



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE 348 GOULD HALL BOX 355734 SEATTLE, WA 98195-5734 COLLEGE OF BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

Executive Committee
Board of Trustees
American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street
Washington, DC 20001

ASLA Award of Excellence for Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections & Garden and Landscape Studies

Dear Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

We are nominating Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections for the ASLA Landscape Architecture Award of Excellence for 2018. This nomination outlines three significant qualifications of Dumbarton Oaks, any one of which would be a substantial reason for recognition. Taken together, these three qualifications give evidence of the significant and remarkable contributions that Dumbarton Oaks has made to Landscape Architecture: 1) the remarkable and enduring legacy of Dumbarton Oaks as steward of the most important work of landscape architecture by Beatrix Farrand, a founding member of the ASLA, 2) as steward of the most extensive and important collection of archives, books, and manuscripts on landscape history, and finally, 3) as host and benefactor for over forty years of fellows in landscape architecture and design history.

This nomination is to acknowledge the outstanding stewardship by the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections of the historic landscape and gardens in Georgetown, Washington DC, originally owned by Mildred and Robert Woods Bliss, and designed by Beatrix Farrand (1872-1959) between 1921 and the late 1940s. The property was originally 57 acres and was divided into the Dumbarton Oaks Park and the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, the latter under the care of Harvard University, in 1940. Dumbarton Oaks has cared for and cultivated the gardens and landscapes with extraordinary thoughtfulness and attention to Farrand's original ideas and designs as well as the wishes of the Blisses.

Stewardship of the Farrand landscape and gardens:

Beatrix Jones (later Farrand) was one of the founding members of the ASLA in 1899. She helped to establish standard office practice and was a model of a professional landscape architect. Her biography and critical essays on her work have been recognized by multiple professional and scholarly associations underscoring her importance to the history of the profession and to that of women as professionals.

Beatrix Farrand was commissioned by the Bliss's in 1921 after an extensive search for the right designer for the couple's new house that was to serve not only as a home but also as a place for official meetings and entertainment as Mr. Bliss was an important ambassador and member of the Foreign Service. With similar social circles and similar backgrounds, Farrand and Mildred Bliss became close friends and correspondents throughout the course of the development of the estates, referring to themselves as "gardening twins." Farrand's designs and curation of the landscape for Dumbarton Oaks would become one of her longest and most rewarding projects, earning her international recognition.

After Beatrix Farrand's gradual retirement in the 1940s and her death in 1959, other landscape architects worked on changes to the Dumbarton Oaks gardens. These included Ruth Havey (1899–1980), Ralph E. Griswold (1894–1981), and Alden Hopkins (1905–1960). The gardens have been maintained under the guidance of superintendents: William Gray from 1922 to 1937, James Bryce from 1937 to 1948, Matthew Kearney from 1948 to 1973, Donald Smith from 1973 to 1992, Philip Page from 1992 to 1996, and Gail Griffin from 1997 to the present.

Garden and Landscape Studies Program

The founding donors, Robert Woods Bliss and Mildred Barnes Bliss, stated that their gift of the estate to Harvard was grounded in the idea that "Dumbarton Oaks is conceived in a new pattern, where quality and not number shall determine the choice of its scholars; that it is the home of the Humanities, not a mere aggregation of books and objects of art; that the house itself and the gardens have their educational importance and that all are of humanistic value."

In 1940 when the property was deeded to the care of Harvard University, the new research institute established programs in Byzantine studies and, later, Pre-Columbian studies and Garden and Landscape Studies. The first fellowships in landscape studies were offered in the mid-1950s, and the program was formalized in the early 1970s with the appointment of the first director, Elisabeth Blair MacDougall (then called the Studies in Landscape Architecture) and the organization of the first of now annual symposia. Dumbarton Oaks was the first institute to support advanced scholarship in garden history and landscape architecture, encompassing the study of culturally and artistically significant landscapes around the world from ancient times to the present.

