

transfers brings with it a significant cash injection of cash and grand plans for change to homes that have been underinvested in for years. Yet many locals have voted against these schemes.

On the Aylesbury Estate a visionary scheme for transforming the estate, drawn up by architect Will Alsop whose unusual designs have proven regeneration credentials, was voted down by tenants, who thereby also refused £179m of investment. Yet when Alsop reimagined Barnsley in Yorkshire as an Italian hilltop town surrounded by a ring of signature buildings, his ideas were taken up with great enthusiasm. The Barnsley strategy worked with the existing fabric. It highlighted that what is needed in development is big vision, not big building.

There is a conflict between out-and-out demolition, people who want certain buildings destroyed without question and those who want to negotiate the future via a more limited demolition, combined with refurbishment and replanning. Demolition proposed an idea of a government-backed X-list, that in its most basic form would remove buildings altogether but could be used to leverage intelligent change and help finance it.

The 'winner' of Demolition - the building that received the most votes for demolition in its poll - was Cumbernauld town centre (see photo above). It is an idiosyncratic megastructure over a four-lane highway built with the optimism of the sixties in this Scottish new town; it has never fulfilled its promise and has been bastardized by badly thought out demolition and extension over the years. It was never the most successful of shopping precincts with its library and shops connected by a labyrinth of ramps and corridors. The photo shows how partial demolition has further isolated it, rather than solving its problems.



Instead of taking the easy way out and condemning it the design team sent by the programme suggested weaving the fabric back together. They reconfigured it to make a more liveable space. And this, rather than blowing up

architectural monstrosities, has to be the way forward if cities are not to be trapped in a painful generational cycle of destruction and development.

#### Eleanor Young

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Philip Pacey  
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### Hedges and molehills in a winter landscape

I have the pleasure of cycling in the local countryside at midday.... often. Here I refresh my soul, watch tractors, I puff steam back at soft breathy cattle, plot molehill distributions, listen to buzzards mewling overhead and look at the weird shapes of trees and sticks in the hedge. I listen to hedge flailing and wheel my way over macerated twigs. It is winter but there is a lot going on. A few images offer you a picture of my rides. Some show how well farmers are dealing with their hedges, under the stewardship scheme. I saw the one below at Eggington near Derby. Others remind you how hedge trimming can be destructive if not properly considered. It is wrong (morally, I would say) to flail small trees, or add wound upon wound to recovering ones. The RSPB offers guidelines.





Macerated twig mulch is a nothing material, far less appealing than traditional hedge sticks. The top photo shows how contorted ash sticks become when repeatedly flailed and how small tree trunks suffer. A new woody material for Goldsworth-ian art in the style of Arthur Rackham.

All the trees in one hedge have been felled. Outrage? These trees have been pollarded many times before. I look enviously at the logs. I am sad that while the thicker poles will go for logs (but not timber), the twigs and branches less than an inch and a bit will end up on a huge bonfire. What a big waste. And none go for cart shafts..... "Come you medieval peasants come and bundle your faggots!" Meanwhile it has been a very busy season for moles — even in busy roadside verges. I have never seen the like.

## WHERE THE LIGHT FALLS

James Randall reviews the evocative and illuminating British Museum exhibition, Samuel Palmer: Vision and Landscape (21 October 2005 – 22 January 2006)

How we see landscape depends on vision, not just through the viewfinder or from a chosen prospect but a sense of the land being possessed. This possession can be by a complex evolutionary history (of natural and human agency), learnt through the study and experience of places, or by a more mythopoetic aspect, concerning the relation of the landscape to the cosmos.

Artist Samuel Palmer, who was born in 1805 in south London, and went into voluntary rural exile in north Kent in his twenties, veered more towards the latter. However, his concentration on familiar landscape scenes and continuing studies of rural scenes, in ink,

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watercolour, tempera, gouache, and sepia washes, and later using exacting and advanced metal etching techniques suggest an abiding concern for a naturalistic rendering of the visible and an enduring, dutiful obedience to what he could see.

The landscapes he painted were the mortal counterpart to his vision of heavenly light entering into the world of nature. Earth is continually visited by the light of the universe on the daily cycle of day and night, and he has a particular concern for twilight, the moon and sunrise. In much of his early work there is a moon present, giving the pictures a certain quality of light and hauntedness, from 'Late Twilight' to 'Cornfields by Moonlight with the Evening Star,' (below) on which stooks of corn are lit up by the night sky.

