

[35] See: Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 193.

I do not contest Ross's claim that environment and land art are (comparatively) vigorous forms of art today. But my preference is that they be understood simply as new arts and not as something into which gardens have evolved by "an artistic version of natural selection."[36] Because, gardens do continue to flourish and invite critical attention. The appearance, after a gap of about a century, of the three philosophical texts on gardens which this chapter is considering, is surely some proof of that. Furthermore, if, as Ross claims, the 18th-century landscape garden has evolved into the environment and land art of today, she needs to offer some account of what happened to gardens between the end of the dominance of the English landscape school and the emergence of environment and land art approximately 200 years later.

I believe a preferable way to account for the emergence of environment and land art is to link its emergence not to the morbidity of gardens but to a range of changes in art and society that have engendered a plethora of new arts, such as conceptual art, performance art, installation art, computer art, street art, and so on.

In summary, Ross's book offers a detailed and informative account of the political, philosophical, and artistic worlds in which the 18th-century English landscape school flourished. Her case studies of poetic and painterly gardens are carefully chosen and illustrate her points well. However, her account of the 20th-century demise of gardens-as-art is not borne out by the evidence I have produced, and her use of Langer's concepts of virtual objects and virtual worlds ends up not being helpful to the claims she wishes to make about gardens and meaning. Furthermore, her downplaying of the role of plants in gardens means that Ross necessarily ends up undervaluing gardens' unique, and most distinctive characteristic.[37]

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[36] Ibid.

[37] In a 2006 paper focussing on the appreciation of nature, Ross appears to reject some of the claims she made about gardens in *What Gardens Mean*. However, in the absence of supporting arguments, it

4.3 Gardens and the Definition of Art

Miller's study, *The Garden as an Art,* appeared in 1993 and was, as far as I am aware, the first significant philosophical examination of gardens in the Anglophone world for over 100 years.[38] Her study is underpinned by two "philosophical preoccupations."[39] The first preoccupation involves addressing the Wittgensteinian question: Are the limits of my language the limits of my world? The second involves addressing the adequacy of what she calls "aesthetic theory" to the concept of art.[40] My examination of her claims is restricted to those relating to her second preoccupation.

Miller conducts her investigation into the adequacy of aesthetic theory by way of an examination of George Dickie's definition of art and Munroe Beardsley's theory of art and concludes that Dickie's definition and Beardsley's theory are both inadequate to the case of gardens. She argues that Dickie's definition is inadequate because it does not allow for the demotion of art gardens from their 18th-century pinnacle to what she claims to be their non-art status of today. Her rejection of Beardsley's theory is less straightforward: she claims that gardens, having experienced a 20th-century "fall from grace," are no longer art, although, at least in the USA, they are "aesthetic," and, therefore, Beardsley's theory should account for them but it doesn't because they are not thought of as art. Therefore, Beardsley's theory is inadequate because gardens, although aesthetic, are not considered to be art, and because the theory "does not adequately catch our practical de facto definition of art."[41]

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is not possible to evaluate these revised claims. (See: "Paradoxes and Puzzles: Appreciating Gardens and Urban Nature.")

[38] Gardens were not totally ignored however. For a rare example, see: Leddy, "Gardens in an Expanded Field." Leddy argues, by way of a critique of an earlier paper by Miller, (Mara Miller, "Gardens as Works of Art: The Problem of Uniqueness," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 26, no. 3 (1986).) that it is only at this (postmodern) time that gardens' true natures are finally acceptable to art theory.

[39] *The Garden as an Art*, 3.

[40] Ibid., 5.

[41] Ibid., 70.

Miller's interest in definitions is understandable because, during much of the historical period discussed in Part II, definitions of art were not equipped to deal with gardens or, if they did deal with them, they did so only by ignoring gardens' unique qualities. Miller's claims with respect to Dickie's definition and Beardsley's "theory" constitute an important part of her book.[42] However, these claims tell more about definitions (and "theories") than they do about gardens. Whether or not a garden is "art," according to a given definition, involves satisfying some minimal condition and is not helpful in the tasks of clarifying what is characteristic, valuable, and unique about gardens. It is to theories and ontologies of individual arts that we must turn for help in these matters, and, in Chapters 7 and 8, I consider these issues in the context of gardens.

At different points in her book, Miller offers differing conclusions in respect of her overarching claims regarding the contemporary art status of gardens.[43] For example, she writes: "Ironically, the garden has to be rejected as an artkind precisely on the theory designed to be the most generous and inclusive – George Dickie's 'institutional' definition of art."[44] And, "I have argued that gardens might well be considered an artkind . . . because they do . . . fit such current definitions of art as those of Munroe Beardsley and George Dickie."[45] And again, "If gardens are works of art, as it now seems they are, they are so in spite of the fact that they do not fit our definitions of art."[46] However, for my purposes, I believe I am being fair in assessing her overall position to be that she rejects the adequacy of both Dickie's and

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[42] Miller, incorrectly I claim, uses theory and definition conterminously. I discuss this in detail below. (See 141-143)

[43] Leddy refutes almost all of the reasons Miller advances as to why gardens cannot be art. (See: Leddy, "Gardens in an Expanded Field."; Mara Miller, "Gardens as Works of Art: The Problem of Uniqueness," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 26, no. 3 (Summer, 1986).)Leddy's objections do not relate to art definitional matters, which is my concern with Miller's text in this chapter, but to what Miller claims to be art's preference for uniqueness, fixed final form, etc. In Leddy's opinion, these qualities are now acceptable to contemporary philosophers of art.

[44] *The Garden as an Art*, 70.

[45] Ibid., 121.

[46] Ibid., 178.

Beardsley's accounts when tested against the case of gardens, and I have structured my responses to her arguments on this basis.

I begin by examining Miller's claims with respect to Dickie's definition of art. I then examine her claims with respect to Beardsley's theory of art and, in doing so, I introduce and discuss what I consider to be an important distinction between definitions and theories of art. I conclude this section by introducing one further contemporary definition and one further contemporary theory of art, the effectiveness of each of which I consider with respect to the case of gardens.

Dickie's definition of art exists in more than one version and Miller refers to the earliest version of it in her text. She writes of it that "something becomes an artwork if 'some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain institution (the artworld)' designate it 'a candidate for appreciation'."[47] However, had Miller chosen to engage with the later, 1984 version of Dickie's definition, which was well known at the time of the publication of her book, her conclusions *may* have been different. In its later version, Dickie's definition lays out five interlocking "sub-definitions" of (1) an artist, (2) a work of art, (3) a public, (4) the artworld, and (5) an artworld system. I quote this version now in full because I believe a close reading of it supports the claims I make below regarding it and its inclusiveness in the case of gardens. Dickie's sub-definitions read:

> An artist is a person who participates with understanding in the making of a work of art.
> A work of art is an artefact of a kind created to be presented to an artworld public.
> A public is a set of persons the members of which are prepared in some degree to understand an object which is presented to them.
> The artworld is the totality of all artworld systems.

[47] Ibid., 70.

> An artworld is a framework for a presentation of a work of art by an artist to an artworld public.[48]

Particularly important for my argument is the way in which Dickie defines the artworld as "the totality of all artworld systems." I believe this sub-definition leaves the door open for the claims I make below regarding subsets of the artworld and artworlds that may run in parallel to *the* artworld, should such an institution exist.

In the following discussion, I will refer to the earlier version of Dickie's definition so as to be consistent with Miller's use of it. However, the claims I make regarding Miller's interpretation of it are not compromised by my reference above to the later version of the definition. I believe that what is made explicit in the later version is already implicit in a thorough understanding of the earlier one and therefore, while my refuting of Miller's claims may be enhanced by an understanding of Dickie's second theory, it does not need that theory to substantiate it in the first place.

Miller makes two related claims regarding Dickie's definition. First, she claims that the definition is inadequate because it cannot account for what she understands to be the downgrading of gardens from art to non-art status. And, second, she invokes the "inadequate" definition to claim that gardens are not now art because members of the contemporary artworld do not present them as candidates for appreciation.

I preface my examination of these claims of Miller's by posing two important, over-arching questions about the nature of Dickie's artworld: does the artworld exist only as a single, ahistorical, catholic institution or does it admit of geographical, historical, societal, and other variants? and, does the artworld, as conceived of by Dickie, admit of status-conferring subsets of itself, or of parallel, status-conferring institutions? For reasons I give below, my answers to these questions are that the

[48] George Dickie, *The Art Circle: A Theory of Art* (New York: Haven Publications, 1984), 80-82.

artworld *can* be constituted variously and that it can admit of more than one status-conferring group. In making these claims, I place myself in opposition to Miller, who makes her principal claims in this regard based on an implied adherence to an opposing state of affairs.

Miller's first claim concerns the adequacy of the institutional definition to accommodating the changing status of objects from art to non-art. She shares, and so do I, the widely held belief that during the 18th century, certain European gardens were considered to be indisputable works of art by philosophers, artists, and the limited number of the public who had access to them.[49] She argues that because gardens no longer hold this pre-eminent, or, indeed, any position in the world of art, Dickie's definition is thereby inadequate because it does not allow for the demotion of an object or artform from art to non-art status. Her claim makes sense and I agree with her as far as she goes. If she is right in saying that gardens are now non-art then she is also right in criticizing the definition for not having an escape clause, as it were, whereby art could stop being art. But, I don't believe that it is the case that gardens are no longer works of art in terms of Dickie's definition, and I give reasons for this below. And consequently, if the definition is flawed in this regard, it is not so because of the case of gardens.

Miller's second claim is related to her first one. It says that gardens are not art because members of the artworld ignore them and do not present them as candidates for appreciation. There is an unfortunate link between her two claims: claim one is that the institutional definition is inadequate because it cannot accommodate gardens' demotion from art status, and claim two uses the inadequate institutional definition to argue that gardens are not art because they have, among other things, been demoted. I reject this second claim, on the grounds that it does not reflect accurately the reality of the contemporary artworld and I introduce material later in this chapter to support this position.

[49] For strong evidence in support of this position, see Ross's *What Gardens Mean*, 49-120.

The institutional definition of art is a procedural definition, that is, an object's or event's status as art depends not on qualities possessed by the object or event but on its art status being conferred on it by members of the artworld. In this way, the institution of art is similar to other institutions, such as marriage. A man and woman achieve the status of being married not because of any particular features they might possess but because that status is conferred on them by members of an appropriately sanctioned institution, such as a church or a court of law.

In the case of marriage, a partnership may be dissolved by a member of an appropriately sanctioned institution and such may be the case for works of art in the limited cases which I describe below. Also, and more significantly, membership of conferring institutions inevitably changes over time, the preferences and requirements of conferring institutions change, institutions may have culturally divergent views of what constitutes marriage, and society may force changes in the conferring institutions. For example, members of some "marriageworlds" confer the status of marriage on bigamists and others do not, and members of still others used to but no longer do. Members of some "marriageworlds" confer the status of marriage on same-sex couples and others do not, some do on parent-arranged marriages and some do not. I argue below that changes such as these in the membership, procedures, and preferences of the "marriageworld" have an equivalence in the membership, procedures, and preferences of any artworld.

In the case of the alleged demotion of gardens from art to non-art status I argue that, just as is the case for divorce, there are certain grounds on which the revoking of a previously conferred status is appropriate and legitimate. In the case of divorce, the status of marriage may be revoked, for example, on the grounds that the groom turned out to be the identical twin of the intended groom, or on the grounds that a partner was mentally unstable at the time she made her commitment and the status of marriage was conferred. Similarly, in the case of gardens there may be reasons for which the status of garden may be legitimately revoked according to the institutional definition. Two such reasons seem possible. First, it may be case that

members of the art world were originally mistaken in presenting gardens as candidates for appreciation because they did not really understand what gardens were and they presented them mistakenly. Or, second, it may be the (unlikely) case that gardens originally presented as candidates for appreciation were presented in good faith but they later turn out to be forgeries and, therefore, they need to be withdrawn as candidates for appreciation. In both these cases, gardens that were previously art can become non-art in a way acceptable to the institutional definition. However, I argue that has this not been the case with 18th-century landscape gardens and therefore they, and all "art" gardens thereafter, ought still to retain their art status.

But, Miller's second claim argues that gardens are not art anyway because members of the artworld, as she understands it, do not present them for appreciation. In making such a claim, I contend that Miller is treating the artworld institution as an unchanging, ahistorical, catholic institution when in fact it is similar in its dynamism to many other institutions in society and frequently revises or changes its membership, procedures, and preferences. Instead of gardens not being art, it may simply be the case that membership of the artworld has changed in such a way that gardens, although they remain art, are no longer of interest to current members of the artworld. Perhaps the new membership has different interests and priorities. Or, perhaps gardens themselves have changed, or not changed, in ways that make them no longer of interest to the current artworld. Or, perhaps (some) members of the artworld may be ignorant of contemporary garden-making for a range of reasons, such as geography or lack of reproductions, or because they harbour, say, a social prejudice against them.

I now return to my over-arching questions: does the artworld exist only as a single, ahistorical, catholic institution or does it admit of geographical, historical, societal, and other variants? And, does the artworld as conceived of by Dickie admit of status-conferring subsets of itself, or of parallel, status-conferring institutions? In

the preceding paragraphs I have been addressing principally question one. I now turn my attention to the related question two.

Miller makes no allowance for institutional change and therefore she ends up assessing Dickie's theory as inadequate to the case of contemporary gardens on the grounds that members of the artworld are not presenting gardens as candidates for appreciation. However, I believe that she is mistaken in making this claim for, although contemporary gardens do not command the stellar art status of 18th-century gardens, it remains the case that throughout the 20th century, and continuing up to today, there continues to be a thriving "artworld" whose members enthusiastically present for appreciation, discuss, influence, curate, write, research, and lecture about contemporary gardens. This "artworld" has its own procedures, trends, preoccupations, conceptions, heroes, scandals, and so on. I believe the only question to be debated is whether that garden artworld is part of *the* artworld, or whether it is an artworld on its own account. And, according to Dickie, such a question is irrelevant because "the artworld is the totality of all artworld systems." However, whether the question is deemed relevant or not, whichever way it is answered, it will still entail that contemporary gardens are art.

Garden writer and sociologist Michel Conan answers the question by asserting strongly that the garden artworld wishes to be considered a quite separate entity from *the* artworld. In his "Introduction: In Defiance of the Institutional Art World," he writes, "garden art deserves scholarly scrutiny in its own right and should be studied in its own terms without any pretence at imitating critical discussions of the contemporary art world since it has remained alien to its critical discourse."[50] But others, such as Miller, Ross, and Cooper, take a more conciliatory approach and, even while they argue about whether gardens are art, they are, de facto, placing gardens within the sphere of interest of *the* artworld.

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[50] M Conan, "Introduction: In Defiance of the Institutional Art World," in *Contemporary Garden Aesthetics, Creations and Interpretations*, ed. M Conan (Washington, DC.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 3.

Regardless of whether the garden artworld is parallel to or a subset of Dickie's artworld, the evidence of the arthood of gardens since the turn of last century is extensive and irrefutable. Earlier in this chapter, I presented a roll-call of prominent practioners whose creations cannot lightly be dismissed as a reason for considering gardens as part of an artworld.[51] And neither can the scholarly output of garden writers and historians, such as John Dixon Hunt, and institutions, such as Harvard University's Dumbarton Oaks, be easily ignored.

However, it is true that the avant-garde artworld, which some mistakenly identify with Dickie's artworld, has generally been orientated away from gardens since the turn of the 20th century. There are many plausible reasons for this state of affairs and I now introduce six of them. First, many contemporary gardens exhibit what might be called traditional aesthetic values, such as beauty, elegance, prettiness, and so on. Such aesthetic values became increasingly unfashionable during the century characterized by the philosopher Richard Shusterman as representing "The End of Aesthetic Experience."[52] Consequently, influential members of the avant-garde artworld ignored gardens. Second, gardens have traditionally, though not always, possessed a high degree of sensuous content and a lesser degree of intellectual content. In a century during which the dominant, avant-garde artworld tended to focus on certain celebrated examples of (non-garden) art that possessed almost only intellectual content, and little or no sensuous content, gardens were again neglected. Third, gardens are not amenable to being transported, exhibited in galleries, or reproduced in facsimiles. They are, therefore, easily ignored by members of that artworld, whose preferred objects of interest and research do not have such drawbacks. Fourth, at most times in their history, art gardens have been expensive to make and to maintain at a level commensurate with their being works of art. Art gardens of any size have therefore commonly been created by and for wealthy

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[51] See 128.

[52] R Shusterman, "The End of Aesthetic Experience," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 55, no. 1 (1997): 29-41.

individuals. This perceived elitism surrounding art gardens has made them unattractive to some members of an artworld, for whom the arts are understood to be a political tool to pursue egalitarian ideals, right social wrongs, or empower minority groups. Five, gardens cannot easily express anger, bitterness, or any form of "negation." Until most recently, they have not usually been ironic or self-critical and nor have they typically shocked or confronted viewers. These characteristics made gardens unlikely candidates for art status within the avant-garde artworld, where part of the mandate for contemporary art has been to shock, disturb, and even offend.[53] Six, by their very nature, gardens are difficult to delineate in space and time. They also have a high degree of mutability. So, the project of pinning down a garden in order for a member of any artworld to present it for consideration as an art work was fraught with a complexity and difficulty unique to the garden artform.[54]

None of the reasons just given amounts to a rejection of my earlier claim that a garden artworld, whether running in parallel or as a subset of Dickie's artworld, exists. They do, however, amount to an acknowledgment that the avant-garde artworld, and the philosophers associated with it, remained largely uninterested in gardens as an artkind.

I now turn to an examination of Miller's claims with respect to Beardsley's theory of art and I take as my starting point her claim in "Conclusions": "If gardens are works of art, as it now seems they are, they are so in spite of the fact that they do not fit our definitions of art."[55] I believe Miller is mistaken in making this claim because in doing so she ignores an important distinction between procedural definitions of art and functional theories of art.

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[53] In a similar vein, landscape architects Dieter Kienast and Günther Vogt write that "the garden as a paradisiacal refuge is an elemental myth and by definition is thus a place of tradition and therefore not particularly suited as a medium for avant-garde experimentation." Dieter Kienast and Günther Vogt, "Die Form, Der Inhalt Und Die Zeit = Form, Content and Time," *Topos: European landscape magazine*, no. 2 (1993): 11.

[54] Furthermore, "garden architecture is a slow discipline." (See: ibid., 10.) Gardens are (usually) not "instant," or easily made, and they take unfashionably long to mature.

[55] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 178.

In “Essential Distinctions for Art Theorists,” Stephen Davies makes it clear that, in the field of aesthetics, a distinction should be observed between “definition” and “theory.”[56] He writes that “[a] successful definition [of art] must specify a set of properties all and only artworks possess and in virtue of which they are artworks,” whereas “a theory of art can be more general in discussing what is typical or normative for works of art,” and “is bound to reflect on art’s significance within human lives and affairs.”[57] This distinction is not just “academic.” I agree with Davies that it can have implications for any arguments and claims mounted on the basis of one or other of the terms.

Miller switches frequently between the terms “definition” and “theory,” and appears to use them as if they are interchangeable.[58] For example, on page 70, Dickie’s definition of art is referred to as a theory and a definition within the same sentence and, on page 71, Beardsley’s aesthetic theory is referred to as a definition and, in tandem with the institutional definition, as a theory also.[59] By using the two terms interchangeably in these ways, Miller fails to distinguish between the characteristics of a procedural definition, such as Dickie’s, and a functional theory, such as Beardsley’s, and this allows her to claim that, according to Beardsley’s theory, contemporary gardens are not art. I reject this claim and I now argue why contemporary gardens may indeed be art according to Beardsley’s theory.

In the case of a procedural definition, such as Dickie’s institutional definition, the status of art is conferred by way of the attitudes and actions of a person or persons acting on behalf of the artworld. For example, if I am a connoisseur of art

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[56] Stephen Davies, "Essential Distinctions for Art Theorists," *Philosophical Perspectives on Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). 23-38.

[57] Ibid., 32.

[58] Miller is not alone among philosophers of aesthetics in using “definition” and “theory” synonymously. I draw attention to this aspect of her writing only because it has lead her to reach conclusions which, had a distinction between the terms been observed, would not have been possible. I discuss the distinction between “definition” and “theory” more fully in Chapter 7, 210-211.

[59] I accept that Dickie’s procedural definition of art is often referred to as the Institutional Theory, and I sometimes refer to it as the Relational Theory, but the fact remains that it is, in Davies’ view, a definition, and not a theory.

gardens and present or treat a garden as if it is a work of art then, de facto, it becomes a work of art. What is important is not the garden's manifest properties, such as what it might look like or smell like, but rather my or someone else's attitude or relationship to it and my or someone else's actions, as a representative of the artworld, towards it. Just as in the case of the institution of marriage, the relevant factors for being married, or for being a work of art, are relational and non-manifest. By contrast, in the case of Beardsley's functional theory of art, an object or event is a work of art just in case it possesses certain characteristics which give rise to aesthetic experiences in the viewer. Now, the fact that a garden possesses these aesthetic experience generating characteristics is what matters. Whether or not members of the artworld, or indeed any world, treat such a garden as a work of art is irrelevant to its art status.

In her Chapter 4, Miller cites statements of Dickie and Beardsley. Her text concerning Dickie reads: "something becomes a work of art if 'some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain institution (the artworld)' designates it a 'candidate for appreciation'." And, her quotation from Beardsley reads: "What establishes an artkind, on my view, is that a good many of the individual instances are created with the intention (perhaps among others) of making aesthetic experience available." Now, her quotation from Dickie constitutes a definition but her quotation from Beardsley, who, admittedly, does elsewhere offer a definition of art, constitutes a theory (moreover, her quotation from Dickie concerns the definition of an individual work of art whereas her quotation from Beardsley concerns a theory of an artkind). In failing to distinguish between the meaning of the two terms, Miller ends up using Beardsley's theory to do the same discriminatory work as Dickie's definition and comes to the conclusion that, although gardens ought to be works of art according to Beardsley's theory, they in fact are not and therefore his theory ("definition") is inadequate. When Miller claims that Beardsley's theory/definition is inadequate because many people in the contemporary United States do not think of gardens as art, she is mistaking the condition required by the procedural definition

with those required by the functional one, and her conclusion that gardens "do not fit our definitions of art" is therefore not valid.[60]

In conclusion, Miller's book is an important, and pioneering philosophical investigation of gardens. Over 20 years on, it remains a seminal, influential, and much-quoted work. However, it is not without its problems. Its problems stem not from the insightful observations and claims Miller makes regarding individual gardens and gardens in general, nor from her clear expositions of philosophical principles and positions. The problems arise, as I hope I have shown, when the case of gardens is used in not always successful attempts to make philosophical points concerning definitions and theories of art.

The matter of the definition of art continues to be a preoccupation of contemporary philosophers of art and for that reason it may be of interest if, before going on to consider Cooper's book, I introduce one further contemporary, procedural definition and one further contemporary, procedural theory of art to see how they accommodate contemporary art gardens. These considerations mean that I will have then addressed for adequacy to the case of gardens at least one definition in each of the contemporary categories of definitions of art proposed by Thomas Adajian, namely functional, institutional, and historical.[61]

The definition and the theory I am now going to consider are both historical because they depend on tracing links between a would-be art object and earlier art objects and practices as their preferred method for establishing the art status of an object. And, as in the case with the (procedural) institutional definition discussed above, both of them depend on non-manifest and relational properties for making their classifications. The definition might be termed an intentional-historical definition and has been promoted by the contemporary American philosopher Jerrold Levinson and the theory, which might be termed an historical-narrative

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[60] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 178.

[61] Thomas Adajian, "The Definition of Art," ed. Edward N Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2012), http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2012/entries/art-definition. § 4.

theory, has been promoted by Levinson's contemporary Noël Carroll. I now explain how the definition and the theory can both accommodate contemporary gardens as works of art.

According to Levinson's version of the intentional-historical definition, an artwork "is an object that a person or persons, having the appropriate proprietary right over, non-passingly intends for regard-as-a-work-of-art, i.e. regard in any way (or ways) in which prior artworks are or were correctly (or standardly) regarded."[62] Therefore, any garden can be a work of art just in case its maker has intended it to be experienced, by whoever and whenever, in a way in which works of art are typically experienced. While irrefutable evidence of intent may often be difficult to prove in cases of historical art, it is clear from written and other documentary evidence that, in the case of much contemporary garden making, there exists on the part of their makers a clear intention that their products be "regarded" as artworks. To select just one example from the list of art garden makers presented earlier, Ian Hamilton Finlay made no distinction (in intent) at all between his work as a poet and as a garden maker. Works in both artforms were equally intended by him to be appreciated as works of art, and so they were and are. His famous garden, *Little Sparta*, is universally lauded as a work of art and its fame as art may even have surpassed that of his poems. It has been described as "one of the wonders of 20th-century art" and "the most important work of Scottish art." And, of his whole oeuvre, it has been said that "his greatest work [of art] is the garden."[63]

Carroll writes that "when an artwork is challenged or likely to be challenged, our response is not a definition, but an explanation."[64] I believe his use of the term

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[62] Jerrold Levinson, *Music, Art, and Metaphysics: Essays in Philosophical Aesthetics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 8.

[63] These quotations, cited on http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Sparta, are respectively from: "Little Sparta Goes a Long Way in Poll on Scotland's Greatest Art," *Scotland on Sunday*, 5 December 2004; "Ian Hamilton Finlay," *The Independent*, 29 March 2006; James Campbell, "The Avant Gardener," *The Guardian*, 17 November 2012.

[64] N Carroll, *Philosophy of Art: Contemporary Introduction* (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), 254.

"explanation" is particularly felicitous but, for the sake of consistency I will ignore it in what follows and continue to use the term "theory," as defined in the quotation from Davies's "Essential Distinctions for Art Theorists" cited earlier. According to Carroll's historical-narrative theory, "artworks are identified in virtue of their descent." According to him, controversial works or works of uncertain (art) status can be admitted as art if they can be fitted into a meaningful "conversation" with earlier works and practices that are generally acknowledged to be art.[65] For example, Martha Schwartz's *Bagel Garden* contains, unusually for a garden, a formal arrangement of ordinary bagels lacquered with marine varnish and laid out on purple gravel, but, like other gardens, it *is* a four-dimensional, designed exterior space. Furthermore it clearly reproduces aspects of and engages in "dialogue" with the traditions French and Italian Renaissance gardens. Therefore, although it is importantly unlike most other gardens, the *Bagel Garden* qualifies as a work of art because of the explanatory relationships it bears to earlier examples of acknowledged garden art.

In conclusion, in my discussion of Miller's book and in the digression on definitions which has followed, I have discussed definitional issues relating to contemporary gardens in terms of Beardsley's functional aesthetic theory, Dickie's institutional definition, Levinson's historical definition, and Carroll's historical-narrative theory. And in so doing I claim that I have demonstrated that there is no sound ground on which any category of contemporary philosophical definitions of art can or ought to exclude art gardens.

