

landscape  
research  
extra 64

January 2013



Copy deadline for  
LRE 65  
The Ides of March  
2013

**Contributors**

- Laurence le Du Blayo
- Jonathan Hicks
- Jay Appleton
- Rei ko Goto
- with Tim Collins
- Gareth Roberts
- Owen Manning
- Ian Thompson
- Philip Pacey
- Bud Young

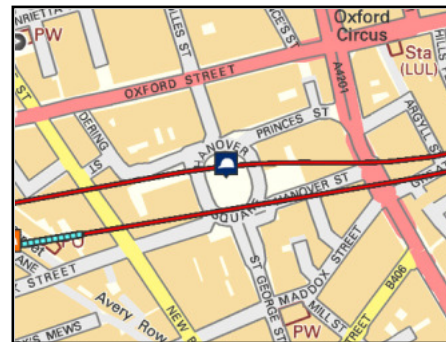
**London: streetwalking rewarded, change continuous**

Delightful to walk in Snowdonia and along the shoreline of Loch Lomond but few walks beat those in London (Paris and complex older cities). Here the sharp eyed stroller comes on something unexpected or intriguing at every turn. This dissonant view menacing the leafiness of Launceston Place, follows



immediately after the leafy mews on the right of this page: cranes spike the horizon. It is a massive redevelopment between Victoria Road and De Vere Gardens — roads which feed into Kensington High Street.

The 19th Century also had its Developers: Cornwall Gardens with a wonderful stand of tall trees Launceston Road and Kynance Mews were named after the Duke of Cornwall by developers (creeps) in 1863-77. This is where the ‘considerably rich’ enjoy leafy Victorian houses slap bang next to some of the most attractive facilities in Kensington — for example The Albert Hall, The Victoria and Albert Museum, Kensington Gardens and the “Allfoods” classy foodstore in what I was accustomed to call Barkers.



This part of Kensington is faux rural (perhaps faux suburban) and very Attractive. But not so, hard faced Hanover Street where Cross Rail ‘comes up for air’. Cross Rail is one of



the great ambitious projects in London. Worth a look on its website.

Our wideawake roving reporter William Young offers this photo of rather brutal and treeless Hanover Street (left) which shows how to conceal (??) one of the largest ever Portacabin complexes. At least I think that’s what it is — or is it an undocumented 19th Century Assembly Rooms? Is it perhaps on rails — some form of monster railcar?

There is another one like this (but more restrained) beneath those cranes in Kensington High Street.

**Bud Young**



## AUTUMN IN 'THE BOTANICS'

By Philip Pacey

Entering by the east gate and following a series of paths twisting and spiralling through the herb and rock gardens, I became more comprehensively disorientated than I have ever been in my life. East had become west and west had become east. But with panoramic views of the profile of central Edinburgh, from Arthur's Seat to the castle and St Mary's cathedral, it is impossible to lose one's bearings here for very long.

It was a dull day, and the autumn colours, though muted, were nonetheless a feast for the eyes. But where were the fallen leaves? Descending from the



unintended, elevated maze in which I had been confounded, the lawns seemed strangely bare of leaves. I became suspicious, having seen too many people - in their own gardens, in parks and avenues - blowing leaves before them, or vacuuming them out of sight, with a variety of unnecessary, power guzzling gadgets — I became suspicious. Surely staff at the 'Botanics' wouldn't be tidying up the leaves even as they fell? Hearing the sound of some kind of machinery, I was gripped by fear verging on panic, and indeed, there was a vehicle bulldozing the leaves and loading them into a lorry, wisely - but surely prematurely? - taking them away to be transformed into leaf mould.

But I was not to be denied my ritual pleasures. On close inspection I noticed that the leaves were being bulldozed into *drifts*, like snow against an invisible wall. As the compact little bulldozer disappeared behind a distant clump of trees, I tore in, kicking up leaves that lay more than ankle deep, stirring a glorious palette of greens turning to yellow, bronze, browns; orange; a mix in which yellow predominated and reds hinted at something rare and precious, in which we wondered and wandered like Wise Men choosing our gifts. Casting caution aside, I must have become visible to the bulldozing man, but he chose to ignore me. At length tiring of the best leaf shuffling I've enjoyed in years (kicking and high stepping through leaves makes unusual demands on the legs) I moved on to etch a long exploratory line of green

grass down a leaf strewn slope, a short-lived homage to Andy Goldsworthy (some pieces by whom are located here).

Over lunch in the restaurant we were unexpectedly entertained by three men, helmeted and roped together, swinging in the tree tops like trapeze artists. We imagined that they were going to perform some tree surgery, but then their purpose became apparent – they were hanging strings of Christmas lights high up in the branches.

PM

[Airphoto of the Maze, courtesy of Google maps whose copyright is acknowledged]

## SEEKING SUBLIME SNOWDONIA

By Bianca Ambrose-Oji, and Gareth Roberts

*What do we understand by sublime in landscape, where can it be found and how important is it in this day and age?*

The Landscape Research Group recently sponsored a weekend long course at Plas Tan Y Bwlch in Snowdonia National Park to explore the meaning and application of “the sublime” in terms of landscape aesthetics and its significance today. The subject of “the sublime” was an important philosophical concept during the late eighteenth century Age of Enlightenment. Edmund Burke is perhaps the most well-known proponent of sublimity as a concept. Burke wrote the “*Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*” in 1757, as an attempt to “establish standards of taste and laws for the passions”. In other words, he explored the idea of the sublime and tried to describe the nature of emotional feelings and profound reactions many experience when confronted by grand and awe inspiring landscapes. The quest for ‘the sublime and beautiful’ in landscape that burgeoned in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was brought about by changing attitudes to nature and the emergence of a new wealthy and leisured class of entrepreneurs and industrialists who had time and money to indulge their passion for the arts, science and travel and increasingly challenged traditional biblical values about creation and man’s place in the world.