The Garden and Landscape Studies program has supported the growth of one of the most important book and manuscript collections in landscape history in the world. It is the site of ancient manuscripts on landscape and the preeminent resource for books, drawings, and paintings of landscape in the 20th century.

Additionally each year the program oversees the publication of books on landscape design and history drawing on the scholarship of the annual symposium (this year's volume will be the 39th) as well as on the scholarship that is made possible by the library collection. The publication series offers over 70 volumes of collected essays on history, theory, and practice spanning the deeply academic to the creatively speculative. They are an essential resource for scholars, students, and practicing landscape architects around the globe.

Through the landscape collection of books and manuscripts and its consistent use by scholars, designers, artists, and many others, the program has made extensive and critical contributions

to the understanding of landscapes and gardens as fields of knowledge, research, and practice carried out by landscape architects, landscape artists, and gardeners.

Fellows in landscape architecture and design history

Finally the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections has supported over 300 fellows since the founding of the Garden and Landscape Studies Program in 1972. The program is advised by six invited Senior Fellows - leaders in the fields of landscape history, design, and practice - who are responsible for the selection of visiting fellows, convening the annual symposium and associated events, and curating publications. Each year the program selects up to two junior fellows and three fellows to conduct research, scholarship, and study at Dumbarton Oaks. These fellows have, in turn, contributed to landscape architecture in significant ways, including research on landscape preservation, environmental stewardship, cultural landscapes, and the social perceptions and uses of designed landscape, among others. Landscape architects Linda Jewell, Elizabeth Meyer, Laurie Olin, Timothy Baird, Jack Sullivan, Ann Komara, and Gary Hilderbrand, among many others, have been fellows at some point in their careers. Elizabeth Mossop, Peter Walker, Michael Van Valkenburgh, George Descombes, and many others have been guests and speakers at Dumbarton Oaks as part of their commitment to engaging the contemporary practice of Landscape Architecture.

Elizabeth Meyer recently wrote on having become a Senior Fellow:

“Under John Beardsley’s leadership of the Dumbarton Oaks landscape Studies program, this inwardly facing research center—long a place associated with promising young scholars and the most respected academics writing about gardens and designed landscapes, has taken an exciting outward turn. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, Dumbarton Oaks has convened designers and scholars at the junior and senior level around the challenges of conceptualizing and making urban landscapes. From fellowships for principals of major landscape architecture firms to workshops for Ph.D candidates beginning their careers, from annual symposium to small colloquia, Beardsley has brought Dumbarton Oaks’ unparalleled research facilities and scholarly reputation into dialogue the practice of designing urban landscapes during an era of climate change, social inequality and population migration, of disturbance and regeneration. As a participant in several of these events, I can attest to the impact these encounters are having on the individuals involved as well as on their trajectories as scholars, critics and designers. That bodes well as urban landscape matters are urgent; reflection as well as action are conditions for creativity and invention. I am heartened that Dumbarton Oaks has seen fit to bring these often separate activities together.”

Most recently John Beardsley, Director of the Garden and Landscape Studies Program, with support from the Director of Dumbarton Oaks, Jan Ziolkowski, has established the Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies that brings together landscape architects and historians to explore the rich and robust spaces of intersection and exploration in the city. The inauguration of this new program with an urban landscape focus reflects the ongoing commitment and strong leadership that Dumbarton Oaks continues to foster in the expansion and enrichment of their landscape programs in the 21st century.

The attached letters attest to Dumbarton Oaks' significant role in the emergence of a rigorous discipline of landscape architectural history and in the shaping of research as an important contribution to contemporary practice. We nominate Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections for the ASLA Landscape Architecture Award of Excellence for 2018 in acknowledgment of three outstanding contributions to Landscape Architecture: as an exemplary steward of the garden by ASLA founding member Beatrix Farrand; for its invaluable library and collection which attracts scholars from all over the world; and for the Landscape and Garden Studies Program with its long standing fellows program.