4.4 Gardens and Gardening

The third book to be discussed in this chapter is Cooper's *A Philosophy of Gardens.* It is a fundamentally different book from Miller's and Ross's because it sets out to inquire

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[65] Ibid., 255.

not about art gardens but about gardens in general, and gardening, and their eudaimonic roles, that is, the roles they play in contributing to "the good life."[66] With respect to art gardens, Cooper claims that their status as artworks is philosophically uninteresting because the questions they raise are "too close to similar and familiar ones asked about other artworks to raise [any] novel issues."[67] I dispute this claim, not because I think it is necessarily wrong but because I think he argues for it from a point of view that does not acknowledge the primary role of gardens in raising many of these issues in the first place.[68]

My claim in this regard is that the challenging features of many new artforms, such as installation art, environment art, and graffiti art, have *always* been features of gardens. And, therefore, I believe that before going on to consider the philosophical status of the new artforms, an appropriate prior step involves taking account of the philosophical status of art gardens. Because art gardens have existed, and endured, for centuries, there is a great legacy of historical and philosophical commentary concerning them, even though, in terms of philosophical aesthetics during the historical period discussed in Part I, that commentary largely ignored gardens' unique, four-dimensional reality. Our understanding of the philosophical status of the new artforms, for which there exists a comparative paucity of such commentary, may well be enriched by our prior and continuing philosophical interest in historical and contemporary art gardens.

Cooper does not specify what the "similar and familiar" issues gardens share with other arts are, and nor does he specify which of the non-garden arts raise them. However, for my purposes, I assume that he is referring to issues generally recognized as important in the field of contemporary aesthetics and I now make some brief suggestions as to why an examination of such issues, as they relate to the

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[66] Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 10-11.

[67] Ibid., 12.

[68] Then, in Chapter 8, I present an account of art gardens which focuses on the "novel issues" I claim they do raise.

case of gardens, may enhance our understanding of some contemporary artforms. In particular, I comment on six areas of interest in contemporary aesthetics: the theory of art, the ontology of art, aesthetic properties, environmental aesthetics, interpretation and intention in art, and art and morality.

First, I am convinced by the argument of the philosopher Dominic McIver Lopes that it is theories of the arts, and not a theory of art, that will best address the question "What is art?" in the early 21st century.[69] And, I believe that among those theories will be ones which integrate philosophical understandings developed in the context of the historical art of gardens with philosophical issues raised by some of the most recent manifestations of contemporary art, such as installation art, environment art, and multi-media performance art. In Chapter 8, I present a new, partial, theoretical account of gardens which will, I hope, usefully add to the body of knowledge with respect to gardens and, indirectly, some of the new contemporary arts.

Second, I believe an adequate ontology of art gardens will have important implications for adequate ontologies of some contemporary arts, including installation art, environment art, land art, and, possibly, interactive computer art. I discuss the ontology of gardens in detail in Chapters 6 and 8.

Third, I claim that an adequate understanding of how gardens function as works of art has always required a commitment to contextualism with regard to aesthetic properties. Historically, no art has been more "real" than gardens, and seeing and experiencing them as art has always involved a viewer's making conscious decisions regarding her "ordinary" physical surroundings. Contemporary arts such as installation and environment art also make strong demands in this regard. Considering the case of gardens may turn out to be helpful in resolving issues arising in the cases of these new arts. I take up this theme in the context of gardens in Chapter 8.

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[69] Lopes, "Nobody Needs a Theory of Art," 109-27.

Fourth, I believe that our experiences of art gardens have always had the potential to oscillate between an experience of them and their materials as mere physical surroundings – an environment - and an experience of them as art. Furthermore, our experience of them has had the potential to oscillate between experiencing them as natural or nature-like objects and experiencing them as cultural objects. Thus, gardens sometimes appear to be cultural environments, just as, say, a shopping mall is, and they sometimes appear to be natural environments, just as rivers and forests are. They therefore potentially exemplify two of the major concerns of contemporary aesthetics, namely, the aesthetics of the everyday and the aesthetics of the natural world.[70] Gardens have always existed on these borderlines, but they now share their borderline position with contemporary arts such as land art, environment art, and outdoor installations.

Fifth, I claim that our experience of art gardens has always raised this question regarding interpretation and authorial intent: how are we to interpret constantly changing (art) objects, especially when, as is the case of gardens, any known authorial intent is inevitably challenged by a potent lack of authorial control. This same question arises in the context of many contemporary artforms, such as collaborative computer art, street art, and environment art.

Sixth, two recent papers, by the German landscape academic Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn and the British philosopher Isis Brook respectively, have addressed issues related to ethics and morality in the case of gardens. Wolschke-Bulmahn's paper presents an historical survey of the field from the 19th century onwards.[71] It includes a discussion of the different roles plants have played in garden design at different times. For instance, plants have sometimes been treated as mere objects to be located in space at the designer's whim and, at other times, they have

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[70] For a brief description of these two areas of aesthetics, and the names of some key philosophers in theSE fieldS, see Chapter 2, 71-80.

[71] Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "Ethics and Morality in the History of Garden and Landscape Design: A Preliminary Essay," *The Journal of Garden History* 14, no. 3 (1994): 140-46.

been design-generating agents, requiring companion plants and growing conditions typical of their ecological niche. Further, Wolschke-Bulmahn's paper considers the societal implications of different design philosophies on the communities in which they arise, flourish, and are eventually superseded.

Isis Brook's paper considers the ethics of hedging, pruning, and shaping plants so as to make them aesthetically useful and valuable to humans.[72] Her paper expresses concerns, shared by others, about the anthropocentrism typically inherent in the design and maintenance of art gardens and about the only recently abandoned, generalized practice of ignoring plants' originary ecological niches and requirements in pursuit of "higher" aesthetic ideals of beauty, balance, and so on.[73]

A concern with the moral and ethical issues raised by the treatment of plants in gardens mirrors concerns that arise in the context of some avant-garde art practices, in which artists use humans and other living creatures for artistic ends in ways which appear to contravene those people's and living creatures' moral rights.[74] And these same concerns are mirrored, and magnified, in the case of performance artists such as Pyotr Pavlensky, whose appalling self-harm is carried out for political purposes.[75] I contend that the particular moral and ethical issues gardens raise predate by centuries similar issues in avant-garde art practices, and that the continuing consideration of the former may usefully inform continuing considerations of the latter.

In summary, the undoubtedly high value of Cooper's book lies principally in its philosophical consideration of gardens and gardening in general and I agree with

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[72] Isis Brook, "Topiary: Ethics and Aesthetics," *Ethics and the Environment* 8, no. 1 (2003): 127-42.

[73] There is an ever increasing number of recent examples of garden and landscape design that successfully marry ecological and aesthetic ideals. See, for example, the outstanding garden and landscape designs of Piet Oudolf: "Piet Oudolf," http://oudolf.com.

[74] See, for example, works by Damien Hirst and Jan Fabre referred to in: "Artists Vs. Animals: 15 Artists Who Have Enraged Animal Rights Activists," http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/13/artists-vs-animals-15-art_n_2124816.html.

[75] See: Abigail Jones, "Some Art's Painful by Design," *Newsweek* (November 21 2013), http://www.newsweek.com/some-arts-painful-design-62799.

him that such consideration should not be "restricted to the domain of the aesthetic."[76] However, I believe that his dismissal of the philosophical implications of art gardens, because they do not raise any "novel issues," is premature and that an examination of the philosophical issues art gardens do raise may well turn out to be a useful first step in examining the philosophical implications of some other contemporary arts.[77] Gardens are four-dimensional art objects with unique ontological and experiential qualities. Gardens have always been thus; but traditional philosophical aesthetics has chosen, by and large, to ignore that reality.

4.5 Conclusion

Each of the three books with which this chapter has been concerned represents an important and welcome contribution to the field of philosophy and gardens and each of them makes important claims that I have disputed. In particular, I have countered Miller's and Ross's claims concerning the current status of art gardens and the accommodation of those gardens under current definitions and theories of art and, at the same time, I have suggested that assessing whether or not gardens meet some *de minimis* art definitional condition is of less moment than investigating and celebrating the unique and essential characteristics gardens actually possess, which is the task of the following chapters. I have also questioned Miller's and Ross's varying accounts of gardens' *modi operandi* and the ontological and epistemological consequences flowing from them. I claim that there is more to these aspects of gardens than most philosophers have traditionally cared to admit, in response to which I propose my preliminary account of gardens in Chapter 8. Finally, I have suggested that Cooper's view, that the art status of gardens is uninteresting, might be revisited with the aim of using gardens as a medium for providing fresh insights into the philosophical issues raised by some new artforms.

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[76] Cooper, *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 4.
[77] Ibid., 12.

Chapter 5

Time and Gardens

5.1 Introduction

This chapter falls into two main sections, each of which has a complementary aim. In the first section, I seek to confirm that gardens are a temporal art by testing them against the criteria set out in an authoritative, philosophical account of such arts. In the second section, I seek evidence for that same temporality by way of a detailed examination of what actually goes on in "real" gardens. There then follows a brief closing section in which I offer a summary account of how these manifestations of temporality in gardens differ and are differently valuable from those to be found in some traditional, non-garden arts.

Confirmation that gardens constitute a unique type of temporal work of art is important for the argument of the thesis. Without it, there would be inadequate grounds on which to base subsequent chapters, in which I claim that gardens' ontology is not accommodated by mainstream ontological accounts of artworks and that a new account of gardens that acknowledges their ontological and experiential complexities is warranted. Furthermore, establishing that gardens are indeed temporal works of art goes some way towards justifying retrospectively my critiques of recent literature in the previous chapter and my analyses of the historical trends in Part I.

It is also important that I address the question of gardens' temporality from two directions, as it were, because a philosophy of gardens that is not adequate to the reality of an actual garden, such as Tupare, described in Chapter 1, is not a useful philosophy. Therefore, if I find discrepancies between philosophical accounts and

actual gardens, I will have good grounds for proposing an alternative philosophical account of gardens in Chapter 8.

5.2 Time and Temporality in Philosophical Aesthetics

In 1991, two distinguished philosophers, Jerrold Levinson and Philip Alperson, published a paper entitled "What Is a Temporal Art?"[1] It is the most recent, comprehensive account of temporality in the arts of which I am aware. It is appropriate, then, to assess to what degree gardens might be acceptable as a temporal art according to the criteria of that paper.

In the paper, the authors answer the title's question by proposing a taxonomy of thirteen individual conditions and one overarching condition, the possession of one or more of which is sufficient for an artwork's being classified as temporal.[2] They situate their argument in the context of well-known claims by Lessing, Zukerkandl, and others that some arts, for example music, are temporal and others, for example painting, are not, and they aim "to cover all that might conceivably be meant in predicating temporality of an art form."[3] They are interested in the possession and expression of time and temporality by standard or paradigm works in the genres of an art form, and they wish "to make sense of familiar intuitions about the arts."[4]

Their paper omits any mention of gardens, which omission, it is fair to claim, adds weight to my aim of proposing a new, truer account of gardens to replace the traditional, received account. However, I believe that theirs is an otherwise thorough account of temporality, and its individual conditions can, either by their being respectively accepted, modified, or rejected, be usefully employed as a framework

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[1] Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?."

[2] Their conditions are presented as sufficient but it can be argued that some of them, including conditions 1, 2, and 3, are indeed necessary for an artwork's being temporal. (See below)

[3] Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?," 447.

[4] Ibid., 441.

within which to clarify the particular manifestations of temporality that gardens, and our experiences of them, exhibit.[5]

Their paper has four sections. Section one is a short introduction. Section two is a descriptive list of thirteen qualifying conditions for an artwork's being temporal.[6] Section three assembles those conditions into object-, experience-, and content-focussed groups and, based on those groups' perceived inter-connectedness, proposes a fourteenth condition that encompasses the other thirteen.[7] Section four addresses the question of whether one art is the most temporal of all. My focus in this chapter is on section two of the paper.[8]

For my purposes, I have divided Levinson and Alperson's thirteen conditions into two groups. Group One contains conditions which could, had the authors chosen to, have been applied uncontroversially to gardens because the application of those conditions is not in conflict with what might be termed the "received," though inadequate, account of gardens. Group Two contains conditions which when applied to gardens illuminate some special, though generally unremarked on, temporal aspects of them, and conditions which *cannot* be appropriately applied to gardens but which thereby illuminate, by default as it were, some special temporal characteristics of gardens.

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[5] Accounts of temporality in gardens, and our experiences of gardens, have been made by some philosophers. See, for example: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*; "Time and Temporality in the Garden."; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*; Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance." These welcome accounts have pursued their own purposes, and each is, to varying degrees, more or less complete. By contrast, my account in this chapter aims (a) to be comprehensive and (b) to situate the temporality of gardens, and our experiences of gardens, in the context of the most recent, authoritative, comprehensive account of temporal art.

[6] In the text that follows, I have maintained Levinson and Alperson's numbering of the conditions in order to make any comparisons between this chapter and their article straightforward.

[7] The authors' grouping of their 13 conditions into object-, experience-, and content-focussed groups highlights an important aspect of gardens: gardens are temporal entities *and* our experiences of them are necessarily temporal. My account of gardens in Chapter 8 addresses both these aspects of gardens' temporality.

[8] For a detailed critique of all sections of the article see: John Powell, "What Is Temporal Art? A Persistent Question Revisited," *Contemporary Aesthetics* 13 (2015).

Conditions - Group One

(i) *Objects of the art form require time for their proper aesthetic appreciation or comprehension.*

I agree with the authors that this condition is so widely inclusive that is not useful for their project. I agree with them that all art objects and events, and our experiences of them, have a durational aspect and that "this temporal aspect is . . . not likely to be what anyone has in mind in thinking of the temporal arts as a special group."[9] Moreover, it is incontestable that the "proper aesthetic appreciation or comprehension" of gardens takes time, for the simple reason that, except in the case of some few, extremely small gardens, a garden visitor needs to move about to experience gardens, and this necessarily takes time.[10]

However, I believe this condition does usefully describe one non-trivially temporal aspect of what could be considered a "proper aesthetic appreciation or comprehension" of gardens. T. S. Eliot describes how when composing a new work the creative artist responds to and is correctly influenced by her awareness of the implications of the unique temporal location of her new work within her own oeuvre and within its own creative tradition and chronology.[11] And similarly, Eliot argues, an "accurate" experience of *any* given work requires attention not only to any temporal relationships within that work but also attention to the temporal relationships between that work and its precursors and successors in the genre.[12]

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[9] Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?," 441.

[10] See: Miller, "Time and Temporality in the Garden," 189-90. For a recent account of the aesthetic and other values associated with moving though gardens, and other outdoor spaces, see: Hunt, "The Time of Walking."

[11] T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent (1919)," in *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot*, ed. Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975).

[12] A similar account of the relationship between a work and an artist's oeuvre is developed by Levinson. See: Jerrold Levinson, "Work and Oeuvre," in *The Pleasures of Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

I believe that Eliot's claims regarding the experience of a work are especially apposite to the case of gardens because of gardens' characteristic mutability. For instance, a traditional herbaceous border garden in a cold climate will have no plants at all visible in winter whereas in spring or summer it will be full of leaves and flowers. Similarly, many gardens seen once and then not again for, say, ten years, will have grown and/or matured or decayed in many ways. It can be argued in each of these cases that a "proper aesthetic appreciation or comprehension" of the garden appropriately involves a knowledge of what that garden was like in winter, or ten years ago, as well as a knowledge of what it may be, or be again, at some time in the future.[13]

> *(ii) Objects of the art form require a significant interval of time for the mere perception or apprehension of their full extent.*

Gardens are probably the candidates *par excellence* for being the most spatially extensive art form.[14] Gardens like Le Nôtre's for the palace at Versailles, or the *Australian Garden* at Cranbourne, near Melbourne, make the highest durational demands – several hours – for the "mere perception or apprehension of their full extent." Such gardens, like many others, exceed in this regard the demands of, say,

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[13] However, this mutability has often caused "problems" for traditional philsophical aesthetics. Salwa writes of it: "If we . . . take painting, poetry or architecture as our points of reference. . . [then it can be said that] gardens lack an artistic essence . . . [and are] too ephemeral, changeable or unstable to by analysed in any way and thus to have any 'conceptual foundations'." (Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," 377.) [For Salwa's complete quotation see Chapter 7, 232] See also: Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 7.)

[14] Until most recently, gardens have also been the most *temporally* extensive of the temporal arts. For example, Tupare, the subject of Chapter 1, continues to exist, change, and function as a temporal aesthetic object 85 years after it began. However, the title, "most temporally extensive artworks,"must now be handed to two recent avant-garde works of 639 years and "several hundred trillion years" duration respectively. For details of these two works, see Chapter 8, 242, FN 19.

the cathedrals of Chartres and Notre Dame, which are noted elsewhere in the authors' paper for their "extraordinary size and scale."[15]

However, it is uncertain how a viewer knows when they have experienced the "full extent" of a garden or a building, and the question arises as to at what criteria with respect to duration, angles, direction, time of day, seasons, etc., may be applied in answering this question.[16] By comparison, it is relatively straightforward to know when one has experienced the "full extent" of, say, a 200 page long novel, a 20 minute long sonata, or a 300 x 450 mm painting.[17]

> *(iii) Objects of the art form require time in presentation, i.e., they require performance or exposition of some sort over an interval of time; the parts of the artwork are not all available at any one moment, but only consecutively.*

I claim that gardens have a greater potential than any other art form to exhibit noticeable, non-aleatory changes while still retaining their ontological identity: bare trees break into leaf and blossom in spring; trees grow from sapling to forest giants; plants flower and then die.[18] However, unlike the other arts the authors refer to in respect of this condition, gardens are not performances, as the condition deems alternately necessary, because they do not have performers.[19] Gardens' most

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[15] Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?," 446.

[16] I revisit this issue in Chapter 8, 255.

[17] Although with a different aim in mind, with which I disagree (see Chapter 4, 125-126), Ross proposes that a garden might be conceptualized as being "composed of the maximally compossible set of experiences elucidated and extrapolated from . . . [its] physical realm." (See: Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 186.) Clearly, knowing when one has experienced the full extent of the type of object Ross decribes is not possible. Two alternative theoretical accounts of the *extent* of artworks – philosopher Nelson Goodman's theory of a "class" and its "members" and philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff's conception of an "original work" and its "instances" – might appear to offer answers to the question of a garden's extent. However, they both entail that gardens are multiple, not singular, works of art, and I therefore reject those accounts. (See Chapter 8, 237-244)

[18] They also involve significant aleatory changes but this is not of interest here.

[19] For a thought-provoking presentation of an opposing view see: Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance."

important constituents are living plants, and plants are not performers: sweet peas do not perform, they simply do what sweet peas do.[20] But the ways in which a garden designer arranges her garden elements result in certain temporal (and visual) events being exposed, juxtaposed, and counterpointed, and in this way the garden may be seen as an exposition, as alternately required by this condition.

Furthermore, a garden is never the same, it is always perceivably changing. So, in this additional sense, the time of the presentation of the garden is only limited by the garden's initial installation and final destruction, or its natural decay to the point where it is reasonable to say that the original garden no longer exists.[21] There is, if you like, one continuous "performance" while a garden exists.

Conditions - Group Two

> *(iv) Objects of the art form consist of elements or parts arranged in a linear order, with definite direction, from first to last.*

This condition is not applicable to most gardens, although there are some exceptions, such as the 18th-century circuit gardens referred to earlier.[22] However, it should be

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[20] In Chapter 8, I offer reasons why I disagree with philosopher Roger Scruton's claim that a tree (merely) grows ouside a garden but performs its growth inside a garden. [See: Roger Scruton, *Perictione in Colophon: Reflections on the Aesthetic Way of Life* (South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine's Press, 2000), 83.] In a recent article, the philosopher Michael Marder writes interestingly of the biological changes in plants from his viewpoint of an ethical concern for plant life and the consumption of plants. See: Michael Marder, "The Place of Plants: Spatiality, Movement, Growth," *Performance Philosophy* 1 (April, 2015). Marder contends that plants *perform* growth, but it is fair to say that his use of the term "perform" is different to the ways in which the term is typically used in the context of the performance arts.

[21] Similar claims can be made for installations such as Damien Hurst's *A Thousand Years* (1990) or his *Let's Eat Outdoors Today* (1990 – 1991), which feature living and decomposing elements such as items of food, maggots, flies, blood, and a cow's head. Such works require time for their presentation and not all aspects and stages of the component elements are available for viewing at any one time.

[22] See Hunt's presentation of differing accounts of movement around Stourhead, and their importance and relevance to an adequate experience of that garden: Hunt, "Stourhead Revisited & the Pursuit of Meaning in Gardens," 330, 32.

noted that these circuit gardens still have much to offer when they are experienced "backwards" or in some random order, especially when compared to say music, novels, and poetry, which result in noise or non-sense when experienced in those ways.

Except for the very smallest gardens, the parts of most gardens can be experienced in any sequence. In this way, gardens are like the ludic novels of the 20th century, which have a linear order, which start and finish, but which do not have an invariable sequence of parts or sections within their overarching structure.[23] In such novels, as in gardens, the reader, or visitor, organizes the structure of the narrative, or visit, for himself.[24]

However, there is an important way in which gardens differ from other arts that can be divided into sections. In gardens, and to a lesser degree in architecture, the direction, duration, and the experience of *moving between* sections of a garden are important contributors to the overall experience of a garden. Hunt notes that the transitional garden zones that give rise to such experiences are "the very essence of garden spaces."[25]

> *(v) Objects of the art form are properly experienced in the order in which their elements are determinately arranged, and at a rate defined by, or inherent in, the artwork itself or its prescribed mode of presentation or performance.*

Levinson and Alperson here write of the proper experience of an artwork at "a rate defined by, or inherent in, the artwork itself." However, this is not quite the case for gardens because in gardens the rate is inherent not in the artwork but in the

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[23] For an example of a ludic novel, see: Julio Cortazar, *Hopscotch*, trans. Gregory Rabassa (New York: Pantheon, 1966).

[24] Birksted's account of mobility in the garden requires that it be free, and directed only by the "beholders." See: Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," 6.

[25] Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 131.

particular natural materials which the garden maker chooses to employ and combine in her garden. Such materials "perform" at generally the same rate whether they are in a garden or not. Spring flowers always appear in spring and not in other seasons, trees grow at a rate determined by their biological nature and in response to the environment, and water springs from fountains for much of the year but not when frozen in winter. Therefore it may be said that although gardens are not performances, they are presentations, the rate and order of whose elements is determinately arranged in what might be understood as a joint venture between nature, the garden designer, and the gardener.[26]

> *(vi) Objects of the art form are such that non-temporally extended parts of the object do not count as aesthetically significant units of it. That is to say, such parts are not isolatable for study in a way that contributes significantly to the full experience of the object.*

I do not consider this condition useful in achieving what I take to be the authors' aim of distinguishing between two different forms of temporal art, namely film and music. They compare music and film and decide that music is temporal in a way that film is not because music is not divisible into small units "isolatable for study in a way that contributes significantly to the full experience of the object," whereas film is. I have elsewhere rejected this claim and I now suggest that gardens constitute a further counter-example to their claim.[27] While gardens are indeed a temporal art, there is an exhaustive literature and commentary in other formats with respect to what might be termed "frozen moments" in gardens. In fact, because of the limits of

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[26] Stephen Davies claims that in some architecture and gardens, the designers of both can set out to deliberately influence the rate and direction of a visitor's movement. (See: Davies, *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*. 139.) This is indeed a theoretical possibility. However, I claim that, apart from some ritualistic uses, it is seldom the case that garden visitors are influenced in this way, and I provide reasons to support my claim in Chapter 8, 248-250.

[27] See: Powell, "What Is Temporal Art? A Persistent Question Revisited". § 3 (vi).

language and photography, the majority of descriptive garden writing and images necessarily involves the description of static scenes or series of scenes, and, despite their obvious limitations, it is counter-intuitive to say that such scenes do not "count as aesthetically significant units" of a garden, nor that "such parts are not isolatable for study in a way that contributes significantly to the full experience" of a garden.[28]

Furthermore, in selecting individual frames of film lasting 1/32 of a second as their measure for "non-temporally extended parts of the object," the authors necessarily and, in my opinion inappropriately, reject the possibility of longer units of a work – say a phrase of music, line of poetry, or a season of a garden – counting as "aesthetically significant units" of a work.

(vii) Objects of the art form are about time, or our experience thereof, in some significant way.

If the preposition "about" in this condition is taken to mean something like "having as its subject," or "concerning," then the condition necessarily excludes gardens. I have earlier questioned Ross's accounts of gardens' ability to function in the ways poems and paintings do, and therefore their ability to represent or be discursively about something.[29] Among my reasons was that when gardens stopped being about "Nature," which necessarily included "Time," and became concerned with "nature," they generally lost their representational capacity.[30] And, besides, gardens' ability to represent – with the exception of some topiary and other atypical gardens – was

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[28] References to the ekphrastic challenges faced by those who present accounts of gardens are well known. See, for example: Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," 8; John Dixon Hunt, "Beyond Ekphrasis, Beyond Sight, Beyond Words…." http://www.doaks.org/research/garden-landscape/scholarly-activities/past/sound-and-scent-in-the-garden/abstracts; *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 131; Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," 385.

[29] See Chapter 4, 119-123.

[30] Turner says of this period: "Garden designers . . . neglected the quest for art to imitate 'the nature of the world' [including 'the nature of time']." . . . They saw only the superficial 'world of nature'." See: Turner, *Garden History: Philosophy and Design 2000 B.C. – 2000 A.D.*, 226.

never based on mimetic representation. Therefore, although gardens are inescapably temporal, they are not usually *about* time. Rather, given that the time of a garden is the same as the time outside a garden, one might simply say that gardens are *in* time, in a way that has, until recently, been unique among temporal art works.

Another possibility is that the preposition "about" in this condition references Danto's notion of "aboutness," that is, the quality an object or event has that distinguishes artworks from mere real things.[31] In this case, gardens turn out to be a good exemplar for Danto's claims because their materials, and the rates at which they change and we experience them, are generally the same both inside and outside the garden, in a way which, until recently, has been unique for any form of art work.[32] And in this way gardens are inevitably "about" time.

> *(viii) Objects of the art form use time as a material, or as an important structural feature.*

I have elsewhere questioned the usefulness of this condition as it is written and proposed that it might be better expressed: "Objects of the art form use change, including rate(s) of change, which we perforce perceive and attend to in temporal successions, as a material or as an important structural feature."[33] In what follows I will be referring to this modified version of Condition viii.

There are two important ways in which gardens comply with this condition. First, as already noted, gardens, and in particular their natural materials, necessarily exist in, rely on, and have their effects in time. But, unlike other temporal arts, the

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[31] For Danto, *art* objects, and their sometimes mundane materials, exist in order to be interpreted. His artworld is "a world of interpreted things." Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*, 113.

[32] For a succinct account of issues raised in a contemporary, non-garden artform which frequently shares its materials, organization, and temporality with the non-art world surronding it, see: Jennifer González, "Installation Art," in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics* ed. Michael Kelly (Oxford Art Onlne: Oxford University Press, 2014), § 6.

[33] See: Powell, "What Is Temporal Art? A Persistent Question Revisited". § 3, (viii).

time of gardens is the same as the time of the non-garden world.[34] Secondly, the *experience* of gardens is importantly temporal because almost all gardens require a visitor to move around, at whatever speed and in whatever direction, in order to experience the garden.[35] Usually such movement is not "choreographed" by the garden maker. Such movement, and a visitor's own choreography of it, take an open-ended amount of time (and space) and, as I discuss in Chapter 8, bring to mind the art of improvisation.[36] These durational and sequential aspects of garden experience are also to be noted in informal, non-ritualistic experiences of large buildings such as cathedrals and stadiums.

> *(ix) Objects of the art form generate a kind of time that is peculiar to them, that exists for a perceiver only in and through experience of the work.*

As I hope I have made plain, gardens do not generate a peculiar kind of time. Instead, their time is the time of the non-garden world, and the time of our garden experience is also the time of our experiences outside the garden. Flowers open and ice creams are consumed at the same rate whether in gardens or not.