During this period philosophical discussion about concepts of the ‘sublime’ ‘beauty’, ‘novelty’, ‘ugliness’ and the ‘picturesque’ began to fire the intellectual and entrepreneurial imaginations of the time. The sublime grew to become a central concept in discourses about aesthetics of nature and landscape and was reflected in poetry literature and the visual arts. The refinement of the sublime aesthetic followed Burke’s ideas and was understood to mean more than ‘beauty’ and ‘grandeur’, it signified an intense reaction to landscape, characterised by feelings of being over-

whelmed, feeling anxious or even scared. Experiencing sublime in nature was widely regarded as search for landscapes where the viewer could simultaneously experience emotions of fear, excitement and pleasure — what was sometimes described as a “delightful horror”! This is not to say that the sublime necessitated placing the observer in danger. Quite the contrary, to experience all the emotions the sublime engenders one needs to view such scenes from places of relative safety. Such view points needed to be carefully cho-



sen and managed. Several were further enhanced to maximise their emotional impact on the viewer, and many, such as the Swallow Falls, the Conwy Falls and the pass of Aberglaslyn remain among the most enduringly popular views of Snowdonia, today! The sublime differs from the beautiful in emphasising discord, extremes of ruggedness and scale. It seeks to remind us of the fragility of the human condition when pitted against the forces of the natural world. Beauty in nature is more ‘rounded’, ‘small’, ‘light’ and ‘delicate’, ordered and exhibiting more regularity in form. In summary then, the sublime is a distinctive aesthetic valuing of nature that involves the experience of powerful emotional qualities that cause anxious pleasure.

The late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries witnessed the establishment of standards of taste in landscape and coincided with the emergence of tourism entrepreneurship. Philosophers, poets and painters were really at the vanguard

in generating public interest in the wild and remote landscapes of highland Britain. Whilst many of these locations had previously been shunned as “desolate” and “uncivilised” with one anonymous writer travelling in North Wales in 1732 describing Snowdon and its environs as, “the fag end of creation”! The interest in the sublime helped recast these landscapes as inspiring, majestic and aesthetically pleasing locations worthy of consideration and contemplation. But Wales was still very much an undiscovered and

unchartered landscape until the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century when opportunities for travel across the Alps to study the classical landscapes of Greece and Roman were curtailed by Napoleonic Wars.

A few wealthy businessmen notably Watkin Wil-

liams-Wynn and Richard Pennant quickly seized the opportunity to promote Wales as an alternative cultural venue. The landscapes of Scotland and Ireland, although potentially as attractive, were for political reasons less popular and less accessible places to visit in these early years. Williams Wynn, the largest landowner and patron of the arts in Wales established the first tour of Picturesque sites in North Wales in 1771. He went on to commission Paul Sandby to prepare a series of 12 aquatint prints of these places which further helped enhance their popularity. Sir Richard Pennant who developed the slate quarries at Bethesda, invested heavily in tourism developing roads and hotels



such as the 32 bedroom Capel Curig Inn along the line of the old Roman (the present A5) road through the heart of North Wales. The foremost artists, poets, novelists of the day all came together with politicians and Royalty all in search of their experience of the sublime and beautiful landscapes of Snowdonia

How does this historical consideration of the sublime have relevance in the contemporary landscape? Well in the first place it is probably worth acknowledging that almost all of the National Parks in the UK are a product of the public preferences established 250 years ago for wild and mountainous landscapes. Whilst it would be difficult to argue that this encompassed ‘sublimity’ — the guiding principles written into the Snowdonia National Park management plan and the area’s Local Development Plan is for the conservation of ‘tranquillity’. This is different to, but linked with, the idea of sublimity. Maintaining the cultural and emotional associations with landscapes are widely recognised as being impor-

tant. Solitude; wildness; natural beauty and opportunities for spiritual revitalisation; inspiration and contemplation are all qualities to be experienced in sublime landscapes. But sublime landscapes are also under threat especially as undue concerns about health and safety often result in the over-sanitisation of our experience of landscapes.

**BA-Oji, and G R**



### Editor's note regarding Snowdonia and the sublime:

With the intention of provoking reconsideration I have abandoned all the classic images of Snowdonia in favour of one by Emily Brady (genuinely Snowdonia) and another by Gareth Roberts. The second photo may or may not represent a British scene and illustrates what I would personally consider sublimity — grade 1. And where does it come from? Why, the Pirin Mountains above Bansko, Bulgaria. I am sure that this will not rock the Sublime boat one whit.

## A TREE IN LOCH LOMOND

By Reiko Goto and Tim Collins

A week before the winter solstice Tim and I decided to spend a day walking amongst the trees on the east side of

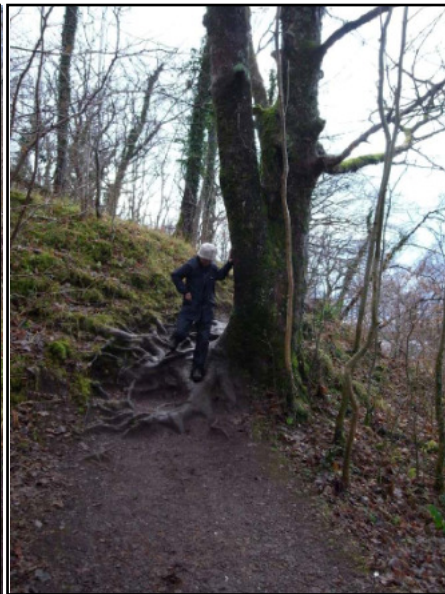
would go through an oak wood that was mixed with hazel.