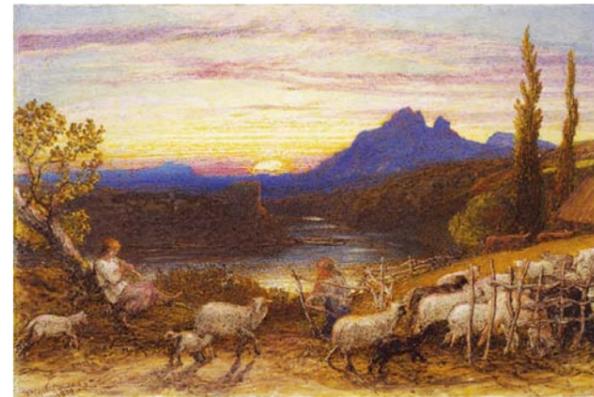
Living in Shoreham, which he described as the 'Valley of Vision', he was part of an artistic brotherhood, known as the Ancients, a group of artists and writers that included William Blake. Amongst the local villagers, to whom they seem to have got their own exotic identity, they were known as the 'extollagers' (astrologers), for their habit of roaming at night down lanes and across fields, watching the stars and the sleeping world around them. To Palmer, landscape was the canvas on which the divine was illuminated, more than a coincidence of ecological and atmospheric conditions carefully composed and enhanced for artistic effect.



Having left Shoreham, the site of labour disturbances in the 1830s, he tried to match his early intense painting of colour and light in other locations. After his travels to Italy, to Rome, Naples and Pompeii, Palmer explored rural England and Wales, and in 1858 travelled to Devon and Cornwall. His work, 'The Comet of 1858, as seen from the Heights of Dartmoor,' captures a scene of the moor, lit from above as the comet travels through the night sky. On the right hand side of the picture, looking along the granite ravine and down through the hills, a shepherd, mother and daughter and hermit watch in awe at this spectacle of the momentary revelation of landscape.

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Rather than being compared to the more epic ethereality of Turner, Palmer might be seen in relation to Marc Chagall and his paintings of rural Jewish scenes in Russia and also to Stanley Spencer, who staged his own religious vision of landscape in the Thames-straddling Berkshire village of Cookham. But Palmer also had a more outward vision. When he returned to live permanently in London, and later in Redhill, Surrey, he turned to literary subjects, following the demand of patrons and his own inclinations, with illustrations (see below: 'Till Vesper Bade the Swain') inspired by Virgil's *Eclogues* (which he also translated), Homer's *Odyssey* and Milton's poetry.



Palmer's final series of paintings on Milton's poems, still ongoing after thirteen years when he died, includes, below, 'The Lonely Tower', in which he uses the gothic tower of Leith Hill in Surrey to illustrate Milton's poem 'El Penseroso' (the contemplative man). The paintings in this series,



including 'The Prospect,' illustrate his search for his own ideal perspective on the world, from where the landscape's transformation by light and divine presence could be observed.

This exhibition covers the key periods of Palmer's life and the full range of his approach to nature and landscape. With his conjuring of small settings, he was

able to bring botanical and geological detail to a mystical sense of English landscape. Romantic and spiritually infused, his paintings are a memorial to a vision of landscape and the ancient work of the painter to witness divinity within the world. To Palmer, self-appointed artist-in-residence to a spectral, intimate Eden, landscape was not just what is seen, or its aesthetic recomposition, but how it may or, even, must be seen.

**James Randall**

## The LRG Research Dissertation Prize 2005

The LRG dissertation prize started in 2001, has now become an established feature of LRG activities. We regularly receive dissertations from a wide range of institutions from Oxbridge to Art College, from Departments of Architecture to Schools of Agriculture. For our undergraduate dissertation prize there are two categories, one called "academic" and the other "practitioner". The prizes are of equal status and we expect high levels of intellectual rigour, conscientious research, imaginative design and good quality presentation in both. The reason for having two prizes is to enable us to give credit each year both to work that investigates a conventionally academic topic and to work which undertakes research into a practical issue concerning landscape management and design.

This year we had fourteen entries and the judges were extremely impressed by the standard. Though we normally award one winner and one highly commended in each category, the rules allow us to reflect the overall standard of entries and make more or less awards as appropriate. The prizes are as follows, winner: £100 plus one year's subscription to LRG and runner up £50 plus one year's subscription to LRG.

### "Academic" Prize 2005.

**Winner:** *Landscapes of the Mind: an artist and his public, questions of communication*, by Cloe De Pencier, University of Cambridge. This dissertation looked at the work of the Cornish artist Kurt Jackson working in St. Ives. The judges were impressed by the command of issues and literature concerning the politics of landscape representation displayed in the dissertation. However we felt that the most compelling part of this study was the way in which it examined how audiences and gallery spaces together help to produce meanings in art.

**Highly Commended:** *Landscapes of the Mind: the influence of the human life cycle on landscape preferences*, by Charlie Malyon, University College London. The judges felt this was a highly original topic for a dissertation and provided an interesting perspective on the relationship between human behaviour and landscape. We were impressed by the methodology of this study which combined quantitative and qualitative analysis

**Highly Commended:** *Heart of Whiteness: Towards the Antarctic with William Hodges*, by Janet Wiltshire, University of Plymouth. This was a highly competent piece of art history. It examined the art work of William Hodges produced whilst sailing with Captain Cook. It considered depictions of Antarctic landscapes within the context of neoclassicism, the sublime and imperialism.