(x) Objects of the art form represent a series of events in time distinct from the series of events constituting the art object.

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[34] But see: González, "Installation Art," § 6.

[35] Birksted reminds us that a garden beholder is perpetually "mobile . . . in gardens' three-dimensional space and time." (Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," 6.)

[36] See Chapter 8, 251-256.

This condition is not applicable to gardens for two reasons already given: gardens can not generally *represent* events; and, even if they could, gardens could not do so in a "time distinct from the series of events constituting the art object."[37]

> *(xi) Objects of the art form are created in the act of presentation, so that the time of creation, time of presentation and (usually) time of reception all coincide.*
> [and]
> *(xii) Objects of the art form require presentation in a time lived through and by the presenters.*

The authors note that these two conditions are especially applicable to the performance and improvisational arts. These two conditions are also, therefore, particularly relevant for the account of gardens I present in Chapter 8. There, I argue that the actual, physical garden is akin to a pre-existing work which one or more improvisers, or garden visitors, uses as the basis for an improvisation. Although the seminal work is important and necessary, and perhaps a work of art in its own right, in such cases it is the improvisation – the garden *experience* – that is the pertinent and valuable "work of art."[38] This account is importantly different from Salwa's recent account of gardens as performances, which account would, however, be neatly accommodated by these two conditions.[39]

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[37] Kuttner describes an exmple of what she claims to be "representation" of historical events in a garden. (See: Ann Kuttner, "Delight and Danger in the Roman Water Garden: Sperlonga and Tivoli," in *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion*, ed. M Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dunbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2003).) However, "straight" representation of temporal events, as in the garden Kuttner describes, differs from what Levinson and Alperson have in mind here. Levinson and Alperson are thinking of what might be called "manipulated mimesis," or "distemporization," which, although relaively common as a theatrical and cinematic device, remains an impossibility in gardens.

[38] See Chapter 8, 251-256.

[39] See: Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance." For a detailed consideration and rejection of Salwa's account see Chapter 8, 240-244.

(xiii) Objects of the art form lack relatively fixed identities over time, but are rather mutable and shifting.

Whether gardens qualify under this condition is debatable. Levinson and Alperson chose to include the imprecise "relatively" in the condition's wording but they do offer some guidance by way of citing folk art and arts with an oral tradition as exemplars of the condition. Whether some gardens change more than some examples of these arts is moot. Miller has claimed that gardens do have a fixed identity and that it is related to their geographical location.[40] However, gardens, especially show gardens, can and have been relocated. A garden may also be neglected to the point of its becoming a non-garden, or it may be destroyed in some way, yet still that new, non-garden object retains its same geographical identity. So, I claim that the identity of a garden depends on more than just its geographical location: a garden is not just a matter of *where* it is, but of *what* is where it is. And, in the case of some garden styles, our conception of that "what" needs to be fluid enough to accept gardens' "mutable and shifting" identities.[41]

Summary

Considered against the criteria of Levinson and Alperson's taxonomy, gardens are clearly temporal works of art. Garden satisfy nine of their conditions, the satisfaction of any one of which the authors regard as sufficient for an artwork's being temporal, yet gardens are not mentioned at all in their paper.[42] The authors allow that their criteria will "permit 'temporal art' to have application to art forms which do not currently exist, but which are theoretically possible," so it is therefore tempting, if

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[40] See Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 76-77.

[41] Gardens' "mutable and shifting" identities have been commented on by many, including: Stephen Davies, *The Philosophy of Art* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 96. Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 38-49; "Time and Temporality in the Garden," 178-91. Hunt, "Gardens: Historical Overview," 272.

[42] Gardens fail to satisfy conditions iv, ix and x; and I have claimed that condition vi is inappropriate as a measure of an art's temporal status. Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?," 440.

mischievous, to speculate that if gardens were to be invented in the future the authors might classify them as temporal art.[43]

I propose there are two main reasons that explain gardens' exclusion from Levinson and Alperson's category of temporal art. First, from the early 19th century onwards, gardens have typically been ignored by philosophers of art, a situation which is only now very slowly beginning to change.[44] Second, until recently, philosophers of art, and the conceptions, definitions, and theories of art they have espoused, have disregarded or even disdained the possibility of unruly, changeable natural objects (plants), and the natural environment generally, being acceptable components of art.[45] In particular, accounts of the ontology and preferred mode(s) of experience of art have been inimical to the reality of gardens and the garden experience. Furthermore, in the very few instances where gardens' arthood has been at least partially recognized, that recognition has entailed their being presented as at best problematic candidates for that status.[46] Gardens are temporal arts by virtue of their satisfying nine of Levinson and Alperson's conditions. However, they also show up the need for an additional condition to be added to the taxonomy. I claim that this new condition acknowledges characteristics of fundamental importance in gardens, in much environmental and land art, and, in part, in some installations and architecture.[47] That condition reads:

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[43] Ibid., 441.

[44] For Cooper's account of the lack of interest that 20th-century philosophy, and some other disciplines, have shown towards the garden see: Cooper, "Foreword," x.

[45] Echoing Hunt, I claim that the root cause of the majority of "problems" gardens have caused for philosophical aesthetics stems from the discipline's unwillingness to engage with the reality of gardens' "actual messy, material, and changeful world." See: Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 7.

[46] For example,while admitting to gardens' potential for arthood, Miller titles the sections of her book dealing with their arthood "Problem 1," "Problem 2," etc. (See:Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 73-90.)

[47] In proposing this new condition, I owe a general debt to Mara Miller for her writings on gardens and time.

> *Objects of the art form are aesthetically dependent to varying degrees on the transitions, movements, actions, and patterns of biological, diurnal, seasonal, climatic, and sometimes geological changes, most of which occur in temporally experienced sequences.*

The application of the relevant conditions of Levinson and Alperson's taxonomy, and the additional condition just described confirm that gardens are temporal entities *and* that our experience of them is inevitably temporal. My discussion below describes manifestations of temporality in gardens and their materials. In Chapter 8 I take up the matter of the temporal nature of our experience of them.

5.3 Time and Temporality in Gardens

I begin with a caveat. Gardens are temporal arts but they are not *only* temporal arts. Gardens' aesthetic appeal and value derive from their being both temporal and pictorial (spatial) arts. They are a four-dimensional art, and they share this bi(multi)-modality with some other arts.[48] Discussing the contribution of temporality to the overall aesthetic value of a garden is therefore not a straightforward matter. In what follows, I do not mean to imply that it is possible to consider or quantify altogether successfully the visual and temporal aspects of such arts as if they are discrete, independent aspects of a work.[49] I remain aware of this complexity in gardens, and some other arts, but nonetheless believe that investigating temporality on its own is a worthwhile task, and a necessary one to assess the comparative importance of gardens' temporality in the context of other (partly) temporal arts.

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[48] Birksted describes a garden existence, and a garden beholder's experiences in it, as occurring in "three-dimensional space *and* time." (My emphasis) See: Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," 6."

[49] Levinson and Alperson note how "closely interrelated" their object-, experience-, and content-based categories are. Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?," 446.

A merely descriptive listing of types of change in a garden, such as I provide below, would be of limited value if those changes were not themselves resonant of temporality. It is not mere changes, but the meaningfulness and values associated with them – their temporality – that is of interest. Temporality is different from time, and may be characterized as our response to the effects of the passage of time on objects, including ourselves, and especially on objects whose existence is importantly temporal.[50] Temporality is the condition or quality we are aware of a thing's possessing by virtue of its being in time or associated with time. Temporality is not something that exists independently; rather, it is a product of our experience of objects and events.

The temporality of an object is linked to our perceptions of the qualities the object possess with respect to its duration, persistence, and ephemerality, its physical stability and manner and rate of change(s), its temporal "location," or order in which it occurs, and so on. We perceive changes occurring in objects and events, or we are aware of the potential for such changes to occur, or not occur, and we understand the changes, or absence of changes, to have a significance for the object ranging from trivial to, quite literally, vital. We assess such changes for the importance, interest, and value they may have for us and for the object in question. Our assessments may be based on the significance of the changes, or lack of changes, with respect to an object's financial value, safety, viability, or physical existence, or with respect to any symbolic and aesthetic considerations for the viewer of changes, or lack of changes, that the object undergoes or has the potential to undergo.[51]

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[50] A dictionary definition of "temporality" reads, in part: "The quality or condition of being temporal or temporary; temporariness; relation to time." (See: "Temporality, N.," September 2016 ed., *OED Online* (Oxford University Press.), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/198948?redirectedFrom=temporality)

[51] For an exposition of some possible *metaphysical* implications of the presentation of temporal events in gardens see: Miller, "Time and Temporality in the Garden." Miller claims that the ways in which gardens structure time(s) for the visitor are "one of [gardens'] most important and least studied contributions, and that this aspect of gardens "has rarely been acknowledged by scholars or designers." (178-179) Miller's concern here is not with "art" or "art gardens" and, while it certaintly

5.4 How Gardens Change

Broadly speaking, the changes that occur in gardens are the outcome of three different, inter-related processes. Changes may result from: (a) the actions of skilled, knowledgeable gardeners, who manage and maintain gardens' materials in the expectation of desired outcomes; (b) the effects of weather, diurnity, and seasons, which result in both predictable and unexpected outcomes; and, (c) the natural growth and decay patterns that are characteristic of all living things.[52]

Changes resulting from these three inter-related processes can be grouped into six broad categories. Changes in all or any one of these categories are not always conspicuously present at any particular time. Moreover, changes in some categories are perceivable only to a retuning visitor while changes in other categories are perceivable only within the timespan of a single visit, whether of a frequent or first time visitor. These categories of change, which I consider in turn below, concern changes resulting from maturation, maintenance, biology, natural cycles, weather, and design, and ongoing planned changes carried out in response to a designer's plan or instructions. Changes in all of these categories offer potential reasons for our aesthetic interest in and valuing of the gardens possessing them.

Maturation

A designed garden might be described as finished when it is newly and completely installed. Alternatively, a designer might specify that her work will be finished at some time, say twenty years after installation, by which time structural tree plantings

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doesn't problematize these concepts, nor does her account attempt – and it does not need to – any explanation of how time and temporality might function in a philosophical account of art gardens. Elsewhere, Miller claims that gardens' "internal" temporality is "continuous with normal, everyday time . . . [and can therefore make plain] the temporal structure of human living." *The Garden as an Art*, 166. For an account of rhythmical ("musical") aspects of the experience of temporal events in gardens see: Barwell and Powell, "Gardens, Music, and Time."

[52] Any consideration of the philosophical and aesthetic significances of changes occurring in gardens, such as occurs throughout this study, ought to be able to account for the full range of changes that occur in "real" gardens. Consequently, my sources for this section of this chapter are my own observations and practical experiences over 25 years as a gardener and landscape architect.

will be starting to develop their adult shape and create the spaces the designer intended; hedges will have grown into dense green walls; the 100 daffodil bulbs originally specified to be planted will have multiplied into a carpet of several thousands; and introduced streams and watercourses will be looking "natural."

The question of when a garden might be deemed to be finished, or complete, is in itself a question which betrays a misunderstanding about what gardens are. This is so because, while there may be desirable, pseudo-permanent stages to reach during their existence, gardens are processes, or events, as much as they are unchanging objects. Gardens must change continuously in order to persist, and in this way they are unlike works in any other traditional art genre.

However, leaving aside the case of short-lived gardens designed for temporary exhibitions, many garden designers do have in mind some idea of a preferred "finished product," and the journey towards that ideal state, and the extension of it once reached, are closely related to how a garden is maintained.

Maintenance

At first glance, the maintenance of a garden may seem to be a process analogous to that of conservation for painting and sculpture. However, this is not the case. Conservation involves returning an object to an aesthetically preferable state, often a work's original state, in which state it should ideally remain, unchanging. But maintenance of gardens does not involve a one-off, remedial action of this type. Instead, it is an essential, continuous intervention, which is rarely concerned with returning a garden, for whatever brief instant, to its original state, even if that state is determinable and desirable. It involves working collaboratively with the temporal processes of change that are continuous and inevitable in gardens. It involves an acknowledgement that among the traditional art genres, gardens manifest a unique temporal nature.

Because gardens and their component elements are largely living, maintenance usually endeavours to balance the inevitable tensions between the

stability of the garden-object and the process of continuous change. However, in the case of some garden styles, such as Italian gardens from the Renaissance, maintenance does not set out so much to encourage or discourage changes brought about through temporal processes as much as to deny time any role at all in the garden, by resisting its effects. In such apparently timeless gardens, frequent and sometimes daily maintenance tasks are carried out by the gardeners ensure that no changes appear to have occurred.

The constant effort required to maintain gardens in whatever their desirable status quo may be has no equivalent in other traditional art genres, and is further evidence of the unique temporal status of gardens. It reinforces that time and temporality play a significant role in a garden's physical existence and dependent aesthetic value and interest, and that, in gardens, object and event are inseparable.

Biological Changes

Underpinning most of the previous paragraphs in this section is the fact that plants, whose presence is characteristic, distinctive and usually constitutive of gardens, are living organisms. Because they are living organisms, plants necessarily change continuously and in accordance with their own internal programmes. And, while the direction and rate of change can be influenced by human and other interventions, while plants may be treated in ways that cause them to thrive or allow them to recover from illness, plants cannot be "instructed" to act in ways for which they are not internally "pre-programmed." Plants, therefore, do not perform when they change, as actors and dancers do when they follow scripts and choreographies. Plants simply do what they must do. And in this way, gardens differ from the other traditional art genres that use living materials because gardens are not performances.[53]

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[53] See Chapter 8, 240-243, for a full discussion of this point.

The biological changes that are distinctive of gardens offer one of the most important reasons for paying aesthetic attention to and deriving aesthetic pleasure from gardens. These biological changes can be grouped into four categories, while allowing that the boundaries between the categories are somewhat permeable.

The first category of biological change is concerned with the maturation of the garden as a whole and I have discussed this above. The designer and gardeners invest much energy in guiding a garden towards its mature state and preventing its decline into senescence. For example, they carefully calculate the relative speeds of growth and the flowering times of different plants to ensure that a (southern-hemisphere) herbaceous border will be "at its best" in, say, the month of January. They do this because it is thought that a particular stage, or stages, in the life of the garden are most worthy of aesthetic attention and will afford maximum aesthetic pleasure to viewers of the garden. In behaving in these ways, designers and gardeners acknowledge that gardens are in large part biological processes which, while they may be influenced, operate in accordance with the biological programmes of their constituent plants.

The second category of biological change concerns the natural processes of individual plants. These processes are to be distinguished from the products of such processes, which I discuss in the following paragraph. When I refer to processes I am referring to activities such as growing and shrinking, living and dying, furling and unfurling, opening and closing, flowering, fruiting, seeding, and so on. Some of these processes may be perceivable by the casual visitor, but more often they reveal themselves to the dedicated gardener or frequent visitor. However, in the case of the casual visitor, it is possible for her to be imaginatively aware that the apparently static moment she is observing is a step in a continuous sequence of, say, growth.[54]

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[54] This small scale imaginative projection is akin to the larger scale version of it I described earlier and related to T S Eliot's suggestion that the interpreter of a text ideally understands it in the temporal context of an author's oeuvre (See Chapter 4, 154-155)

All these, and similar processes are constitutive of gardens and aesthetic attention is properly directed towards them.

The third category of biological change is concerned with the products of processes of change. In one sense, the distinction I make here between process and product is false because the fruits, flowers, and so on are themselves processes as much as they are products. However, I believe the distinction is reasonable because of the perceived importance in gardens of flowers and fruit *qua* products, not processes, suited to aesthetic attention and generative of aesthetic value. Some gardens exist primarily to display their products, traditional rose gardens being a well-known example. In such gardens, aesthetic attention to a flower- or fruit-product is similar to the aesthetic attention paid to an unchanging painting or sculpture. However, it is different from attention paid to a painting or sculpture because it is attention to a non-permanent object, which cannot be restored once it deteriorates, and also because it is a multisensory attention, potentially engaging not only sight but also taste, smell, and touch.

In this section, I have been examining changes that are largely the outcome of a living organism's internal programming. In the section that follows, I examine the changes that occur in a garden, and to individual plants in it, that stem from what might be considered external influences, namely the diurnal and seasonal cycles.

Cyclical Change

Diurnal cycles are regular. Unlike seasons, where the effects of spring may come "early" one year and "late" the next, day follows night in an entirely predictable though varying diurnal and annual pattern, the effects of which can be grouped into three categories.

First, a garden's appearance changes importantly depending on whether it is viewed by day or by night. These changes are caused by the presence or absence of light and therefore they affect primarily how a garden looks and, consequently, its colours and shapes, apparent size, views, mood and aspect, and so on. Second, plants

react quite conspicuously to the presence and absence of light. For example, many plants close their flower petals at night, some plants flower only at night, some plants release scents at night, and some plants close up their leaves at night.

Third, besides the changes brought about by the sharp contrast between night and day, there are changes that occur in gardens and individual plants in response to the gradual daily movements of the sun. Some of these changes, such as those that result in a visitor's experience of dawn and dusk, and of sun and shade, can perhaps be understood as variants of changes comprising the first category of changes above. However, other changes, such as the continuous tracking movement of some flower heads in response to the sun's position, are responses to the gradual change in the sun's position during the day.

The progression of the seasonal cycle is responsible for some of the most conspicuous changes in gardens. Bare trees in winter, new scents in spring, prolific flowers in summer, and brightly coloured leaves in autumn are all familiar garden "pictures." However, the conspicuousness of the changes resulting from the progression of the seasonal cycle varies and is dependent on the geographical location of a garden, the garden's style, and the garden's plant communities. Thus, a formally devised, tropical garden at an equatorial latitude will change little from season to season compared to an informally conceived woodland garden or mixed flower garden in a temperate climate. Temperate climate gardens are often designed to be "at their peak" during a particular season, or seasons, and the differences between gardens of this sort "at their peak" and at different times of the year can be extreme, and are unparalleled in other traditional art genres.

All these and other changes wrought in gardens by the continuous and unending progressions of both the diurnal and seasonal cycles are constitutive of gardens and offer important opportunities for viewers to attend to them aesthetically and to derive aesthetic value from them.

Occasional Changes

Occasional changes comprise a group of changes that significantly affects all gardens. They include changes caused by climate generally and those caused by weather. Changes of the former type can be grouped with the seasonal changes discussed above and I will not discuss them further here. Changes of the latter type can powerfully affect a garden and a visitor's experience of it and I now give examples of some weather-based changes caused by two selected agents, namely wind and rain.

Occasional wind may rustle leaves and ripple water, or it may be sufficiently strong to make walking difficult and even to fell trees. Constant wind may alter trees' profiles and generally stunt plants' growth. By its presence, rain may encourage growth and cause colours to "glow" in its aftermath. It may also make garden visiting unpleasant and it may cause floods. By its prolonged absence, rain may cause whole gardens to die.

No artworks in any other traditional art genre are affected by occasional changes to this degree and even if they are affected, as is potentially the case with outdoor sculpture and outdoor performances, the changes wrought are usually neither constitutively important to the artwork nor are they generally appropriate targets of aesthetic attention on the part of informed viewers.

Planned Changes

There are two ways in which planned changes may affect gardens and a visitor's experiences of them. The first type of changes has parallels in the performance arts. Thus, fountains and lighting systems may be activated from time to time in gardens because the designer, owner, or gardener intends this to happen, just as stage effects – for example the visual and sonic components of a storm – can be activated when required by the stage directions or director during the performance of a play. In the case of gardens, I do not believe these changes are distinctive, and nor do they provide additional grounds for supporting the conclusion that gardens relationship with the passage of time is unique or constitutive of them.

The second type of changes is constitutive of gardens and is unique to them among the traditional art genres. These changes concern the installation, removal, or modification of plants in accordance with a schedule determined by the designer, gardener, or owner. These changes are similar to some of the maintenance tasks described above. They include activities such as the planting out of annuals, the removal of sensitive plants to orangeries in winter, the planting of shade loving species under trees when young trees have become sufficiently umbrageous, and the thinning of initially over-planted areas as trees mature. While these activities may be categorized as simple maintenance, they also contribute to the status of gardens as a unique art form because they exemplify the ways in which gardens are designed not only to persist but also to be regularly changed in specific ways that are aesthetically important, in accordance with a designer's or owner's instructions. Gardens, uniquely, are art objects that remain themselves while continuing to change and be changed in significant ways that are aesthetically interesting and valuable.[55]

5.5 A Summary Comparison with Other Arts

I have described above some temporal characteristics of gardens which, in the context of traditional arts forms, are unique to them. However, gardens also share some temporal characteristics with some other art forms. In the following section, I present brief comparative accounts summarizing the similarities and differences between the temporal characteristic of gardens and those of six traditional art forms.[56]

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[55] For an interesting, botanical perspective on this, see: Miranda Mote, "Exquisite Odor: The Colosseum, a Garden of Serendipitous Procreation," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* 35, no. 2 (2015). Mote's article examines descriptions of the Colosseum "garden" from 1411 onwards.

[56] There are extensive literatures descibing each of the artforms discussed in this section of the chapter. However, with respect to the exact ontological, and related features and chacteristics of the individual artforms, there is a lack of straightforward, accessible material. For a *general* background to the ontological issues I refer to see: Paisley Livinston, "History of the Ontology of Art," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N Zalta (Summer 2013). And, for a good introduction

Paintings and Non-Kinetic Sculptures

Paintings and non-kinetic sculptures are able to represent change and narrative in limited ways and, although static, they thereby possess what might be called an apparent temporal dimension. The physical objects that are paintings and non-kinetic sculptures do themselves change to a limited degree but the changes they undergo are not constitutive of them *qua* artworks, are not generally of aesthetic interest, and do not generally provide reasons for valuing those works.

Gardens are unlike paintings and sculptures because gardens change continuously. Although a visitor may properly view a garden as if it were a painting or sculpture, she may equally properly direct her aesthetic attention towards a garden's changing elements, aspects, and configurations, and, indeed, towards the process of change itself.

Prints, Cast Sculptures, and Photographs

Individual instances of prints, cast sculptures, and photographs possess the same apparent temporal dimension that paintings and non-kinetic sculptures do because they are able to represent change and narrative in limited ways. In addition, originary images in these genres have a temporal aspect because individual prints, cast sculptures, and photographs made from them are necessarily produced in some temporal sequence and may vary in appearance, in part as a result of this sequencing. Such variations may provide some limited reasons for our aesthetic interest in, and valuing of, the *combination* of the originary image and a given instance of it, but they are not constitutive of the genre.

Gardens, like individual instances of the multiply-instanced visual arts of printmaking, cast sculptures, and photographs, admit of changes across time. However, in the case of the multiply-instanced works no change is permitted to the

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to the temporal aspects of (nearly) all the temporal arts, see: Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?."

originary object or impression whereas in gardens there is only the originary object, and changes in and to it are not only acceptable but are inevitable, and constant. Such changes in gardens are aesthetically interesting and valuable and they are constitutive of the genre.

Novels and Unperformed Poetry

Novels and unperformed poems are temporal works of art because they represent sequences of event, or narratives, and they are also temporal because an appropriate reading of them, at whatever rate it may proceed, involves starting at the beginning and finishing at the end of the text. Authors of novels and poems may also make play with our notions of time by, for example, writing very long books about brief events or by employing narrative techniques such as flashback. All these temporal characteristics provide potential reasons for our aesthetic interest in and valuing of works in these genres.

Although it is not typical of them, gardens *can* present narratives in the manner of novels and unperformed poetry and, when they do, they provide potential reasons for our aesthetic interest in and valuing of them.[57] Gardens do this by mimetically or metaphorically representing sequences of objects that tell a story. When gardens function in this way it is desirable that the elements contributing to the narrative remain in a relatively stable state. And gardens are further like novels and unperformed poems because their narratives are not performances and consequently they can be “read” non-sequentially and at varying speeds

Drama and Performed Poetry

Drama and performed poetry have the same temporal characteristic as novels and unperformed poems except that, because they are works for performance, they may

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[57] Classical English examples of such gardens are those at Stowe and Stourhead, whose iconographic and narrative aspects are well rehearsed, and contested. See, for example: Hunt, "Stourhead Revisited & the Pursuit of Meaning in Gardens."

not be picked up or put down at leisure, and nor may their rate of delivery be drastically modified. Because performances are themselves temporally ordered sequences of events, the time taken to experience them remains identical to the length of the performance, although not usually identical to the length of the narratives represented. Drama and performed poetry may also offer temporal aesthetic pleasures because of the ways in which their words and lines are ordered by the playwright or poet so as to create temporally interesting patterns based on metre, rhythm, rhyme, assonance, and so on. And plays and performed poems have a further temporal aspect because they allow for comparisons to be made on aesthetic grounds between any performance and its originary text.

Gardens are like drama and performed poetry because they can, atypically, present narratives and because the passage of time is a constituent component of them. And gardens therefore offer potential reasons for our aesthetic interest in and valuing of them on these grounds. However, they are unlike drama and performed poetry because they are not performances. They do not have a beginning and end in the way that performances do, and nor do their inevitable changes usually occur in a particular way, or at a specified time and rate, in accordance with a designer's or gardener's plan.[58] Moreover, as a further consequence of their not being performances, a visitor's experience of them can occur for any length of time, at any speed, and in any sequence.

Abstract Music

Abstract music is a performance art. It is therefore necessarily temporal, and any experience of it is constrained by the length of the performance. Because music is generally unable to represent narratives, appropriate aesthetic attention when listening to it is directed not towards representation of events but towards

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[58] It can perhaps be argued that some *components* of gardens, such as fountains, lighting, heating and cooling, etc., may be said to "perform" in accordance with a pre-arranged schedule. (See 174)

temporally occurring arrangements of abstract sound patterns. In addition, an originary musical score has a further temporal aspect because comparisons can be made on aesthetic grounds between individual performances of it occurring at different times, or at the same time in different locations, and the originary score.

Gardens are like abstract music because the passage of time is a constituent component of them and because aesthetic attention is properly directed to changes in their (living) elements over time. But changes to the visual appearance of gardens' elements do not only result in altered visual elements in the garden: the differing *rates* at which those changes occur, and the effects of those rates of change, can combine to produce rhythmic interest analogously to the way in which rhythm arises in music.[59] In this important way, gardens and music are similar. However, in spite of this similarity of temporal features, gardens are not performances because their temporal exposition is not regulated in the way that occurs in performances and nor is the experience of gardens regulated in this way.[60]

Abstract Dance

Abstract dance shares with music the necessity that our experience of it be determined by the length of the performance. It also shares with abstract music the inability to represent narratives and, because of this, our aesthetic attention to abstract dance is directed not towards representation of events but towards objects moving in time and space, that is, in four dimensions. We experience these patterns of movement in the context of chronological time and "real world" space, but we also experience them in the context of the dance's internal temporal structures and spatial world. In addition, again as in the case of music, originary choreography has a temporal aspect because comparisons can be made on aesthetic grounds between individual performances of it and the originary choreography.

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[59] See: John Powell, "Music, Gardens, and Time," in *Time Theories and Music* (Department of Music Studies, Ionian University, Corfu2012).

[60] See Chapter 8, 243-244.