We parked the car at the Millarochy Bay beach. The sky was a deep greyish blue but not windy. After a bitter cold start to December, the snow and ice had melted. It was a good day to be outside. The path was covered with dark brown oak leaves. The cliff along the shoreline was held by large roots of oak trees, which were exposed and the tree trunks were bent as they struggled to balance and hold the slope over time. The cliff was made of red sandstone and the beach was the same although studded with green serpentine pebbles; indicating the closeness of the Highland Boundary Fault. Tim and I enjoyed this natural beauty and marvelled at the cause and affect relationship between time, geology, the soil and the trees.

The Trossachs National Park is one of the world's newest National Parks; it became a national park in 2002. It is a landscape in transition, sheep are off the land for the first time in centuries, deer fences protect new planting of native scots pine and broad leaf trees. Small thick birch trees with strong

roots have grown in the bracken areas, cut back each year by sheep yet they survive. These strong bonsai like trees are part of the spirit of a future forest: one of many cause and effect relationships which shape the aesthetic perception of landscape in Scotland.

As we walked in the cool air, heading south, the lake on our right there was a spot on the path where we had to climb from a beach up to a ledge. We found ourselves touching a great tree next to the path. It was an old sycamore covered by beautiful lichens and mosses and it caused us to pause and look more closely. The tree roots had developed as a staircase which fitted our feet perfectly. Tim said 'this tree has been touched by everyone, everyday who walks along this path.' The shape of the tree indicates its relationship with the people. The tree seems to accept human interaction. If the interaction was difficult for the tree, it would grow in a different direction, or wither and die back; yet this tree seemed to prosper with the attention it receives. We went back and forth many times to experience the tree and talk about conjoined relationships between trees and people.



Loch Lomond in the Trossachs National Park. It is about forty minutes away from the city of Glasgow where we live. We stopped at a visitor centre in Balmaha (from the Gaelic for St Maha's Place) and asked the National Park Ranger where we might see some older native trees. The lady said the trees were not very old in this area but there was a path along the loch that



The sun was going down at a half past three. We had to keep going, but we left with the feeling of that tree firmly planted in our hearts and minds, our passions engaged through experience.

RG and TC

## SALE OF FORESTRY COMMISSION LAND

Article By Jay Appleton

Now that we have had time to breathe again after the scrapping of the plan to start selling off bits of the Forestry Commission's land, it is fitting not to lose sight of the arguments initially put forward in defence of the proposal. Much was made of the safeguarding of rights of access for the public to the sections to be sold off. But this misses the point. It isn't everyone who wants to walk through a stand of sitka spruce where one can see little, not even the prickly spikes which threaten to brush against one's face and get in one's eyes! The views *within* and *out of* such a forest are severely limited by the density of the foliage. It is the views *of* the forest from distant vantage-points which were most at risk, and this aspect received little comment in the Government's own explanations of its intentions and was largely overlooked by the press.

When the Commission was set up after the first world war to safeguard the supply of home-grown softwood timber the plots of land available for acquisition were usually bounded by straight lines and, in order to maximise the use of the land, trees were planted right up to the boundary fences. The result was the imposition of highly conspicuous geometrically regular patterns on the irregular patterns left by nature, and places like the Lake District were horribly disfigured until Sylvia Crowe and the landscape architects who succeeded her began to introduce remedial action. The boundaries of plantations were made irregular and frayed at the edges so that they merged gradually into the surrounding open land while the rigid stands of conifers were fringed with mixtures of broad-leaved species giving the landscape a much more natural appearance. Selling off parcels of forest land would have brought an end to the Commission's authority over the management of the landscape *as a whole* and therefore to the continuing implementation of the policy by which it is still undoing the visual damage insensitively done by the early foresters.

All this was well known to anyone conversant with the aesthetics of landscape (but not, apparently, to the Cabinet) and gave rise to one of the most immediate and spectacular U-turns in parliamentary history. But let us recognise that, in politics, although changes of mind are interpreted as signs of weakness and irresolution — rather than condemning the Government for making a wrong initial decision, we should applaud it for having the courage to do the sensible thing in the end and do it so quickly, so that the Commission can continue with the remedial work which is not yet complete.

JA

Prof Jay Appleton  
13 Kingtree Avenue  
COTTINGHAM  
East Yorkshire HU16 4DS  
UK  
Tel: (01482) 849654  
email: [jav@jappleton.karoo.co.uk](mailto:jav@jappleton.karoo.co.uk)

### Letter to the Editor

Sir, The contents of LRE 63, as so often, have inspired much thought! Too much for a letter really (and I see the editor has used the secateurs — but see later issues).

Philip Pacey's magical evocation of paradise in a suburban garden, Peter Howard's reflections on landscape from a wheelchair, and the Editor's own thoughts on the surprises to be found in the East Anglian countryside, all seem to be about the same thing: the value of intricacy, and a need for the term 'landscape' to accommodate far more than is often allowed, from the intimate to the immense. It is reassuring to find one's own experience and feelings so strongly echoed.

I too have wondered about the incidental details through which a landscape barely noticed by some may become special to others; I have experienced in a period of disability the revelations of 'slow walking', through streets in which hardly a wall or gate or hedge or garden matched its neighbours; have rejoiced in the infinite richness of experience possible in a structured landscape whose spaces are separated yet connected, enhancing privacy and

communality together 'along slow pathways of delight'.

My teaching mostly concerned how to achieve all this through conscious design — yet it can just happen, without a designer in sight, as Alexander's pattern language suggested. Villages of course are where everything first happened, where everyone lived who once animated 'Corn Country' (along with the horses): everyone learning to adapt necessarily to each other's needs as so many writers (Dorothy Hartley one of the best) have shown.