### “Practitioner” Prize.

**Winner:** *Natural Remedies: How is the Battersea Garden Project Constructed as a Therapeutic Landscape?* by Holly Hampson, University of Edinburgh. The judges felt this was a superbly written and excellently conceived piece of work. We were impressed by the highly innovative participant observation methodology adopted in this study. In addition to theoretical and methodological sophistication, this dissertation was able to apply its research findings directly to the practical issues involved in using gardens for therapeutic purposes.

**Highly Commended:** *Land Management at How Hill Fen, Norfolk, since 1997 and its impact on vegetation succession over time*, by Samantha Jones, University College London. This was a highly competent study of fen management strategies. The major concern was the effectiveness of the Fen Management Strategy implemented in 1997. The judges were very impressed by a well organised and conscientiously undertaken study.

*Recently, (2005) LRG has instigated a dissertation prize for Masters students. We very much hope that together the undergraduate and masters dissertation competitions will help us welcome new young researchers into the world of landscape research.*



The photo above also whilst on a bike ride is a lovely rushy meadow fringed by ash and with alder in the stream line. A medieval sight /site close to Yalworthy — the old (10th century) farm in Devonian now just a stone based grassy platform in amongst a cluster of tiny fields.

## ANTHOLOGY

*From 'A Time of Gifts' by Patrick Leigh Fermoy published by John Murray 1977. (ISBN 0-7195-6695-9). This account of a journey on foot across Europe in 1933 is packed with descriptions of what the author saw and how he reacted to it. Leigh Fermoy was only 19 when he made his journey and some of those descriptions are of landscape and it is the landscape of the solitary walker in a snow bound pre-War Europe.*

*The author explores towns and buildings, architecture and cultural history. Like a true European he cheerfully leaves a bit of German or Latin untranslated (but notes ruefully when he leaves Austria for Czech lands that he does not understand a word). It is a view of a continuous Europe full of cultural difference and full of meanings and values. Sometimes the author is inventively wordy. It is tempting to point out the many ways in which he experiences landscape but perhaps, dear reader, I may safely leave this to you.*

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\* A change came over the country. For the first time, next day, the ground was higher than sea-level and with every step the equipoise of the elements tilted more decisively in favour of dry land. A gentle rolling landscape of water-meadow and ploughland and heath, with the snow melting here and there, stretched away northward through the province of Guelderland and south into Brabant. The roadside calvaries and the twinkle of sanctuary lamps in the churches indicated that I had crossed a religious as well as a cartographic contour-line.

### From page 26 In the Low Countries

\* Vague speculation thrives in weather like this. The world is muffled in white, motor-roads and telegraph-poles vanish, a few castles appear in the middle distance; everything slips back hundreds of years. The details of the landscape – the leafless trees, the sheds, the church towers, the birds and the animals, the sledges and woodmen, the sliced ricks and the occasional cowmen driving a floundering herd from barn to barn – all these stand out dark in isolation against snow, distinct and momentous. Objects expand or shrink and the change makes the scenery resemble early woodcuts of winter husbandry. Sometimes the landscape moves it further back in time.

### From page 104 Wintereise

\* Footpaths corkscrewed down-hill from these uplands; down, down until the trees thinned and the sunlight died away. Meadows would appear, then a barn, then an orchard and a churchyard and threads of smoke ascending from the chimney pots of a

riverside hamlet; and I was back among the shadows. *Et jam summa procul villarum culmina fumant Majoresque cadunt altis de montibus umbrae.* There was always a Golden Hart or a White Rose for bread and cheese among the huddle of roofs, or for a coffee and Himbeergeist. Often, half in a bay of the mountains and half on a headland, a small and nearly amphibian Schloss mouldered in the failing light among the geese and elder-bushes and the apple trees.

### From page 143 The Danube: seasons and castles.

*I note that the follow-on book (acquired second hand at Exeter's new Oxfam bookshop) takes us through to Istanbul. Further reports are likely.*

## HOWARD IN ALBANIA

There have been two meetings of the Council of Europe this year to discuss the European Landscape Convention, now with 32 signatory nations. The first meeting was a workshop in Cork in June, particularly discussing the problems of peri-urban and suburban landscapes. These two have to be carefully distinguished as the peri-urban landscape is the area of the greatest change, with considerable effort being given to it academically, socially and in terms of landscape design. The suburban landscape, however, is much more static, and attracts surprisingly little attention considering that these are the very areas with the greatest populations. One might imagine that the landscapes experienced by the greatest number of people might attract the greatest amount of interest, but the reverse seems to be the case—empty places make most noise. We sometimes wonder what kind of landscape ‘people’ really want. One answer seems quite clear; when they have the money they will build their own house and overlook as much landscape as they can afford. The fact that others are doing the same all around them does not seem to be a major concern.