Sincerely



Thaisa Way, ASLA, FAAR16,
Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of Washington

Ron Henderson, FASLA
Professor and Director, Landscape Architecture + Urbanism Program, Illinois Institute of Technology
Founding Principal, L+A Landscape Architecture

COLLEGE OF

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STUDENT ENVIRONMENT



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Jack Sullivan, FASLA
Associate Professor
Landscape Architecture Program

January 31, 2018

ASLA Board of Trustees
The American Society of Landscape Architects
636 Eye Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20001-3736

RE: Dumbarton Oaks nomination for the Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence

Dear ASLA Trustees,

It is my pleasure to join a chorus of voices that are singing the praises of Dumbarton Oaks in nomination for the ASLA Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence. As a licensed professional landscape architect, a Fellow of ASLA and the American Academy in Rome, a landscape scholar and academic instructor, I have had the good fortune of interacting with Dumbarton Oaks on a regular basis since I arrived in the Washington, DC, area in 1994. Dumbarton Oaks has consistently provided my students, my colleagues and me with the rich resources of Beatrix Farrand's garden, Mildred Bliss's library, and Harvard's outstanding choices to lead the Garden and Landscape Studies program. The gardens have been my classroom, the library has been my research center and the symposia, colloquia and exhibits in landscape history, practice and art have been my intellectual inspiration for over 23 years.

Although Dumbarton Oaks excels in supporting scholars and scholarship in Pre-Columbian and Byzantine literature, music and art, it is the study of landscape that covers every period in time—pre-history, ancient, medieval, early modern, pre-industrial and contemporary. Scholars who have had the benefit of studying at Dumbarton Oaks represent the fields of landscape architecture, garden art and design, landscape sculpture, horticulture, history, sociology, anthropology and archaeology, among others.

The able and innovative leaders who have guided the Garden and Landscape Studies program over the last three decades, including John Dixon Hunt, Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, Michel Conan and John Beardsley, have set high standards for scholarship and community inclusion. This has been especially true during John Beardsley's current tenure. Beardsley has increased access to landscape and garden scholarship by inviting practitioners to join in the exploration and discussion of landscape history, meaning, character and transformation. He has used the garden as a canvas for visual, audible and tangible art, taking the Farrand-Bliss collaboration into new territory and new expressions of landscape art, while highlighting the original garden rooms, sculptural elements, distinctive views, and seasonal horticultural effects.

The Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence "recognizes significant contributions to landscape architecture policy, research, education, project planning, and design, or a combination of these items". Dumbarton Oaks is a living laboratory that embodies all of these factors and continues to be a valuable asset to the practice and scholarship of landscape architecture.

With best regards,

Jack Sullivan, FASLA

Letter of Support for Dumbarton Oaks for the ASLA Medal of Excellence

Dear Executive Committee and Members of the Board of Trustees,

I'm honored and pleased to support the nomination of Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, the Dumbarton Oaks Farrand Garden, and the Garden and Landscape Studies Program for ASLA's 2018 Medal of Excellence. The dream candidate!

For my entire career, this institution has stood for the highest standards in scholarship, the most inspired programming, and the very best of early and mid-century gardens in the nation. I was taught at Harvard by Director Elizabeth MacDougall in the 1980s, under whose guidance DO built a scholarly community for garden history and landscape architecture from scratch. John Dixon Hunt, Michel Conant, and John Beardsley have advanced this tradition mightily and brought to it contemporary topics of the greatest relevance for our field today. Along the way, they have helped successive Directors to build the most extraordinary facilities, broadened its reach, and secured its financial structure. In combination, these institutional gains have allowed the place to embrace its traditions but be supportive of contemporary life. There is simply nothing like it.