Owen Manning

## LANDSCAPE AS A CAUSE

An exhortation from Gareth Roberts.

Bas Pedroli (leading light of Uniscape and lecturer in landscape at the University of Wageningen) once poignantly declared to me that he considered the European Union to have huge influence over, but little competence in, landscape! I agreed with him and was very pleased that LRG supported the publication of 'Blueprint for Euro-landscape 2020' in 2008 an initiative that Bas has led on to help reframe the future of European landscape by provoking debate and stimulating ideas about landscape research and support. The European Commission, the executive body of the European Union responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions and upholding its treaties and directives, was a partner in the launch of Euro-landscape 2020.

On checking the website of the European Commission today, I find that little if anything has changed in terms of raising awareness and understanding of landscape.

The Commission's key word index [http://ec.europa.eu/atoz\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/atoz_en.htm) lists position statements on social, economic and environmental matters including its policies, programmes and initiatives but there is not one reference to LANDSCAPE. This astonishes me, given that landscape is such a popular notion and people across Europe are often up in arms about changes to



their landscapes. The truth is that politicians are seemingly unable to deal with it! They often choose to shy away from such debates. The conclusion I come to is that this does not necessarily reflect a disinterest among politicians in landscape issues but more of a lack of understanding and 'competence' amongst them when it comes to debating such issues. The consequence is that despite the best (albeit weak) efforts of the Council of Europe, the quality, diversity and character of European landscapes are fast diminishing. We need to champion the cause of landscape more urgently throughout Europe and elsewhere. The European Landscape Convention provides a very sound framework for us to take forward the cause of landscape. Thus my question to the membership would be: do you consider LRG could do more in this regard? If so what should we be doing?

#### GR

PS For those who wish to read 'Blueprint for Euroscape 2020' we are presenting a pdf version on the Group's website — quid vide.

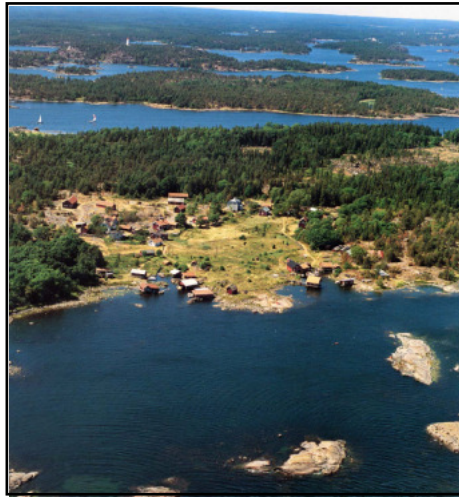
## SWEDISH LANDSCAPES

We are at Shaftesbury — Hilltop Saxon Town in Dorset, stopping for a quick bite on a five hour car journey across southern England. As relaxation and seizing the chance we go into the Oxfam bookshop. Not very well sorted, but there on the shelf is the book **Swedish Landscapes**. A bit glossy for me? is it a coffee table book? No time to ponder and at £2.99 (!!)I can always put it out.

But since then I have browsed it and it happens to be excellent — though I will have to consult Kenneth Olwig before I commit myself!! (as you know Kenneth, one of the Board of LRG is 'Swedish American' and works at SLU-Alnarp a Swedish University — seems to know most everything).

Illustrated with good 'landscape province' maps, accomplished botanical drawings, soil information, historical maps, oblique aerial and other photos and well organised text it seems to cover landscape in a wide range of themes. Now I will be able to widen my very hazy notions of what Sweden is like:

previously it comprised the Stockholm waterfront, some lakes as in films by Ingmar Bergmann and an awful lot of



native conifer forests. Oh and I forgot the rather more agricultural landscapes of Kurt Wallander.

Did you know that some of its land emerged from the sea and rose as much as 300m when the ice melted. Like our raised beaches in Scotland only much

more — its called isostatic readjustment.

Oh and yes ( See Gareth's exhortation) we must try and understand and so protect our European landscapes. Well for me this book is a start.

#### BY

*Swedish Landscapes. Authors: Ulf Sporrang, Urban Ekstam and Kjell Samuelsson. Published 1995 by Ingvar Bingman for the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.*

## LANDSCAPE EUROPE

[www.landscape-europe.net](http://www.landscape-europe.net)

Readers of LRE will benefit from careful reading of the twice yearly newsletter published by Landscape Europe. It is packed with information about recently published landscape books, academic publications and reports, conferences, events and comment. Compiled by their Network Coordinator Peter Bezak it can be accessed on their website

## HEARING LANDSCAPE CRITICALLY:

**Music and the Spaces of Sound  
Department of Music, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa  
9-11 September 2013**

This conference will bring together scholars and practitioners from a range of backgrounds to discuss the importance of sound (including, but not exclusive to music) in the experience and representation of landscapes. One of our aims is to take stock of existing work in sonic geography, soundscape studies and historical musicology in order to address theoretical questions about sound, music, space and landscape. We also hope to feature a number of empirically and historically grounded case studies as a way of bringing the more abstract issues into sharper focus.

Following on from the first "Hearing Landscape Critically" conference — held at the Faculty of Music, University of Oxford in May 2012 — this second event will continue to challenge the tacit visual bias in landscape studies. How do we know places differently when we focus

less on what we can see, and more on their aural qualities? How important is sound for understanding the shifting configurations of the public and the private aspects of landscapes? Who controls what can be heard where, and what power relations does this bring into question?

Since the conference is taking place in South Africa, we are especially interested in presentations and performances addressing the specific characteristics of African landscapes: how have deserts, vineyards, mineral mines, coastlines, townships and national memorial been shaped through sonic design or neglect? How unique, or universal, is the (South) African example of hearing landscape? And how can this conference contribute to ongoing debates about land rights and restitution? These are just some of the issues that will be addressed in what promises to be a varied and stimulating meeting.