To see this at its most extraordinary, I recommend a visit to Albania. The Council held a meeting in Tirana in December, and the first shock on taking a taxi from the small international airport (recently named after Mother Theresa) is to find that the road to the capital city has only a passing acquaintance with tarmac. Even in the middle of the city, streets are dug up and left as hills of earth, while trenches are dug but rapidly become filled with garbage bags. Pavements are not usually paved, and the iron inspection covers are often missing so that great care must be taken not to fall into the sewers. This is unnerving. But the drive out of the city first to Durrës and then southward to the national park near the Greek border shows one of the most fascinating landscapes in Europe. Let me explain.

Albania has had many occupiers and regimes. There are occasional glimpses of Turkish influence with occasional balconied houses in the older towns, although in Tirana the influences of Italian colonisation of the 1930s predominates, with Futurist concrete curves melding with fascist iconography and



style. Italian food is still the dominant form and perhaps more welcome than the built legacy. Then came the long period under communist regimes, influenced more by China than the Soviet Union. Everywhere, even beside the pool of the modern hotel, there are the round concrete caps of half a million small pill boxes, like submerged daleks, as well as the usual fare of concrete apartment blocks, on a slightly different model from those of the Soviet empire.

Albania is not perhaps yet ready for the care-free seaside holiday, though it certainly has the scenery, the sea and the weather. Students for all that would find this the ideal country in which to ‘read’ the landscape, whether that were part of geology, economics, sociology or cultural geography. Where else can one view the legacy of seven or eight empires in almost every field?

The post communist landscape is even more extraordinary. The whole way from Tirana to Durrës and over much of the flat land there is an almost

random scatter of property. Much of it is of illegal construction, much of it is unfinished, indeed much of it is scarcely begun, but obviously abandoned. Some of the new property is painted with the most garish colours, in a variety of styles. A child achieves a similar effect by emptying all its Lego pieces onto a



green carpet, except that Albania is more colourful. In between, of course, are older properties clearly exhibiting real poverty. Much of the money comes from Albanians working abroad, and so we are witnessing a landscape of rampant capitalism with 'trophy houses' on a scale far greater than in Ireland, though the funds invested are clearly less. Public poverty is cheek by jowl with private wealth, or at least sufficiency. And at intervals one sees the relic temples of ancient Greece or imperial Rome, sometimes, as at Apollonia, strangely conserved with columns of Greek marble plus modern concrete.

Of course, much of Albania is anything but flat and green. The mountains are sharp, grey and clothed with greater forests of olives than in most of the Mediterranean, though they prefer their olives to be as sharp as the mountains. In parts of the Adriatic olive terraces are abandoned as work in the tourist sector beckons; in Albania the result is similar but the workers have gone abroad.

The northerner carries an image of the Mediterranean which it is not easy to shed. Nineteenth century travellers to Italy or Greece were frequently faced with grinding poverty, but more recently most people's experience, certainly mine, has been of comparatively wealthy areas. Here in Albania is a landscape which clearly has all the basic features which have attracted tourists to the Mediterranean littoral, but without the mental, perceptual infrastructure that allows both locals and visitors to see an idyll. That the local people perceive their landscape as unlovely is evident enough by the lack of attention even to private, let alone public aesthetics, and the litter strewn everywhere.

The Minister of Tourism is well aware of the problem of the desecration of all sites by mess, and frighteningly honest about it, but a national attitude of

littering all public spaces will not change until the national idyll changes. At present, too often, the national dream is to get out.

### Peter Howard International Officer for LRG

#### Stop Press

Bud, UK yesterday signed the European Landscape Convention. I have been asked to attend the meeting with the minister next Tuesday

## COMFORT ZONES

Within just a few weeks, culminating in the 2005 Chelsea Flower Show, I fell under the spell of two images of England's green and pleasant land which first enchanted me, then persistently and insistently haunted me, as if obliging me to question the ease with which I had surrendered to them.

The two images, although very differently made, were closely related. The *second* was Julien Dowle's first prize winning garden at Chelsea, a cottage garden in front of, apparently, a thatched pub called 'The Chelsea Pensioner'. Under a window outside the pub stood a bench. Somehow despite its ephemeral nature it seemed to me (seeing it on television) to be surrounded by mature trees in full foliage, but they may have been a figment of my imagination. Julien Dowle had been commissioned to create the garden by the Royal Chelsea Hospital; his first step was to ask several of the Pensioners about what they felt they had been fighting for; how they remembered and imagined the England they had left behind and so desperately hoped to return to.

