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ABSTRACT


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This thesis explores the career of Canadian landscape architect James Austin Floyd (1910-1981). To date, despite Floyd’s status as one of Canada’s first modern landscape architects, there exists no comprehensive study of his work. Through concentrated literature review, archival study, and key informant interviews, this thesis explores Floyd’s residential and institutional gardens—designed between 1950 and 1970---in the context of the emergence of modern landscape architecture in postwar Canada. The thesis concludes that Floyd had considerable influence on the evolution of modern landscape architecture in Canada through his garden designs and writings, and that his design philosophy, merging functionalism with aesthetic, owed much to his professional training and influences in Canada and the United States. This thesis offers valuable information for further exploration of Canada’s landscape architectural history in the postwar modern era.

KEYWORDS: Modernism, Beaux-Arts, Classical, Victorian, Bauhaus, International Style, landscape architecture.
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ABBREVIATIONS

JRAIC .................. Journal of Royal Architectural Institute of Canada
CH&G ........................ Canadian Homes and Gardens magazine
WH&L ........................ Western Homes and Living magazine
LAC ................................ Library and Archives Canada (Ottawa, Ontario)
CCLAA ............................. Centre for Canadian Landscape Architecture Archives (University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario)
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

After 1945, Canadian society wanted respite from the horrors of two major world wars and a seemingly endless economic depression. As the troops returned home and reconstruction efforts began, a collective sense of high optimism and hope for a better future filled the nation. The ensuing economic growth, accompanied by improved access to new materials, technology, and highly skilled labor, meant that opportunities were ripe for the adoption of new ideas. It was during this period that a cultural zeitgeist—modernism—came to dominate Canadian society, particularly in design circles. From architects to furniture designers, Canadian design professionals of this era embraced modernism’s tenets—functionalism and truth to materials—with gusto (Gottlieb & Golden 2005). By the mid-1950s, modernist pioneers like Jan Kuypers and Stefan Siwinski had brought their European training to Canada, while others, such as architects John C. Parkin and Arthur Erikson were fast gaining national reputation for their flat-roofed, rectangular-shaped, international style buildings. It was in this optimistic design climate that J. Austin Floyd, a young landscape architect from Toronto, began his career among a generation of landscape architects who would introduce modern residential and institutional gardens into the Canadian landscape.
While the careers of many American mid-century modern landscape architects have been well documented, the same cannot be said of their Canadian counterparts. Indeed, very little scholarly attention has been paid to Canada’s landscape architectural history in the post World War II period. This thesis attempts to explore this underexplored era by examining the career of J. Austin Floyd (1910-81), one of Canada’s most prolific landscape architects to practice in the mid-twentieth century. It focuses particularly on the years between 1950 and 1970, a critical phase in Canadian landscape architectural practice that witnessed a stylistic departure from the Beaux-Arts designs that had dominated the prewar era. The thesis concludes that during this period Floyd had considerable influence on the evolution of modern landscape architecture in Canada through his garden designs and writings, and that his design philosophy, \textit{merging functionalism with aesthetic}, owed much to his professional training and influences in Canada and the United States.

After receiving his Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) degree at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design (GSD) in 1947, where he was trained by both Beaux-Arts and modernist design proponents, Floyd returned to Canada to establish his private firm in Toronto. In a career that spanned over three decades and produced more than 2000 gardens, Floyd’s work reflected the modernist style of landscape architecture that was sweeping across much of Europe and America in the mid-twentieth century. Whether it was a backyard garden or institutional courtyard, Floyd’s landscapes were not mere ‘decorations’ simply to be looked at for their collections of colorful shrubs and trees, but to be enjoyed as living places. Drawing inspiration from many American modern landscape architects, particularly, Thomas Church, Floyd utilized modern forms and vocabularies--drawn from the plastic arts--and tested new materials in his gardens. Like Church, Floyd never abandoned his Beaux-Arts knowledge but chose to punctuate
some of his modernist gardens with classical elements. In both his gardens and writings, *merging functionalism with aesthetics* remained Floyd’s overriding preoccupation.

An examination of Floyd’s gardens alone, however, does not offer a complete picture of the man and his career unless it is placed within the broader context of the times in which he lived. Floyd reached the height of his career at a time when a modern sensibility had permeated Canadian landscape architectural circles. Indeed, the approximate period of Floyd’s modernist work corresponds chronologically in the Canadian landscape architectural community to an era of increased attention to modernism in landscape design. The idea of the modern garden particularly became the focus of many disparate but not entirely disconnected discussions among Canadian landscape architects during the 1950s and 1960s. Floyd contributed to these discussions as a growing professional keeping track of development in the field and as a popular landscape architect whose opinions were respected by both his colleagues and the public.

Because the amount of landscape architectural writing was very limited during the 1950s and 1960s, architectural and garden magazines became the primary mediums for the circulation of ideas about modernism in landscape architecture. Hence, in studying Floyd’s work, I have briefly analyzed the landscape designs and writings of some of Floyd’s contemporaries in Ontario and British Columbia, that promoted the ideas of modern landscape architecture and which was taken up by Canadian architectural and garden publications. Here, my intention is to show that Floyd was not a loner in his modernist approach to landscape architecture. Instead, he was part of a group of Canadian landscape architects, some of them educated at Harvard under Walter Gropius and influenced by the works of American modernists, who attempted to introduce—through their gardens and writings—modernism into Canadian landscape architecture.
1.2 Research Goal

This thesis examines the career of J. Austin Floyd, particularly focusing on his residential and institutional gardens designed and constructed between 1950 and 1970. It situates Floyd’s works within the social and professional contexts in which he operated in order to demonstrate the emergence of modern landscape architecture in post World War II Canada.

1.3 Research Objectives

- Explore Floyd’s career by examining a selected number of his residential and institutional gardens designed and constructed between 1950 and 1970.
- Place Floyd’s work within his broader social and professional contexts to show the emergence of modern landscape architecture in Canada.
- Ascertain the legacy of J. Austin Floyd in the development of modern landscape architecture in Canada.

1.4 Significance of Research

Floyd’s career serves as a rich source of data for illuminating Canada’s modern landscape architectural history during the postwar 1950s and 1960s era, not only because he witnessed events which shaped the profession during this period, but because he participated in those events. Indeed, Floyd’s gardens were among the most recognizable modern landscape architectural projects in Canada during the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, this thesis offers valuable
information that sheds light on Canada’s landscape architectural history in the midcentury modern era.

1.5 Organization of Thesis

The thesis unfolds in six chapters. The next chapter discusses the methodology used in approaching this research. As a qualitative study, the thesis utilized three research methods: concentrated literature review, archival study and key informant interviews. The ‘J. Austin Floyd collection’ at the Library and Archives Canada holds the complete professional record of Floyd, and was a major source of information for this thesis. Other sources of information came from shelter and garden magazines of the 1950s and 1960s, and interviews of landscape architects who knew Floyd and shared professional relationship with him. There is little documentation and scholarly work on the history of gardens designed in the modernist style by Canadian landscape architects in the 1950s and 1960s. The literature review, discussed in Chapter Three, focuses on key figures and institutions that contributed to the development of modern landscape architecture. It is intended to create a suitable historical background to the thesis.