#### Jonathan Hicks

Junior Research Fellow in Music  
Lincoln College, Oxford

For more details, go to <http://musiclandscapeconference.wordpress.com>

## BELLS AND BIKES IN THE 'SOUND LANDSCAPE' OF BATH

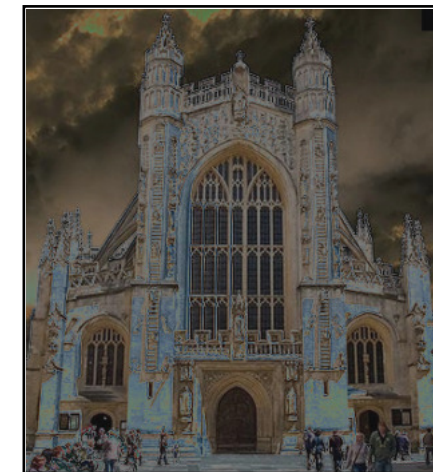
by Owen Manning

Clouds of rain are sweeping along the Cotswold edge and across the Severn as our two-coach train (bound for Westbury of all places: whoever would go there from *Malvern*?) rattles along, going backwards from time to time as though not *entirely* sure of the way (irritating if you prefer facing forwards) and stopping at every opportunity. But Bath when reached at last is almost dry. Head straight for Avon Cycles, discuss and test-ride expensive most-wanted bike after surrendering licence, debit card and agreeing to all possible claims

on children's inheritance.

Half an hour of cycling pleasure from first spin; return to test-ride alternative model already knowing the answer: no competition: it stumbles and drags where t'other one flies. So.....part with children's inheritance for real, and wander around Bath while new purchase is having its teeth cleaned and laces done up.

Bath bright and breezy as showers recede and windy sunshine takes over; no weather for hats! Feeling good at unwonted speed of decision-making, treat myself to Britain's Best Cornish Pasty (not bad), noting as I wander the busy precincts how many other pasties claiming to be Britain's Best seem to be on offer: does Bath possess the National Collection? Now the beautiful Abbey beckons, but appears closed; slyly slip into Abbey Shop (alternative way in), but still blocked, then hear enthusiastic strains of Jerusalem distantly from within the nave — followed by organ, high and exciting — and then, of all things, *bagpipes*, even more so! Whatever is going on? When have bagpipes ever been heard within these hallowed etc? "It's a *wedding*" explains the shop-assistant to other surprised visitors. Some wedding! We



rush outside to see what follows; the piper is leading the procession out into the sunlight, crowds applauding, gay costumes; can't quite see the bride etc but it's obviously a lavish occasion — and to crown it the Abbey bells join with a thunderous peal from the great central tower high above.

Abbey Square just round the corner overflows with the flood of gorgeous sound; it reverberates all round from

the enclosing walls, bell notes tumbling over each other in an endless chain, the two deepest alternating in a sonorous seemingly continuous *Ding.... Dong.... Ding.... Dong* as higher bells cascade down; there is nothing else in the world but this marvellous all-enveloping shaking of the air, of the very stone beneath one's feet; one can only surrender to it heart and soul..... Then I observe a girl on a bench quietly reading, oblivious to the tornado of sound all around her — how *can* she not have noticed.....? Oh: she's wearing headphones. How sad.

On another bench a tubby little man is attempting a business deal on his mobile, also seeming unaware of being in an aural war-zone. I move on eventually, happily saturated, drawn by the glimpse of an unusual plane tree in an adjoining precinct. Even though reduced at some period its canopy still fills the place, its trunk columnar and massive — and standing next to it is the little business-gent on his mobile, succeeding at last.

On impulse decide to end a good day by visiting Prior Park (notable C18<sup>th</sup> landscape) on my newly-collected go-anywhere flying machine, not having appreciated a) the grinding length and steepness of the approach road, reducing me in late hot sunshine to an ignominious crawl, pulling my unwilling steed behind me, and b) that when reached after one sweaty mile and five-hundred feet of ascent, the gates would be shut. "Sorry, we're closed," said the little notice. Of course they are, I should have known: another heroic failure to visit a Trust property at the right time on the right day. Bloody National Trust, why can't they keep normal business hours. Fumed up the remaining gradient to Combe Down perched on its plateau like a lost world then hurtled crossly down — but missed the best train back; caught the worst, crammed to bursting, bikes piled on bikes.....bloody cyclists.

But Hey, Bath was good and its bells were wonderful! I don't know a time when bells (real bells, not the tinny recording blasted out every Sunday from our neighbouring church) have not been so, for me. What is it about this clanging of one metal lump against another metal lump that can so trans-



port the mind to distant times and places? Is it anything more than the wistful associations triggered by a Roland Hilder Christmas card: the sweet glad sounds floating across snowy fields from some elm-enfolded village church.....? Recalling the sensation of myself (by invitation) striking just one deep soft 'boom' from a great 700 year old bell at Loughborough Bell Foundry, I think it is something more than that. Whatever the case, I recall other occasions when bells have been as startlingly dramatic and exciting as those in Bath.