The *first* image was a painting by John Shelley, owned by Tate Britain and included in the 'Art of the Garden' show which I saw at the Manchester City Art Gallery. It depicts a garden in front of a cottage; under the cottage window is a bench; the whole is surrounded and enclosed by mature trees in full foliage. Two very similar scenes, then; *neither* featuring a picturesque prospect, a distant view; both offering instead almost total enclosure, other than being open to sunlight from above.

Nearly every time it was shown on television through Chelsea week, the garden of 'The Chelsea Pensioner' was inhabited by pensioners, sitting on the bench; the pub may have been make believe, but the actual

Chelsea Pensioners, we were told, were provided with a supply of 'real ale'. In the painting a young woman sits on the bench; a man has just cycled down the lane and is coming through the garden gate. The picture is called 'The Annunciation' and is touched by mystery and holiness, with echoes of Samuel Palmer and Stanley Spencer. The artist is himself something of a mystery, for the Tate Web site indicates that he was born in the 1930s, and that the painting is not based on any one place, but gives no other information, and I've not been able to find out anything about him. It's almost as if he appeared from nowhere, produced this one picture, and disappeared without trace.

When in my teens I first came upon Samuel Palmer's visionary depictions of the countryside around Shoreham in Kent, I instantly succumbed. Since then I have learned to question why certain images and texts appeal as they do; whether their appeal lies as much in what they omit as what they represent? whether they portray an England that never was? The pensioners' garden and John Shelley's painting both depict scenes which might - still - exist, even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but if they did, would not be immune to the hum of traffic on a nearby motorway or aircraft overhead... Yes, there is a kind of landscape pornography, such as the 'chocolate box' pictures of 'English cottages' on my mother-in-law's table mats, which tempts us to flirt with its facile, cosmetic images. But the enchanted landscapes of Palmer, and the imaginings of a soldier at war, are hard won images of the world as it might be, which take some courage to envision. Accurate depictions of 'reality' make fewer demands on the imagination. Palmer could not sustain the intense creativity of his 'visionary' period.

So it seems to me that Palmer's landscapes, John Shelley's 'Annunciation', and the garden of 'The Chelsea Pensioner' are images of a profound comfort and of deep shelter, by which I mean, a comfort of the spirit as much as of the body, and shelter where no shelter is needed, because no hostile forces threaten; shelter which does not *merely* protect but which embraces. They are peculiarly English; perhaps nowhere else in the world are there landscapes which - lush, intimate, kindly - lend themselves to be re-created in quite this way. They are courageous, and fragile, because they pit themselves against the near certainty of our brevity and insignificance in an infinite but empty universe. They demonstrate the extraordinary coincidence, that the most beautiful planet in the universe happens also to be inhabited by sentient beings who see and make it so. They dare to imagine heaven on earth; they are poignant proof, if proof were needed, of life before death.

### Philip Pacey University of Central Lancashire

## MEET THE BOARD Kenneth Olwig



As a child of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century America, my interest in landscape is very much tied to the various autos that have motored through my life, so this is literally an "auto" biography. My father was a

born explorer of the old school. Alexander v. Humboldt could not have planned his New World expeditions more meticulously.

Before heading west from our home on Staten Island, New York, en route to San Francisco, California (my mother was from the Bay area), my father thus ordered a pile of maps and a route planner from the American Automobile Association (AAA), which worked out the route most likely to be passable (geography mattered). For my mother (the navigator), the AAA also supplied a long strip map that was designed to be read in the direction of movement, thereby eliminating the problem of having to orient oneself to the cardinal directions. My father worked out the planned distance for each day of a month long trip, after which he booked a motel room, or a visit with friends, for each stop along the way.

My father had friends from one end of North America to the other. This was also true of the European continent, from Pucklechurch to Pilzen, "thanks" to "the" war. For some people the war was about fighting, but for my father, a pacifist medic, it was about geographical exploring and making life long acquaintances.

My little brother and I spent the various family excursions (to California; the American South; Michigan; New England; Canada etc.) sprawled on the back seat. Whenever the auto stopped at a gas station we would make a raid on the free maps that were on offer, and then we would trace our trip on the maps - comparing the styles offered by the different

companies: SUNOCO, CONOCO, AMOCO etc.

For Americans the grand tour was about landscape, especially as found in the great national parks, the Grand Canyon, Yosemite, etc. – and we did this, of course. But we also visited, the glorious landscape gardens of the

Carolina plantations, near where my father was once stationed (with his new bride) prior to being sent to England and thence the Belgian front. And, most importantly, we also visited my Danish-American grandfather in Nevada, where he was now married (after the death of my Swedish-American grandmother) to the daughter of the sheep rancher who had grubstaked him during his early days as a gold and silver prospector in the Sierra Nevadas. My grandfather knew the geology of the mountains and desert like the inside of his pocket, and he imparted an enduring interest in the subject to me. Later in life, when I had my own auto, and my own wife, I followed in my parent's tire tracks, crisscrossing North America, Britain and Europe, visiting at times my father's friends, or their descendents, and my mother's relatives.