Chapter four explores a selected number of Floyd’s gardens and writings during key stages of his professional life. It is important in the context of this thesis to take a look back at garden design trend and writing in Canada before the modern era. Consequently, the chapter begins by looking at the landscape profession in Canada before the modern era, particularly focusing on the garden designs and writings of Howard Dunington-Grubb, one of the many landscape architects whose works epitomized the pre-modern era. Next, the chapter introduces Floyd by tracing his early days at the University of Manitoba to his professional training at the Harvard GSD, where he
was exposed to both Beaux-Arts and modernist approaches to landscape design. It will then discuss Floyd’s return to postwar Canada, which coincided with the rising popularity of modernism in Canadian society, particularly in design circles. Here, Floyd’s early opinion of the idea of the modern garden, which became a topic of interest in Canadian landscape architectural circles during this era, and Floyd’s first major work will be explored. Following this, the chapter examines Floyd’s partnership with Dunington-Grubb and J. Vilhelm Stennson, which produced many modern gardens, tempered with some Beaux-Arts elements and helped solidify Floyd’s stylistic oeuvre. Finally, the chapter looks at how Floyd applied his skills and experiences in private practice, and how he became involved in major collaborations with modern architects of that era. An attempt has been made to situate these stages of Floyd’s career within the broader context of his professional environment, specifically the gardens and writings of his contemporaries who promoted the modernist approach to landscape architecture. Chapter Five analyzes and draws conclusions from Floyd’s career. Chapter six ends the thesis by outlining the limitations of this research and recommending future topics.
Chapter Two: Methodology

1.6 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this thesis. The research utilized three qualitative methods; literature review, archival study, and key informant interviews. It followed a four stage process. First, I reviewed literature on modern landscape architecture and generated background information relevant to this thesis. Second, I conducted archival studies to retrieve graphic and biographical information on J. Austin Floyd. Third, information gathered from both the literature review and the archival studies were used to formulate questions for key informant interviews. Finally, information from the interviews was used to fill gaps and inconsistencies found in the archival research. Data from all three methods were then analyzed to draw conclusions. An overview of the methods used and the relationship between them is demonstrated in a flowchart shown in Figure 2.10.

1.7 Literature Review

The study began with a review of available literature on J. Austin Floyd. Currently, there is no significant publication on the career of Floyd except for Robert Graham (Graham 1981), and Jacqueline Adell’s (Adell 1984) articles that appeared in the Landscape Architectural Review in 1981 and 1984 respectively. Relevant and appropriate published materials on the history of
modern landscape architecture were also reviewed to offer a comparable historical background for this thesis.

Figure 2.10: Methodology Flowchart.

1.8 Archival Research

Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa currently houses the complete professional record of J. Austin Floyd. However, the record contains little textual material, including Floyd’s biographical information. As a result, descriptive data about Floyd’s works came from primary and--in a few cases-- secondary sources, including Canadian Homes and Gardens Magazine (CH&GM), the Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (JRAIC), and Western Homes and Living magazines of the 1950s and 1960s. The constraints of time and logistical challenges of gathering
data have caused the researcher to focus on the years 1950 through 1970, and to focus on a selected number of Floyd’s residential and institutional gardens.

1.9 Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews were conducted on January 26th and 28th 2014, and February 1st and 7th 2014 (See Appendix A for brief biographies of interviewees). The informants were selected from the work and social environments of J. Austin Floyd. Key informants were identified based on information gathered from the faculty of the program of landscape architecture at the University of Guelph, and the website for the Canadian Society of landscape architects (CSLA). All interviewees were professionals who were knew Floyd and were familiar with his work. Three of the interviews were conducted in person and one over the telephone. Personal correspondence via e-mail and follow-up telephone conversations were conducted on an as-needed basis. Permission to conduct the interviews was granted through the University of Guelph’s Research Ethics Board. A copy of the ethics certificate can be found in Appendix B. All interviews were audio-taped and the information was transcribed. The purpose of the key informant interviews was to rectify inconsistencies and gaps in the archival research. In addition, it was intended to shed light on the social and professional environment in which Floyd worked. This way, it became possible to gain an in depth knowledge of Floyd and the times in which he lived---information that otherwise could not have been deduced from the literature review or the archival research.
According to Stephen Taylor and Robert Bogdan, there are three types of qualitative interviews (Taylor & Bogdan 1998). One of which is background interviewing, which is intended to create a picture of a setting, situation, or person. The interview process takes sample informants to represent their group at large. This thesis used the background interviewing type to gather relevant contextual information. The informants for this research were selected from the work and social environments of J. Austin Floyd. Key informants were chosen for this research based on their experience as practicing landscape architects in the study period (1950-1970), and their professional relationship with Floyd. A well known Canadian landscape historian was interviewed in order to gain a different perspective on this topic aside from the viewpoint of landscape architects. By interviewing informants with different experiences and with varying professional relationships to Floyd, it was possible to get a more holistic picture for this study.

1.10 Interview Questions

The interview was meant to generate information about the social and professional contexts in which Floyd worked during the modernist decades of the 1950s and 1960s (See Appendix C for a copy of the interview questions). There were a total of 11 questions which were divided into five sections, each section serving as a focus area. The first two sections—introduction and professional context—were designed to obtain background information about the interviewees, and to better understand the “atmosphere” in which Floyd worked during the 1950s and 1960s. The next two sections—modernism and influences—were created to verify the existence of modern landscape architecture in Canada, and to ascertain some of Floyd’s modernist influences. The last section—legacy—was designed to deduce the contribution of Austin Floyd and his contemporaries in the development of modern landscape architecture in Canada.
Chapter Three: Literature Review

1.11 Modernism: A Background

In 1880, German philosopher and cultural critic, Frederich Nietzsche, expressed his frustration at the staleness of Victorian culture by proclaiming that Western Civilization was exhausted, and had to be transcended by a society that went beyond anything imaginable in Victorian 19th Century (Nietzsche, cited in Hollingdale, 1991). For Nietzsche, society was in need of fresh ideas that penetrated ‘undiscovered countries’ of the mind. It did not take long before Nietzsche’s prophecy materialized. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Victorian societal values and tastes had all but declined in their influence. The arrival of modernism at the height of industrialization ignited a clear ideological and stylistic break from Victorian societal norms. By all accounts, modernism was a cultural revolution against traditional ways of doing things in Western societies, and whose ideologies and styles were reflected in the artistic and design professions.
While the specific date or place for the onset of modernism is still a topic of debate among historians, many agree that the modern movement began with the ushering of industrialization in Europe in the late eighteenth century. The industrial revolution brought unprecedented change to the landscape. As trade boomed and populations increased, millions of people increasingly moved to cities, and factories replaced home workshops. The result was a massive and widespread ‘socio-cultural and political overhaul’ of Western society. As Alvin Toffler nicely sums it:

‘Industrialism was more than smokestacks and assembly lines. It was a rich, many-sided social system that touched every aspect of human life…It produced the Great Willow Run Factory outside Detroit, but it also put the tractor on the farm, the typewriter in the office, the refrigerator in the kitchen. It produced the daily newspaper and the cinema, the subway and the DC-3. It gave us cubism and twelve tone music. It gave us Bauhaus buildings and Barcelona chairs, sit down strikes, vitamin pills and lengthened life spans. It universalized the wrist watch and the ballot box. More importantly, it linked all these things together--assembled them, like a machine—to form the most powerful, cohesive and expansive social system the world has ever known.’ (Toffler 1980, p.38-39).

Industrialization produced an environment fertile for a cultural revolution. It is industrialization that served as a catalyst for the thriving of modernism, and it is modernism, beyond any other cultural movement, that influenced arts, architecture and eventually penetrated landscape architecture at the dawn of the twentieth century.