Two especially come to mind: Wife and I pausing while cycle-touring Kent and Surrey in a handsome village lively with visitors on a fine evening, precisely as a splendid peal poured out overhead from its handsome church: the ringers just starting their regular practice with a faultless chain of sound which filled the valley and held us spell-bound. And a memorable glowing dusk in Sheffield centre when I was drawn through its precincts by an extraordinary thunder of sound from the Cathedral, slowly growing as I approached till its full glory burst upon me: not a regular pealing out of the traditional figures but an irregular sounding of bells both high and low overlaying one another in fluctuating waves, in which the lowest came slowly to dominate till all higher bells had ceased, and just two deep notes alternated in a broken rhythm, gradually slowing, till finally the deepest and mightiest (the One Bell to rule them all!) boomed out at ever-increasing intervals -- "*caverning out the dying day*" as Betjeman wonderfully put it — the space between each tremendous note filled with a kind of echoing, sonorous silence, as I left at last totally drunk, overwhelmed by something I'd never heard before: the sound (as I learned much later) of a mighty set of bells being put to sleep: "rung down" to their point of rest.

Let not bells have the last word however: let's hear it for *organs*. Many years past but never to be forgotten was a moment in Chartres Cathedral, with family on camping tour, when as we walked quietly round beneath the shadowy vault (nothing, but nothing, except for Liverpool's great Anglican Cathedral, can equal the heavenly height and

space of those wondrous Gothic structures abroad), a colossal roar thundered suddenly out from an enormous unseen organ somewhere high above — and there in a space all her own in the middle of the nave a tiny figure, three year old Alison, fluffy hair caught in a sunbeam, spun round staring up transfixed as the stupifying storm of sound swept around her. And that precise moment of wonder that anything could be so magnificent, the high west doors of the Cathedral opened wide, a flood of sunlight poured in — and with it came a wedding procession.....

So, in a way, this ends nearly as it began, with that wedding in Bath.  
**OM**

## THE ETHICS AND AESTHETICS OF ARCHITECTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

*A conference under the auspices of the International Society for Architecture and Philosophy, held at Newcastle University, and supported by the Newcastle Institute for the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, the Landscape Research Group, and the British Society of Aesthetics, July 11th-13th 2012.*

Report by Ian Thompson  
Bringing landscape architects and philosophers together has always been one of my ambitions, probably because I studied philosophy before I became a landscape architect and I've always been interested in the connections. However, organising a conference is a lot of work, so I procrastinated; but then I heard that colleagues here at Newcastle University were already planning an event which would bring philosophers and architects together. I suggested that there might be a second strand, supported by LRG, which concentrated not on architecture but on landscape. Later we broadened this to 'landscape and environment' recognising that few philosophical discussions have been framed around landscapes, while there is a whole sub-branch of ethics known as environmental ethics and a growing body of writing on environmental aesthetics. This conference was a novel undertaking, although the path had been ex-

plored by a one day event the previous year, also at Newcastle, under the auspice of the nascent International Society for Philosophy and Architecture (brainchild of architecture PhD student Carolyn Fahey). Our confidence in the larger event was not misplaced. We attracted not only the anticipated architecture and landscape academics and the environmental philosophers, but also practising artists, art theorists and art historians. Three eminent philosophers in the field were the keynote speakers. **Dr Ian Ground**, Senior Lecturer at the University of Sunderland and a member of the Executive Committee of the British Society of Aesthetics addressed the question 'Why Does beauty Matter?', arguing that beautiful things manifest a reciprocal relation between their parts and wholes such that we cannot respond to the whole thing *qua* beautiful, without responding through its parts, and we cannot respond to the parts without seeing them as belonging to a whole. From consideration of this 'mereological reciprocity' Ground went on to argue that the aesthetic response to beauty and the most intense of human attachments to another person and to place share the same roots: a capacity to come to know objects in all their ontological variety, places in the world and other persons, as if they were worlds themselves, as both unique and necessary, particular and absolute, so that we are to them, and they to us, fully present.

**Dr Emily Brady**, a philosopher who holds the position of Reader in the School of Geosciences at the University of Edinburgh, spoke on the aesthetic implications of climate change. She observed that while there is a growing literature on the ethical issues we may have to face in a warming world, very little has been said about the aesthetic consequences of a changing climate and of the steps we might have to take to reduce its impact. Brady asked what conflicts might arise between efforts to protect the environment and to conserve aesthetic value. Was it even reasonable to understand such change in terms of losses — or even gains — in aesthetic value? **Dr Simon James**, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at Durham University, discussed our capacity to find meaning in nature, observing that we could go

wrong in various ways, indulging in anthropocentric sentimentality, for instance, or demonising certain aspects of nature, as happened in the case of wetlands. Drawing upon the work of nature writers such as Richard Mabey and Robert Macfarlane, James suggested that the remedy for prejudice and myopia when looking for meaning in nature was a sustained attention which enabled one to see clearly.

In the themed sessions many interesting papers were presented, but space permits me only to mention a few. In a paper titled 'Human Landscapes, Virtue and Beauty', **David E. Cooper**, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Durham University, asked how, if at all, ethical considerations are relevant to aesthetic appreciation of human landscapes, concluding that there is such an intimacy between moral and aesthetic sensibilities that maintaining a sharp distinction between them is no longer possible. In similar vein, **Isis Brook**, a philosopher based at Writtle College, Essex, asked: 'Do We Have Ethical and Aesthetic Obligations to Respect Landscape?' She invoked Warwick Fox's notion of 'responsive cohesion' to suggest how we can enlist our moral/aesthetic sensibilities to make judgements for the good of the landscape. **Marie Ulber**, Assistant Professor at the Bauhaus University of Weimar, Germany, introduced us to the ideas of German philosopher Gernot Böhme, who employs the concept of 'atmospheres' to elucidate the relationship between environmental qualities and human emotional states. **Tunde Varga**, from the Hungarian University of Fine Art, described three projects which overcame the differences between artefact, cultural environment and natural environment. **Ron Henderson**, Professor of Landscape Architecture at Penn State University considered the role of cherry blossom in Japanese culture, teasing out the economic, militaristic, and aesthetic implications of cherry blossoms falling to the ground. **Vera Vincenzotti**, a visiting Humbolt Fellow at Newcastle University, considered the way in which aesthetics is down-graded in the discourse of Landscape Urbanism at the same time that ecological processes are aestheticized. **Rudi van Etteger** from the University of Wageningen, presented a paper on the 'The Appreciation of Aesthetic, Intentionally Designed Landscapes.' **Jonathan Maskit**, from the Department of Philosophy, Denison