Two years ago I was honored to receive the Mellon Practicing Fellowship in Urban Landscape Studies. It's notable that this space for scholarly work by practitioners, one of only a handful, was invented by Beardsley and supported with Mellon funds precisely because of the impacts that could be gained for practitioners who write, and for the DO community who are able to interact with design professionals on a daily basis. I treasure that productive and very special time. The place felt like another planet to me—one friendly to my cause, populated with serious scholars and thinkers, with the best book resources on any planet. I yearn for others to have this experience.

Here's a chance to recognize the most established and indeed incomparable knowledge producers for our field, and, in doing so, to affirm our profession's essential ties to history, scholarship, research, and the humanities. I am proud of DO and of our vital dependence on it for inspiration and guidance. It is our treasure!

Sincerely,



Gary R. Hilderbrand FASLA FAAR
Principal, Reed Hilderbrand LLC
Professor in Practice, Harvard Graduate School of Design

Executive Committee
 Board of Trustees
 American Society of Landscape Architects
 636 Eye Street
 Washington, DC 20001

ASLA Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence Letter of Support
 For Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, Farrand Garden, and the Garden and
 Landscape Studies Program

Dear Executive Committee and Board of Trustees,

It is with enthusiasm that I support the Dumbarton Oaks garden, research library, and its Garden and Landscape Studies Program for the ASLA Medal of Excellence. My first introduction to Dumbarton Oaks was Beatrix Farrand's beautifully detailed garden that I visited regularly when I lived nearby. These visits reinforced my decision to study landscape architecture, particularly after seeing a small exhibit of Farrand's drawings at Dumbarton Oaks. The ongoing preservation and maintenance of this important public garden is reason enough to recognize Dumbarton Oak's contribution to landscape architecture, but Dumbarton Oaks then developed and curated a premier research library and an exceptional archival collection of landscape drawings and documents that attract landscape scholars from across the globe to their library. It is, however, the Garden and Landscape Studies program that has most directly impacted our understanding of landscape architecture at all scales.

Since the early 1970s, the GLS program has sponsored lectures, colloquia, symposia, and numerous publications on landscape related topics while offering research fellowships to study and use their library and collections. Like many practicing landscape architects, I once associated the GLS program with only the study of garden history, particularly Renaissance gardens. Since focusing on an academic career, I have become aware of the range of landscape topics they have supported and I have seen this range steadily increase. In the late 1980s, Director John Dixon Hunt expanded the programs and publications to include more topics of interest to practicing landscape architects. This expansion continued under subsequent directors to include symposia, on "Existence and Experience in Contemporary Gardens," "Lawrence Halprin," "Designing Wildlife Habitats," "Landscapes of Housing," "Landscape and the Academy," and a forthcoming one on "Military Landscapes." Likewise, recent publications address emerging topics pertinent to Landscape Architects such as Dorethee Imbert's edited book, Food and the City, John Beardsley's Cultural Landscape Heritage in Sub-Saharan Africa, and Senior Fellow Thaisa Way's forthcoming book on urban rivers that includes essays by six practicing landscape architects.

In the past three years, two new fellowships, the Mellon Fellows in Urban Landscape Studies and the William R. Tyler Scholars Fellowships for Harvard PhD students, have supported additional studies related to design practice and developed valuable web sites on landscape topics, including the recent interactive one on Washington, DC's water systems. In 2015, I was fortunate to be a Dumbarton Fellow to pursue my research on American outdoor theaters, a project based on case studies and my design practice. Guided by Director John Beardsley, the Mellon Fellows, the Tyler Fellows, and invited guests supplemented the usual presentations on the research of GLS Fellows with urban infrastructure topics that included field trips, lectures, and colloquia on the recent history and present conditions of urban water supply, storm water, sewage treatment, urban waterways, and disenfranchised communities as well as 19th century "soft" streambank stabilization techniques by the Corps of Engineers. The discussions afterward, not only with landscape historians in the GLS program, but also with Fellows in Pre-Colombian and Byzantine Studies, provided perspectives on infrastructure and my own theater research that I would have never gained from an audience of only landscape architects.