My father also liked to explore on a smaller scale. We usually took a drive, after church, to some nook or cranny of Staten Island, which he knew in minute detail, both as an aviator, journalist, and as an avid reader. He might point out the place where Garibaldi lived while campaigning for Italian unity, and where the emigrant Italian population still maintained gardens (complete with olive trees and grape vines) that were as close as possible to those in Italy. Then there was the area, Sandyground, where the descendents of runaway slaves, who had come up from the South, on the "Underground Railway," still lived almost as then, and could be seen riding horses bareback over their fields. There was also the fields, near Richmondtown, where the British quartered their troops during The Revolutionary War, and the place where Frederic Law Olmstead had his farm before going on to a career as landscape architect.

A particularly important stretch of land was the extended area of woods and fields where my father



hoped the city would establish a green belt – a cause championed by the landscape architect Ian McHarg. Eventually, however, the construction of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge caused the island to become rapidly overbuilt, so it lost its sense of community, leading my parents to move to Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where they became active members of a township that had been run on the basis of direct democracy, through town meetings, since its foundation by English settlers centuries earlier.

By now I have provided all the necessary autobiographical background to explain my career as a landscape researcher. After being inoculated by a journalist father with an abiding interest in maps, geology, landscapes, places, European lands and history, I almost automatically had to become a landscape geographer, with a particular interest in words and literature. After a junior year abroad in Denmark, I did a Masters in what might properly be called "Scandinavian philology" (language, literature, history and geography) at the University of Minnesota, before transferring to geography, where I was lucky enough to study with Yi-Fu Tuan (my thesis supervisor) and David Lowenthal. Given the wanderlust that had spread my family across several continents, it is also understandable that I wound up married to a Dane; living in Copenhagen, Denmark and commuting daily to the university in Sweden where I am a professor in the Department of Landscape Planning at the Swedish Life Sciences University (SLU).

My most recent book, *Landscape, Nature and the Body Politic* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002) is in many respects an inversion of my autobiography. It starts in Denmark before moving back, via Great Britain, to the landscapes of the United States that I explored on the back seat of my father's auto. Any one who is interested in the more boring details of my (academic) life since childhood can always Google my name, starting with the department website (<http://www.lpal.slu.se/personal/kentolw.html>), and then my life will take on the appropriate character of billboards on the information highway.



Another landscape in the can

hoped the city would establish a green belt – a cause championed by the landscape architect Ian McHarg. Eventually, however, the construction of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge caused the island to become rapidly overbuilt, so it lost its sense of community, leading my parents to move to Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where they became active members of a township that had been run on the basis of direct democracy, through town meetings, since its foundation by English settlers centuries earlier.

## IL PAESAGGIO, 1963

By good fortune I come across this clean, query unread, volume (120 plates, 94 local maps at 50,000 or good block diagrams) describing the landscape of Italy. Published by the Touring Club Italiano in 1963



it is a work of geographical scholarship and seems to me to knock some 'landscape by region' accounts into a cocked hat. A bit old fashioned? It must by now have some historical significance. It is both geological and cultural in approach. I quote from the preface:

*"Il Paesaggio" e uno studio inteso a condurre il lettore-turista a saper vedere gli aspetti tipici del nostro Paese, come se si trattasse di opere d'arte che derivino il loro fascino, anziche dai profondi impulsi del genio artistico umano, direttamente dalla millenaria, infrenabile azione della Natura, a cui l'uomo, dapprima per necessita di adattamento, poi per esigenze del suo progresso*

*civile, ha aggiunte il suo intenso lavoro trasformatore.*

Below: Tavola (photo). Interestingly the other volumes (there are ten) deal with the Flora and then with Art.



## JOURNALS RECEIVED '& Obituary'

Unless I hear a roar of disapproval (yeah) I am not now presenting detailed lists of other journals. This is in view of the ease with which their contents may be viewed on websites. I retain the synopsis of the German language journal *Garten und Landschaft*

provided for me by Peter Howard who claims he needs the German language practice.

G+L 1/2005 Theme : Urban Spaces, includes articles about: the division between designer and sponsor at the Wall Park in Berlin; green promenades in Berlin – Kiez; experimental uses for parks with young people in Hannover; combining nature protection and pedagogic functions at Munich-Hilbertshofen; a modernist playground in Kassel; using empty lots for public spaces in Leipzig; Space Pioneers using empty lots in Berlin; the Shrinking Cities Project (in the former DDR)

2/2005 Theme: Cultural Landscapes

Articles concern: the concept of Heimat, now back in favour but with an unclear meaning; New Pictures for the Land – a new band of parks in Berlin-Barnim, 3 designs using classic parkland ideas; European Landscape Convention – a plea for Germany to get involved; an Austrian project to map their cultural landscapes; the Biosphere Reserve at Entlebuch (CH) an exemplar of local participation; Marketing the value of landscape – using Corporate Identity to promote landscape, including Land Art; what is the cost to landscape? - the results of agricultural change on landscape values and the landscape impact; Information Management Systems for landscape planners.