University, USA, discussed 'Natural, Human and Painted Landscapes.' **Michael Rios**, Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of California at Davis, USA discussed the role of ethnicity and marginality in placemaking. My own paper explored the agency of 'landscape imaginaries' illustrating their potential for good and ill, through consideration of the history of the pastoral-picturesque imaginary. The event brought together disciplines which might not normally mingle. Ideas were shared and provoked and I am sure that some friendships were formed and innovative collaborations launched. A special issue of *Landscape Research* featuring papers developed from conference presentations is currently under consideration.

**L.Th**

## FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

### UKRAINE: YALTA

By Gareth Roberts

Yalta on the south coast of the Crimean Peninsula is a sprawling town of around 80,000 citizens. I first arrived here at



three in the morning on 20th May 2012 after a 12 hour car journey from Kremenchug and made my way to the main bus station in the hope of finding someone displaying a sign KiMHaTi (kimnaty) offering a room in their private apartments. Yalta is as about as far south as you can travel in Ukraine before you fall into the Black Sea. Sheltered from the north by a magnificent ridge of white limestone hills such as Ay-Petri towering straight from the sea to over 1000 metres the wonderful scenery, azure blue seas and subtropical micro climate made Yalta the most favoured watering hole of the Imperial Russian Tzars and Bolshevik

politburo chiefs and remains the destination of choice for those seeking relief from the harsh winters of Biela-Russia.

Leninski Nab, the sea front promenade, is the place to go to be seen in Yalta. This is where the Ukrainian jet set love to party, where pretty young things roller-blade and refined ladies exercise their lap dogs. Come dusk the night sky lit up by firework displays, celebrating something or other and continue until dawn when the first brigades of wrinkled pensioners emerge into the early morning sun to exercise on the pebbly beaches.

Yalta has an air of affluence. BMWs, Porches, Jaguars and Mercedes abound. Their menacing black tinted windows hinting at some seediness too. Yet behind outward signs of wealth there is also deep seated poverty. The shambling relics shuffling between bins in backstreets are reminiscent of the down and out character of the consumptive 'Ratzo' Rizzo, played by Dustin Hoffman in the 1969 film 'Midnight Cowboy' directed by John Schlesinger. Ratzos' dream of moving from cold New York to sub-tropical Florida sadly ended as he passed away as the Greyhound bus in which he was travelling entered the State. I often wondered how many of Yalta's vagrants had seen their dream of a better life similarly shattered.

Yalta is the most popular holiday destination for Ukrainians as is Blackpool to the British. But that is where the comparison ends Yalta is more like Lytham St Anne's than Blackpool. Yes there are many theatres here but the shows are more in the style of Chekov than Chubby Brown! There are many shows catering for the young but none offering the brash bawdiness of England's most popular seaside resort. Young teenage girls tottering on high heels and men wearing T-shirts printed with double entendres are the closest one gets to sexiness in Yalta.

Yes, there are plenty of fast food joints too but it seems that Macdonalds might struggle to make inroads here when the fast food traditionally eaten by Tartars, the Camca meat pie, is so wonderfully delicious and cheap and where fresh fruit and vegetable markets (rynok) abound.



On one of the many evenings I spent promenading the Leninski Nab, I nearly choked on my Camca as a young man, girlfriend in tow, ambled by — T shirt emblazoned with the words “Want to play with my balls’ I laugh and asked if he’d got any offers but he smiled but clearly didn’t understand what I was saying. As fireworks exploded above me an impromptu jazz band struck up a tune, some promenaders stopped to dance and rollers bladders continued to weave past me, a fortune teller, three lace-making babushkas and a maimed veteran of the Afghan war dressed in his military uniform shuffling along on his stumps a tin collecting cup in hand. No ‘Help for Heroes’ here it seems!

Yalta is perhaps best known by people in the ‘West’ for the Conference that took place here in 1946 when Winston Churchill, Stalin and a sickly President



Roosevelt came here to settle the post World War II map of Europe. It was a ‘settlement’ that was to prove to be catastrophic for three generations of Ukrainians. Few of the estimated 800,000 Tartars deported by Stalin from the Crimea in the war years were ever to return.

Very few people in the Crimea today are willing to be drawn into a discussion about the ‘Tartar Question’. Most of them of course are ethnic Russians decanted in to fill the void left by the Tartars they displaced. They are also benefiting from the boom in development and tourism that is now occurring all along the Crimean coast.

But despite the ongoing development it remains a coastline that is remarkably un-spoiled. Pal-



aces and villas built for the Tsars and the present day Russian oligarchs and the mistress of German business magnate in 1912, fit well into a landscape dominated by oak woodland and limestone cliffs and buff. Gorbachev retains a dacha here. It is a landscape that offers some of the most spectacular scenery in the Ukraine and some of the buildings such as the Swallow’s Nest a fairytale Gothic style mansion perched above the Black Sea add to the sublime quality of this wonderful coastline.

**GR**

### SATURATED LANDSCAPES COLLAPSING CLIFFS

All along the coast there has been an increase in the number of cliff falls and mudslides due to the abnormally



heavy rain fall. Similarly along railway lines and in Whitby (Yorkshire) a graveyard is falling into the sea. While some will say this is landform analysis not landscape, it is also how landscapes change — and a set of memorable events for locals and visitor. The picture is of red Triassic sandstones and marls east of Sidmouth Devon.