1.12 Modern Art

Nowhere was the modernist revolt against Victorianism more evident and widespread stylistically than in the visual arts, particularly painting. There is no consensus among art historians with regards to the exact date or place where modern painting began. The most common date cited is 1863, the year that Edouard Manet exhibited his painting, *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*, in the *Salon des Refusés* in Paris (Herbert 1991). Others argue that an earlier work titled
the “Oath of Horatii” painted in 1784 by Jacques Louis signified the beginning of modern art. Harvard Arnason, for example, posits that this painting is historically relevant in modern art because it injected into painting a new conception of space, leading ultimately to 20th century abstract art (Arnason 1991). Yet, as Arnason reveals, each of these dates offered by various historians has significance for the development of modern art, but none categorically marks a completely new beginning. Rather, a gradual metamorphosis of several art movements and groups took place in the course of a hundred years. By the end of the nineteenth century, many artistic movements had emerged to build upon the advances already made by the English Arts and Crafts Movement. The most important among these movements to influence architecture and landscape architecture were cubism, symbolism, Art Nouveau and Art Deco. Although these movements were partly historicist, they sought simplicity and honesty in art and design.

1.13 Symbolism

Symbolism in painting was a style in which the painter created ‘symbols’ in an effort to unite reality with the mysterious spiritual or emotional inner world of the individual. In symbolism, form and colour were used to create a sense of intensity of the painting. For symbolists, the work of the painter depended on his own feelings, not a set of standards or regulations. Paul Gaugin (1848-1903) was one of the leading artists of this movement. His bold and colourful paintings, such as Vision after the Sermon (1888), shown in Figure 2.11, went beyond the actual object to find an emotional connection and deeper meaning. He wrote, ‘…it is better to paint from memory for this work will be your own; your sensation, your intelligence and your soul will triumph…’(Rowland 1973, p.66). Throughout the 1890s the symbolists produced art that reacted against stale nineteenth century materialism. In effect, the symbolists tried to unite reality with
the mysterious inner world of the individual emotions, recreating a union which the symbolists believed to have existed before the Victorian era. The work of other symbolists such as Vasily Kandinsky (1866-1944) and Kasimir Malevich (1878-1935) would later inspire the garden designs of American landscape architect Garrett Eckbo.

![Image](image_url)

**Figure 2.11:** “Vision after the Sermon” (1888) by Paul Gaugin (usc.edu, 2014)

### 1.14 Art Nouveau

Art Nouveau took the symbolists’ ‘visual art’ and developed it into more abstract forms. Described as ‘the first self-conscious, internationally based attempt to transform visual culture through a commitment to the idea of the modern, Art Nouveau is characterized by its use of long, sinuous, organic lines and was employed most often in architecture, interior design, jewelry and glass design, posters, and illustration (Greenhalgh 2000). The movement took its name from
a gallery, La Maison de l’Art Nouveau, which opened in Paris in 1895 to sell modern objects. Three main principles characterized the Art Nouveau movement. The first was a rejection of predictable symmetrical and asymmetrical arrangements in favour of unpredictable asymmetry. The second was opposition to the naturalistic ornament of historic styles, in favour of a non-representational decoration that had to be accepted on its own. Third was a preoccupation with organic forms; a logical extension of eighteenth century Romanticism. All three principles would later find their way into modern landscape architecture. Belgian architect Victor Horta (1861-1947) was one of the first designers to apply Art Nouveau of the interior to the landscape at his country house La Bastide at La Hulpe (shown in Figure 2.12) in 1912 (Hustache, cited in Waymark 2003, p.74). Though the garden in front of the house was formal, the plan of the 7 hectare site on the steeply sloping hill shows extensive use of curvilinear forms to create paths that lead to the bottom of the slope. Art Nouveau can be considered the bridge between the end of Victorianism and the development of the first truly modern movements.

1.15 Art Deco

Art Deco built upon the advances made by Art Nouveau. Historian Bevis Hillier defined Art Deco as an assertively modern style that ran to symmetry rather than asymmetry, and to the rectilinear but rounded edges; it responded to the demands of the machine and of new material and the requirements of mass production (Hillier 1968). Hillier points out that the first appearance of Art Deco occurred in France around 1900 in response to the organically inspired Art Nouveau style. Throughout Europe and even in the United States, designers and artists saw Art Nouveau as increasingly out of date due to its focus on nature instead of modern industry and the machine. Thus, Art Deco combined traditional craft motifs with Machine Age imagery and materials. The style was often characterized by rich colors, bold geometric shapes, and lavish
ornamentation. It was also characterized by chevrons, zig-zag lines, arrow shapes, overlapping arcs and squares.

Figure 2.12: Victor Horta’s house, Belgium, 1912. (Waymark, 2003)
1.16 Cubism

Cubism was a style in both sculpture and painting which was characterized by an emphasis on formal structure, a separation of planes of space, and a reduction of natural forms to their geometrical counterparts. It emerged from a productive relationship between Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and Georges Braque (1882-1963), although the development of cubism was linked to the works of many artists such as Cezanne, Gaguein, Van Gogh and Matisse. Picasso’s “Portrait of Henry Kahnweiler,”(shown in Figure 2.13) painted in 1910, was a classic example of cubistic painting. The primary concern of cubists--both painters and sculptors--was the exploration of new conceptual relationships between time and space. The cubists wanted to experience all sides of an object, to question its boundaries and even concept of boundaries, and as a consequence they experimented with different planes in their depictions of landscapes, still life and portraits.

A description of cubism which helps clarify this was given by Sigfried Giedion in his book, *Space Time and Architecture*. He stated, ‘cubism breaks with Renaissance perspective. It views objects relatively: that is, from several points, no one of which has exclusive authority. And in so dissecting objects it sees them simultaneously from all sides—from above and below, from inside and outside. It goes around and into its objects. Thus, to the three dimensions of the Renaissance which have held good as constituent facts throughout so many centuries, there is added a fourth one---time’ (Giedion 1967, p.436). Cubism was to play an important part in the modern movement, particularly in architecture and landscape architecture.
By the beginning of the twentieth century, a number of architects were utilizing some of the modernist styles that were being promoted in the visual arts (painting and sculpture), particularly...
Cubism and Art Nouveau. This coincided with the emergence of new building materials and technologies in construction, particularly glass, structural steel and concrete, which allowed buildings to take forms never before possible. The works of pioneering architects in this era, particularly Otto Wagner, Peter Behrens, Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe, and Walter Gropius, coupled with the rise of powerful institutions, particularly the Bauhaus, pushed the stylistic limits of modernism in architecture, and later served as crucial conduits to the emergence of modern landscape architecture in North America.

1.18 Otto Wagner

One of the first architects to draw from modern art in his works was Otto Koloman Wagner (1841-1918). Born in Vienna in 1814, Wagner began to evolve Art Nouveau into a more rational and structural visual language. Considered widely as the founder of modern architecture in Europe, Wagner was one of the first architects to remove unessential ornaments from his design; revealing form and structure, and made use of new technologies: combining steel, glass and stone in his designs. Among his notable works in the Art Nouveau style are a number of stations for the elevated and underground City Railway of Vienna (1894–97) and the Postal Savings Bank (1904–06) also in Vienna. The latter, which had little decoration, is recognized as a milestone in the history of modern architecture, particularly for the curving glass roof of its central hall. When Wagner was appointed head of the architectural school at Vienna Academy, he broke with tradition by insisting on function, material, and structure as the bases of architectural design. He argued that nothing that is not useful is beautiful (Rowland 1973).