3/2005 Theme: Open Space

Articles include: Open-space culture in Berlin—many parks, including the banks of the Spree are now designed for minimal maintenance; new art and landscape architecture of the Government area of Berlin, including the Articles of the 1949 Constitution in stone; monument for the murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin; Hansa Green in Hamburg – the new Harbour City and Jump over the Elbe; New landscape parks at Munich – Neubiberg, and on top of the railway; Munich park on top of the autobahn; Stuttgart, where prosperity means there is no time or space for green; big projects displacing parks in Berlin.

4/2005 Theme: City Marketing

The first article, on the Inner City as Urbane Leisure Space, emphasising gastronomic and other leisure activities, in between the commercial zones, sets the scene for examples from: Wiesbaden – the new pedestrian zone; Zürich – a new lighting plan; Bremen – lighting design; Hannover-Herrenhausen Paark, enhancing the visitor experience; Gronau following a Landesgartenschau; Salzburg – developing urban parks despite its rural environs; Damp (on the Baltic) a new image of seaside promenades.

5/2005 Theme: Trees

Articles include: The Art of Waiting – new schemes allowing for time, including Greenwich Park; Riem Landscape Park, Munich, with trees upwind and

aligned for cleaner air; People's Rights Square, Munich, has pines planted in a busy mall, with strict quality control and planting regulations; Uptown Munich – a forest of mature pine trees planted on top of a car park, to transform the north of the city; Leipzig-Paunsdorf – a wooded recreation area in an urban waterside setting; stress factors in old trees close to development; transgenic trees – some being resistant to Finnish birch fungus, can be used to repopulate areas, such as British elms.

6/2005 Theme – the Federal Garden Show at Munich Articles : Munich Riem – the site of a former airport, is site for the show, where cell gardens show natural processes; Between the cells are flowering carpets – with plant lists; Blooming Meadows and Banks – planting based on local natural meadow types (with plant lists); Middle of the Periphery – there are problems with the square designed as a focal point, but shunned by people; History of Munich Parks – including the Englischer Garten, the Nymphenburg, the Olympia Park; the Show as a catalyst for the revitalisation of north Munich, diverting leisure from the overcrowded south; Leverkusen, where a Landesgartenschau has revitalised 16000 ha along the industrial Rhine.

## TIDES OF CHANGE:course

May 2006. A workshop on past present and future enactments of the coast as a boundary  
The workshop will be held in co-operation with Kenneth Olwig of the NordForsk Landscape Research Network (NLRN) and Peter Howard from the Landscape Research Group (LRG).

The NLRN is co-sponsoring this as a combined research workshop and doctoral course. It will be held at the Multimar Wattenmeerforum ([www.multimar-wattforum.de](http://www.multimar-wattforum.de)), Tönning, Schleswig on 18 – 21 of May 2006. For an in-depth description of the workshop topic see below (context).

The workshop has a twin format: that of an advanced research workshop, where scholars will present papers for discussion and a doctoral course where a limited number of Ph.D. students will have the opportunity to present papers, and receive guidance from both the invited lectures and the course organizers from the NLRN.

Ph.D. students should apply directly by e.mail to Kenneth Olwig, of the NLRN: SLU-Alnarp, Department of Landscape Planning, Box 58, SE-230 53 Alnarp, Sweden. [Kenneth.Olwig@lpal.slu.se](mailto:Kenneth.Olwig@lpal.slu.se).

Scholars interested in presenting a paper at the workshop should contact Dr. Martin Doering, GKSS-Research Centre Geesthacht, Institute for Coastal Research, Max Planck Straße 1, D-21502 Hamburg, Phone: 0049/(0)4152-1848, Fax: 0049/(0) 4152-1888, E-Mail: [Martin.Doering@gkss.de](mailto:Martin.Doering@gkss.de)

The main aim of the workshop is to investigate – in a comparative way – the different scientific, social and economic representations of coastlines, especially, but not exclusively, those of the North Sea. As the past is continually redefined in terms of the present and through projections into the future, the workshop offers a kind of collective memory-work on the discourses and repertoires that structure the contestation and renegotiation of these coastlines.  
**Organising committee** Dennis Bray (GKSS Research Centre), Martin Doering (GKSS Research Centre), Werner Krauss (University of Texas), Brigitte Nerlich (University of Nottingham) and Hans von Storch (GKSS Research Centre)

## A FIELD GUIDE TO SPRAWL

Dolores Hayden with aerial photos by Jim Wark  
W.W. Norton, N.Y. & London, 2004, hbk, 128pp, \$24.95, 0-393-73125-1..