Gardens are like dance because they both typically involve changes to living and inanimate objects in space and time, and proper aesthetic attention to these arts involves attention to changes of these kinds. However, dance and gardens are unalike because dances are performances and gardens are not and, more importantly, because dancers are performers and plants are not. Furthermore, biological changes are of paramount interest in gardens whereas in dance, changes attributable to a dancer's physiology are almost always aesthetically irrelevant to the dance.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the temporality of gardens in both philosophical and "real-life" contexts and I have contrasted gardens' temporality with that of some other arts. I have described how gardens have a range of temporal features that are unique to them and which arise chiefly as a consequence of gardens' use of mainly natural materials. I have claimed that these temporal features are of aesthetic interest and value and are partly constitutive of gardens. Furthermore, I claim that the extent, significance, and types of changes I have described in real-life gardens, and the temporal processes that are associated with them, justify the addition to Levinson and Alperson's taxonomy of the new condition I proposed earlier.

An adequate philosophical account of gardens needs to accommodate their being (a) spatio-temporal works, that (b) are not performances, but (c) whose elements are continuously changing at a variety of rates and in different ways, and (e) whose components include living materials, and (f) whose components can sometimes be removed and/or replaced, and (g) whose aspect can be radically yet acceptably changed owing to the continuous influences of seasonal, climatic, and diurnal changes. Such an account must inevitably concern itself with the ontological issues gardens raise, and these are the subject of the following chapter and Chapter 8. An adequate account also needs to accommodate the temporality of our *experience* of gardens, which results not simply from gardens' being changeable entities but also

from gardens' characteristic unstructured extensiveness, the experience of which would remain temporal even if gardens did not change at all. I examine the temporality of the experience of gardens in Chapter 8.

Chapter 6

Ontology and Gardens

6.1 Introduction

It has been argued that gardens which meet certain criteria can be considered works of art.[1] It is therefore reasonable to expect that ontologies making claims to adequacy to the case of art works will be able to accommodate such gardens. In this chapter, I investigate the extent to which this expectation is satisfied. I do this by examining influential ontological positions held by three philosophers. But before doing that, I give a brief overview of the current state of play in the field of ontology of art so as to provide a background and context for the discussion that follows.

Concerning the variety and complexity of positions on offer, David Davies suggests that "in matters of ontology, it might be thought, contemporary philosophy of art has almost no shame!"[2] However, Davies' provocative sentiment aside, I believe it is possible to identify the common issues and tasks which an ontology of art needs to address. Amie Thomasson and Stephen Davies are two well known contemporary writers on the ontology of art.[3] Although they differ radically in their *approaches* to addressing art ontology's important tasks – and I address their differences during a discussion of Thomasson's position in Chapter 7 – they do share a broad view of what those important tasks are. Thus, Thomasson claims that the core tasks of art ontology are to account for a work's and a genre's existence, identity,

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[1] See, for example, Ross's extended accounts of 18th-century gardens which satisfied the contemporary criteria for "art." (Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, Chapters 2-4.) See also Powell, "We Do Not Have an Adequate Conception of Art until We Have One That Accommodates Gardens."

[2] Davies, *Art as Performance*, 127.

[3] For ease of reading, in the remainder of this chapter I refer to David Davies as "D. Davies," and Stephen Davies as "Davies."

and persistence status, while Davies writes that "the ontology of art considers the matter, form, and mode in which art exists."[4] Thomasson writes that once a work's existence, identity, and persistence statuses are accounted for, we are in a position to establish what category a work of art occupies and that, flowing from that, we may in turn also learn additional facts about a work such as "when and where . . . [it] is observable, what properties of the work are essential or accidental, [and] what sort of changes interfere with its preservation."[5] And Davies writes that once the matter, form, and mode in which art exists have been established, some ways of categorizing, or classifying a given work may turn out to be more revealing than others with regard to "why and how art is created and appreciated."[6] In summary, their key questions are: What sort of objects are works of art? How do they exist and persist? How do we identify them? What category do they belong to, and what further information might we derive from their categorization? I agree with Davies' and Thomasson's expositions of the key questions in art ontology, and I adopt and adapt them for my own purposes in this chapter.

While there may be general agreement on the questions art ontology is attempting to answer, the contemporary state of the discipline is nonetheless characterized by diversity, as noted above by D. Davies. There exist diverse ways of conceptualizing and categorizing canonical and emerging genres and works of art; there exists a diverse range of conceptions of what a work of art is, and there is also methodological diversity. In *The Continuum Companion to Aesthetics*, published in 2012, Sherri Irvin offers a useful, succinct account of the range of ontological positions currently or recently defended with respect to works of art.[7] To summarize

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[4] See: Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 1; Amie L Thomasson, "Ontological Innovation in Art," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 68, no. 2 (2010).

[5] "Ontological Innovation in Art," 119.

[6] Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 1.

[7] Sherri Irvin, "Artworks, Objects, and Structures," in *The Continuum Companion to Aesthetics*, ed. Anna Christina Ribeiro, Continuum Companions to Philosophy (London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012).

her classifications, Irvin says that works of art exist in one of five ways: they may be physical objects; they may be in some way related to, dependent or supervenient on, physical objects; they may be ideas; they may be a combination of an object or process (i.e., what she calls in this case a structure) and some contextual component; or they may be actions.[8] In the discussion that follows, I will concentrate on those ontological classifications that I believe are most pertinent, whether positively or negatively, to the case of gardens.

I have selected for detailed examination ontologies developed by Davies, Richard Wollheim, and Gregory Currie, all of whom are or have been (Wollheim died in 2003) prominent in the field. Davies supports the view that works of art are in some way related to the physical objects constituting them, Wollheim supports, but later modifies, the view that art works (aesthetic objects) bear an identity relationship to the physical object constituting them, and Currie supports the view that works of art are the results of actions. My aim here is not to investigate the totality of their individual ontologies of art. Instead, I wish to point out the ways in which their ontologies are, or are not, adequate to the case of gardens.

I have excluded from consideration at this point the conception of artworks as what Irvin calls structures. I examine artworks as structures, or contextualist entities, in Chapter 8, in connection with the theories of Danto.[9] I have also excluded from consideration the conception of works of art as ideas. However, I will from time to time comment on that conception as the occasion arises during the course of the chapter. At this point, I will simply say that while that conception's claim – that the medium of an artwork is immaterial to its being because the real artwork exists as an idea in the artist's mind – is theoretically possible in the case of gardens, it may

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[8] Ibid., 55-71. Irvin develops her ideas regarding the diversity of art forms' ontologies further in: "The Ontological Diversity of Visual Artworks," in *New Waves in Aesthetics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). There, she claims that, in the case of contemporary visual and other artworks, it may be appropriate to consider separately the ontological status of each individual work.

[9] See Chapter 8, 256-261.

reasonably be considered an unintuitive conception in such cases. This is so because gardens are, by their very nature, actual, living, ever-changing, multi-sensory objects, and their "artness" is in large part attributable to their being physical objects in possession of those particular, medium-specific qualities.[10] Furthermore, it seems unlikely that a garden artist could foresee all the changes in a garden over its lifetime and therefore be able to incorporate all those changes, not to mention combinations of changes, into her art-idea.[11]

I have also excluded from consideration ontological issues that are not directly relevant to the case of gardens. For instance, there is no discussion of whether artworks are created or, in the Platonic sense, discovered because I claim that addressing that issue in the case of gardens does not raise or solve any unique ontological problem

6.2 Gardens are Physical Objects

In *The Philosophy of Art*, Davies defends a position he describes as "ontological contextualism."[12] Many aspects of this position are uncontroversial and, ontologically speaking, mainstream because they are shared to varying degrees and with varying emphases by many other contemporary ontologists for whom an artwork is identified with or is in some way related to a specific physical object or event. Davies asserts that artworks are public items – objects or events – and that

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[10] Conversley, it has been argued by some that it is this very, messy, aliveness of gardens' materials that has caused gardens to be "problematized," and sidelined by philsophical aesthetics. (See, for example: Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 7.)

[11] The unpredictability taken for granted in the performance arts is different from the changeability that obtains in gardens. In the performance arts, deviations within certain agreed limits are expected and acceptable. In fact, some deviations – those we generally term "interpretative" – are often highly valued. (See: Stephen Davies, "Authenticity in Musical Performance," in *Arguing About Art: Contemporary Philosophical Debates*, ed. Alex Neill and Aaron Ridley (London: Routedge, 2002). (However, philosopher Nelson Goodman arges controversially that that "the most brilliant performance with a single wrong note does not count as a performance of that work." See: N Goodman, (1976), 186.) But changes in gardens, whether major, minor, expected, or otherwise, are not only acceptable: without them, gardens containing living elements cannot exist.

[12] Davies, *The Philosophy of Art*, 81-89.

they are created rather than discovered. He asserts that their designed form and content are inseparable from their medium and that whether they are singular or multiple in their instances depends on which genre they belong to. If they are multiple they exist in one of three ways: they can either be presented as a performance, they can be specified in encoded forms, such as on a digital file or woodblock, or they can take the form of an exemplar, such as a novel or poem, produced by the artist at the time of the work's creation. Finally, he argues that, generally speaking and his contextualist views notwithstanding, artworks' identities are fixed at the time of creation and that "factors crucial to the work's identity [do not} alter after its initial creation."[13]

Davies makes three claims pertinent to the ontology of gardens. The first and second claims are made in Chapter 4 of *The Philosophy of Art.* In answer to his question, "does an artwork have an evolving identity, much as a living person does?," he makes his first claim: "Some may do so. Gardens, supposing some qualify as artworks, are intended to change with the growth of the flora and the yearly cycle. These works change while retaining their basic identity only because their media and constituent elements are living. It is less plausible to suggest the same for other art works."[14] Davies second claim is related to his first one but appears to partly contradict it. He writes: "For art, we can account for the manner of its existence without resorting to the special kind of ontology that is used to explain the persistence through change of the identity of living creatures."[15] Davies' third claim, presented in Chapter 9 of *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*, is that some architecture shares with gardens a temporal nature because the designers of both can set out to

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[13] Ibid., 97.

[14] Ibid., 96. In this section of his text, Davies has been referring to Margolis's view of the evolving identity of artworks being constituted in part by socio-historical factors, including interpretation. Davies rejects this view; but the changes in gardens' identities he refers to here are not of the type Margolis's conception envisaged. For Margolis's exposition of his own theory, see: Joseph Margolis, "What, after All, Is a Work of Art?," in *What, after All, Is a Work of Art?: Lectures in the Philosophy of Art* (PA., USA: Penn State Press, 1999).

[15] Davies, *The Philosophy of Art*, 98.

deliberately influence the rate and direction of a visitor's movement around a building or garden. He claims that in such cases, buildings and gardens are less like "symphonies, films and drama than like novels."[16] And he goes on to note that although a fixed view, say from a particular window, of a garden through the seasonal cycle may constitute a temporal experience more akin to "a symphony or drama than a novel," he is not aware of any building affording a similar experience, even though he concedes that a site-specific building could potentially offer such an experience of time's passage.

In the following paragraphs, I focus on Davies' three garden-related claims and his overarching claim that artworks are public objects or events. In questioning aspects of each of these claims, I at the same time acknowledge that Davies is the only contemporary ontologist to have given anything but the slightest attention to art gardens. While philosophers writing on other aspects of art have discussed gardens, those writing on art ontology have almost universally ignored them.[17] I propose there are two reasons for this uninterest in gardens' ontology. First, for reasons I discuss in Chapter 3, gardens are not fashionable art objects at this time and therefore writing about them is not seen as important or urgent. Second, even when gardens are acknowledged to be potential works of art, their complex, muddied combination of spatial and temporal modes of functioning results in their being put in the "too hard" ontological basket and, again, ignored. I address this second factor in some detail in Chapter 8.

Davies' first claim, concerning the acceptability of change in gardens, is supported by his statement that such change is acceptable "only because their [i.e., gardens'] media and constituent elements are living."[18] At this point in his text, Davies is countering the claim of the American philosopher Joseph Margolis that a

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[16] *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*. 139.

[17] And the same is true for most contemporary philosophers who have written on gardens. "Ontology" does not appear in the indexes of the garden monographs witten by Miller, Ross, and Cooper.

[18] Davies, *The Philosophy of Art*, 96.

"work's context continues to affect its identity after its creation."[19] Davies admits that the identity of gardens may change after their creation but that such change occurs, and is acceptable, only because gardens contain living elements which perforce change, and such change does not constitute proof of Margolis's claim. Although Davies had other aims in mind when making this point, it is a welcome statement regarding gardens' ontology. I have described in Chapter 5 the many ways in which gardens' living elements change.[20] However, it is important to acknowledge that significant changes occur in gardens for reasons other than plants' mere aliveness. For instance, plants may change, or be added, removed, or altered as a result of the effects of climate or disease, or because of changes in ownership or fashion, and such changes have the potential to effect the garden's identity.

Furthermore, it is not the case that all gardens or all gardens' "media and constituent elements are living."[21] Some celebrated gardens are very sparing in their use of non-living materials. For example, many well known classical Spanish, Italian, and French gardens rely for their effects as much on statuary, paving, walls, terraces, urns, steps, and water as they do on plants.[22] And, when such gardens do rely on plants, those plants are often manicured into lawns, hedges, and topiary and are thereby presented as seemingly unchanging (that is "non-living") garden elements. In summary, then, gardens are complex entities. They contain significant living and

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[19] Ibid. See FN 14, 186, above.

[20] See Chapter 5, 168-175.

[21] Davies, "Ontology of Art," 96.To be fair, Davies is not setting out to deny that gardens may contain non-living objects. His concern is with rejecting Margolis's claim, and his rejection stands whether gardens contain non-living materials or not.

[22] For an account of the elements, and their ineractions, in Renaissance gardens, see: Cowell, *The Garden as a Fine Art: From Antiquity to Modern Times*, 135-67. For a contemporary example of a garden in which both living and non-living elements are equally significant contributors to the garden's aesthetic effectiveness, see: "Andy Goldsworthy's Garden of Stones," http://www.mjhnyc.org/garden/about.html.(For an account of Goldsworthy's garden, see: Jacky Bowring, ""To Make the Stone[S] Stony": Defamiliarization and Andy Goldsworthy's Garden of Stones," in *Contemporary Garden Aesthetics, Creations and Interpretations*, ed. M Conan (Washington, DC.: Harvard University Press, 2007).)

non-living, changing and non-changing elements, on all of which, and on the interactions between which, gardens' aesthetic properties supervene.

Later in the same chapter, Davies makes his second claim: art ontology has no need to resort to "the special kind of ontology that is used to explain the persistence through change of the identity of living creatures."[23] The special kind of ontology to which Davies refers here is one that allows us to recognize a person as being the same person even though she may be blond and thin at one point in her life and bald and obese, and even "he," at another. However, I claim that such an ontology is very similar, though not identical to the ontology required to account for the identity of a garden as it changes from, for example, being newly installed in winter to being mature 30 years later in summer.[24] Furthermore, the very changes which I take Davies to be implying when he talks of "the persistence through change of the identity of living creatures" are themselves at the heart of gardens. Other arts, such as the performance arts of dance, drama, and music, involve changing, living creatures as a constituent part of their existence but aesthetic interest does not usually supervene on actors', dancers', or musicians' actual livingness. Thus, although bodily changes in dancers, such as those that result in a *jeté* or an *entrechat*, are constituent of the performance, other simultaneous physiological changes in the same dancers, such as their growing (imperceptibly) older or having a cold, are not. Whereas, in the case of gardens, it is precisely physiological changes such as ageing, senescence, growth, flowering, and so on that are at the core of the existence and process of gardens, and I believe that Davies has allowed for this to be the case in his first claim.

It is not clear how, or if, Davies intends to make a distinction between the phrase, "living creatures," cited in the paragraph above, and his clause, "media and

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[23] Davies, *The Philosophy of Art*, 98.

[24] I develop this claim further in Chapter 8, 251.

constituent elements [that] are living," quoted earlier.[25] If he does not intend to make make a distinction between these categories, then his claim that there is no need to invoke "the special kind of ontology that is used to explain the persistence through change of the identity of living creatures" is either mistaken or, alternatively, Davies has at this point decided to exclude gardens from the "art" category. If Davies does mean to imply a difference between "living things" and "living creatures," a clarification of what that difference entails would be useful. If it is simply a matter of distinguishing between (a) an ontology used to explain the persistence through change of the identity of living *creatures* and (b) an ontology used to explain the persistence through change of the identity of living *things*, then that is an appropriate, subtle distinction to make. However, I suspect that in both cases he is referring to biological events such as birth, growth, flourishing, and decay that are common to living "creatures" and living "elements," and through which processes those creatures' and elements' identities are sustained, and therefore my assessment of the adequacy of this second claim holds.

Also relevant to Davies' second claim is his statement that "qualities of the *medium* are likely to become part of the artwork's content and message."[26] (My emphasis) Ironically, he is making this statement as part of a discussion of avant-garde artworks which self-destruct, such as works involving dying butterflies or rotting meat, and not with reference to gardens, which characteristically grow and flourish. However, his statement does apply with equal aptness to gardens, and invites further reconsideration of his claim that art ontology has no need to resort to "the special kind of ontology that is used to explain the persistence through change of the identity of living creatures."

Davies third claim, that some architecture shares with gardens a temporal nature because the designers of both can influence visitors' movements and rate of

[25] Recall that this clause identifies components, the possession of which justifies an artwork's having "an evolving identity, much as a living person does."

[26] Davies, *The Philosophy of Art*, 87.

progress, is right as far as it goes. Garden designers, and gardeners, certainly can and do manipulate the rate and direction of progress around a garden and they have available to them a wealth of techniques to achieve this. For example, at Stourhead, in England, a visitor's progress around the grounds is influenced not only by the usual means of paths and bridges but also by a complex narrative and iconographic scheme. However, most gardens are equally temporal for the simple reason that they are not small enough to be taken in at a single glance. A visitor generally needs to move in space and time to experience all but the smallest gardens and, in this limited sense, gardens are indeed usually temporal art works. However, such movement need not be influenced in any way by the design of the garden maker and may simply derive from a visitor's whim, special interest, timetable, or desire to walk in the shade. And, although Davies does not here mention it, the same sort of temporality is also part of the experience of architecture, even in cases where movement is neither directed, foreseen, or even sanctioned by the designer.[27]

Davies' third claim does include an interesting statement about how the version of temporality now under discussion – that is, the temporality that obtains by virtue of a visitor's choosing to be stationary and/or to move around a building or garden at differing speeds and in different directions – might compare to the temporalities obtaining in different art genres. He writes that when buildings (and presumably gardens) exhibit this type of temporality they are less like "symphonies, films and drama than like novels."[28] However, I argue that this comparison does not pick up on an important temporal difference between novels and architecture (and gardens). In novels, although a reader may jump from anywhere to anywhere else in the text, and may even read the whole text backwards, this is not the way in which a

[27] For wide-ranging accounts of movement in gardens see: M Conan, ed. *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion*, vol. 24, Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture (Washington, DC., USA: Dumbarton Oaks Reasearch Library and Collection, 2007). I examine some philosophical implications of visitors' movement around gardens in Chapter 8, 252-254.

[28] Davies, *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*. 139.

novelist would normally expect her work to be experienced, and nor is it the way in which a novel's themes, plot, characterizations, and so on will make the best sense and be most aesthetically effective. But such is often not the case with architecture and gardens. Although a visitor's progress may sometimes be influenced by a designer's "programme," any *directed* progress through buildings or garden is much more likely to stem from ritualistic requirements, practical concerns such as crowd control or safety, or from commercial imperatives that ensure that your visit terminates in the souvenir shop.

In addition to the three claims I have now examined, Davies suggests, and then rejects, the interesting idea that architecture may usefully be considered a type of performance. It is an idea that is also interesting in the case of gardens, but I reject it for the same reasons, *mutatis mutandis*, as Davies.[29] Gardens, though, are not unchanging artworks, and the notion of performance is not altogether unhelpful in understanding what is going on in them. Performance works admit of a complex variety of interwoven spatial and temporal changes and they "encompass certain parameters of indefiniteness," and in these ways they have much in common with the particular type of four-dimensionality that is characteristic of gardens.[30] Viewing gardens as a type of performance similar to, say, music may be useful and lead to fresh insights, and Davies himself suggests as much when he writes that a fixed view of a garden throughout the cycle of seasons may offer a temporal experience more akin to "a symphony or drama than a novel."[31]

I have quoted Davies above to the effect that performances have "certain parameters of indefiniteness." And, even though they are not performances, so do gardens. Gardens' indefiniteness invites clarification of Davies' overarching description of artworks as *public* objects or event. Many gardens are indefinite in

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[29] Ibid., 141-45. I examine the singularity/multiplicity and performance/non-performance features of garden artworks in detail in Chapter 8, 237-248..

[30] *The Philosophy of Art*, 90.

[31] *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*. 140.

their spatial extent and this is a significant, constitutive element of them. In Chapter 1, I referred to the permeable aural boundaries of Tupare, and many examples of permeable visual boundaries are to be found in gardens which intentionally or otherwise include "external" elements such as a view of a church steeple or the sea.[32] These elements can be a central feature of or even provide a *raison d'être* for the gardens that possess them.[33] If artworks are indeed public objects or events then, in the case of gardens, there must be flexibility with respect to the spatial extent of the art object. The garden-object's perceptual boundaries may extend significantly beyond a garden's cadastral or similar boundaries. In cases when there is no shared agreement on where a garden stops, the public object that is an art garden must be acknowledged to be spatially indefinite.

In summary, Davies' acknowledgement of gardens' inherent changefulness is welcome. However, I contest his implied claim that gardens' retention of their identity in spite of constant change is not plausibly accounted for by an ontology similar to that employed in the case of living creatures. I agree with Davies that gardens are not performances but that they, and our experiences of them, nevertheless have importantly temporal dimensions. Finally, I suggest that Davies' account of an artwork *qua* public object might need clarifying in order to be able to accommodate artworks that are partly indeterminate spatially but whose aesthetic qualities are intimately related to their spatiality, like gardens.

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[32] The indefiniteness of (some) gardens' visual boudaries has been noted by many, including Hunt. Hunt draws attention to the tendency of some gardens to have indistinct external boundaries, as well as, in some cases, indistinct internal-area boundaries and indistince internal-area transitional zones and processes. (See: Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 131.) For my discussion of the permeable aural boundaries at Tupare, see Chapter 1, 46-47.

[33] The garden-world's ready acceptance of the invisible barrier known as the ha-ha, and the general concept of "borrowed scenery," further indicate an easy acceptance of gardens' permeable visual boundaries.

6.3 Gardens are Actions

In his *An Ontology of Art*, Currie presents and defends two hypotheses, the Action Type Hypothesis and the Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis.[34] Currie does not test these hypotheses against the case of gardens. However, in arguing below for their inapplicability to gardens, important constitutive aspects of gardens are usefully illuminated.

Action Type Hypothesis

The Action Type Hypothesis claims that any art work has two jointly necessary components: a perceivable structure – of words, sounds, visual elements, etc. – and a unique heuristic path. Currie links together a work's perceivable structure, say, a sonata, and the actions by which it was arrived at and/or executed, to form the single object we know as a work of art. This art object is neither created nor discovered, as others would have it; rather, it is *enacted* by the artist.

The first component – a perceivable structure – is unremarkable and is to be found, albeit with differing emphases and limits, in ontologies developed by Wollheim, Goodman, Levinson, and others. The second component – a unique heuristic path – is, while not unique to Currie, controversial in his presentation of it.[35] What Currie seeks to introduce into the concept "art" by using the term "heuristic path" is an acknowledgement of the constituent importance of the ways in which

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[34] Currie, *An Ontology of Art*.

[35] An ontology in some ways similar has been developed by D. Davies: see Davies, *Art as Performance*. However, while Currie argues that the perceivable structure of an artwork is discovered via a heuristic path, D. Davies argues that the perceivable structure of an artwork is created via a performance. My objection, developed in this chapter, with respect to the conflict between Currie's concept of an artist's discovery of a (completed) work and the reality of a changing garden can, I believe, be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to D. Davies' notion of an artist's performance of a (completed) work. Action ontologies have also been developed by others, although they have not called them that, and "activity" has not perhaps been their motivating concept. For instance, Collingwood's ontology had regard to the mental activity of the artist and the viewer, and D. Davies writes of Danto's ontology that "it is in virtue of the *activity* of the artist" [my emphasis] that one of two objects whose manifest properties are indistinguishable is an art work and the other is not. (See ibid., 41-42.) I discuss Danto's ontology further in Chapter 8, 256-261.

and the actions and thoughts by which an artist forms a work's perceivable structure. He claims that artists who follow different heuristic paths but end up designing perceptibly indistinguishable structures have in fact created different artworks.

For example, if the Dadaist Duchamp were to have produced a perceivable structure identical to *Mona Lisa*, it would not be the same work of art as *Mona Lisa* because we can assume that in producing it Duchamp would have followed a different heuristic path from Leonardo's. Leonardo's heuristic path would possibly have included the requirement to earn a living by painting a commissioned portrait, a wish to reference paintings of the Madonna and, innovatively, the decision to employ a landscape scene as a background to the figure. However, the heuristic path enacted by Duchamp in producing his work would almost certainly have been governed by different matters, including a wish to express a sense of humour and a decision to be true to the tenets of Dadaism. Therefore, Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* and Duchamp's painting are completely different works of art even though their perceivable structures are physically indistinguishable.[36]

With respect to gardens, there are two problems with this hypothesis. First, while a particular perceivable garden structure *could* be the result of following more than one heuristic path, this must remain only a theoretical possibility if Currie intends that identical, enacted perceivable structures can exist simultaneously.[37] Because, gardens are essentially site-specific works. Attempts to produce, via whichever heuristic path, the "same" perceivable garden structure on a different site, or, absurdly, to reproduce it on the site of an existing, identical perceivable garden

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[36] However, as I discuss below, Currie claims that the aesthetic and art-historical values of Leonardo's and Duchamp's perceivable structures are identical and that the physical works are interchangeable. Contrary views have been expressed by, among others, Margolis and, by implication, Borges, the latter in a celebrated short story concerning a fictional author who writes a "new" work by copying exactly an existing work. See: Margolis, "What, after All, Is a Work of Art?."; Jorge Luis Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote," in *Collected Fictions* (Middlesex, UK: Penguin, 1998).

[37] Although he does not discuss the matter, Currie surely intends that identical perceivable structures can coexist. Otherwise, in the case of gardens, how would you be able to judge that they were identical?

structure, must fail.[38] This is unlike the case for non-garden arts. For example, however unlikely it may seem, it is *actually* possible for an open-ended number of perceivable structures identical to what we know as *Mona Lisa* to be created via different heuristic paths and to co-exist. Furthermore, even if the difficulty I have described could be resolved, there would remain one additional, intractable difficulty in the case of gardens: for two identical perceivable garden-structures to co-exist, they would need to have been enacted not only in the same location but at precisely the same moment in time and in identical growing condition, which possibility is remote, to say the least.[39] Therefore, while Currie's Action Type Hypothesis claim that artworks have a perceivable structure and a unique heuristic path may be appropriately hypothesized in the case of gardens, its corollary, that another artist could create the "same" garden via a different heuristic path must, in the case of gardens, remain untestable.

Second, Currie's Action Type Hypothesis implies, but does not make explicit, that any instance of the perceivable structure of an art work is a product of a completed action. It is therefore reasonable to assume that an artist's actions have resulted in her producing a completed work or a completed set of instructions for the performance of a work. This further implies that an artist has foreseen all possible development and changes in non-performance works and has anticipated and found acceptable those developments and changes that might occur in performance works. But this cannot be the case in gardens. Gardens may persist for centuries and are subject to continuous change on all levels, from the geological to the biological. I do not believe it is plausible, or possible, to expect all changes in a garden's contents,

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[38] I develop this claim in detail below in the context of Currie's Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis. The claim depends on a further claim, which I develop in Chapter 8, that gardens are, in Davies' terms, *singular* works of art. (See: Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 1.)