Wagner’s students were strongly influenced by his ideas. At the Academy he removed much of the classical architectural training and replaced it with problem solving exercises. He taught that
form should be the end result of the creative process, and not the starting point for further decorative design. Perhaps influenced by the spirit of the machine age, Wagner boldly proclaimed in 1909 that: ‘...the house should function like machine, as flawlessly constructed apparatus...’(Rowland 1973, p.78). Wagner’s ideas of functionalism and doing away with ornamentation influenced successive generation of architects, and later landscape architects.

1.19 Peter Behrens

Another important architect who infused elements of Art Nouveau into modern industrial architecture and design was Peter Behrens. Born in Germany in 1868, Behrens worked as a painter in his youth and as Art Nouveau designer of decorative and graphic art before training to become an architect. In 1907 when the German government formed the Deutscher Werkbund, an association of German designers, craftsmen, architects and industrialists, Behrens was appointed as the head. Later that year Behrens was appointed design co-ordinator to the electrical firm AEG, in charge of the design of industrial buildings, company products and publicity materials. Behrens used these opportunities to produce his most influential work: his design for the AEG Turbine Factory in Berlin (1909), showed in Figure 2.14. He used large areas of glass inserted between exposed structural members, with minimal decoration. Thus, Behrens effectively became one of the first modern industrial architects. Behrens’s work ended as a result of the outbreak of World War I, but his influence remained. Three of Behrens’ apprentices before the war were Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier. These men would go on to become prominent modern architects, building on Behrens’ earlier successes.
Charles Edouard Jeanneret, who later adopted the pseudonym Le Corbusier has been described by many architectural scholars as arguably the architect of the modern movement. Known as an architect, painter, writer, and urban planner, Le Corbusier would leave a legacy long to be remembered. After a short apprenticeship with his family’s watch design business, a short jaunt in art school, and a journey through Europe, Le Corbusier settled in Paris to become an artist and an architect. Le Corbusier was particularly unhappy about the architectural curriculum of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, which he saw as laying too much emphasis on decoration (Jencks 1973). He began experimenting in Cubism with its concerns for sculptural shapes and geometry, free of Victorian historicism and less about subject matter than the way of presenting.

**Figure 2.14:** The AEG Turbine Factory in Berlin in 1909, designed by Peter Behrens. (architectuul.com 2014).

1.20 Le Corbusier
Throughout the 1920s Le Corbusier produced plans for buildings incorporating five rules which he set down in 1927. These amounted to the use of a simple load-bearing framework of slim concrete-encased metal pillars to support pre-stressed concrete floors, leaving the outside wall free to accept ribbon windows extending all around the building allowing uniform daylight to the interior. Since the outer walls carried no weight, pilotis could raise the base of the building, accentuating the concept of lightness and space. Villa Savoye near Paris (shown in Figure 2.15) offers an impressive example of how Le Corbusier applied cubism in architecture. Le Corbusier’s contribution to modern architecture also included a wealth of books which he wrote expressing the role of architecture in the machine age. In most of his writings he drew parallels between architecture and engineering. In his book, *The New World of Space*, Le Corbusier wrote: ‘To take hold of the modern world and lift it into the fantastic possibilities of a machine civilization endowed with unbelievable powers, that is the adventure possible and open to those who are prepared to risk their ease’ (Le Corbusier, cited in Jencks 1973, p.87).

He therefore stated that engineering principles must be applied to architecture. Although his work influenced many landscape architects, Le Corbusier had no rules or answer to offer for the treatment of the landscape around his houses, other than it should be treated as natural, undisturbed and Virgilian. He treated the land as an abstract plane onto which the building could be placed. Indeed, he went as far as severing his buildings from the ground by placing them on stilts; allowing nature to, theoretically pass straight underneath the ‘machine for living.’ In his view, the landscape was to go around or underneath the house undisturbed, and should serve as a romantic backdrop to the architecture.
Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) was arguably America’s greatest architect of the 20th century, and considered by many architectural scholars as one of the most influential proponents of modern architecture. Like Le Corbusier, Wright was concerned with designing buildings whose forms rendered it to function rather than history and established rules. Wright had been influenced by his mentor, Louis Sullivan, who helped coin what has come to be known as the slogan of modern architecture, “form follows function,” a phrase which simply means the purpose of a building should be the starting point for its design. In his 1896 essay *The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered*, Sullivan stated:
‘It is prevailing law of all things organic and inorganic, of all things human and superhuman, of all true manifestations of the head, of the heart, of the soul, that the life is recognizable in its expression, that form ever follows function. This is the law…’

Wright adapted Sullivan's maxim "Form Follows Function" to his own revised theory of "Form and Function Are One." Wright explained, ‘Not until we raise the dictum, now a dogma, to the realm of thought, and say: Form and function are one, have we stated the case for architecture. That abstract saying Form and function are one is the center line of architecture, organic. It places us in line with nature and enables us sensibly to go to work’ (Wright cited in Cruz 2012, p.29). Perhaps Wright’s most important contribution to architecture, and by extension landscape architecture, lay in his organic approach to house and landscape, which he saw as indivisible. Unlike Le Corbusier, Wright believed in designing structures which were in harmony with humanity and its environment, a philosophy he called organic architecture. Wright was obsessed with the central importance of engagement with the natural world in order that modern man could lead a happy, healthy and productive life. Wright believed, like his tutor Sullivan, that disharmony with nature was at the roots of the ills of the modern world. Wright’s architecture developed into a program that united the building with the genius loci of the site; utilizing an organic spatial structure in which interior and exterior space flowed and intermingled. As he revealed:

‘We have no longer an outside and an inside as two separate things. Now the outside may come inside, and the inside may go outside. They are of each other…It is nature of any organic building to grow from its site, come out of the ground into the light- the ground itself held always a basic component of the building itself…A building dignified as a tree in the midst of nature.’ (Wright cited in Cruz 2012, p32.).
This philosophy was best exemplified by his design for Fallingwater (1935), shown in Figure 2.16, which has been called "the best all-time work of American architecture. Wright’s style mimicked that of a horizontal plane, with no basements or attics. Built with natural materials and never painted, Wright utilized low-pitched rooflines with deep overhangs and uninterrupted walls of windows to merge the horizontal homes into their environments. Much of Wright’s early designs were studies of spatial relationships, flowing space linking one area to another and the exterior to the interior. Wright’s naturalistic approach to architecture greatly influenced the early modern landscape architects who saw the landscapes they designed as part of the architecture.

Figure 2.16: Fallingwater(1935) designed by Frank Lloyd Wright . (Fallingwater.org, 2014).
1.22 Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Another influential modern master and contemporary of Lloyd Wright was German American architect Mies van der Rohe. Born in Aachen, Germany in 1886 to a master mason, Van der Rohe trained in trade schools and then apprenticed to become an architect. Van der Rohe’s architectural style was characterized by extreme clarity and simplicity. He strove toward architecture with a minimal structural framework in order to create a free-flowing open space. His buildings also made use of modern materials such as industrial steel and plate glass to define interior spaces. Van der Rohe also shared Frank Lloyd Wright’s ideas of establishing a strong relationship of buildings with their surrounding landscape (Shulze & Windhorst 2012). In Van der Rohe’s works, harmony with the landscape was achieved by the surrounding floor to ceiling glass wall, which brought trees and grass, shadows and reflections into the living space.