**BY**

## A THREE DAY RESEARCH EVENT IN BORDEAUX

**Reported by Laurence le Du-Blayo.**

This was the fifth conference to hear the research work of students at PhD and diploma level in France whose work touches landscape and landscaping; previous meetings have been held at Blois, Angers, Lille and Versailles. Over the five year period 113 PhD students have had the opportunity to present their research about the landscape. Of these 40% had a diploma in landscape, and the majority of those studying for a PhD were from university departments including geography, history of art, ecology, history, agronomy, and urbanism (that is town structure and development). Students have some difficulty accessing research on landscape — or lack interest in that part of the work — and this is a present and pressing question for their teachers.

This year in Bordeaux under the aegis of Bordeaux University (EnsapBx) and organised by Serge Briffaud, Bernard Davasse, Marie-Noelle Wisniewski and Perinne Roy there were two days of presentations and one day when those attending could visit the St Emilion district (world respected vine growing area) or alternatively look at landscape projects within the wider Bordeaux urban agglomeration. The research team from ADES of the Université de Bordeaux, and the UMR CNRS de recherche GEODE of the Université of Toulouse led the 2012 excursions.

Presentations were grouped

into five general themes:

### **Session 1: Outils et formes de l’action (Tools and ways of going about things)**

**Guilhem Mousselin** (ADES, Univ-Bordeaux III): *Politiques publiques urbaines et systèmes agro-urbains en Europe du Sud (Montpellier et Lisbonne).*

**Etienne Delay** (GEOLAB, Univ-Limoges): *Du paysage au terroir viticole de fortes pentes: à la recherche des leviers du management territorial.*

**Anaïs Leger** (Agrocampus ouest, Angers): *Landscape urbanism, discours professionnel ou émergence de nouvelles pratiques?*

**Sergio Florio** (Univ-Pise et Toulon): *La protection paysagère des littoraux en Italie et en France*

**Caroline Guittet** (ESO, Univ-rennes): *Analyse des dynamiques paysagères urbaines à travers les corpus photographiques du paysage.*

### **Session 2: Dynamiques, histoire et patrimonialisation des paysages (The dynamics history and national heritage value of landscapes)**

**Caroline Pouliquen** (ESO Univ-Angers): *Le patrimoine paysager comme élément constitutif d’un espace de nature protégé touristique: le cas du parc national du Lake District*

**Sidonie Marchal** (CREAAH, Univ-Le Mans): *Les perceptions historiques des paysages: reconnaissances et effacements des marqueurs paysagers antiques, l’exemple du Biterrois.*

**Jean-François Rodriguez** (CEPAGE, ensapBx): *haute montagne et développement touristique: le rôle de l’hydroélectricité dans les Pyrénées*

**Fanny Esther Subinn Etouke** (Univ-Maroua, Cameroun): *Dynamique du paysage urbain*

The views and opinions in this publication are those of the authors and the editor individually and do not necessarily agree with those of the Group. It is prepared by Bud Young for the Landscape Research Group and distributed periodically to members worldwide as companion to its refereed main journal Landscape Research.

Editorial enquiries:

**Bud Young,**

**Airphoto Interpretation,**

26 Cross Street

Moretonhampstead Devon

TQ13 8NL

or emails to young @airphotointerpretation.com

*au Cameroun*

*septentrional: le cas de Ngaoundere.*

**Julien Laborde** (ADES, Univ-Bordeaux III): *Les villes nouvelles à l’épreuve du temps. L’exemple de Marne-la-Vallée.*

### **Session 3: Paysage et écologisation des territoires (Landscapes and ecological development of regions)**

**Rémi Bercovitz** (CEPAGE ensapBx): *Paysage, ressource et « bon état écologique ». Le cas de la Sèvre niortaise (XIX-XXè siècles). Une enquête historique pour fonder un projet partagé.*

**Esther Sans** (EHESS, INRA Avignon): *La réécriture des paysages et l’agriculture écologisée: de la banalisation du modèle productiviste à*



*la diversité territoriale de modèle biodynamique.*

**Sébastien Passel** (ESPACE, Univ-Nice): *De l’optimalité pour la « ville-nature ». Nice, une ville vraiment verte?*

**Philippe Bodenan** (Agrocampus ouest, Angers): *La cité verte: une réponse aux attentes de la nature en ville?*

### **Session 4: Des formes de sensibilité aux pratiques paysagères (Sensory perception in landscaping practice)**

**Théa Manola** (Lab’Urba, Paris): *Paysage multisensoriel des quartiers dits durables: spécificités, identités et compositions urbaines sensorielles.*

**Hélène Galléot** (Institut de géographie de Lausanne): *Révéler l’esthétique ordinaire des paysages périphériques.*

**Julie Cattant** (GERPHAU, Paris): *L’horizon, manière d’habiter.*

**Virginie Antunes**, (GEODE, Univ-ToulouseII): *Le jardin privatif, un paysage sous influences multiples. Etudes de cas dans l’agglomération Toulousaine.*

The presentations gave rise to rich discussions despite the light participation from students and their academic advisers. Notably few of the students’ research directors were at the discussion. In the last afternoon a round table discussion reviewed methods; landscape and ecology; landscape in an historical context and agriculture in an urban context.

The salient points of this discussion will be included in LRE 65.

[Text but not paper titles translated from the French by BY].

Landscape Research Extra is published by Landscape Research Group Ltd. Landscape Research Group Ltd is a Registered Charity (No. 287610) and Company Limited by Guarantee (No. 1714386, Cardiff). Its Registered Office is at: 89A The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1QE

For disclaimer and addresses for editorial enquiries and administrative correspondence see the box on the top of this page.

[www.landscaperesearch.org](http://www.landscaperesearch.org)