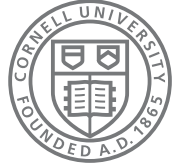
In its nearly 50-year history, the Garden and Landscape Studies program have supported the scholarship of landscape architecture faculty and practitioners such as Michael Van Valkenburg, Patrica O'Brien, Mirka Benes, Charles McLaughlin, Nancy Volkman, James Wescoat, Judith Major, William Tishler, Curt Culbertson, Suzanne Turner, Diane Harris, and Tim Baird. The research of these and other Fellows have increased our understanding of both modest and significant landscapes through rigorous scholarship on landscape architects such as Downing, Olmsted, Cleveland, and Farrand as well as investigations into overlooked topics such as African American landscapes, the suburbs, and the evolution of sewer systems.

Dumbarton Oaks contributions to our discipline and profession have steadily increased since Beatrix Farrand's garden first opened to the public and I am confident their programs will continue to grow. Each of their programs has enhanced our insight into the diverse practices of landscape architects across the globe and they deserve to be recognized with the Medal of Excellence.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Linda Jewell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Linda" and last name "Jewell" clearly distinguishable.

Linda Jewell, FASLA
Professor Emerita, Landscape Architecture & Environmental Planning
Professor Emerita in Urban Design
University of California, Berkeley



C. Timothy Baird, ASLA, PLA, Chair
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January 28, 2018

ASLA Board of Trustees

Dear Colleagues:

I am delighted to write in support of the nomination of the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, the Farrand Garden, and the Garden and Landscape Studies Program for the ASLA Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence for 2018. As a 2015 Summer Fellow, educator, and practicing landscape architect, I know from my own firsthand experience what a wonderful and stimulating place Dumbarton Oaks can be and the significant impact it has had over the years on our profession and discipline.

Beatrix Farrand worked closely with Mildred Bliss for over thirty years to design the Garden and grounds of Dumbarton Oaks and as a woman practicing during that period in time, she didn't receive the recognition that her work warranted. This award would honor her contributions to not only this phenomenal landscape but also to the profession of landscape architecture. This serene and beautiful place of respite and contemplation was thoughtfully conceived with serious attention to detail. My personal walks around the garden on my breaks from the library and collections was a landscape architect's dream; to be able to move through this exceptional landscape or sit and absorb the surroundings was an experience that was such a welcome complement to the research I was doing inside the library. It is time to honor Ms. Farrand's legacy and contributions to the profession and this award would provide the recognition she so richly deserves.

The collections and the work of Mildred Bliss in amassing such an archive of information should also be recognized for her contribution to the creation of the highly regarded Pre-Columbian and Byzantine Studies Programs. Implementing their vision of the library and collections eventually led to the addition of the Garden and Landscape Studies Program. Robert and Mildred Bliss are deserving of this honor for developing their idea of a "new pattern" where quality and not quantity of the scholars awarded fellowships was to be the norm for Dumbarton Oaks.

The Garden and Landscape Studies program was established in 1972 and has flourished over the years providing access to the archived information, including drawings from contemporary practitioners of landscape architects as well as Ms. Farrand's drawings for her design of the garden. It would be impossible for me to choose between my walks in the garden or viewing Humphry Repton's original Red Books as being the highlight of my summer at Dumbarton Oaks. I began my fellowship reviewing the material expression of American Mid-Century Modernists Garrett Eckbo, Dan Kiley, James Rose, and Thomas Church as the beginning point of my research. However, before the summer was over, I had discovered the innovative work of Fletcher Steele and learned of his significant influence on those four. Kiley, Eckbo, Rose, and Church followed in Steele's footsteps by continuing his unique and innovative material experimentation in their own work.

I urge the ASLA Board of Trustees to award the ASLA Medal of Excellence to Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, the Farrand Garden, and the Garden and Landscape Studies Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Timothy Baird".