Van der Rohe’s most popular project which exemplified his ideals of minimalism, use of modern new (and old) materials, and integration between building and its surrounding landscape, was the Barcelona Pavilion (Figure 2.17). The Pavilion was built to represent Germany at the 1929 International Exhibition in Barcelona and was dismantled at the end of the event. It was a single story rectangle divided by glass and marble walls, the flat roof supported by slim chromium-plated steel pillars, mounted on a travertine terrace beside which was a pool lined with black glass. The Pavilion became the archetype of modern spatial composition. It had a heavy influence on American architects and landscape architects. For example, the asymmetrical layout with overlapping planes had a lasting effect on the garden designs of the American landscape architect Garrett Eckbo (Treib 2005). The Pavillion’s open floor plan and modular system of support created a new sense of space, defined by interpenetrating vertical and horizontal planes.
1.23 The International Style

In 1932, an exhibition was held at The Museum of Modern Arts in New York to showcase the latest development in architecture and design. Organized by architect Philip Johnson and art historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock, this exhibition, which they called *The International Style*, was a decisive moment in the history of modern architecture in North America. According to Johnson and Hitchcock, the International Style consisted of two fundamental design principles. First, the style promoted a new conception of architecture as volume, rather than mass. Second

*Figure 2.17* The Barcelona Pavilion, originally designed and built in 1929 by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. (www.conceptbook.org 2014).
regularity rather than axial symmetry served as the chief means of ordering design (Hitchcock & Johnson 1932). Typical characteristics of the buildings on display at the exhibition included rectilinear forms; plane surfaces that were completely devoid of applied ornamentation; and open, even fluid, interior spaces. As a movement the international style was very influential, even though it included a very strict and limited set of criteria. Forms of modernism that failed to meet the Hitchcock and Johnson’s exacting standards were considered to be half modern, romantic, or regionalist (Mathews 1994). International style ignored landscape architecture. Rather, it focused on universal buildings that could be anywhere, negating the fundamental relationship between architecture and place.

1.24 The Bauhaus

There were prominent institutions in Europe that played crucial roles in shaping and popularizing the modernist design agenda. The most important of these institutions was the Bauhaus, a design school established in Germany in 1919 by Walter Gropius and his colleagues. The school embodied some of the clearest principles of modernism and was to have a significant impact on architecture and landscape architecture. As Alexandra Griffith points out, the core objective of the Bauhaus was a radical concept: to re-imagine the material world to reflect the unity of all the arts (Griffith Winton 2007). The Bauhaus combined elements of both fine arts and design education. Students came from a diverse range of social and educational backgrounds to immerse themselves in a curriculum that stressed the importance of materials, color theory, and formal relationships in the various arts. Courses were taught by expert teachers from across Europe. For example, courses in visual arts were taught by renowned artists, including Paul Klee (1879-1940), Vasily Kandinsky (1866–1944), who would later influence the work of American
landscape architect Garrett Eckbo, and artist Josef Albers (1888-1976), among others (Droste 2002). Architecture was just one of the concerns of Gropius and the Bauhaus, which tried to unite all design disciplines. The school advocated for a new architecture which was to eliminate historical reference, celebrate the idea that walls no longer needed to be structural elements—they could simply be screens, and that glass set in steel frameworks allowed new opportunities to bring sunlight into the building interiors. The Bauhaus was also a “process” in its methodology; always start with the problem; design is about finding solutions for a problem.

The influence of the Bauhaus on twentieth century design culture cannot be understated. In many ways the Bauhaus solidified and unified the modern movement into an accepted and recognized school of thought. It became the institutional authority in Europe for the modern ideology—the complete severance of ties to the past and the conceptualization of a new unified language to reflect all of the visual design professions. The Bauhaus was closed in 1933, following political unrest in Germany. The closure of the school caused many of the tutors to migrate to the United States, where their work and their teaching philosophies would influence generations of young architects and landscape architects. Marcel Breuer and Joseph Albers taught at Yale, Walter Gropius went to Harvard, Mies Van der Rohe went to Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, and Moholy-Nagy established the New Bauhaus in Chicago in 1937. This migration to the United States was one of the most important aspects of the Bauhaus—beyond its early influences and stylistic concerns: it brought European modernism to North America, where it was embraced and nurtured.
1.25 Modern Landscape Architecture

In *Modern Landscape Architecture: A Critical Review*, first published in 1993, Marc Treib proposed seven characteristics or axioms of modern landscape architecture. These were: a denial of historical styles, the destruction of the axis, a stress on space rather than pattern, a concern for people and use, plants used for their sculptural form, the integration of building and garden and borrowing forms and shapes from modern art (Treib 1993). While Treib believes this list is largely applicable today, at least in the context of United States and Europe, he proposes three sub-categories, transitional, modernistic, and modernist, to be added to the broad category of ‘modern.’ (Treib 2013). According to Treib, ‘modern refers to twentieth-century landscapes that derived from the materials, technology and social needs of the times, but with no restriction on vocabulary. Modernistic landscapes borrowed in a similar way, but more superficially, retaining the spatial structure of historic landscapes as did transitional works, including those rooted in naturalism. Modernist, then, specifically applies only to those landscapes that deliberately proposed and tested new spatial and formal ideas, often adapting graphic idioms drawn from the modern plastic arts’ (Treib 2013, p.6).

1.26 Gabriel Guevrekian and the 1925 Paris Exposition

The eyes of the world were first opened to modern landscape architecture at the ‘Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes,’ held in Paris, France, in 1925. It was the first time garden design was included in the exhibition which featured the crème de la crème of decorative arts and design from around the world. Prominent among the displays at the exhibition were the gardens of architects Robert Mallet Stevens (1886-1945) and Gabriel Guevrekian (1892-1970). As Janet Waymark remarks, ‘Mallet-Stevens’ ‘Garden with Concrete Trees’ (*Jardin de l’habitation modern*), shown in Figure 2.18, puzzled, amused, shocked, and
awoke the public to the realization that modernism had reached the garden’ (Waymark 2003, p.80). From each end of two large, rectangular plant containers emerged trees made of cast concrete by Jan and Joel Martel. They stood like signals from railway lines over which the garden was built, with many arms resembling planes from a cubist painting. The garden was intended to be a representation of nature, not a copy.

Gabriel Guevrekian, an Armenian architect, can perhaps be regarded as the first modern landscape architect, although in reality he was the first in a series of transitional figures between Beaux Arts classicism and modernism. Guevrekian’s ‘Garden of Water and Light’ (shown in Figure 2.19) utilized triangles throughout the garden, as the shape was repeated through the plan in pools, plantings, and the surrounding walls. In a small, triangular site surrounded by a chevron-patterned fence, Guevrekian used contemporary materials—glass, concrete, and electric light, and tilted planes of single-colour planting. In the centre of a concrete-framed pool, Louis Barllet’s revolving, illuminated sphere of patterned glass sent images across the pool. Each of the triangular beds was set at an angle to give the picture more than one dimension. The publicity surrounding this garden led to several commissions for Guevrekian, including one for another triangular garden at the villa of Vicomte Charles de Noailles on the Cote d’Azur. In this garden Guevrekian combined an interesting pattern derived from cubistic art with formal layout similar to his earlier garden of water and light. Shallow steps rose as they moved away from the house, ending in a rotating sculpture by Jacques Lipchitz. Alternating square panels of tiles and tulips formed a triangular shape with tilted planes of blue flowers around the edges of the garden. Guevrekian’s use of cubistic geometry set a precedent in landscape architecture.
Figure 2.18 “Garden with concrete trees” (Jardin de l’habitation modern) by Steven Mallet. (Waymark 2003).