[39] However, it is granted that any number of identical, perceivable garden structures could theoretically exist in theoretical, parallel universes. (For an overview of the concept of "parallel universes," see: Lev Valman, "Many-Worlds Interpretation of Quantum Mechanics," ed. E N Zalta, Fall 2016 ed., *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2046), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2016/entries/qm-manyworlds/>.)

structure, views, etc. over any other than an extremely short period of time to have been foreseen, approvingly or otherwise, by the garden designer. I claim that the Action Type Hypothesis is, on these grounds, inadequate to the case of gardens.

Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis

Currie's Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis claims that the perceivable structure of any art work is capable of being multiply-instanced.[40] This hypothesis enables him to make the controversial claim that works (perceivable structures) that are usually regarded as singular, such as *Mona Lisa* and gardens such as Tupare, are in fact of equal aesthetic value and importance in their original instance *and* in a theoretically limitless number of copies that are physically indistinguishable from the original. In the case of Leonardo's and Duchamp's identical paintings discussed earlier in connection with the Action Type Hypothesis, Currie, in accordance with his Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis, argues that the perceivable structure of Duchamp's work, or any other identical perceivable structure, including, for example, one made by a super-copier, could all stand in for Leonardo's canvas, or vice-versa, without any alteration to whichever perceivable structure's aesthetic or art-historical values.

In my discussion of Currie's Action Theory Hypothesis I claimed in passing that gardens are not capable of being multiply-instanced. I now develop this claim in more detail, in the light of his Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis. In Chapter 4 of *An Ontology of Art*, Currie includes a section entitled "The Problem of Architecture," whose contents may fairly be taken, *mutatis mutandis,* to represent his views regarding gardens.[41] In spite of that section's title, architecture turns out not to be so problematic for the author. He admits that replicating architecture, in his instance the Parthenon, is fraught with difficulty, but claims that it is nevertheless possible. However, I claim that that assertion underestimates the art of architecture and, by

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[40] Currie, *An Ontology of Art*, 85-129.
[41] Ibid., 104-05.

extension, garden making. For, even when it appears to be otherwise, architectural buildings are not in fact replicable, although some aspects of them of course are.[42] This is so because a building, such as Bonython Hall, on the campus of the University of Adelaide, is not simply a construction with internal and external faces. Its walls contain and shape internal spaces, but they also contain, shape, and influence *external* spaces, including spaces bordered by Elder Hall, Ligertwood, and Napier Buildings, North Terrace, Pulteney Street, and so on. In this way, buildings are like sculpture: they animate, form, and influence the spatial environment in which they are placed. This feature is not an "extra." It is an essential function of sculpture, and of architecture too.

Furthermore, all architecture is inevitably part of its geographical setting. Ideally it sets out to merge or contrast with, or otherwise acknowledge its immediate and surrounding geographical setting. And, similarly, all architecture is inevitably an expression of the cultural, social, and historical milieux in which it first appears and then persists. Thus, a Venetian palazzo is one thing in the geographical, cultural, social, and historical setting of Las Vegas and quite a different thing in its native Venice, just as a reconstruction of the Sydney Opera House in Moscow would take on resonances different from that possessed by the original on Bennelong Pont in Sydney.

All these relational and situational features of architecture apply to gardens as well. Gardens also contain, shape, and influence the spaces surrounding them, they animate, form, and influence the spatial environment in which they are placed, and they merge or contrast with, or otherwise respond to, their immediate and surrounding geographical, cultural, social, and historical milieux. And, because of all these factors, gardens are not capable of being multiply-instanced. However, there are five ways in which gardens are even more formidably unique than architecture.

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[42] For support of my view see: Davies, *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*. 141-45.

First, without the interventions of artificial heating, cooling, irrigation, and wind protection, gardens must rely on the resources of the local climate for flourishing. Generally speaking, climates are not replicable with any exactness and for this reason gardens are not replicable on other sites. Although attempts are sometimes made to do this, they often begin with good intentions and end in failure. Second, growth rates and suitability of plants to purpose are governed in part by the geological and pedological make up of the soil and substrate and the resultant drainage patterns. Such a system is not usually replicable, and for this reason too gardens cannot be multiply-instanced.

Third, and related to the comments made above concerning cultural, social and historical settings, views out from gardens are often constitutive elements of the gardens that offer them. But such views, of mountains, the sea, rivers, cathedrals, motorways, and so on, are not usually replicable. Fourth, gardens sometimes have indistinct or highly permeable boundaries, or no obvious boundaries at all. In such cases, how is it to be determined how much of the garden's surrounds need to be replicated in order that the garden may be said to have been successfully re-instanced on another site?

Fifth, at what stage of development or in what state of health or decline should a garden be duplicated so as to be "faithful" to the original? Is it necessary to plant elm species prone to Dutch elm disease to replicate those dying in the original garden? Should the polluted water in the original garden's lake be duplicated to ensure that fish do not thrive in the replica lake? And so on, and on.

The problems raised above do not signal any issues that are unfamiliar to those who have written on gardens and philosophy generally. However, they stand as significant obstacles to Currie's ontological claim that the perceivable structure of any art work in any art genre is capable of multiple instancing. I argue that he has not successfully countered the related issues in the case of architecture, nor has he

acknowledged or addressed them in the case of gardens. Therefore, Currie's Instance Multiplicity Hypothesis is inadequate to the case of these arts.[43]

Before leaving the issue of the multiple-instancing of gardens, it is relevant to note that attempts are indeed often made, with varying degrees of success, to replicate some features and aspects of gardens and garden styles. Witness, for instance, the "English" gardens of early, white antipodean settlement, and their recently fashionable "Italian" successors. It is also right to acknowledge that some show gardens have actually been relocated – for example, from the Chelsea Flower Show to the Middle East. However, such cases are exceptional. Show gardens have usually been designed in the first place without primary regard to their geographical, climatic, pedological, and social contexts. Therefore, a relocation of them to another location, in which they may again fail to have regard to those contexts, may not be as problematic as for typical, non-show gardens. However, I do not consider such relocations to be a successful challenge to my earlier claims regarding the multiple-instancing of gardens. Even it is accepted that some gardens *may* be able to be relocated, it still does not entail that they are replicable: in such cases, the relocated garden is not a replica, it is simply the relocated, original garden.[44]

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[43] There is a further way in which the claim that gardens can be multiply-instanced might be challenged. It might be argued that a particular garden can be multiply-instanced if the original garden is destroyed and a new one, indistinguishable from a particular moment of the original one is installed on the same site. However this claim does not succeed because the replica garden does not represent a multiple instance of the original garden because the original garden no longer exists. The replica garden is thus a (new) singleton, not a co-existing multiple instance of the original. (However, see FN 40, 196, in which I grant that multiple instancing of gardens remains a theoretical possibility in the case of parallel universes.)

[44] In the context of Davies' claims regarding singular and multiple art forms, I argue again for gardens' singular status in Chapter 8, 245-246. Note, however, that Davies overarching division into "singular" and "multiple" categories is, while useful, not employed by all ontologists. Amie Thomasson, for example, argues against overaching ontologies and for the appropriateness of devloping ontologies for each individual artform, if not art*work*. (See Chapter 7, 22-227)

6.4 Gardens Depend on Physical Objects

Richard Wollheim's *Art and Its Objects* was first published in 1968.[45] In it, Wollheim presented what he called the physical-object hypothesis. In arguing for the hypothesis, he first proposes a common enough division of the arts into one category whose works are singular, such as oil painting and sculpture, and another category whose works typically exist in multiple copies or performances, such as novels and music. An example of a work of art in the former category is *Mona Lisa,* and examples of ones in the latter category are *Ulysses* and *La Traviata* respectively.

According to Wollheim, singular art works are identifiable with actual physical objects. Thus, *Mona Lisa* is identifiable with the poplar panel Leonardo painted around 1510 and called "Mona Lisa." This ontological position differed significantly from other contemporary ontologies, especially those referred to by Wollheim as "Ideal," and "Presentational." For Wollheim, the Ideal ontology was represented by Croce, Collingwood, and their followers. Their ontology entailed that a work of art was a type of mental production, and that the physical "art" object or event functioned solely as a tool to access an artist's real (mental) work of art.[46] Presentational ontology was represented for Wollheim by the formalist aesthetics tradition, which stretched from Bell to Greenberg and beyond. The Presentational ontology required that anything other than the immediately perceptible aspects of a work be deemed irrelevant to a work's aesthetic interest and value. In the case of extreme formalists, such as Clive Bell, all expressive and representational content was to be ignored. Wollheim, on the other hand, went to some lengths in *Art and Its Objects* to argue how such features of a work could in fact be transmitted via a

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[45] Richard Wollheim, *Art and Its Objects:An Introduction to Aesthetics* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968).

[46] Had Wollheim been writing later he would surely have included D. Davies' action ontology, discussed in the previous section, in his "Ideal" group.

physical-object artwork and that they therefore did not need to be considered external to the work.

However, in 1980, *Art and Its Objects* was republished.[47] This time it included "Six Supplementary Essays," one of which was entitled "A Note on the Physical Object Hypothesis." In this brief essay, Wollheim declines to support his physical-object hypothesis, writing that "I suspend judgment on its truth." He argues instead for an "'aesthetic object theory,'" claiming that "the likeliest, though not the sole alternative to holding the physical object hypothesis is to posit, for each work of art in question, a further individual, or an 'aesthetic object' with which the work of art is then identified."[48] Thus, a work of art remains for him an object but is no longer identifiable with, say, the physical object – that is, the canvas, applied paint and frame – of the painting Leonardo called "Mona Lisa." *Mona Lisa* has now become an *aesthetic* object.

For Wollheim, the concept of the aesthetic object allows for the conceptual safeguarding of what he refers to as the aesthetic character and the aesthetic condition of a work.[49] Acknowledging a work's aesthetic character involves drawing a distinction between what Wollheim now saw as the merely physical, and the aesthetic characteristics of a work of art. And acknowledging a work's aesthetic condition involves allowing that a work may be aesthetically privileged at a particular stage of its existence. For example, a bronze may acquire a patina that enhances it aesthetically at the same time as a fresco may become grimy, less aesthetically pleasing and therefore in need of restoration.

Wollheim's acknowledgement that aesthetic objects have constituent, changing character and condition aspects that need accounting for amounts to an (unstated) simultaneous acknowledgment of important ontological aspects of gardens and our experiences of them. However, Wollheim does not take the

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[47] Richard Wollheim, *Art and Its Objects: An Introduction to Aesthetics*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK, 1980).
[48] *Art and Its Objects:An Introduction to Aesthetics*, 177.
[49] ibid., 178.

opportunity to explore those aspects in the case of gardens (by my reckoning, he devotes eleven words to the subject of gardens). Furthermore, an earlier acknowledgment of these same "new" aspects of artwork-objects would, on its own account, have amounted to an inevitable rejection of his original physical object hypothesis if that hypothesis had been tested against the case of gardens. In my discussion below, I examine the notions of character and condition principally in relation to the aesthetic-object hypothesis, on the grounds that Wollheim himself has as good as rejected his physical-object hypothesis.

I begin by quoting Wollheim's eleven words pertaining to gardens. In a section discussing art works which change over time, he cites as an example "or William Kent's garden at Rousham, conceived of with full-grown trees." It is a clause that is of interest because of the three assumptions which underlie it. The first and second assumptions are not controversial: many people, including some philosophers, would agree that gardens can be works of art and that Kent's famous garden at Rousham is such a garden. The third assumption is, however, more controversial, and can be broken down into two smaller elements: gardens are to be viewed as unchanging pictures and not as processes; and, a garden maker has it in mind that her garden will be a work of art only at the time when the trees and other living elements of it are at a particular size and age.

The first element implies that gardens are simply static visual images, or pictures, rather than continuously changing images. However, almost all garden designers and gardeners design and garden in the knowledge that plants and gardens change continuously and that aesthetic interest and value, and other benefits accrue to the gardens of those who are successful in anticipating and managing such changes.[50]

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[50] Nevertheless, this view is often ignored in popular opinion regarding gardens, and in philosophy. A preference for a bottom-up approach to developing art ontologies is expressed by Thomasson. See: Chapter 7, 226-227.

The second element is related to the first element. Element one treats gardens as if they are static: element two acknowledges that even though gardens do change there is still a time when they are "at their best," that is, presumably, most like the work of art the designer intended visitors to enjoy. To be absurd about it, it could be argued on this view that Kent's Rousham was/is/will be a work of art only at and for a given moment, and then only if we have evidence of Kent's intentions in this regard. In such an instance, the commonly heard apology from garden owner to visitor that, "You should have been here last week," assumes altogether different proportions.[51]

Before examining Wollheim's aesthetic-object hypothesis below in terms of its application to gardens, I need to detour briefly through his physical-object hypotheses because that will provide useful background material when it comes time to discuss his aesthetic-object hypothesis.

Wollheim's physical-object hypothesis is of particular interest to the case of gardens because gardens are generally more "physical" than any other art works. For example, we can live in a garden and we can eat its produce. Birds, fish, animals, and insects live and feed in gardens. Gardens have many features that are indistinguishable from features found in the non-garden world. Gardens have important elements that are growing, changing and dying. And, so on. All these and many more features of gardens makes them undeniably real in ways and to a degree that most other art objects are not.[52]

But this very realness of gardens, which Wollheim's physical-object hypothesis seemed tailor-made to explain, would have defeated that hypothesis if

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[51] Furthermore, this view is coincidentally rejected in the light of the positions adopted in ecology and other biological sciences, whereby expressions such as "climax vegetation" and "climax species" have long been considered inappropriate by some, in part because of their teleological and anthropomorphic implications. See: G W Selleck, "The Climax Concept," *The Botanical Review* 26, no. 4 (1960).

[52] This leads Miller to claim that, "because they live and they incorporate our bodies," gardens' various effects on us may be made "with an unusually compelling force." See Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 5.

Wollheim had attempted to apply it. This is so because, with the possible exception of architecture, no other fine art so confuses us with claims of being *simultaneously* part of art and part of life. Gardens objects are in every sense real and "of this world," with everything that entails, at the same time as they are works of art, with all that entails. So, although Wollheim could easily and sensibly have accounted for a garden's being a physical-object artwork, he would have had difficulty attempting to account for the same garden's *simultaneous*, quotidian existence as a physical-object non-artwork.

The case I am making here, that gardens and some architecture are simultaneously "real" objects and works of art, differs from, say, the case of painted canvases being removed from walls and used as stretchers during war time. In the latter case, a painting is mis-used *qua* art by being used as a stretcher. A canvas is expected to be in a frame and on a gallery or church wall. Most art gardens, by contrast, are meant to be used. They are not just to be looked at: they are to be lain in, eaten in, weeded, and so on. It is expected that their shade will be enjoyed and, sometimes, their produce consumed. They are simultaneously real and works of art in a manner unique among art genres.[53]

Wollheim's aesthetic-object hypothesis represents a considerable modification to his earlier physical-object hypothesis. In the case of gardens, his acknowledgment that works of art have both aesthetic and non-aesthetic components, and that these may vary over time, goes some way towards an ontology adequate to their case. However, the hypothesis only goes so far, and I now offer two reasons why it in fact ends up being inadequate to the case of gardens.

First, the aesthetic-object hypothesis acknowledges that art works have aesthetic and non-aesthetic components. Thus, in a garden, we are used to distinguishing between the roses and statuary on one hand and the ice cream van parked just inside the gate on the other. However, the hypothesis is unable to

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[53] I discuss the theories of Danto in this regard in Chapter 8, 257-262.

account for the very many, more complex cases where garden elements, and our experiences of them are simultaneously aesthetic and non-aesthetic, or that alternate between being aesthetic and non-aesthetic, or vice-versa, in quick succession or during different seasons. To the examples already given above I would add activities such as sun-bathing, chasing a peacock, adding your "song" to the bird song, or simply eating a garden apricot and washing your hands in the fountain.

Second, and more importantly, the aesthetic-object hypothesis acknowledges that some works of art *do* change and that, in such cases, unless the artist's intentions in this regard are clear, a decision needs to be made about whether such changes are for the better or worse and, therefore, whether works are aesthetically privileged at some or other time of their existence. Thus, a stone building may be enhanced by its gradually acquired patina while a timber building's appeal may be lessened by the peeling paint on its woodwork. But in the case of gardens, unless the designer has specifically indicated otherwise, it is fruitless to speculate on whether a garden is better aesthetically at one time than at another. Because, the whole point of gardens is change. Without growth, decay, death, flowering, seeding, furling, unfurling, and so on, gardens cannot exist.

So, Wollheim's aesthetic-object hypothesis turns out to be inadequate to the case of gardens, even though it sets out to address the issues of realness and change that are paradigmatic to the case of gardens. It is inadequate principally because it fails to accommodate the continuous, sometimes unpredictable, but aesthetically important and valuable changeability of gardens' living elements.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined in detail the ontological positions of three philosophers who have made important contributions to the field during the last 50 years. I have claimed that their positions fairly reflect a representative range of views from across the ontological spectrum. I have found their actual or inferred ontological claims to be inadequate to the case of art gardens. In Chapter 8, I offer a

preliminary account of an ontology of art gardens that celebrates, rather than ignores or problematizes, their mutability and singularity.

PART IV

BREAKING NEW GROUND

Chapter 7

Theories and Ontologies *or* Theory and Ontology

7.1 Introduction

My principal aim in this chapter is to explore a range of philosophical positions currently held with respect to the definition, theory, and ontology of art, and some individual arts, in order to establish the need for and provide a firm foundation for my attempts to develop a theory and ontology unique to gardens in Chapter 8. I begin by describing briefly how this chapter relates to those that have preceded it. I then rehearse the differences in meaning and intent between "definition" and "theory" as they are currently understood in the literature. Next, I chart developments in the fields of the definition and theory of art from the mid-20th century onwards and then I do the same for the ontology of art. I explore the developments in these fields in two ways. First, I review the writings of a representative range of philosophers prominent in the fields of the definition and theory, and ontology of art. Second, I examine implicit and explicit claims made with respect to these same matters by contemporary philosophers, and practioners in other disciplines, who have written specifically about gardens.

I have claimed that philosophical aesthetics lost interest in gardens sometime around 1800 and that it was not until the last third of the 20th century that philosophical aesthetics – now restyled as the philosophy of art – showed a renewed interest in them. I have argued that the 19th-century's lack of interest in gardens occurred because, for a variety of reasons, gardens no longer measured up to the contemporary requirements for being considered works of art. I have also shown that, despite their renewed interest during the last decades of the 20th century, philosophers have found it difficult to confer arthood on gardens.

In proposing reasons why, according to some, gardens have not always measured up as works of art, I have been reporting on how gardens have been measured at different times against a variety of criteria for assessing arthood. These criteria have been embodied in contemporary definitions of art and in theories of arthood and the ontology of art, and my interest in this chapter is both in such definitions, theories, and ontologies themselves and in any applications they may have to the case of gardens.

Clearly expressed summaries of the different functions and characteristics of "definition" and "theory" are to be found in Stephen Davies' "Essential Distinctions for Art Theorists."[1] In this work, Davies begins by distinguishing between "real" and "nominal" essences.[2] Using gold as an example, he poses two questions: "What is gold?" and "What is the meaning of 'gold'?" He says that an answer to the first question seeks to describe "what makes something gold," in other words to describe gold's real essence, or, in philosophical terms, the necessary and sufficient conditions for something's being gold; whereas an answer to the second question seeks to describe the meaning(s) we might attribute to the linguistic term "gold," in other words to describe gold's nominal essence. As a "natural kind," gold has a real, invariant essence based on its "distinctive atomic constitution," but that real essence is not available to "unaided human perception." Conversely, gold's nominal essence stems directly from our human perceptions of it. A full description of gold's nominal essence "would need to mention, among other things, its social and cultural significance and its place in human history. In other words, it must consider why gold matters to us." And the same is the case with "art." Davies thus uses "definition" to denote a description of real essence and "theory" to denote a description of nominal essence. In his opinion, "[a] successful definition [of art] must specify a set of properties all and only artworks possess and in virtue of which they are artworks,"

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[1] Davies, "Essential Distinctions for Art Theorists."
[2] Ibid., 23-28.

whereas, “a theory of art can be more general in discussing what is typical or normative for works of art” and “is bound to reflect on art’s significance within human lives and affairs.”[3]

However, in spite of Davies’ clarity with respect to this distinction, it will become clear in what follows that philosophers of art have sometimes used “definition” and “theory” interchangeably (for example, see the quotation from Kivy cited on page 217 below, where he appears to use “a single theory” and “a single real definition” coterminously within the same sentence).[4] It should also be noted that the principal definitions of “art” that were developed and espoused before the mid-20th century simultaneously defined art *and* offered reasons for its “significance within human lives and affairs.”[5] In what follows, in cases where uses of the terms “definition” and “theory” may prove confusing – see the quotations from Weitz and Lopes – I will insert in square brackets the term which I believe more accurately conveys the philosopher’s intended meaning in the light of Davies’ distinction.

7.2 Definitions and Theories

Philosophers were uninterested in gardens during the 19th and early 20th centuries, and during the late 20th century a small number of them entertained the possibility of rehabilitating gardens as works of art. The philosophers who at those times ignored or sought to include gardens in the category of “art” typically relied on a generic, one-size-fits-all definition of “art.” The traditional philosophical preference for such all-encompassing definitions, with their attendant necessary and sufficient conditions, meant that philosophers narrowed the extension of the defined term,

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[3] *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*. 32.

[4] The equivocation between “definition” and “theory” is not unknown elsewhere in philosophy – see, for example, Alvin Goldman’s work in the 1980’s on “knowledge” and “justification” in epistemology – and, for some, a definition that includes both a subject’s real and nominal essences is desirable. However, in what follows, I will follow Davies’ distinction because it usefully illuminates the cases I address.

[5] I discuss this further below. (See 212)

thereby excluding objects and activities which might otherwise have counted as "art." Since the time of Plato, who proclaimed all (what we now think of as) art to be a matter of imitation, there has followed a series of equally all-encompassing definitions, that all art is expressive of emotion, or exhibits significant form, or relates to an historical art narrative, and so on. Thus, the notion that a single definition of "art" could somehow accommodate all individual artworks in all genres was taken for granted by philosophers until the mid-20th century, and that assumption is still held by some. Furthermore, up until that time, the successive definitions had each, on Davies' terms, fulfilled the dual roles of providing a definition and underpinning a theory of relevance, importance, and value for art.

The notion of a single definition/theory of art remained largely unchallenged until the mid-20th century, when Morris Weitz published his influential paper "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics" in 1956.[6] Although, as Kivy notes, the American philosopher Dee Witt Parker was already questioning whether all art indeed had a common essence as early as 1939, from around the time of Weitz's paper, a growing number of philosophers of art has emerged to challenge the necessity, appropriateness, and usefulness of single one-size-fits-all definitions and/or theories of art.[7] These philosophers may have differing agendas, and arguments, but they all agree that unique definitions and/or theories for individual art genres might usefully be developed.

In "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," Weitz challenges the traditional historical definitions of "art." He rejects, among others, mimesis, formalism, and expressionism on the grounds that while each has purported to be a complete definition of "art," each has necessarily rejected artworks, genres, and styles that were non-compliant with the definition. For example, invoking his arguments it might fairly be concluded that although Palestrina's masses are universally

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[6] Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics."
[7] Kivy, *Philosophies of Art: An Essay in Differences*, 32.

acknowledged to be works of art, according to the contemporary mimetic definition they cannot be works of art because they are generally acknowledged to be non-mimetic. Similarly, it seems reasonable to suggest that those 20th-century formalists who would claim Wilfred Owen's *Anthem for Doomed Youth* as a work of art on account of its formal virtues only have thereby largely missed the point of the poem.

Weitz argued that each of the historical definitions was partially correct and partially incorrect and that each necessarily rejected conflicting evidence to give an illusion of completeness. Each definition assumed a "closedness" of the concept, which he argued was inappropriate for the concept of art. He rejected the possibility of *defining* anything other than the constructed and closed concepts of logic and mathematics and argued that art's creative dimension made it importantly open to change and novelty, and that it was therefore particularly undefinable.

Instead, Weitz claimed that art had an "open texture," which it shared with the term "game."[8] And this similarity with "game" enabled him to introduce the Wittgensteinian notion of family resemblance, which Wittgenstein originally developed using "game" as his exemplar. In this way, Weitz proposed replacing all definitions of art with a description of the family resemblance between the *arts.* Such a description would reflect the non-essential nature of the arts, acknowledge their "complicated network of similarities overlapping and crisscrossing," and reflect their possession of "no common properties – only strands of similarities."[9]

Weitz's rejection of the historical definitions of art did not involve a simultaneous rejection of art theory. His rejection of the historical definitions was purely on the grounds of their being inadequate as definitions, and he at the same time accepted their putative usefulness as theory. He wrote: "To understand the role of aesthetic theory is not to conceive it as definition, logically doomed to failure, but to read it as summaries of seriously made recommendations to attend in certain ways

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[8] Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," 31.
[9] Quotations from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* appear in: ibid., 30-31.

to certain features of art."[10] The foundational importance of his paper for my project of attempting to present a unique account of aspects of gardens in Chapter 8 lies in its pioneering rejection of a definition, as opposed to definitions, of art, and its strong support for the development of theories of art that are not in thrall to art definitional projects. Weitz wrote, "I wish to reassess theory's role and its contribution primarily in order to show that it is of the greatest importance to our understanding of the arts," including, as I aim to demonstrate, the art of gardens.[11]

In these circumstances, it is ironic to consider that during the 50 or so years following Weitz's publishing of "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," new definitions of art's essence have appeared at an historically unprecedented rate. Several of these definitions, including those put forward by Danto, Dickie, Levinson, and Carroll, embraced the challenge of incorporating the radical creativeness that had challenged Weitz. In fact, that radical creativeness may be seen to have been the generating impulse for all these philosophers' definitions of art's essence.

However, the first of the post-Weitzian definitions did not aim to be inclusive of the products of the radical avant-garde. It appeared in 1958, in Munroe Beardsley's "Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism," and defined art in terms of aesthetic functionalism.[12] Beardsley claimed that something was a work of art by virtue of its ability to provide an aesthetic experience: a work of art was "an arrangement of conditions intended to be capable of affording an experience with marked aesthetic character."[13] This was followed by Danto's definition in his 1981 volume, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace.*[14] That definition sought to establish why a seminal "work of art," such as Warhol's *Brillo Boxes* (1964), was art whereas its

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 28.

[12] Monroe C Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*, second ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1981).

[13] Ibid., 299.