Zooming alligators! this is a handy introduction to some curious ways of using the land. It begins with a short, sensible, introductory essay, and ends with an extensive, largely American, biography. In between are about fifty aerial photos of types of urban sprawl to be found splattered across the landscapes of the U.S.A., each briefly explained. It is like a catalogue of gargantuan works by some megalomaniac land-artist.

If you want to see how pretty patterns on a developer's plan translate into soulless ticky-tacky on the ground, or how brutal the rape of the land can be, or how well the project to tarmac from New York to Los Angeles (or, indeed, John o' Groats to Land's End) is going, this 'field guide' is worth a browse. Keep it on the coffee-table to frighten visiting C.P.R.E. or National Trust members.... They will find 'big boxes', for instance, which are up to 250,000 square metres of commerce on one level under one roof, 'lulus', the sort of locally unwanted land uses that nimbies (you will now know this word) or bananas (build absolutely nothing anywhere near) and nopes (not on planet Earth) can't stand. You will also find 'zoomburbs' that splurge over the land even faster than 'boomburbs'.

Arizona's zoomburbing Sun City - like a whirling disc spilling out fragments as great as itself - ends the book's selection. The book begins with two

'alligators', or prospective developments that weren't actually realised. One exists as bulldozed dirt roads strung along the contours of Colorado hillsides; the other is a seemingly endless rectilinear grid of roads scraped across New Mexico drylands. Wildness has lost again....

But... the thought is dangerous, but seeing some of these aerial views - or, indeed, those in many of the recent spate of 'views from above' books - is to see some remarkable, intriguing, and often beautiful, patterns we have drawn on the land. They may destroy naturally beautiful landscapes, mock the notion of 'sustainability', and make it almost impossible to establish the 'community' for which they are intended, but some of these developments - at a distance, from above, experienced only as *pictures* - surely outdo much so-called land-art! Not just in terms of scale. I'm not pretending there is usually any such artistic intention behind what is built - I guess there sometimes is, and it would be interesting to hear about them: they are criticised because they *are* sprawls, commonly heartless, usually eco-disastrous, and - on the ground, when you remember they are *real* - so often ugly from either grotesqueness or tediousness..

And they are saddening: and one feels so angry at the rape. However, we should not pretend that here is something that happens only within the American Dream, or that it happens only in 'advanced' civilisations. Think [say] of the scale of the ancient scrapings that make up the 'Nazca lines' and drawings in the Andean desert which 'read' to us only in aerial view. And then note the comment of Sir Tipene O'Regan, one of New Zealand's Maori leaders, which probably has worldwide echoes: "I shudder to think what my ... ancestors would have done, had they had bulldozers."!  
[ This is an modification of a review for *Ecos* - a review of conservation, journal of the British Association of Nature Conservationists. ]

## Martin Spray Forest of Dean

## BLOWDOWN AND LOSS OF THE FAMILIAR

The destruction of place is always emotionally charged. Channel 4 programme Demolition, broadcast just before Christmas, followed a group of council tenants in Edinburgh who had been campaigning for years for the destruction of their damp, badly built high rise homes. They were

joyful that at last it was to be dynamited. Yet in the seconds it took for the block to collapse in onto itself the tenants covered their face at the horror of it and had to choke away the tears at the destruction.

I once saw a 'blown down' as they are called and it was one of the most exciting and shocking things I have ever witnessed - a moment of outstanding violence despite being the most planned of demolitions.



Change in our landscape is traumatic, even when it happens more slowly. In the countryside, building – while it has nothing on demolition – seems out of chronological kilter. It happens too fast. And a business park or housing estate is more than a leap of imagination away from fields and hedges. An artist's sketch of an urban extension near Luton fills me with horror and a dull sense of dread. Is it the loss of some second rate greenbelt I am mourning? Views through windows in houses I have never visited? Or a fear of the new?

The problem of speed is exacerbated by modern computer generation that allows this even on projects that will take years to complete. Walking through the scrubland and playing fields of the Lea Valley in East London it is all-too-easy to visualise animations of Olympic development sweeping across the landscape with gleaming stadia and happy people. But the mourning for what will soon be lost has already begun.

It is unsurprising that, even in areas with a patent need for a facelift, change is resisted – part emotional attachment to our physical surroundings, part a crisis of confidence over what might replace them. Some of the biggest votes on demolition for regeneration have taken place not on TV but in real life where large housing estates are transferred from the council to arms length management organisations as at Aylesbury Estate at Elephant and Castle in South London. Under government rules each of these