Figure 2.19 “Garden of Water and Light” by Gabriel Guevrekian. (Waymark 2003).
1.27 Modernism in the American Garden

Fletcher Steele (1885-1971), an American landscape architect, can be considered as the first to apply the European modernist style of garden design to the American landscape. After receiving his practical training in the office of Warren Manning (1860-1938) in Boston, Steele travelled widely in Europe in the 1920s, visiting the Paris Expo in 1925. The young American landscape architect was strongly impressed by the works he saw, particularly Guevrekians’ gardens, and expressed his frustration at the staleness of Victorian art and its impact on garden design in America. ‘Victorian art in America,’ Steele argued, ‘gave prominence to what was elegant and genteel…ignored naked or unpalatable facts…and saw beauty only where it wanted to find it and truth all too rarely’ (Steele 1930, p.167). For Steele, it was time for Americans to accept the new realities and possibilities of modern art. ‘The glow of much old beauty is fading before our hungry eyes, from the very excess of our interest and inevitable changes in modern life and thought. We must search a new point from which to view art (Steele 1930, Ibid).

Steele’s work was mostly for the elite of the period, who largely demanded traditional designs. However, after his return from Europe, Steele began to gradually introduce elements of Art Deco in some of his works. Beginning in 1938, he created a series of gardens that utilized pure lines, fluid geometric forms, and bright colors. Steele’s most notable work was the gardens he designed for Miss Mabel Choate at ‘Naumkeag’ (shown in Figure 2.20) in western Massachusetts. The garden illustrated a new conception of the landscape as a setting for outdoor living. In the gardens Steele created a series of small gardens along an axial arrangement of stairs that ascended to the house. He designed ‘Blue Steps’ from the house to the garden, and furnished the stairs with white tubular steel handrails that drew attention to white birch trees in the
background. Steele can be considered as the first transitional figure between traditional and modern landscape architecture.

![Image of The Blue Steps at Naumkeag](eyefordesign.wordpress.com 2014)

**Figure 2.20** The Blue Steps at Naumkeag, originally designed and constructed in 1938 by Fletcher Steele.

1.28 Thomas Church

Thomas Dolliver Church (1902-1978), a contemporary of Steele, played an immense role in the development of Modern Landscape Architecture in America. After receiving his B.A from University of California, Berkeley, and Master of Landscape Architecture (M.L.A) from Harvard, Church began his own practice in the early 1930s. His garden design style was rooted in Mediterranean formality but tempered by the informality of the California climate, vegetation, and life style (Treib 2012). Like Steele, Church had travelled across Europe visiting exhibitions, including the Paris Expo in 1925, and had been impressed by the work of European modern architects such as Le Corbusier and Alvar Aalto. After returning from his trip in 1937, he began
to experiment with new forms for landscape design, influenced by the flowing, curvilinear forms of Aalto’s architecture, and zig-zag border from new French gardens. Church’s hallmark was the patterning of the ground plane, with emphasis on the structure of space rather than the planting (Sullivan & Boult 2010). Church also advocated for the use of new materials in the garden. These included concrete and asphalt paving, 'gunite' (sprayed cement) pools, steel supports for pergolas and benches, fiberglass fencing, and steel pipe for irrigation systems (Herman 2012). In the postwar period these materials were looked upon as highly permanent, reassuring low maintenance.

Out of the vast number of gardens which Church designed—it has been estimated to number over 2000 gardens—one garden that perhaps represents his best work in the modernist style is the Donnell Garden (shown in Figure 2.21), completed between 1947 and 1949, in Sonoma, California. The garden was built before the house, on a hillside in Sonoma, at the top of San Francisco Bay. Church collaborated with the architect, Austin Piermont, to orientate the house in the best position to take advantage of the spectacular views from the site. A long curvilinear road connected the main road to a spacious parking area adjacent to the house. A concrete terrace, directed towards the front door, runs from the parking area through the main living area and into the garden. Sliding glass walls separated the interior room from the exterior garden, allowing views out into the garden. Church used modern materials, including concrete and terrazzo, for the paved surfaces. The main attraction of the garden was a kidney shaped pool (Figure 2.22) that was specifically designed to mimic the surrounding Sonoma landscape. In the centre of the pool is a monumental sculpture by Adaline Kent which serves as a focal point. The pool itself is surrounded by wood decking with live oaks penetrating the decking. The Donnell garden
arguably is the most iconic modern garden of the twentieth century. As Marc Treib points out, in many ways, the Donnell garden was not typical of Church’s numerous designs. Rather, it represented the apex of his modernity and was probably never equaled in this regard by his later work (Treib 2012).

Figure 2.21 (Top) Plan of Donnell Gardens (1947-1949) by Thomas Church (content.cdlib.org 2014). Figure 2.22 (Bottom) Kidney-shaped pool of Donnell Gardens (ahlp.org 2014).
Church’s writings also had tremendous influence in the promotion of the idea of the modern garden. His *Gardens are for People*, first published in 1955, remains in print in a recent paperback edition. Perhaps more than any other single publication, it defined the modern California garden (California style), and more importantly, it promulgated an idealized postwar Californian (and mostly suburban) lifestyle (Treib 2012). In addition to the publication of *Gardens are for People* in 1955 and *Your Private World* in 1969, Church became incredibly popular through his articles that appeared in a variety of trade and popular home magazines including *House Beautiful, House & Garden, Architectural Forum, Architectural Record* and *Sunset*. As Diane Harris reveals, ‘Church's writings, like the architectural treatises that had preceded his by millennia, helped establish both an audience and a body of informed clients, formulating boundaries of a profession for the largely uninformed, but newly affluent numbers of postwar homeowners’ (Harris 2012, p.157-170).

Although Church was a pioneer of the modernist style of garden design, it is important to note he never rejected the traditional methods. Instead, his designs sought to solve functional problems by drawing from factors such as the site, the architecture of the house, and the client’s personality and preferences. In Church’s view, the style of the design was to be dictated by these aforementioned factors, and not some preconceived rules and regulations of design aesthetic. Church built on the earlier advances made by Steele. In fact, Church credited Steele, who was practicing in Boston when Church was at Harvard in the mid-1920s, for being a great influence. ‘It was from Steele,’ he recalled, ‘that I learned you can take the wall around the tree—that the tree is more important than the axis. This was my first insight into what landscape architecture could become. From then on, for me, the Beaux Arts rules of symmetry were dead and gone
(Church, cited in Calkins 1967, p.142).’ Seen in this light, Church can be considered as a link between Beaux-Arts formal landscape design and modern landscape architecture. Garrett Eckbo who worked at Church’s office for a year and would later become a leading figure in modern landscape architecture, befittingly described Church as the last great traditional designer and the first great modern designer (Eckbo 1950).

1.29 Christopher Tunnard

Canadian-born Christopher Tunnard was another influential figure in the development of modern landscape architecture, contemporary to both Church and Steele. Born in Victoria, British Columbia, and educated as a landscape architect in England, Tunnard trained for a diploma in horticulture at the Royal Horticultural Society at Wisley before training in building construction at Westminster Technical Institute. Between 1932 and 1935 he worked for the landscape designer Percy Cane (1881-1976), whose clients were mainly the owners of small country houses, before setting off on his own (Waymark 2003). On the invitation of Joseph Hudnut, the director of Harvard’s GSD, Tunnard migrated to the United States to teach landscape architecture at Harvard alongside other prominent émigrés, including Walter Gropius.