[14] Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*.

quotidian equivalent – mere Brillo boxes – were not.[15] Danto stated that art was to be distinguished from (perceptually indistinguishable) non-art by virtues of its "aboutness." "The former," he wrote, "are about something (or the question of what they are about may legitimately arise)."[16] Next came Dickie's institutional definition. Although later modified from its initial publication in 1974, its central premise, that art was to be defined not by any intrinsic qualities it might have but in virtue of the relationship the would-be art object or event enjoyed with the artworld, remained unchanged.[17] The importance of a work's relatedness was retained in definitions offered subsequently by Noël Carroll, and Jerrold Levinson. In Carroll's case, a work of art was an object or event that stood in a particular relationship to its artistic predecessors and, in Levinson's case, it was an object or event that could be fitted into a coherent narrative with past art. These relational definitions have been followed more recently by the disjunctive definition proposed by the philosopher Robert Stecker, in which works of art may either exhibit aesthetic functionalism, *or* they may satisfy the requirements of Dickie's Institutional definition, *or* they may exhibit the relatedness to the past that Carroll or Levinson requires. And finally came the cluster concept definition, promoted most notably by Berys Gaut. Gaut proposed a list of ten criteria, none of which is necessary but some (one?) of which is sufficient for something's being a work of art.[18] His list includes, for example: "possessing positive aesthetic qualities;" "belonging to an established artistic form;" and, "being formally complex and coherent."[19]

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[15] Brillo is a well-known brand of household cleaning products in the United States. "Brillo boxes" refers to the boxes in which the Brillo products are packaged, transported, and displayed. The title, *Brillo Boxes*, refers to artist Andy Warhol's work, which comprised an arrangement of hand-made Brillo boxes that looked in all respects identical to their machine-made, everyday equivalents. See: Andy Warhol, *Brillo Boxes,* 1964. Stable Gallery.

[16] Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*, 82.

[17] George Dickie, *Art and the Aesthetic* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1974), 31.

[18] Gaut, "'Art' as a Cluster Concept."

[19] Ibid., 28.

I have listed all these definitions because, with the exception of the cluster concept, whose usefulness has otherwise been questioned on the grounds that a theoretically limitless number of criteria might be added to Gaut's list without destroying its intent, the definitions have all received convincing counter-arguments concerning what each of them has defined as the essence of art. Therefore, it appears that despite the flurry of definitional activity over the past 50 years, the situation is little changed from that described by Weitz in 1956: any definition purporting to be a complete definition of "art" must necessarily end up rejecting artworks, genres, and styles that are non-compliant with that definition and therefore be inadequate as a definition of "art."

However, as I indicated earlier, there is another approach to answering the question of what a work of art is and that involves enquiry into art's, and the arts', *nominal* essence(s). There are several contemporary philosophers working in this field and I introduce below the work of three of them: Peter Kivy, Dominic McIver Lopes, and Aaron Meskin.[20] A plausible extrapolation from the writings of these philosophers is that the way forward in the areas of the definition, theory, and ontology of art lies not in developing or refining a single, overarching, multi-art-genre definition, theory, or ontology but in devising singular, genre-specific definitions, theories, and ontologies. In Chapter 8, I consider these matters with respect to gardens and it is with this in mind that I now examine these philosophers' claims in some detail.

Kivy uses the case of abstract music to construct a fascinating historical narrative of the history of definitions of art from the 18th century onwards.[21] There is not space to examine his narrative here, but a short summary of what I take to be its key point follows. Invoking Carroll, who writes that "one might say that a great deal of modern philosophy of art is an attempt to come to a philosophical understanding

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[20] Although there are others working in this field, I believe that these three represent fairly the range of views being presented at this time.

[21] Kivy, *Philosophies of Art: An Essay in Differences*.

of the productions of the avant-garde," Kivy explains how the rise of the art theories of expressionism in the early 19th century and of formalism in the early 20th century were in their own ways as much attempts to grapple with contemporary avant-gardes as were the definitions of Dickie, Carroll, and other philosophers during the later years of 20th century.[22]

Kivy cites the failure of formalism *à la* Clive Bell and Roger Fry to accommodate adequately what he calls contentful (i.e. representational in the conventional sense) art as a turning point in the quest for a single definition of the essence of art. "It seems to me that at this point in the history of aesthetics one might well have begun to doubt seriously whether a single theory, a single real definition, could lasso both the contentful arts and absolute music together in the same modern system."[23] According to Kivy, the search for the Abbé Batteux's *même principe* for all the arts foundered at that time and needed to find new directions.[24] One of these directions, the Weitzian one, I have already described, and it involved moving away from the notion of defining "art" altogether. The other direction, pursued initially by Danto and Dickie, involved a continued search for *un même principe* for the arts, but their search, and that of some of those who followed, was for a completely different sort of property – an extrinsic, relational property – that might serve to unify the arts.

Kivy's response to this dilemma has been to develop philosophies of *individual* arts, most notably literature and music.[25] He concludes that the search for a unifying principal, while useful on its own account, "has blinded the philosophical

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[22] Noel Carroll, "Historical Narrations and the Philosophy of Art," *Journal of Aesthetics & Art Criticism* 51 (1993): 314. Quoted in: Kivy, *Philosophies of Art: An Essay in Differences*, 6.

[23] *Philosophies of Art: An Essay in Differences*, 28.

[24] For a brief discussion of Batteux's treatise, see Chapter 2, 81.

[25] For example, see: Peter Kivy, *The Performance of Reading : An Essay in the Philosophy of Literature*, New Directions in Aesthetics (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006); *Introduction to a Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

community to a bevy of questions of more than trivial importance, involving the arts not in their sameness but in their particularity."[26]

Lopes argues along different lines but reaches a similar conclusion in "Nobody Needs a Theory [definition] of Art."[27] He claims that the two main streams of definitions of "art" in the 20th century, that is the functionalist and the proceduralist streams, each evolved in response to the provocations of avant-garde works. To the aesthetic functionalists, these provocative works were ruled to be beyond the art pale. For the proceduralists, the same works provided the stimulus to revolutionize the concept of art by claiming that certain of art's non-perceptual qualities were to be the basis on which something was deemed to be or not be art, and therefore, according to the revised "art" concept, those same provocative works were deemed to be works of art. Lopes argues that while each of these definitional streams has provided new and useful insights, the better way to have dealt with the troublesome avant-garde works would have been through the development and application of theories of the individual arts and individual artforms. For instance, *Fountain* might more usefully have been considered as a visual or sculptural art work, and *4'33''* as a musical work, rather than their being considered as art *simpliciter*. He claims that "there is nothing left to explain when you have [adequate] theories of the art forms and the arts," and that the subject needs to be changed from art to arts and artforms.

Further argument against the art definitional project is provided by Meskin.[28] He agrees with Weitz concerning the possibility and utility of defining "art." He postulates that, as the "most plausible" of the contemporary (i.e. post-Weitzian) definitions of art have given no guidance on the important matters "of interpretation, evaluation and appreciation" of artworks, it may be reasonable to propose that

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[26] *Philosophies of Art: An Essay in Differences*, 53.

[27] Lopes, "Nobody Needs a Theory of Art."

[28] Meskin, "From Defining Art to Defining the Individual Arts: The Role of Theory in the Philosophies of Arts."

definitions of the individual art forms might be more useful in these respects.[29] However, he points out that Weitz himself suggested that "many of art's various sub-concepts (i.e., the art form and genre concepts) cannot or should not be defined."[30] And with this suggestion Meskin also agrees. Meskin proposes that the various art forms may indeed be indefinable – or at least not usefully definable in terms of their unique values, processes, meanings, and so on. Using comics as a case study, he claims that the definition of them that appeared in a recent book-length philosophical study remains inadequate despite its author's best efforts.

Meskin's claim is that neither "art" nor "arts" can be usefully or profitably defined. He cites Zangwill: "This issue does not concern the word 'art'. . . . We want to know about a range of objects and events, not about the words or concepts we use to talk about those things. We are interested in objects, not concepts – the world not words."[31] Meskin asserts that definitions of art and of the various arts are not, and never have been, necessary for adequately and legitimately experiencing, evaluating and criticizing works of art. Echoing Kendall Walton (see below), he claims that it is sufficient that we know "enough about how the various art forms, genres, and styles work." And finally, he concludes: "We may need theories of the arts but I do not see any reason to think that we need definitions."[32]

If, then, Kivy's, Lopes', and Meskin's shared claims, that theories, not definitions, should be developed for individual artforms and genres, what should the characteristics of such theories be? How are we to be guided in developing a theory of, for instance, gardens? What sort of theory would adequately account for Tupare? I believe that an important and widely read paper of the American philosopher Kendall Walton offers some direction in answering these questions.

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[29] Ibid., 143.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Quoted in: ibid., 139.
[32] Ibid., 143-44.

While Weitz's "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics" may be claimed as a direct, if distant, precursor to the work of Kivy, Lopes, and Meskin with respect to the arts' nominal essence(s), Walton's 1970 paper, "Categories of Art," may be seen as an indirect, though important, contributor to the sympathetic philosophical environment within which those philosophers could develop their claims. The aim of Walton's paper was to provide support for a limited intentionalist position. However, the paper's examination of the unique combinations of properties characteristically present and absent in works in a given art genre, and the psychological claims flowing from that examination, can be seen as adding weight to Weitz's quest for new ways of theorizing about art.[33] Walton's paper can be taken to endorse the view that theories of art that do not account for the unique and uniquely important features that are characteristic of different art forms and genres are not useful. Furthermore, his paper indirectly questions what characteristics an adequate account of a specific artform might possess and for which characteristics of that art form an account might need to have regard. Walton's paper is therefore relevant, even though indirectly, to my aim of presenting an adequate, partial account of gardens in Chapter 8 and I present some of its key points below.

Walton offers an alternative to the projects of defining or developing classificatory theories of art, or individual arts. Instead of definition(s), his project concerns normative and evaluative aspects of the arts. He is concerned with determining and categorizing the aesthetically relevant properties of the different arts and thereby providing a psychological framework for the *appreciation* of artworks. His paper indirectly facilitated the replacement of the quest for establishing the unifying factor(s) of all the arts with an acknowledgement, even a celebration, of the potential differences of method, materials, processes, and so on, that different art genres, styles and even, in some cases, individual works, exhibit or possess.

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[33] Walton, "Categories of Art."

As I interpret it, Walton's aim in "Categories of Art" was to counter the claims of Wimsatt and Beardsley's "The Intentional Fallacy" by arguing that a work's aesthetic properties are not solely discoverable in the physical work itself.[34] He wrote: "If a work's aesthetic properties are those that are to be found in it when it is perceived correctly, and the correct way to perceive it is determined partly by historical facts about the artist's intention and/or his society, no examination of the work itself, however thorough, will by itself reveal those properties."[35]

In arguing for this claim, Walton elaborated in detail on what he described as "standard," "variable," and "contra-standard" properties of works of art in a given genre. I will not expand on these properties here other than to say that in recognizing them in a work of art that we are experiencing we are, albeit almost always unconsciously, recognizing that we are in fact hearing a sonata; and, we do not mistakenly think that we are reading a poem, for example, or looking at a painting, or watching a ballet. Walton argued that this was the case because certain properties of, say, a poem, are standard, variable, and contra-standard for poetry and that these properties, although not perceptually present in the poem, need to be taken account of if we are to appropriately experience or criticize that poem. It is not appropriate, for instance, to experience that poem as a sculpture for the reason that sculptures possess different, though still non-perceptual in the work, standard, variable, and contra-standard properties than poems do. In summary, he claimed that we will be categorizing a work appropriately, i.e., as a poem rather than a sculpture, if (a) it has a relatively large number of properties standard for the category of poems, (b) the work "comes off best" when experienced as a poem, (c) the artist intended it to be perceived as a poem, and (d) poetry was a recognized art genre in the society in which it was produced.

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[34] W. K. Wimsatt Jr. and M. C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy," *The Sewanee Review* 54, no. 3 (1946).
[35] Walton, "Categories of Art," 363-64.

A straightforward example may clarify Walton's claims. We are right in experiencing Anthony Trollope's *Barchester Towers* as a novel. It has many features standard for a novel, such as being a prose narrative, having chapters, having a plot and various characters, etc. It has some features variable for a novel, such as its comic elements, its fictitious locations, and its exposition of ecclesiastical intrigues. I am not aware of any contra-standard properties it possess, although the presence of pages of musical notation, or the author's requirement to stroke or smell the pages while reading would qualify as such. Furthermore, *Barchester Towers* works well as a novel, Trollope intended it to be a novel, and novels comprised a well-known art genre in the Victorian period. So, for all these reasons, our experience and criticism of *Barchester Towers* as a novel is appropriate even though the evidence supporting these reasons is not able to be perceived *in* the novel. In this way, Walton was able to counter the anti-intentionalist claims of Wimsatt and Beardsley.

Walton does not discuss gardens. Had he done so, it is reasonable to assume that he would have sought to establish their standard, variable and contra-standard properties, and the role those properties play in appropriate experiences and theories of gardens. In other words, if Tupare is to be categorized as a Waltonian "garden," what does that tell us about Tupare and its aesthetically relevant features, and how we experience and evaluate them.[36] In Chapter 8, I claim that the aesthetically relevant features of Tupare, and all gardens, are intimately bound up with their ontology, as, therefore, are the reasons why we value them and find them interesting.[37]

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[36] Tupare is presented in some detail in Chapter 1, 43-55.

[37] There remains one incidental matter to consider regarding theories of art and I introduce it here in the interests of completeness with respect to my assessment of Suzanne Langer's philosophy of art and its applicability to the case of gardens. (I have earlier considered, and rejected, Miller's and Ross's application of Langer's theories to the case of gardens.) If, as has been argued above, it is preferable that unique theories be developed to suit individual art genres, what should be done in the case of the so-called hybrid arts, such as ballet and opera? For instance, in the case of opera, what role should the theories of music, drama, and dance each play in determining the (hybrid) theory of opera? What relative aesthetic weight should be given to the roles of these arts in the work? These

7.3 Ontologies

Commentary on the ontology of art and art genres has been occurring since the time of the Ancient Greeks but it was not until the 20th century that it came to assume a prominent role in philosophical aesthetics. Just as in the case of art's definition, this flourishing of interest in art's ontology was stimulated in part by troublesome products of the 20th-century avant-garde. And today, and in part because of the continuing challenges of the avant-garde, the ontology of art represents one of philosophical aesthetics' most important and contested areas of endeavour.

Unlike definitions and theories of art, which seek to establish under which conditions works of art exist, the ontology of art seeks to establish what sort of *entity* is a particular thing, or type of thing, which has already been determined to be art.[38] It considers what material(s) and form(s) constitute the work of art, and the mode(s) in which the work exists. It determines "the conditions under which a work of art comes into existence, remains in existence and is destroyed and also the conditions under which works of art are *one and the same.*"[39] It considers whether works of art are physical, imaginary, or abstract objects, or whether they are actions, and whether the identities of works of art are physical, mental, or imaginary.

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questions are given a very straightforward answer by Langer. With regard to Wagner's claim that his operas were *Gesamtkunstwerke*, she writes: "The *Gesamtkunstwerk* is an impossibility, because a work can exist in only one primary illusion, which every element must serve to create, support, and develop. . . . Wagner's operas . . . are music, and what is left of his non-musical importations that did not undergo a complete change into music, is dross." [Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*, 164.] But I believe Langer is mistaken in this. Typically, a survivor of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* comes away with an impression of that work in which music is more akin to a *primus inter pares* than being solely constitutive of the work. I believe that Langer's requirement that each art form has a single, unique illusory field leads her to this unsatisfactory conclusion. She does not make it clear why, given her requirement for each (non-hybrid) art to have its own illusory field, that the same requirement should not be applied to the "hybrid" arts too. Had Langer done, so she may have gone on to develop unique theories of opera, dance, and even gardens, that may have been as fascinating and insightful as those she developed for the majority of the traditional arts.

[38] Thomasson, "The Ontology of Art," 78.

[39] Amie L. Thomasson, "Debates About the Ontology of Art: What Are We Doing Here?," *Philosophy Compass* 1, no. 3 (2006): 245.

The ontology of art is of important purely philosophical interest and value, especially in its relationship with metaphysics. However, it can also be practically important and useful and, in this vein, Davies writes that "some classifications and interests are likely to be more revealing of why and how art is created and appreciated . . . [and that] . . . it is these that our ontology should reflect."[40] Such practical applications may include: (a) guiding viewers, conservators, and valuers towards knowing how much a painting can change through deterioration or restoration and still remain the same work; (b) in the case of less than word- or note-perfect performances of plays and musical works, guiding critics and recording producers towards knowing, say, how many wrong notes are needed before it can be said that a particular symphony is no longer being performed; (c) establishing which properties of a work are essential and which are accidental; (d) establishing how a work is to be displayed; and (e) establishing what aspects of a work it is appropriate to evaluate and interpret.[41]

The recent history of the ontology of art exhibits three trends which I call "conservative," "radical," and "innovative." I will very briefly describe the conservative and radical trends before spending some time outlining the case for adopting the innovative trend as the preferred method of determining the ontology of art works and genres. And it is this innovative approach that I will adopt in my discussion of gardens' ontology in Chapter 8.

The conservative approach, exemplified by, for example, Wollheim, and Wolterstorff, acknowledges that some works in some art genres, such as painting and non-cast sculpture, are to be identified with their physical objects, and that works in some other genres, such as music and literature, are abstract types, of which individual performances and instances are tokens. I call this approach conservative

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[40] Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 1.

[41] Thomasson, "Ontological Innovation in Art," 119.

because it rightly acknowledges that one single ontological theory is inadequate to capture the highly diverse range of art works and genres.

By contrast, the radical approach, exemplified by, for example, Currie, and D. Davies, claims that one single type of ontological entity encompass all art works and genres. In Currie's case, his theory requires that all artworks are *enacted*. They are constituted not by any particular tangible object but by the combined experience of the physical object and the artist's heuristic path in creating it.[42] This approach I have called radical because it ignores any differences between art genres and contradicts the widely held, common sense notions of what almost all artists, critics, and the public hold to be intuitively "true" about art objects and their experiences of them. It has been said that we should reject such radical ontologies, "which would take everyone to be massively mistaken about . . . [artworks'] identity and persistence conditions."[43]

The innovative approach is most readily associated with the work of Thomasson. I will not examine here her claims for works of art being abstract or concrete artifacts.[44] My interest is primarily in the grounds on which she has judged existing ontologies of art to be inadequate, the qualities which she claims successful ontologies need to have, and the issues successful ontologies need to address.

Thomasson is clear that "'What is the ontological status of the work of art?' is an ill-formed and unanswerable question."[45] She claims this to be the case on the grounds that "art" seems not to be "category specifying."[46] She further claims that

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[42] See my discussion of D. Davies' ontology in Chapter 6.
[43] Thomasson, "Debates About the Ontology of Art: What Are We Doing Here?," 250.
[44] Ibid., 247.
[45] Ibid., 250.
[46] Ibid.

ontology has lost its way and that a preference for what she terms the "discovery" mode of acquiring ontological knowledge has lead us "badly astray."[47]

Her solution to these apparent dilemmas is to propose that we have got things the wrong way about. Instead of beginning ontological investigations by bringing traditional ontological conceptions to bear on art we should, for a start, make our investigations genre- if not work-specific, and then investigate that genre's or work's nature while not treating it as some mind-independent thing. "Instead, we must follow the method of analysing the conception embodied in the practices of those competent speakers who ground and reground reference of the term."[48] In this regard, "would-be grounders have some forms of epistemic privilege," and this generally depends on "background practices already in place that co-evolve with the use of the art-kind term."[49] And it is only at that point that relevant "features may then be drawn out in more formal philosophical theories of the ontology of the work of art – explicitly describing . . . their relevant formal category, . . . existence conditions and relations to human intentions and physical objects and processes, and their boundaries and individuation conditions."[50]

In summary, Thomasson is arguing for an ontology of art which, at least in its initial formulation, results from a bottom up rather than a top down process. She argues that more accurate and appropriate ontologies of the arts will emerge from studies of the practices and unspoken precepts, traditions, and so on that are reflected in the art activities, and their practitioners and critics, than will emerge from massaging and manipulating art works and genres into categories that ill fit

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[47] Amie L Thomasson, "The Ontology of Art and Knowledge in Aesthetics," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Ciriticsm* 63, no. 3 (2005): 221.

[48] Ibid., 226.

[49] Ibid., 225.

[50] Ibid., 225-26.

them and that inadequately explain, or contradict, the ontological qualities that "competent speakers" assume them to possess.[51]

Thomasson concludes that we need to "develop broader and finer grained systems of ontological categories," not only to better understand the traditional arts but also to come to terms with the ontologies of new artforms such as internet and street based arts."[52] I would add to this the need to develop adequate ontologies for art genres that may not be new but which have been previously largely ignored in this respect including, especially, gardens.

7.4 Definitions, Theories, Ontologies, and Gardens

In the preceding section, I have presented claims made by a range of contemporary philosophers regarding the theoretical desirability of developing art-form specific theories and ontologies of the arts. In this section, I review implicit and explicit claims in this regard made by contemporary philosophers, and practioners in other disciplines, who have written specifically about gardens. There is agreement among these commentators that gardens comprise a unique art form and, among some of them, an agreement that any account of gardens ought to reflect this uniqueness.[53] I agree, and claim further that accounting for gardens' unique *ontology* needs to be the primary focus of any adequate philosophical account of gardens.

For the two contemporary philosophers most prominently involved in writing about art gardens, the unique qualities such gardens possess are problematic. Both Miller and Ross wrote their seminal works at a time when there still existed in some parts an assumed "requirement" to consider and assess any art form in terms of its fit

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[51] Thomasson is not alone in thinking along these lines. For example, Davies writes of the novel: "Just what is crucial to a story's or novel's identity is likely to be settled by reference to its genre and the literary practices, conventions, and histories on which it draws." (Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 2.3.)

[52] Thomasson, "The Ontology of Art," 88.

[53] For the exception, see Chapter 4, 146-147.

with, and success or failure when assessed against, a pan-art conception of art.[54] Without the tasks of (Miller) proving that in spite of definitional problems gardens can be art and (Ross) showing that gardens were art in the 18th century but not since, their important books would be considerably smaller. In other words, they both spent time squeezing gardens into or out of the (an) "Art" conception. By not worrying about whether or not gardens measured up to "Art," and in the light of more recent theorizing, they may well have structured their important books differently. To a degree, by simply replacing "problem" in their books with "attribute," this present chapter becomes in part redundant. However, as I hope to show, the task is more complex than that, and important "new" dimensions of gardens become evident when the model of "Art" is abandoned as the ultimate criterion of conceptualization and assessment of garden art. In her Introduction, Ross writes that her book addresses the "fundamental question of aesthetics, namely, 'What is art [singular] and what does it do for us?'," and her book is strongly focussed on assessing how gardens do or do not measure up to "Art."[55] Later in the book, although she argues that the influence of *ut poesis pictura* "waned after the publication of Lessing's Laokoön (1766), which argues that painting and poetry serve separate tasks," she nevertheless persists with what is for her a fundamental question: "In asking what gardens can do and what they can be, I am really asking in what ways they resemble their sister arts."[56] She describes the by-now-familiar range of gardens' "problems" for the "Art" conception, thereby perhaps acknowledging inexplicitly the inadequacy of that conception to the case of gardens.[57] And, in

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[54] See: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*.

[55] *What Gardens Mean*, xii.

[56] Ibid., 50, 24.

[57] The by-now-familiar range of gardens' "problems" includes: the lack of authorial control; the mutability of the garden object; the environmental, immersive, multi-sensual character of gardens; the naturalness of gardens' materials; gardens' spatial/temporal nature; gardens' combination of art and nature; gardens' functionality and potential usefulness; the non-art interest in and value of gardens' materials; and so on. Succinct accounts of gardens' "problems" are to be found in: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 73-91; Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," 376-77.

similar vein, Miller titles the relevant sections of her book "Problem 1," "Problem 2," and so on.[58]

Writing later, Salwa is explicit in his dissatisfaction with the use of non-garden models for conceptualizing gardens.[59] With reference to poetic and painterly models in particular, he writes that "they result in a reductive enclosing of gardens in a grid of concepts offered by art-centered aesthetics that remain blind to those aspects that can be grasped by aesthetics of nature," and he goes on to develop his performance based model for conceptualizing gardens.[60]

The architect and garden writer Jan Birksted discusses the requirements for an adequate account of gardens (and landscapes).[61] He contrasts the theoretical and disciplinary requirements of a garden history-and-theory discipline with the requirements of those he terms adjacent disciplines, including, in particular, art history. His requirements confirm and extend those expressed implicitly and explicitly by the philosophers discussed above, whose concern was for the discipline of philosophy alone. Concerning the documentation and re-presentation of gardens, with which philosophy and garden theory both necessarily engage, he writes: "The risk is converting landscape and gardens into documents without dealing with their particularity and specificity as presentations – which are not purely visual nor simply two-dimensional and static."[62] Furthermore, he claims that the "adjacent disciplines have their own particular methodological approaches, theoretical positions and explanatory rationales, which tend not to take into account the specifics of landscape [or the garden] – its diverse materialities, complex visualitites, [and] composite dimensionalities."[63] And therefore, "the challenge that falls to landscape and garden history and theory is to devise ways of dealing with

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[58] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 73-91.
[59] Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance."
[60] Ibid., 385.
[61] Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool."
[62] Ibid., 8.
[63] Ibid., 6.

observation and analysis of domain-specific form and representation when considering the (extra)visual and mobile beholder in landscapes and gardens' three-dimensional space and time."[64]

Landscape architect Bernard Saint-Denis and garden historian John Dixon Hunt offer perspectives on the matter from their respective disciplines. Saint-Denis seeks the essential nature of (all) gardens, and thus their distinctiveness from other arts, by contrasting the classically inspired Italian garden of the Villa Lante with Gilles Clément's controversial *jardin en mouvement* at Parc André Citroën in Paris.[65] And Hunt suggests that his own tasks as an historian are made more difficult by the tendency of philosophers to "parry and thrust over definitions of garden art without much commitment to its actual messy, material, and changeful world."[66]

Implied in the claims of Birksted, Hunt, Saint-Denis and, to a lesser degree, those of Ross, are ekphrastic concerns. Words, static images, and film cannot adequately re-present or describe a garden or garden experience, and the interpretation of gardens by way of some other art form (e.g. poetry, painting, or performance arts) may be illuminating in the cases of some feature or style of gardens but remains an inadequate re-presentation or description of an actual garden.[67] Furthermore, considering the process in reverse, attempts to design gardens based on paintings or music may produce effective gardens but, inevitably, the essence of the paintings or music gets left behind in the process. For example, Julie Moir Messervy's *Music Garden* in Toronto takes as its inspiration Bach's *Suite No. 1 in G Major* for unaccompanied cello *and* a performance of the suite by cellist Yo Yo

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[64] Ibid., 8.

[65] See: Bernard St-Denis, "Just What Is a Garden?," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* 27, no. 1 (2007).

[66] Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 7. However, philosophers may choose to take some comfort from art historian James Elkins, who proposes that garden writing may be vague and reverie-like because gardens themselves may possess a "dreamy quality" and thus inspire a sympathetic style of writing and "analysis." See: J Elkins, "On the Conceptual Analysis of Gardens," *Journal of Garden History* 13, no. 4 (1993).

[67] For brief references to some ekphrastic issues raised by gardens see: Hunt, "Beyond Ekphrasis, Beyond Sight, Beyond Words….".