C. Timothy Baird, ASLA, PLA
Professor and Chair

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Department of Landscape Architecture

101 Temple Hoyne Buell Hall, MC-620
611 Taft Drive
Champaign, IL 61820



January 23, 2018

To the ASLA Board of Trustees:

I write in enthusiastic support of the nomination of Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collections, the Farrand Garden, and the Garden and Landscape Studies Program for the ASLA Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence for 2018. Dumbarton Oaks has played an extraordinary role in the field of landscape studies and excels in three distinct ways.

First, it has an outstanding collection of print, manuscript, and visual resources that is made available to scholars from around the world at all stages of their research and comprises one of the world's most extensive repositories of materials (many of them unique or rare) on garden history.

Second, the gardens designed by Beatrix Farrand are of great historic importance and are an unusual case of a landscape that has been tended and rigorously maintained as a historical artifact while still allowing new experimentation. I am recalling the temporary herb garden that was made for the Sound and Sense Symposium that I organized in 2014 and the quartet of sonorous chairs installed on the upper terrace by resident artist Hugh Livingston the following year. There have been other installations (all organized by GLS Program Director John Beardsley) that have similarly changed the subjective experience of being in the gardens without affecting the gardens themselves.

Third, the Garden and Landscape Studies Program has a unique position as the center of scholarship on gardens and landscape, there being no comparable institution in the US or indeed, the world. The Program provides project grants for landscape archaeology and surveys, runs a wonderful intensive summer workshop for pre-doctoral scholars, and has a distinguished publication series that disseminates the papers from the annual symposia as well as studies on works from its rare book collection. The Garden and Landscape Studies Program attracts scholars from around the globe as resident fellows and to participate in its annual spring symposium and fall colloquium, on themes ranging from Roman gardens (1981) to military landscapes (2018). Many of the symposia have launched new areas of research or established a benchmark for excellent scholarship. For example, I cannot imagine how my field of Islamic landscape history could have developed without D.O.'s *The Islamic Garden* (1976), and I predict that John Beardsley's *Cultural Landscape Heritage in Sub-Saharan Africa* (2016) will have an equally galvanizing effect on a field that, until now, has all but ignored Africa.

All the landscape scholars of the world pass through the doors of Dumbarton Oaks, whether as resident fellows, Senior Fellows (constituting the advisory board of the GLS Program), or contributors to the symposia. In this sense, the ideas that we have developed, the archaeology that we have conducted, the books and articles that we have published, the courses that we have

taught, the design and history students that we have taught, and in some cases even the designs that we have produced all owe a profound debt, in one sense or another, to Dumbarton Oaks. For all of these reasons and more, Dumbarton Oaks fully deserves the honor of receiving the ASLA Landscape Architecture Medal of Excellence

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "D. Fairchild Ruggles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

D. Fairchild Ruggles
Professor and Chair, Joint PhD Program in Architecture and Landscape Architecture
Dumbarton Oaks, GLS Senior Fellow, 2010-2016

Images:

Beatrix Farrand, sitting at Desk, Courtesy of Dumbarton Oaks Library and Collections

Painted Plan of Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC, c.1956, landscape design by Beatrix Farrand