Tunnard became increasingly irritated by the inability of garden makers to relate their work to the modern house and its connection with modern lifestyles. Tunnard was particularly critical of the formal versus informal debate surrounding garden design. Up until this point, the stylistic debate among landscape designers revolved around the “formal” and “informal” styles. Formality was not only dominant in many European schools of architecture and painting, such as the Ecole de Beaux Arts in Paris, but was also reflected in garden design. The formal garden was
characterized by the application of “architectural” forms—planting areas defined by built elements and strong geometries and axis. Often these parterres contained colourful flowers arranged in mosaic-like patterns and changed seasonally, a practice known as carpet bedding (Sullivan & Boults 2010). Typical of the Victorian formal garden was the excessive use of plants and ornamental sculpture to both offer visual pleasure and reflect the status of the garden owner. The informal garden design style aimed to do the opposite of the formal style— that is, avoiding symmetrical balance and hard, clean lines in favour of a more natural appearance. Informal gardens followed the natural terrain by using curved lines. Balance is created not through symmetry (as in a formal garden) but with plant material characteristics such as plant shape, color, size, and texture.

Tunnard began to express his modernist view of garden design in a series of articles which he wrote for the Architectural Review. Garden books, he argued, were full of vistas, axes, oval lawns and picture making, producing ‘second-hand designs’ full of remakes of the traditional formal garden. Alternatively, they came up with the informal or naturalistic, ‘the dying breadth of the romantic age (Jacques & Woudstra 2009, p.32). In 1938, Tunnard published Gardens in the Modern Landscape, in which he proposed three fundamental guiding principles of the modern garden (Tunnard cited in Jacques and Woudstra 2009). The first was that it should be functional, reflecting the needs for rest and recreation (needs of the client), with perhaps some provision for the growing of food. A garden should have aesthetic appeal, that is, there was to be room for flower cultivation, though the aesthetic had to be non-ornamental and free from sentimentalism and romantic nature worship. Tunnard’s second principle was empathy, which he related to the placing of the garden in the landscape. There should be freedom from the ‘tyranny’
of symmetry, with axes and vistas leading into the landscape. Instead, the garden maker should hope to achieve an ‘occult balance,’ between the designed landscape and nature around it—a quality which he admired in Japanese gardens. Finally, he urged the use of art in the garden, especially non-representational sculpture, where the honesty of the modern materials would not be obscured by design. Tunnard’s philosophy on the relationship of the house to the wider landscape came from a desire to be part of it, and not to shut it out. Nature should be controlled, but not imposed upon with wasteful designs. Tunnard’s writings gave clear indication of the direction modern landscape architecture would follow.

1.30 The Harvard Revolt: Garret Eckbo, Daniel Kiley, and James Rose

From 1937 to 1940 three students at Harvard’s GSD published a series of articles in Pencil Points (now Progressive Architecture) and Architectural Record outlining a new approach to landscape architecture, similar to but beyond Tunnard’s. The three, Garrett Eckbo, Daniel Urban Kiley and James Rose, posited a theoretical framework for design, rather than advocating a new style. Their theories were influenced by the European modernists, particularly Walter Gropius who was now head of GSD, and the earlier works of Steele, Church and Tunnard. They represented a different generation, one more vociferous and radical in promoting modern landscape architecture. Like Tunnard, Eckbo had been frustrated by what he saw as a fictitious division in the garden world between ‘the formal work, which forces architecture upon landscape, and the informal garden, which forces landscape upon architecture (Eckbo cited in Treib 1997 p.15).’ Before his graduation in 1938 Eckbo proposed and published a hypothetical study called Small Gardens in the City (Figure 2.23), where he divided a typical city block (in this case based on San Francisco) into a series of lots and demonstrated eighteen ways of
designing a garden on a small lot (Treib 1997). Some were more formal; others more natural; some more heavily planted. Some used diagonals and clean straight lines; others relied almost exclusively on the radius or free curve. Eckbo showed that one could have limitless possibilities of designing a garden on a small plot.

Like Church, Eckbo was dedicated to helping middle class homeowners get the best out of their increasingly shrinking garden lot. His books *Landscape for Living* (1950) and *The Art of Home Landscaping* (1956) offered practical design alternatives for small-scale spaces. Eckbo also believed that the organization and composition of space itself should be the focus of the garden, and called for a three dimensional approach to garden design: “people live in volumes, not planes. Things must be around us, and over us, as well as under us” (Eckbo cited in Treib 1997, p.36). He advocated for a design that is multi-dimensional as opposed to axial: “why must we be forced to glare at one ‘focal point’, when a whole area can be full of interest and diversion” (Eckbo cited in Treib 1997 *Ibid*).

![Figure 2.23 Small Gardens in the City (Garrett Eckbo). Model student project at Harvard University, 1937. (publishing.cdlib.org (2014)).](image)
Eckbo’s gardens also showed strong evidence of modern painting, particularly the works of abstract and cubist painters Laszlo Moholy Nagy (1895-1946), Kasimir Malevich (1878-1935), and Vasily Kandinsky. The use of multiple foci common to the Kandinsky paintings, in particular the series he termed Compositions (Figure 2.24) allowed Eckbo to destroy both the axis of the formal garden and the forced naturalism of the English garden tradition, as seen in Burden Garden designed in 1945 (Figure 2.25) (Treib 1997).

![Figure 2.24](Publishing.cdlib.org 2014)


![Figure 2.25](Guggeinheim.org 2014)

FIGURE 2.25 Compositions VIII, (1923) by Vassily Kandinsky (Guggeinheim.org 2014).
**Figure 2.26** Goldstone Garden (site plan), Beverly Hills, 1948 by Garrett Eckbo. (publishing.cdlib.org 2014).

**Figure 2.27** Goldstone Garden (Bath house), Beverly Hills, 1948 by Garrett Eckbo. (publishing.cdlib.org 2014).
Eckbo’s concern was not for pattern in the ground but in the spaces created by the garden’s elements. Geometry served spatial creation; vegetation served as sculptural form as well as to soften the solidity of the architectural materials. Most closely associated with abstract pattern is the Goldstone Garden in Beverley Hills (Figures 2.26 and 2.27), built in 1948. Here, a biomorphic pool lies across an elliptical space, its sunbathing patio sheltered by triangular roof trellis, an irregular lawn joining pool to house area and planting restricted to tubs, a tree and low evergreen shrubs.

Dan Urban Kiley (1912-2004), Eckbo’s friend from Harvard, first worked for landscape architect Warren Manning and architect Louis Khan, before establishing his own practice. Kiley became friends with Eero Saarinen in 1944, which led to a job opportunity in Europe. Kiley’s stay in Europe gave him a chance to see formal styles of architecture and landscaping, which had profound influence on his work thereafter. He developed a design style which combined modernist aesthetics with functional classicism. His work demonstrated a concern with form and spatial hierarchy, and utilized bold geometrical shapes to order the landscape. As Kiley later revealed in his memoir, Dan Kiley: In His Own Words, ‘The landscapes of Europe appeared to be governed by a formal geometry whose vocabulary was expressed by the terms allee, bosque, boulevard and tapis vert’ (Kiley and Amidon 1999, p. 24). Drawing inspiration from modern architects such as Le Corbusier and Mies Van der Rohe, Kiley believed that geometry was an inherent part of man. It was the structure man could use to gain comprehension and create stabilization of his surroundings. Like Frank Lloyd Wright, Kiley firmly believed that man was a part of nature, rather than being separate from it.
Kiley’s most popular design which epitomized his modernist style is the Miller Garden (Figure 2.28), made for Irwin and Xenia Miller who had commissioned Eero Saarinen in 1953 to build their house on a site overlooking the floodplain of the Flatrock River outside Columbus, Indiana. Kiley designed four different gardens and linked them spatially to each other. Along the west side of the house Kiley planted an allee of honey locust trees parallel with the building. Intended to shade the sunny side of the house, the trees provided a vertical line breaking the horizontal plane of the building. A Henry Moore sculpture was later added to the northern end. Arbor vitae was used to screen the swimming pool near the drive. The eastern inner space was divided by a row of white oaks, which separated two apple orchards, the southern one adjoining a childrens play area. Another allee of horse chestnuts defined the drive, each tree being encased at its base by an inset square set in horizontal planes of low cut yew. Miller garden remains Kiley’s most popular work, although Kiley designed many well known corporate and residential gardens.