Ma.[68] But the garden is necessarily unable to reproduce the sonic experience which is the *sine qua non* of any performance of the Bach *Suite*. Similarly, the *illusion* of three-dimensional space which, according to Langer, characterizes the painting art form, is necessarily lacking when Derek Jarman returns to the themes of his *Avebury Paintings* in the *actual* three-dimensional designed spaces of his much-discussed garden at Dungeness.[69]

In sum, it is necessary to develop an artform-specific account of gardens.[70] Existing accounts undersell gardens when they measure them against the "Art" criterion. Such accounts necessarily ignore, misrepresent, or treat as problematic many of gardens' unique and essential qualities, and the ways in which we experience them. With the exception of Cooper, it is made clear by philosophers writing on gardens that it is only with some difficulty that gardens fit into pan-art accounts of art.[71] For example, Miller admits there is a problem when, commenting on the perceived non-acceptance of some paradigmatic "art" gardens into the fold of fine arts, she writes that "we're obviously doing something wrong here."[72] Salwa claims that gardens are not "standard artworks" for philosophers because they contain "too much nature."[73] And he adds, more forcefully:

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[68] For a description of the garden see: ""A Lyrical Landscape: Toronto's Waterfront Music Garden Bridges All the Senses."," *Country Living Gardener*Jan.-Feb. 2003, 72

[69] See: Michael Charlesworth, "Derek Jarman's Garden at Prospect Cottage, Dungeness, and His Avebury Paintings," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes: An International Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (2015). For Langer's description of paintings illusory field see *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*, 84-85.

[70] Thomasson would argue that in some case an art*work*-specific account may be appropriate. I comment on this in Chapter 7, 225-5-227.

[71] Cooper swims against the time when he claims that the art status of gardens is philosophically uninteresting because the questions it raises are "too close to similar and familiar ones asked about other artworks to raise [any] novel issues." (See his *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 12.) I contend that the contents of this study thus far do not support Cooper's claim.

[72] Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 91.

[73] Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," 375. However it is necessary to begin by rejecting the idea, implicit in the quotation from Salwa, that there is any such thing as a standard artwork. It is hoped that one outcome of this chapter will be to show that gardens, at least, comprise a unique or, if you prefer, non-standard art form.

> if we – as it is traditionally done – take painting, poetry or architecture as our points of reference, then we can, indeed, state in the Platonic vein that gardens lack an artistic essence for not only do they have no structure typical for arts, but also they are too ephemeral, changeable or unstable to by analysed in any way and thus to have any 'conceptual foundations'.[74]

Gardens comprise a highly various art form. The conceptual and physical distances between, say, Schwartz's important *Splice Garden*, which contains a small number of highly-stylised plants, all of which are plastic, and the high-summer lushness of Monet's garden at Giverny can scarcely be ignored. Although those gardens do share qualities – for example, both are designed external spaces characterized by an "excess of form," the use of natural materials, and an openness to the sky – they exemplify quite different aesthetic issues.[75] In *Splice Garden*, one might be prompted to question whether a work of garden art can be (virtually) static and contain only plastic plants and, at Giverney, one might question how much seasonal change it is possible for a work of (garden) art to sustain and still remain conceptually the same artwork.

As well as gardens being highly various, their materials exhibit a degree of ontological hybridity. With reference to the hybrid art of ballet, Davies writes that it "is not unusual . . . for displaying a range of not clearly differentiated ontological types," and that "even among non-hybrid artforms, most are ontologically various."[76] Within a single garden, individual components of differing ontological types may co-exist. In a typical Italian Renaissance garden, for example, some constructed components of the garden function ontologically in the manner of relatively static architectural or sculptural features and some natural features such as topiary trees and shrubs function similarly; whereas fruiting trees, the changing

[74] Ibid., 377.
[75] See my discussion of Miller's definition of gardens. (See Chapter 5, 131-143)
[76] Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 6.

planting infill in parterres, and animated water are relatively ephemeral elements whose ontologies are more easily conceptualized in non-architectural, non-static ontological terms such as those associated with perhaps dance, music, or mobile sculpture.

Gardens are also highly various epistemologically. They can be understood and experienced, with varying degrees of appropriateness and with the caveats discussed in earlier chapters, as paintings, poems, architecture, sculpture, and performances, or even, simultaneously or sequentially, in combinations of these ways. For example, in gardens such as Stourhead, discussed in Chapter 3, a visitor can appropriately attend to statuary, architecture, and set-piece and changing painterly scenes, to written, poetic, and emblematic inscriptions, and to multi-sensory stimuli including the kinaesthetic experience of progress around the garden's circuit, with its contested metaphorical associations.[77]

The kinaesthetic modes of experience, whether real or imagined, and of appreciation have not gone unremarked in the case of Stourhead, but they are of fundamental interest in the case of all gardens that are able to be physically entered. Along with the olfactory, tactile and auditory senses, the importance of kinaesthesia as a component of garden understanding and experience has typically been underemphasized, if not ignored. One reason for this is the ekphrastic challenges the experiences of those senses pose for written or verbal description and analysis.[78] Such challenges are certainly greater than those described above with reference to the painterly, architectural, and poetic experiences of gardens.

7.5 Conclusion

[77] See: John Dixon Hunt, "Emblem and Expression in the Eighteenth-Century Landscape Garden," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4, no. 3 (1971): 295-310; *The Figure in the Landscape*; "Stourhead Revisited & the Pursuit of Meaning in Gardens," 328-38.

[78] See, for example, the acknowledged inadequacies of my description of Tupare in Chapter 1.

The second half of the 20th and the early 21st centuries have seen unparalleled activity in the fields of defining and theorizing about art and art's ontology. Although some philosophers continue the traditional search for an adequate, essentialist definition of art, there exists an expanding contemporary growth in interest in developing what Davies calls nominal definitions of art. There exists also a simultaneous call to dispense with the definitional task altogether, at least in situations where clarification of the ways in which we understand, appreciate, and evaluate art are at stake, and to replace it with the development of a theory, rather than a definition, of art.

The value of *a* theory of art, as opposed to theories of the individual arts, has also been increasingly questioned. Some philosophers now claim that only individual, genre-specific theories can adequately illuminate the reality of art, both *qua* art and as it is experienced in individual art forms. Furthermore, there has been a recent tendency to question traditional, some would say simplistic, ontologies of art and to replace them with ontologies which more adequately capture the ontological nuances of individual art forms and even artworks.

In summary, the recent general, philosophical literature demonstrates a growing inclination away from generic, one-size-fits-all definitions, theories, and ontologies of art towards ones that are tailored to the realities, and take cognizance of the aesthetically relevant features, of the individual art forms. It also highlights a gradual change in focus away from art considered as an abstract concept to art considered as a range of meaningful, pleasurable, and valuable objects made by and for humans.

A preference, sometimes only implied, for accounts and ontologies that are tailored to the realities and take cognizance of the aesthetically relevant features, of *gardens* is also to be noted in recent writing on gardens. And, recognizing the claims of Birksted, Salwa, and Hunt in this regard, as well as those of the "non-garden" philosophers Kivy, Lopes, Meskin, and Thomasson, it is such a account of gardens that I present in the following chapter.

Chapter 8

Towards an Account of Gardens

8.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, I analysed the garden of Tupare with respect to the issues it raises for philosophical aesthetics. Those issues can be divided into two categories: definitional and non-definitional. The definitional issues relate to Tupare's arthood and the artist status of its maker. The non-definitional issues relate to the garden's ontology and temporality and our experience of and epistemic access to the garden.

In subsequent chapters, I examined the ways in which those issues have been addressed by philosophical aesthetics and found that there are numerous inadequacies in the literature with respect to both the definitional and non-definitional issues.

In Chapter 7, I summarized the relevant literature and claimed that useful accounts of the arts are likely to be genre-specific and concentrate on non-definitional matters. In other words, we need theories, not definitions, and we need individual theories for the different art forms.

In this chapter, I develop a new, partial theory of gardens that addresses the principal non-definitional issues raised in Chapter 1 with respect to Tupare. It is, in other words, a theory that explains how and why Tupare and other gardens function and why they are of interest and value to us. The theory is offered as a "conclusion," or response to the questions raised throughout the thesis with respect to the adequacy of existing historical and contemporary philosophical accounts of art gardens.

I agree with Hunt that the root cause of the majority of "problems" gardens have caused for philosophical aesthetics stems from the discipline's unwillingness to

engage with the reality of gardens' "actual messy, material, and changeful world."[1] In other words, philosophers have ignored or misconstrued gardens' ontological reality. My new account focuses on gardens', and their materials', ontology, and the experiential and epistemological consequences that flow from that ontology

I proposed that a useful heuristic device for understanding how we appreciate a garden *qua* art is "personhood," and this idea is developed with respect to each of the three aspects of gardens discussed in the chapter. Art has theories, but I suggest that the phenomenology of personhood usefully illuminates some aspects of gardens. In particular, I claim that the ways in which gardens maintain their identity over time, the ways in which we experience them, and the ways we understand and engage with their mundane materials may all be usefully illuminated by comparisons with how persons maintain their identity over time and how we experience, understand, and engage with other persons.[2]

8.2 Ontology

Stephen Davies separates all art into two primary ontological categories: works are either singular or multiple in their instances. He subdivides the multiple works into two partially overlapping sub-categories: multiple works are either for performance or not; and, multiple works are transmitted either via exemplars or via sets of instructions. "These ontological divisions," he writes, "are fundamental to the ways we conceive and describe art."[3] I agree that this is the case, and in this chapter I propose that all gardens belong to the singular ontological category.[4] In terms of

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[1] Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 7.

[2] Salwa gives some unitended, indirect support for this approach when he writes of the difficulties associated with analyzing gardens through the lens of other, non-garden art forms, including painting, poetry, and architecture. (See Chapter 7, 231-232)

[3] Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 1.

[4] I am less inclined to agree with Davies' attenuated claims elsewhere regarding multiple ontological categories for single artforms. For example, Davies writes of architecture: "A reasonable, though messy, conclusion might accept that, among art buildings, some are singular and others are multiple,

Davies' claim, there that are two ways of justifying this proposition: I can either show that no gardens are multiple or that all gardens are singular. In this chapter I attempt to produce evidence to justify both of these positions.

Gardens Are Not Multiple

Gardens have similarities with some multiple artforms, including multiply-instanced works, such as woodblock prints and cast bronzes, and works for performance. These similarities have been noted by Davies, whose comments in this regard I introduced in Chapter 6, and by Mateusz Salwa in his recent paper, "The Garden as a Performance."[5] Both writers imply that gardens may, with some qualifications, be multiply-instanced. A reasonably inferred claim from Davies is that gardens may be multiply-instanced in the manner of, say, woodblock prints or cast sculpture, and Salwa claims that gardens are akin to performances.[6] In the paragraphs that follow, I reject these claims because I believe they are incorrect. However, equally, I believe that the reasons I provide for rejecting them need to be aired because they can teach us more about gardens' ontological complexity.

In *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*, Davies considers the possibility of architecture (buildings) being artworks with potential for multiple instancing.[7] He writes that, in a very small number of cases, builders and other tradesmen could construct more than one building from the same set of drawings and that the "copied" buildings and their settings *could* be virtually indistinguishable from each other, and

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with no stark division marking the boundary between the two." (ibid., § 2.2.) Of poetry, he writes: "We should accept poetry's ambivalence, without trying to force it unnaturally to fit only one ontological category." (*The Philosophy of Art*, 95.) And of musical works in the genres of rock, Gregorian chant, classical, and folk music, he writes: "Works within a single artistic type can display considerable variety in their ontologies." (ibid., 94.) (An account of rock music's unique ontology is to be found in: Theodore Gracyk, *Rhythm and Noise: An Aesthetics of Rock* (London: I. B. Taurus, 1996), 1-36.

[5] See Chapter 6, 186-193, and Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance."

[6] Davies makes his claims in terms of architecture but I believe it is reasonable to consider them in the context of gardens, as I do in the following paragraphs.

[7] Davies, *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*. 139.

from an original building if there was one. He suggests that, in that limited sense, buildings *could* be performances enacted by performer-builders, performer-plumbers, and so on, in accordance with the architect's drawings. However, he rejects this idea on the grounds that neither builders nor plumbers understand their relationship to the drawings and the product to be that of a creative interpreter in the way that, say, an actor playing the role of Hamlet understands his relationship to Shakespeare's text and the play's performance. Davies therefore decides that when buildings *are* capable of being multiply-instanced they are more akin to works in non-performance art genres, such as lithographs and moulded bronze sculptures, the production of which requires executants who are skilled but are not typically regarded as "artists" of the objects they produce. Furthermore, I would add to Davies' reasons for rejecting the notion of performance in architecture the fact that it is the finished, unchanging building that is generally considered to be the putative artwork, rather than the process (performance) of its erection.

However, I claim that there are five important reasons why gardens, and buildings, are not akin to multiple works such as, for example, woodblock prints. First, it is essential that an originary woodblock (template) is executed and that it continues to exist for as long as new woodblock prints are to be made from it. By contrast, it is not essential that a garden plan is ever made. A garden can come into being via many routes. There may be a detailed plan, but a garden may equally be the result of a rough sketch or verbal instructions, or it may develop in a seemingly haphazard manner in the absence of any clear directional drawn or verbal "plan." Second, once a garden is made it must continue to change, or die. An individual woodblock print generally does not change markedly and, if it does, it may be restored to its original condition. Third, woodblocks relate to the prints derived from them in a close, causal, relationship. No such relationship exists between a garden plan, if one exists, and its built embodiment. Fourth, a woodblock embodies all the features of any prints made from it. At best, a garden plan provides a degree of spatial information. There is no agreed method for a plan to provide the temporal

information all gardens require to exist successfully, whether their lifespan be six or six hundred seasons. Furthermore, because a woodblock embodies all the features of prints made from it, a woodblock may be the source of many near-identical prints. Gardens are not reproducible in this way. They are context dependent and context influencing to a degree unparalleled in the arts.[8] Fifth, Davies claims that an artwork exists if the woodblock itself exists. No instances of it need exist.[9] Similarly, if all prints from a woodblock are destroyed the work survives. The same claims cannot plausibly be made for gardens.

Although I have rejected the idea of gardens being multiple works, there are two respects in which some atypical gardens do in fact share features with them. First, gardens designed for show or competition purposes, for which physical, geographical, and climatic contexts are largely immaterial, may be considered performances because such gardens are theoretically able to be "performed" on more than one occasion and in more than one location. They are even able to be "performed" simultaneously on different continents, just as is the case for traditional works for performance.[10] Second, scrupulously detailed plans of such gardens may bring to mind the originary templates of non-performance multiple works, such as lithographs and cast sculptures. However, these features do not entail that gardens are performances, or non-performance multiple works. Just as in the case of the Renaissance gardens discussed earlier, show and display gardens' aesthetically relevant features do not usually supervene on physical properties, such as their locations and seasonality, or on their relationships with their geographical and

[8] See my discussion of gardens' non-reproducibility in Chapter 6, 197-200.

[9] Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 2.3. It should be noted that not all philosophers agree with Davies that the template for a work is itself an instance of that work.

[10] Note that I am using the terms "performance" and "performer" in the traditional sense of referring to arts such as ballet, music, and theatre and to those who execute works in those art forms. I discuss the pan-art performance concepts developed by Currie and D. Davies in Chapter 6.

climatic environments and social and historical context.[11] Nonetheless, those properties still exist in such gardens, and gardens therefore remain singular works.

There is a further respect in which gardens can be likened to performances: both gardens and performances necessarily exist in a temporal dimension. However, simply existing in a temporal dimension does not necessarily equate to being a performance. Davies writes of non-performance works with a temporal dimension, such as novels and un-performed poetry, that "temporality is not part of their identity *qua* work-instances, because the works they are of do not require in their instances a more or less given duration." By contrast, "it is only works that do require [a more or less given duration] that can be performed." Furthermore, "performances are events that take place in continuous chunks of real time, where the duration (and separation) of those chunks is a function of the identity of the piece the performance is of."[12] So, drawing a long bow, it might be said that a spring garden can only be "performed" for a specific number of days each year, after which a specified length of "intermission" follows before its next annual "performance." Similarly, gardens based on nocturnal flowering and scents do not exist in that form during the day, nor bog gardens during times of drought. Nor can a visitor jump forward to the summer garden during winter, although, as I explain later in this chapter, the direction and duration of the visitor's *experience* of a garden is itself temporally unconstrained.

There is yet another way in which gardens may be likened to performances. This conception was introduced by Salwa in 2013.[13] Unlike D. Davies' performance conception, which was developed in a pan-(performance)art context, Salwa's conception has been developed specifically around the case of gardens. He cautions that his conception is merely one, potentially useful, metaphorical way of regarding

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[11] See Chapter 7, 200.

[12] Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 2.5. Also see: Levinson and Alperson, "What Is a Temporal Art?," 441, 42, 45.

[13] Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance."

gardens. He further cautions that his claims are epistemological; but, as will become clear, they also entail some ontological implications, which I address below.

Salwa rejects what he sees as the standard comparisons of gardens with paintings, poetry, and architecture because he correctly claims that they undervalue gardens' temporality and dynamism, and the role(s) nature plays in them.[14] He also correctly claims that gardens' nature-like qualities have to be minimized when considered under such non-performance art concepts. Under his garden-performance conception, nature performs in the garden. It contributes freely its "dynamic, changeable and temporal character." Gardens are understood to be "'constant processes,' or 'actions' performed by nature and partially planned by humans."[15] On Salwa's view, gardens combine nature and culture and overcome that (perceived) dichotomy by performing it.[16]

Understanding gardens as performances usefully emphasizes their event-like and processual character and their mutability. However, even bearing in mind Salwa's caveat that his claims are epistemological, understanding gardens in this way also reasonably entails five ontological or quasi-ontological consequences, the first two of which are welcome and the latter three of which are problematic.

First, Salwa says that just as in the case of, say, composers and compositions, a garden designer "will never see her piece accomplished, performed once and for all."[17] With regard to performances in general, (S.) Davies finds this view less than convincing but I believe it accommodates well the continuously dynamic nature of gardens, which must embrace events ranging from Dutch elm disease infection, gales, and drought through to the to the subtle introduction into the garden of new turf

[14] See ibid., 372, 80-82. I have made preliminary comparisons between gardens and music, and gardens and dance, which attempt to take these factors at least partially into account. See: "We Do Not Have an Adequate Conception of Art until We Have One That Accommodates Gardens."; "Music, Gardens, and Time."

[15] "The Garden as a Performance," 381, 83.

[16] Ibid., 373. This view appears to reject the widely held view of "nature" as a cultural construct.

[17] Ibid., 382.

cultivars.[18] In this way, the appearance of a garden changes continuously until that garden is destroyed. But that does not entail that gardens are performances.[19]

Second, if the garden is understood to be a performance, and visitors to be performers in it, then one can ask with Salwa whether the performance is authentic or, indeed, valid? "Do we and does nature perform in the way it was planned by the architect or gardener?"[20] And this may be a useful critical and experiential question to consider.

Third, performances have a determined beginning and end and, usually, a pre-determined starting and finishing time. By contrast, although a visitor's access to a garden may be limited to particular opening times and durations, a garden's existence is not usually bound by such constraints.

Fourth, performances not only have beginnings and ends but they also often have internal divisions for artistic reasons (overtures, acts, movements, entr'actes, etc.) and for human reasons (intervals). Thus, performances can stop and start as required and in this way they are unlike gardens, whose processes are necessarily continuous.

Fifth, gardens cannot be performances because they lack performers. It is reasonable to claim that gardens possess some constitutive features in common with performance art forms, such as theatre and dance, because their appeal is in part the result of a viewer's paying attention to objects which are perceived (mainly) visually and which change in various ways over time and in space.[21] For example, in dance a viewer's attention is in part properly directed towards changes in the form, aspect,

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[18] For Davies' view see: Davies, "Ontology of Art," § 2.6.

[19] Non-garden works are starting to appear whose temporal extent is extremely long and whose identity is therefore unknowable by any one person. For example, John Cage's *As Slow As Possible* is currently being played on an organ in Halberstadt, Germany, in a performance that will not finish until 2640. More extreme by far is John F Simon's computer based visual work *Every Icon,* any completed performance of which is estimated to take "several hundred trillion years."

[20] Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," 384.

[21] However, the changes in gardens are more frequently multi-sensory than is the case in other performance arts. For example, changing and moving scents are smelt, moving water of a certain temperature is touched, blowing wind is felt, etc..

and location of dancers and their costumes and props. And just so in gardens, a viewer's attention is properly directed to the ways in which living and inanimate objects change, or remain the same, with regard to their form, aspect, or location; or, in Salwa's terms, to how they perform. But performers perform by intentionally interpreting instructions provided in a script, score, or choreography, or they improvise in response to some stimulus provided to them or derived by them from their environment. Therefore, plants do not perform. When a gladiolus flowers, or merely exists, it does not do so in response to a designer's instructions: it does so because that is what a gladiolus does at a certain time in its life cycle. While it is true that a garden designer may have located a gladiolus in the knowledge (and hope) that it would produce a red flower on or close to a particular day, I argue that, even if all goes to plan and the gladiolus flowers on the "correct" day, that does not entail that the gladiolus is performing, because the gladiolus is not interpreting and following the designer's instructions in this, or any other, regard. Furthermore, plants cannot have intentions and are on that account incapable of performance.[22]

A final distinction can be made between the changing form and aspect of living materials in a garden and the performance arts. In dance, for example, a dancer's being in the early stages of pregnancy, or growing (imperceptibly) older during the performance, are immaterial to the aesthetic content of a ballet, whereas it is precisely such processes of natural change that are at the heart of a garden's aesthetic appeal But this does not entail that gardens are performances.

An interesting comparison can be made between John Cage's notorious music performance piece *4'33"*, in which whatever ambient sounds occur constitute the performance, and a garden, in which whatever is going on might be said to constitute the "performance" also. But, in the case of Cage's work, the three constitutive aspects of performances that I have referred to above are all put firmly in

[22] For an interesting contrasting view see Micahel Marder's account of plants performing the unperformable, i.e. vegetal growth: Marder, "The Place of Plants: Spatiality, Movement, Growth."

place by the composer. In the first place, the very title of the work specifies a beginning and end, and results in an exceptionally and unusually tightly defined duration. Second, the piece has an internal sequence of "events," indicated in the score by the instructions for page turning by the performer(s) at pre-determined intervals. And third, detailed instructions are provided to the performer(s) about how to perform the work, including, as is well known, instructions to not make any sound at all. So, while 4′33′′ remains controversial as a piece of music, and while it is acknowledged that whatever happens during its duration provides its content, it remains uncontroversially a performance because it fulfils the three important criteria required for the constitution of a performance. And the case of 4′33′′ reinforces the fact that a garden, even though whatever happens in it may be said to constitute the work, is not a performance because it fails to satisfy the same three criteria.

However, there is one important way in which gardens are like *4′33′′*. I have already remarked on this similarity but it is worth repeating because it differentiates gardens not only from other performance works but also from paintings and sculptures; and furthermore, it is constitutive of the nature of gardens. Whatever sounds occur during a performance of *4′33′′* and whatever is going on during a visit to a garden constitute the composition or garden on that occasion. Performances of *4′33″* occurring in a soundless anechoic chamber or in a noisy shopping mall sound completely different but still constitute performances of the same work. Similarly, a visit to a flowerless woodland garden on a hot summer day differs radically from a visit to the same garden on a misty day in early spring, when the trees are bare and the camellia flowers glow in the damp air, yet a garden visitor easily accepts that both visits amount to visiting the same garden. However, a visitor's easy acceptance of such differences in the appearance of a garden does not entail that she is viewing a performance. Rather, as I explain in the following section, it means that gardens constitute a uniquely changeable, but still singular, art form.

Gardens are Singular

One of the most obvious differences between singular and multiple artworks is that the former admit of little change, except for purposes of restoration, and conservation, whereas multiple works admit of considerable change over time. It might therefore be expected that gardens are some type of multiple art, but I have rejected that possibility above. In this section, I claim that gardens are indeed singular, and that they are so in spite of the degree to which they change, and in spite of the similarities some may have with some multiple work art forms.

Some gardens are relatively a-temporal and stable. For example, many highly formal Italian Renaissance gardens change very little over time. In these types of gardens, elements that are subject to change are regularly – sometimes even daily – restored to their "original" condition by activities such as raking of grass and gravel, and pruning of topiary plants. Such gardens may usefully be considered as an equivalent to traditional singular artworks, such as paintings, sculptures and architecture, which are "restored" by regular or occasional maintenance to what is considered to be a preferred aesthetic state or condition from some prior moment of time.

Ironically, such singular works (gardens) may *appear* to be open to being multiply-instanced because they *appear* to be unchanging and are typically less affected instrumentally and contextually by their physical environment. However, such gardens are no more open to being multiply-instanced than gardens in more changeable styles are. Such gardens do still change, engage with their physical context and react to climate and weather, although admittedly to a lesser degree than other gardens.[23]

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[23] It is interesting to note the coincidence, in the case of these realtively unchanging gardens, between gardens' features and gardens' aesthetically relevant properties. These gardens are spatially clearly delineated and contained and often comparatively unchanging, *and*, aesthetically relevant properties of these gardens typically did not supervene on physical properties such as location, relationship with environs, seasonality, and mutability.

However, such a-temporal gardens have not been the dominant model for Western gardens since the Renaissance, and throughout this study I have stressed the important and distinctive mutability and temporal nature of post-Renaissance Western gardens and their materials. These qualities arise principally from the naturalness of living garden elements and from the predictable and unpredictable environmental effects of weather and climate, and seasonal and diurnal cycles. Gardens exist and persist in four dimensions. In experiential terms, they are spatio-temporal entities whose visual, tactile, aural, olfactory, kinaesthetic and, at least in a promissory sense, gustatory stimuli are always changing. Their mutability and temporal nature give rise to ontological complexities which, until most recently, have been, among the arts, unique to the case of gardens.[24]

When a visitor views or otherwise experiences any garden, that garden is at that time always, and inevitably, unlike that garden at any other time in its existence. It is different in countless ways from the "same" garden that existed a minute, day, week, year, or decade ago. Yet it does not usually seem that way to a visitor. In some cases that may be because the differences are slight. But in other cases, such as the visual contrast between visiting an iris garden in summer and then in winter in a cold climate, when the visitor sees no leaves or flowers but plenty of snow, the differences are striking and obvious.[25] How are such complexities to be accounted for? How is this extreme degree of mutability to be explained in the context of the other, unchanging, singular arts?

The answer to this conundrum is that we (unwittingly) accept that gardens are "allowed" to change and retain their singular identity just as is the case for humans, and I suggest that thinking of gardens' ontology in this way may be more helpful

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[24] New artforms which have emerged during the last 40 or so years, including land, environmental, installation, and computer art also exhibit somewhat similar, complex ontological characteristics.

[25] I believe it is reasonable to claim that the degree of mutability exhibited, and accepted, in some gardening styles – such as the iris garden mentioned above – is unique to gardens, and surpasses that of the traditional performance arts and the type-token multiple arts.

than trying to align gardens with ontologies traditionally associated with other art forms.[26] Gardens change because their principal components are alive and because they are subject to changes wrought on them by environmental and human agencies. In these ways, gardens are importantly like humans. Humans too are living, and are altered by environmental and human impacts on them. And, just as we readily accept that a person remains the same person despite their being at different times premature, obese, tanned, ill, blond, hirsute, educated, lonely, or an amputee, so too we accept the same garden's being at different times newly planted, badly maintained, bare of leaves, full of flowers, mature, storm damaged, or lacking a view it formerly had. Many of these changes in persons and gardens are the predictable outcome of natural cycles but others are less predictable, or completely unexpected, and result from impacts caused by the environment and humans.