Pool, drawing by Beatrix Farrand for Dumbarton Oaks, Mr & Mrs. Bliss, c. 1930

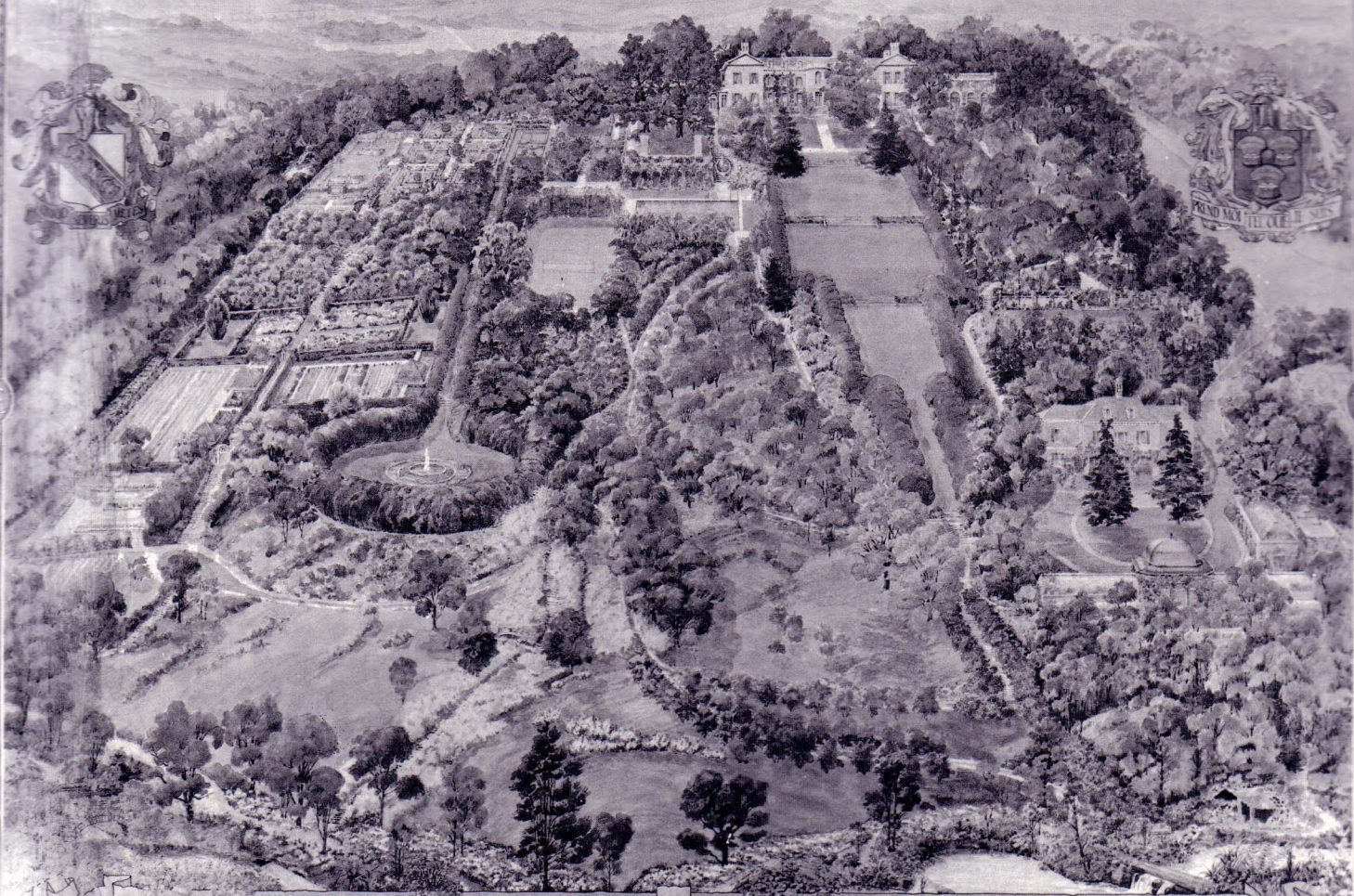
North Vista, Beatrix Farrand, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC , photograph by Diane Balmori

Ellipse fountain with hornbeams and plants, Beatrix Farrand with modifications by Alden Hopkins, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC:

Bluebell walk, Lovers Lane, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC

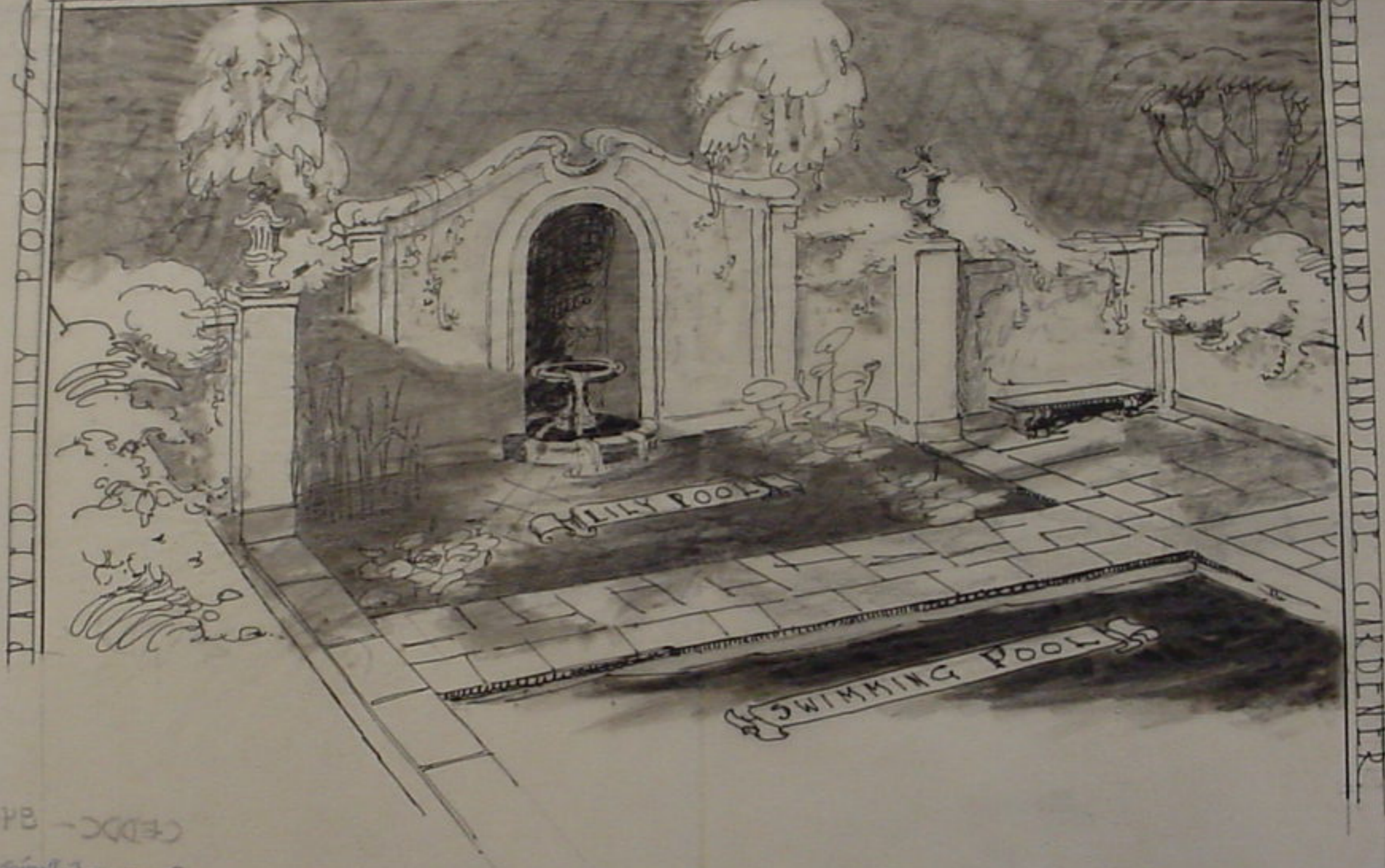
An illustration from P.J. Redouté's *Les Roses* (1817 edition) from Dumbarton Oaks Rare Book Collection





DUMBARTON OAKS GEORGETOWN D.C.

ROBERT WOODS BLISS ESQUIRE - AT WASHINGTON - D.C.



CEDEC - 841/25

Document Collection
College of Environmental Design
University of California, Berkeley









ROSA sulfura.

P. J. R.

ROSIER jaune de soufre.

Ch.