Davies writes that factors pertinent to a work's identity include: "the work's genre, style, and medium, its creator's intentions, and the work's relation to the artist's body of works, to other works to which it refers or by which it is influenced, to the art-historical setting in which it originated, and to the wider social and political environment."[27] I agree with this list but would now add, contra Davies, that in the case of gardens, "the work's genre . . . and medium" entail that its identity is similar, but not identical, to the identity of humans, plants, and animals.[28]

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[26] I employ this intuitive, non-technical conception of personal identity only as a heuristic device. Within philosophy, the topic continues to be hotly-contested. For example, the "worm" theorists believe that a persisting object is composed of the various temporal parts that it has. They believe that all persisting objects are four-dimensional "worms" that stretch across space-time and that you are mistaken in believing that chairs, mountains, and people are simply three-dimensional. By contrast, the "stage" theorists take an object to be identical with a particular temporal part of it at any given time. So, in a manner of speaking, a subject only exists for an instantaneous period of time. For an overview of the topic see: Andre Gallois, "Identity over Time," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N Zalta (Summer 2012).

[27] Davies, *The Philosophy of Art*, 89.

[28] There exists a further possibility: Gardens might be considered multiple artworks, with a plan of the-garden-as-originally-installed functioning as a "score" or exemplar, either of which contains a theoretical infinitude of compossible spatial and temporal instances of the garden. However, I have

Miller claims that a garden's identity amounts to its geographical location.[29] I contested that claim earlier by proposing that a garden's identity is not just a matter *where* it is, but of *what* is where it is; and to this proposition I would now add, *when* it is. Gardens, like people, have beginnings and, eventually, endings. It is what happens, continuously, between those two temporal extremes, at a particular location, that constitutes the identity of a garden.[30]

8.3 Experience

Gardens' distinctive features not only affect their ontological status: they also have a profound impact on the ways in which gardens are experienced. But, when theories claiming to be adequate accounts of the experience of the arts are applied to gardens, they prove unsuccessful in accounting for the unique aspects of garden experiences.[31] Such accounts have typically been based on theories developed in the context of other, non-garden arts. They have assumed that gardens function in a restricted range of sensory modalities, and that they are distinct, unchanging objects to which we have complete epistemic access from stationary, preferred viewpoints. Whereas, the actual experience of gardens is shaped by their often indistinct external and internal boundaries, their continuous mutability, and their all-encompassing nature. More importantly, however, the experience of gardens is shaped by their immersive

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rejected this possibility earlier, on the grounds that gardens are necessarily singular works of art. (See Chapter 5, 156, FN 17)

[29] See: Miller, *The Garden as an Art*, 76-77.

[30] Note, however, that the identity of humans and animals is not fixed geographically, although it may be argued that it is usually fixed in the case of plants.

[31] I am aware that the American pragmatist John Dewey "posits change across time and space" as an important component of the aesthetic experience and that one of his intellectual heirs, the aesthetician and musician Arnold Berleant, argues for an immersive, multi-sensual engagement across time with works of art. However, my concern in this thesis is with art as traditionally presented in analytic philosophy, not with its presentations in the works of these, and similar philosophers. For accounts of Dewey's and Berleant's aesthetics, see: Berleant, *Art and Engagement*; Dewey, *Art as Experience*.)

nature, their multi-sensual, including kinaesthetic, appeal, and by the high degree of free agency a visitor enjoys in "structuring" her visit to a garden.[32]

Although in some formal gardens, for example those at the palace at Versailles, where Le Nôtre appears to have laid out parts of the garden so that they are best viewed from the privileged perspective offered from the king's quarters, and although, with reference to the 18th-century circuit gardens described earlier in the thesis, Ross writes that it is important to remember the degree to which such gardens "manipulated and controlled their visitors' experiences," most gardens are not controlling in this way.[33] Most gardens allow, and garden makers expect, visitors to explore in a spatially and temporally undirected manner. Hunt writes that "nowhere in any fine garden is the visitor permitted an adequate view of the whole – the process of understanding even the smallest territory and its changes through hour and season militate against that."[34]

Birksted articulates clearly the fundamental and distinctive features of the experience of gardens. Preferring the multisensory "beholder" to the merely visual "visitor," he writes of the "spatial and temporal location of the (extra)visual and mobile beholder in the three dimensions of . . . gardens," and of the beholder's

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[32] There is an increasing philosophical and non-philosophical interest, to which I have already referred, in the multi-sensual, multi-modal aspects of the experience of gardens. See, for example: "Sound and Scent in the Garden: Garden and Landscape Studies Symposium at Dumbarton Oaks"; Tafalla, "Smell and Anosmia in the Appreciation of Gardens."For more general accounts of or references to gardens' multi-sensuality see: Susan Herrington, *On Landscapes*, ed. Simon Crichtley and Richard Kearney, Thinking in Action (New York; Abingdon, Oxon.: Routledge, 2009), 200f; "Gardens Can Mean [2007]," in *Meaning in Landscape Architecture and Gardens: Four Essays; Four Commentaries*, ed. Marc Treib (London; New York: Routledge, 2011), 202, 10; Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 156-63; Salwa, "The Garden as a Performance," 377. For an interesting art-historical account of the body in 18th-century gardens see: Karen Lang, "The Body in the Garden," in *Landscapes of Memory and Experience*, ed. Jan Birksted (London: Spon Press, 2000).

[33] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 159.

[34] Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, 7. However, Herrington points out that some gardens, for example Schwartz's *Bagel Garden,* are to be looked at, not moved through. (Herrington, *On Landscapes*, 3-4.) But such gardens remain three-dimensional works and a viewer may move her viewpoint and thereby see them differently, or, she may imaginatively enter and move about in them.

"variable perceptual structures."[35] He separates out "focalization," the garden maker's point of view, from perspective, or the beholder's point of view, and argues that they are inextricably linked in an adequate garden experience. And he notes that "the importance of temporality [in the experience of gardens] forces one to reconsider the centrality of space as the predominant dimension, and highlights the complex interactions between space and time."[36]

The understanding of the garden viewer as mobile in space, and therefore in time, is scarcely new. In the first half of the 18th century, Walpole was already acknowledging such when he wrote that the "animate prospect is the most continually rewarding garden feature."[37] However, this essential feature of the experience of gardens has remained largely unexplored, one might say almost ignored, by philosophical aesthetics.

A garden is always changing and, in any but the smallest garden, a viewer's experience of a garden is inevitably partial. Therefore, a visitor can know only one "time slice" and one, or a series of, "space slices" of a garden at a time. This means that direct epistemic access to a garden is doubly restricted, and it may be speculated that this is similar to what occurs when one person experiences another person. In the case of persons, each has direct epistemic access only to the time/space slice of the person that is existing in front of her. Just as in the case of gardens, we "construct" people from different bits and pieces of information from now, the future, and past, we potentially use all our senses, and, apart from some limited, atypical situations, there is no recommended or preferred viewpoint, procedure, or direction to follow in

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[35] Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," 7. It is perhaps just an etymological quirk, but it is none the less interesting to note that although we attend a concert or performance, read a book, look at a painting, and so on, we *visit* a garden. "Visit" has its etymological roots in the Latin *viser*e, which means "to see", and perhaps this unwittingly contributes to the tendency to emphasize the visual above all else in conceptualizing gardens.
[36] Ibid., 11.
[37] Quoted in: Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 163.

doing so. Therefore, it might be proposed that the garden itself is, in the senses just described, person-like.

If we conceptualize the garden in this way, then the *experience* of a garden will necessarily be unlike the experience of works in other traditional artforms. I have already referred to, and rejected, Salwa's metaphorical, performance account of the experience of gardens, but I propose there is an account of another art that might usefully be employed. It is a phenomenologically based account of contact improvisational dance. I believe that the account helpfully illuminates what it is like to be a person experiencing a garden.[38]

Philosopher Philip Alperson writes of musical improvisation but I believe it is reasonable to take his account as being applicable to other forms of artistic improvisation also.[39] His account characterizes well the account of gardens I am attempting to present so I quote from it at some length. He writes:

> The chief characteristic of improvised activity, it seems to me, is that while we might or might not have a general idea of the sort of outcome of the activity in question, in improvised activity, certain of the fundamental features of both the activity and of the product of that activity are determined in the very doing of the activity. In a very general sense, we can think of improvisation as a kind of goal-directed activity, . . . but what makes the activity improvisatory is the sense that what is being done is being done on the fly.
> [However,] "if we think of improvisational activity along these lines, there would [be] an indefinitely large number of human activities that involve improvisation. Indeed, improvisation would seem to be a feature of most, if

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[38] Note that this account does not entail that the garden is a performance, which is something I have been at pains to deny. I invoke this account simply to improve the understanding of what being a garden *visitor* appropriately entails, and how it differs from the appropriate experiences of other artforms.

[39] Philip Alperson, "A Topography of Improvisation," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 68, no. 3 (2010).

> not all, directed human thought and action. . . . So, what makes art improvisation different? . . . We designate activities as improvisatory, I think, not simply in cases where we notice an evident degree of spontaneity or free play in the activity. Improvisation is not completely free or autonomous activity. Improvisation depends fundamentally on routines, rituals, and practiced activities of all sorts.[40]

My contention is that a visitor to a garden behaves in these improvisatory ways. Just as in the case of musical (jazz) improvisation, where a musician, or group of musicians improvise on some pre-existing musical material, so too in gardens, a visitor, or group of visitors improvises on, around, and over the garden base supplied by the garden designer.[41] Matters of sensory involvement and precedence, and spatial, temporal, and locomotional engagement and preferences are "determined in the very doing of the activity."[42] Moreover, just as in the case of musical improvisation, a garden visit is "not [a] completely free or autonomous activity. [It] depends fundamentally on routines, rituals, and practiced activities of all sorts."[43] Finally, garden visits need not be solitary affairs; a visiting group may have a social dimension encompassing "conversational" and social protocols, just as in musical improvisation.

The improvisational account of the experience of gardens remedies two of the objections raised earlier to Salwa's performative account. First, unlike performances, whose length is determined within certain limits, improvisations are of uncertain length (and gardens of potentially indeterminate length). Furthermore,

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[40] Ibid., 273.

[41] This idea is not unrelated to Dewey's conception of the work of art: "'The product of art – temple, painting, statue, poem – is not the work of art. The work of art takes place when a human being cooperates with the product so that the outcome is an experience.'" (Quoted in: Susan Herrington, "When Art Is a Garden: Benny Farm by Claude Cormier," in *Contemporary Garden Aesthetics, Creations and Interpretations*, ed. M Conan (Washington, DC.: Harvard Univeristy Press, 2007), 20.)

[42] Alperson, "A Topography of Improvisation". 273.

[43] Ibid.

improvisations may feature un-programmed internal temporal divisions. Second, improvisations are by nature unrepeatable – if repeated, they would become *performances* of "improvisations" – and, because gardens change perpetually, garden experiences are in this sense unrepeatable. Furthermore, neither improvisations nor garden experiences necessarily entail the presence of an audience.

However, successfully comparing gardens to improvisations has a significant hurdle yet to overcome. Alperson writes of the high level musical and technical skills that competent improvising demands.[44] While there is no denying that an adequate sensory perceptual apparatus is important and a knowledge of gardening and its traditions advantageous to a visitor, a high level of (performing) skills is unnecessary for the garden visitor. I believe a way around this apparent impasse is to be found in the theories and practices of the improvisatory dance that developed in USA from the 1970's onwards and whose repercussions continue to resonate internationally.

Writing of improvisation in dance, the philosopher Curtis Carter describes how, during the 20th century, dance and the other arts have "undergone major changes reflecting increased democratization and open form;" how the "mainly hierarchical systems of earlier centuries" have been replaced by "collective participatory practices."[45] In what follows I will, unless otherwise noted, be drawing heavily on his account from 2000, "Improvisation in Dance." Carter writes:

> Improvisation invites examining a situation from various angles that can be invented in the very process of creation; [that] the primary instrument through which improvisation in dance takes place is the human body and its interactions with other bodies [and the environment (see page 255 below)]; [that] the full range of human attributes, including the physical, conceptual, and emotional resources embodied in the body are thus available for

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[44] Ibid., 275-77.

[45] Curtis L Carter, "Improvisation in Dance," ibid.58, no. 2 (2000): 181.

> improvisation in dance; [and, finally, that] richness and variety are brought to the improvisation process through the aid of immediate feedback, which could completely change the direction of events. . . . The improviser must create the artistic product as he or she performs it.[46]

All of these quotations from Carter mirror well the account of the improvisatory model of the experience of gardens I am proposing. Carter then goes on to describe the contact improvisation introduced by Steve Paxton and others in which three additional aspects of the new style of improvisation are commented on. Each of these aspects is significantly important for my model of the experience of gardens.

First, discussing the style of the influential choreographer Yvonne Rainer, Carter notes that it was, and still is, often characterized by an interest in "new uses for everyday movements of people without formal dance training."[47] Furthermore, the temporal sequence of such improvised movements is to be "determined" during the course of the improvisation by the (non-)dancers. Thus, in the garden context, garden-improvisers need not be trained or skilled in their art and nor need their garden-improvisation be structured or pre-arranged in any way.[48]

Second, in his discussion of contact choreographer Paxton's approach to improvisation, Carter writes that what matters is a body's physical, sensory, and emotional interactions with the environment, including other bodies.[49] He

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[46] Ibid., 181-82.

[47] See: ibid., 186. Carter refers in particular to: Yvonne Rainer, *Work 1961-73* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1974). Danto commented of Rainer that she "grasped the Sixties question of distinguishing merely sitting in a chair and a dance movement consisting of sitting in a chair." See his "Ontology, Criticism, and the Riddle of Art Versus Non-Art in *the Transfiguration of the Commonplace*," *Contemporary Aesthetics* 6 (2008): ¶ 7.

[48] This attitude to the involvement of (non-)dancers was not new. Carter writes that "Laban[, working in Zurich at the time of the Dadaists,] extended his theories on improvisation to the training of amateurs and thus anticipates the blurring of the lines found in post-modern dance between the movements of ordinary persons and trained dancers in performance." See Carter, "Improvisation in Dance," 182.

[49] Ibid., 186. For an explanatory introduction to Paxton's work see his "Contact Improvisation," *The Drama Review* 19 (1975).

summarizes anthropologist Cynthia Novack's view of contact improvisation as, "inward focussed, informal in dress and manner, involving pedestrian movement."[50] Thus, in the garden context, garden-improvisers' bodies react with their environment in ordinary, non-specialized ways.[51]

Novack hints at the third important aspect of contact improvisation when she describes it as "inward-focussed." Carter takes this further: "In its inward-turning mode, contact improvisation changed the relationship of performers to audience. Instead of performing to or for an audience, the dancers in contact improvisation are focussed of the action occurring among themselves."[52] Thus, although we might expect an improviser to have an audience, that is not so in the case of contact improvisations. A garden visitor "improvises" her encounter with the garden for her own benefit, not for any audience, and the conception further allows that a garden visitor may "improvise" her visit jointly with other garden visitors, thereby accommodating a feature of some garden experiences.

This new conception of dance raised profound questions for that performance-based art form: How are "performances" to be evaluated? How are they to be repeated? What role is a "performance" audience to have? How is that audience to be engaged and satisfied? And, once the proscenium theatre had been abandoned, what role is any particular performing environment to play in the "performance?" However, these questions, once transferred to the experience of the art form of gardens, become so familiar as to be unremarkable. They are questions with which garden art has comfortably lived for centuries. Gardens have always been experienced in these ways. Contact improvisatory dance has taken on these aspects

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[50] "Improvisation in Dance," 187. For a fuller exposition of Novack's views on these aspects of contact improvisation see: Cynthia J Novack, *Sharing the Dance: Contact Improvisation and American Culture* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 128-29.

[51] Dewey claims that that "bodily engagement and resistance are central to the development of the process." (*Art as Experience*, 214.) This is different from what I am getting at here because without bodily engagement garden appreciation, as opposed to, say, reading a novel or contemplating a painting, is largely impossible.

[52] Carter, "Improvisation in Dance," 187.

of the garden experience and in so doing has usefully provided an explanatory framework for conceptualizing the garden experience as an improvisation.

Although the explanatory usefulness of the metaphor of contact improvisation is, I claim, considerable, garden visiting and improvisational dancing remain dissimilar in a significant way: the participants in the former are not intending to, or deliberately participating in, an improvised performance, whereas participants in the latter are. I claim that this dissimilarity does not weaken the explanatory usefulness of the metaphor because my aim, in employing it, is to characterize the activities themselves, rather than the state(s) of mind of the participants. Garden visitors are intending to visit a garden and contact dancers are intending to dance. My interest is has been in examining and finding similarities between the outcomes (activities) stemming from each party's intentions.[53]

8.4 Gardens' Materials

Gardens are like Brillo boxes.[54] We are so familiar with plants, paths, water, wind, sun, soil, birds, and almost all the other familiar constituents of gardens that, like Brillo boxes, but unlike *Brillo Boxes*, we take them for granted.[55] Those who gathered at the Stable Gallery in New York for the 1964 opening of *Brillo Boxes* were suitably troubled by that work's seeming ordinariness and its mundane, quotidian, not to say non-art, aspect. I claim that gardens "deserve" a similar reaction because their contents also comprise ordinary, mundane, and quotidian objects. There is scarcely

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[53] An important recent book should be noted: Gary Peters, *The Philosophy of Improvisation* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2009). However, Peters treatment of his subject is metaphysical and is not directly relevant to the present argument.

[54] See my earlier desciption of Brillo boxes and *Brillo Boxes* at Chapter 7, 215, FN 15.

[55] Danto wrote of *Brillo Boxes* that "it asked, in effect, why it was art when something just like it was not." (Arthur Danto, "Approaching the End of Art," in *Richard Rudner Memorial Symposium* (Washington University, Saint Louis, MO1987), 24.) The question is not new. Quatremère de Quincy, an astute (according to Turner) French critic, wrote of the landscape garden in 1823: "What pretends to be an image of nature is nothing more or less that nature herself. The means of the art are reality. Everyone knows that the merit of its works consists in obviating any suspicion of art." See: Turner, *Garden History: Philosophy and Design 2000 B.C. – 2000 A.D.*, 226.

anything in a conventional garden that does not exist as an *objet*, or *evénèment trouvé,* somewhere outside the garden. Furthermore, garden makers organize and present their quotidian objects for our appreciation, just as Andy Warhol did. However, unlike the viewers at that Stable Gallery opening in 1964, garden visitors are inured to the ordinariness of gardens' materials – they even find many of them intrinsically attractive – and this in part explains why gardens continue to slip under the philosophical radar or, rather, why there appears to be nothing problematic about them that warrants philosophical investigation. Danto neatly expressed an opinion with regard to (presumably) baffling, "anxious objects": "the objects approach zero as their theory approaches infinity."[56] And so, as gardens are in this sense far from "approaching zero," their philosophical theorizing has consequentially fallen behind that of other, more problematic arts.

Not only gardens materials but also their spaces and temporality are ordinary. Garden spaces often appear indistinguishable from real-world spaces, and shade, for example, is as welcome in a garden on a hot day as it is outside the garden. Similarly, it takes the same time for a plant to grow or for a visitor to age inside and outside a garden. This aspect of gardens has been well canvassed by philosophers Miller and Ross, who write of gardens' simultaneous actuality and virtuality, and by others writers on gardens, including Hunt, who engages with it in his account of gardens' capacity for representation of a "third nature."[57] Miller and Ross both invoke Langer's theory of art to account for what they understand to be the virtual world of an art garden. I have already offered reasons why I believe their adoptions of Langer's theory are inappropriate.[58] I would now add this further, straightforward

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[56] Arthur Danto, *The Philosophical Disenfranchisment of Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 111.

[57] Herrington also discusses this. She invokes Danto, and quotes Ross in passing, to argue for gardens' virtuality. See: "Gardens Can Mean [2007]," 190.

[58] See Chapter 4, 123-128.

reason: gardens' unmistakable and unavoidable realness and aliveness make them unlikely candidates for virtuality.[59]

Ross additionally invokes theories of Wollheim, Wolterstorff, and Danto to support her view of gardens as virtual entities. She explains Wollheim's theory of twofoldness this way: "In viewing a representational painting we are simultaneously aware of both the painted surface and the image seen in that surface."[60] However, even so-called representational gardens are only partially so and many gardens are, *pace* Hunt, not representational at all. Therefore, Ross's claim that a physical (non-representational) garden and its virtual counterpart function in the way Wollheim describes for representational paintings does not prevail because "nothing," that is, no image, is necessarily being intentionally represented by the garden designer's choice and arrangement of her materials. Moreover, I believe that the linking of, in Wollheim's case, an unchanging painted image with, in Ross's case, a constantly changing garden "image," is misleading and further weakens Ross's claim.

Ross also invokes Wolterstorff's "world of the work" to support her claims regarding the simultaneously actual and virtual worlds of the garden. Wolterstorff's arguments originated in the literary (narrative) arts and for this reason, just as in the case of Wollheim's theories discussed above, they were developed in response to unchanging works, though not experiences, of art. Wolterstorff's account of an author's "indication" and that author's readers' subsequent "elucidation" and "extrapolation" in the creation and experience of literary works is applicable in its extensiveness to the case of gardens, and Ross expands on this account. However, overall, in applying Wolterstorff's theories, Ross restricts herself almost completely to an account of gardens' visual effects, and, further, to effects that might be experienced by a static viewer at a particular time and from a particular viewpoint,

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[59] Cooper also rejects the idea that gardens are virtual entities, describing arguments to the contrary as "unpersuasive." See *A Philosophy of Gardens*, 18.

[60] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 178.

thereby denying gardens the multi-modality and multi-sensuality she describes and celebrates elsewhere.[61]

More fruitfully, Ross invokes Danto's theories to explain how "ordinary" objects – like hedges and lawns (or Brillo boxes) – can function as virtual art objects.[62] Danto's explanation of why a necktie daubed by a child is non-art whereas an identical necktie resulting from Picasso's daubing may be a work of art is well known. In essence, the necktie daubed by Picasso is a work of art because it invites or requires interpretation, and this "consists [in part] in determining the relationship between . . . [the] work of art and its material counterpart."[63] Using this argument, Ross distinguishes the garden work of art from its physical, or material, counterpart. However, this does not necessarily entail, as it does for Ross, that the garden becomes a virtual entity. I believe that it means no more than that the garden requires interpretation, that its *esse* is *interpretari,* that, in Danto's words, the artworld is "a world of interpreted things."[64] But gardens are usually more attractive to the senses than Brillo boxes and, in some ways, this makes them harder to conceptualize as art on Danto's conception. We usually do not "need" to separate the art garden from the physical garden in order to enjoy it, in the way that the bewildered viewers did in the case of *Brillo Boxes*. But, philosophically, the tasks and the reasons for them are similar.

Ross's use of Danto's theory is right as far as it goes. But the reality is more complex than she acknowledges in her discussion, although she refers positively to

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[61] Further, I believe that it is reasonable to claim that it was with mono-modal, unchanging art forms in mind that Wolterstorff developed his "world of the work" account.

[62] Ross, *What Gardens Mean*, 180-86.

[63] Ibid., 179.

[64] Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art*, 113. Danto was not alone in promoting an understanding of the use of mundane, "obvious," or cliché-ed materials in art. For example, the Russian theorist Vikto Shklovsky developed a psychological theory, *ostranenie*, in the 1920s. *Ostranenie* has been applied to the case of a contemporary garden by landscape architect Jacky Bowring. See: Bowring, ""To Make the Stone[S] Stony": Defamiliarization and Andy Goldsworthy's Garden of Stones."

those same "complexities" elsewhere in her book.[65] Gardens are unlike *Brillo Boxes* because their "material counterpart" is itself constantly changing in a multitude of ways and modes. Furthermore, the fact that the garden beholder is "(extra)visual and mobile … in gardens' three-dimensional space and time" adds a complexity (understandably) ignored by Danto in his theory. In the case of the garden, not only is the material counterpart continuously changing of its own accord but also the beholder's multi-modal experience of it is so highly idiosyncratic and variable that the material counterpart of the garden may be said to be changing, or a least reconstructed frequently, on those grounds too.[66]

If Danto's theory of art can be understood to accommodate these two levels of continuous change and the varying modalities in the material counterpart of the garden work of art then I believe it is, of all the theories re-presented in the literature, the most apposite to the case of art gardens. Such an understanding of Danto's theory would account not only for the ordinary, real, fictive space of gardens, as Birksted required an adequate theory to do, but also for their ordinary, real, fictive temporality.[67] It would allow us to counter Roger Scruton's claim, that a tree grows outside a garden but performs its growth inside a garden, with the observation that the growing is not different within or outside the garden; it's just that in the latter case we ought to be interpreting that growing.[68] It would allow us to understand how the various types of ordinary time and temporal processes Miller cites as obtaining in a garden – for example, diurnal, seasonal, geological, meteorological, and chronological – could be "transfigured" into artistic times and processes. Finally, it would allow us to retain our instinctive awareness of the extraordinary complex

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[65] I refer here particularly to gardens' multi-sensual, multi-modal, and multi-dimensional qualities. Not only is it necessary to "see as," to employ Wittgenstein's phrase, but it is equally necessary to smell as, feel as, hear as, move as, and so on. For a good, fresh account of the complex, inter-related elements and experiences of gardens and landscapes see: Herrington, *On Landscapes*, 3-16.

[66] The quoted description of the "beholder" is from Birksted, "Landscape History and Theory: From Subject Matter to Analytic Tool," 6.

[67] The useful term, "fictive space", is taken from: ibid., 17.

[68] See Scruton, *Perictione in Colophon: Reflections on the Aesthetic Way of Life*, 83.

blend of sensory inputs gardens offer instead of having to sacrifice that awareness in the face of art theories inimical to the reality of gardens.

I have discussed above a range of theories with respect to gardens' ontology and its epistemological consequences. With the exception of Danto's, the theories share a significant underlying problem: they each require that we understand gardens as "structures" with "formal" qualities. But, as Danto explained with reference to *Brillo Boxes*, when "an art work is perceptually indiscernible from an object which is not an artwork . . . then form alone neither makes an artwork nor gives it whatever value it has."[69] So, in the case of gardens, whose materials fall squarely into this category of objects, invoking formalist, ontological, and epistemological explanations will generally be unsuccessful. It may be said that on Danto's account, the ways in which we (should) understand gardens are similar to the ways in which we understand people. For example, one person's hand is generally like billions of other hands. To the degree that we are interested in that hand, and the rest of the person, we are typically interested in it because it is *that* person's hand, not because it exhibits the structure and form of "hand." The "materials" that make up humans are ordinary and omnipresent. But the activity of knowing and understanding one particular person's materials involves *interpreting* the unique combination and context of those omnipresent, "ordinary" materials, and the interrelationships between them, just as is the case for knowing and understanding gardens. In this way, too, gardens may be thought to be more like persons than they are like works in other, traditional art forms.

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[69] Quoted in: James Shelley, "The Concept of the Aesthetic," ed. Edward N Zalta, Winter 2015 ed., *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2015), http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2015/entries/aesthetic-concept.

8.5 Conclusion

In this concluding chapter I have singled out for attention three aspects of gardens which separately and in combination go some way to constituting gardens' unique status as works of art. These aspects relate to gardens' ontology, their materials, and the ways in which we experience gardens. These aspects have previously been well explored by philosophers and others writing on gardens. However, in this chapter, I believe I have added usefully to those earlier studies, in particular (a) by affirming that gardens are singular works, whose identities have similarities with those of humans, animals, and plants, (b) by invoking contact improvisation as a metaphorical framework for conceptualizing the experience of gardens, and (c) by proposing Danto's "world of interpreted things" as a concept preferable to virtuality in accounting for gardens' "ordinariness." Further, I have shown that personhood can be a useful heuristic device to understand how gardens exist and how we experience and know them.

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