Figure 2.28: Miller Garden(designed and built in 1953) by Daniel Kiley.
James Rose, the final member of the three Harvard students, was perhaps the most vociferous in his criticism of Beaux-Arts formalism. In 1938, Rose wrote:

‘We are told that the industrial design and so called modern architecture came about through the discovery of new materials and methods of production, but that landscape design cannot change because materials and methods have not changed. We have found our final resting place. Our grave lies on an axis in a Beaux Arts cemetery. A monument terminates the vista and if you approach with reverence you can see the bromitaph authority has placed there…A tree is a tree and will always be a tree, therefore we can have no modern landscape design…painting has had no noticeable change in materials, yet how a Beaux Artist must scratch his head when he compares Picasso with Leonardo’ (Rose cited in Treib 1993, p.55).

Rose went on to say that contemporary design represented a change of conception by society; a product of the industrial and economic revolutions; “The expression of a new mentality”. The result of this new mentality was that whilst Gothic cathedrals and Renaissance palaces could be appreciated they could no longer be produced, as society had been cut off from their source of inspiration. ‘The only stimulus we can get from the past is an understanding of how the social and psychological influences led a particular civilization to arrive at its peculiar expressions. We should do the same for our own civilization and seek to express it’ (Rose cited in Treib 1993, Ibid).

Rose preferred designing small residential gardens, and was not particularly impressed by large scale flamboyant gardens. He rejected the historic pattern making of the Beaux Arts, instead advocating the new approach of a design solution driven by the site and the problem. In fact, he was irritated by the grandiose demands of his clients, reminiscent of the aspirations of the Victorian aristocrats of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In Gardens Make Me Laugh, written in 1965, Rose suggested that Americans regarded gardens as a mark of their position in life, and where possible he avoided putting in lawns, massed flower-beds, the lifestyle barbecues...
and imposing entrances to which they aspired (Rose 1965). In many ways, Rose was the most elusive of the three Harvard rebels, as there are few surviving examples of his completed work.

1.31 Chapter Summary

Modernism was a cultural revolt against Victorian values and artistic styles. The dawn of industrialization, coupled with rapid technological advancement served as a catalyst for the development of modern society. Modernism as an artistic style first reflected in painting before spreading to architecture. The works of modern painters such as Picasso, Mondrian, Kandinsky, Gaugin, and Gabo, explored new ways of visual expression that went far beyond rationality and engaged the inner emotional and spiritual world of the viewer. Modern architecture drew inspiration from modern art, and was an exploration of space and time often influenced by mechanization. Modern architects such as, Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Mies van der Rohe drew from modern abstract painting styles, particularly cubism, expressionism, and constructivism. Aided by the proliferation of new building materials such as glass, steel, and concrete, these architects engaged in spatial experiments that pushed the stylistic boundaries of modernism.

Modernism demanded an abrupt departure from historicism and imitation of past styles. As Heinrich Klotz put it, “this break with tradition—an attack on aristocratic and bourgeois forms of representation—was so decisive that it became impossible to separate a declaration of belief in Modernism from a phobia of the past” (Klotz 1989, p.54). In addition, modernism was characterized by a new design approach: Design was the end of a process that began with
identifying a problem and working towards a solution for that problem. From this logic was the idea that the form of any design was to follow its function. Seen in this context, modernism saw ornamentation as unnecessary and a hindrance to the true nature and function of materials.

Modernism reached landscape architecture decades after it had gained roots in art and architecture. Although it began in Europe with the works of Guevrekian and and Mallet, it gradually spread to America through the individual works of Fletcher Steele and Thomas Church, as well as the institutional contribution of the Bauhaus regime at Harvard GSD, under the tutelage of such teachers as Walter Gropius, Marcel Brauer and Christopher Tunnard. But it was the works of Thomas Church and the three Harvard rebels, Eckbo, Kiley, and James, that truly epitomized modern landscape architecture and influenced successive generations of modern landscape architects in America.

The main influence on the development of modern landscape architecture came from arts, (painting and sculpture), and architecture (cubism and constructivism), rather than within landscape architecture itself. In the late 1930s James Rose nicely captured this view in his articles in *Pencil Points*. Rose situated landscape architecture between architecture and sculpture; naming space creation, as opposed to style, as the true calling of the landscape architect. Rose juxtaposed one of his own garden designs with cubistic painting by Theo Van Doesburg and the plan of Mies Van der Rohe’s 1924 project for a brick country villa; illustrating the similar spatial construction of the three (*Pencil Points* 1938). Drawing from the vocabulary of abstract art and cubistic architecture, modern landscape architecture rejected historical styles and repetitive Beaux Arts pattern making. This implied the destruction of the axis and axial symmetry, in
favour of multi-faceted and omni-directional views. By destroying what Christopher Tunnard labeled as, “tyranny of symmetry,” the landscape architect was freed to plan and design according to function rather than the axial framework of a pattern. Seen in this light, modern landscape architecture was preoccupied with volumetric space, rather than planar space.

Modern landscape architecture emphasized functionalism as an integral part of design. It is important to note that while functionalism was part of Victorian landscape design, it was not seen in the context of utility and response to site specific needs. Rather, the garden was seen as a decorative feature with only aesthetic functions. As Derek Clifford argues, “The eighteenth century garden, whether of the poetic, picturesque, or Burke-Brown type, was created to satisfy the eye or the imagination; it asked to be judged as a work of art without function in the same way that a picture or a piece of sculpture is normally judged; so much so that even the architecture, the temples and grottoes and porticoes they contained, also became functionless, outstanding examples of that relatively rare thing.” (Clifford 1968, p.216). The expression of “function” in modern landscape architecture can be understood as the loss of ornament and historical reference—so that designs reflected simplicity with clean, sleek lines and forms. Much of the expression of form in modern landscape architecture can be seen as a reflection of the same elements in abstract painting during the modern period: “The creation of a garden in this new light becomes something halfway between the making of a painting and the making of a house. It is as if the landscape architect were composing an abstract painting for people to live within. And because people are to live inside of it, the movements through it, the actual tactile feel of its materials for hand and foot, the functions it is to serve as a place to dig, to dine, to play games in, or read in, or nap in, become also elements of its composition . . . The purely visual
elements of line, plane, shape, volume and mass take on the values of functional elements” (Pepper 1948, p.5).

Modern landscape architects also experimented with new materials, although they were limited compared to architects and painters of this era. Plants were seen as just one of the many functional and aesthetic materials available to the designer. Indeed, Eckbo pointed out that every plant, no matter how low, how prostrate, how massive or solidly bushy, how fastigiated or billowing, is nevertheless a construction in and of space (Eckbo 1950). Seen in this light, masses of shrubs and carpet bedding had no place in the modern landscape as they concealed the functional and aesthetic potential of individual plants. In both Thomas Church’s and Eckbo’s designs flowered bedding were rarely used, instead shaped beds were filled with grasses or paving, while masses of shrubs and trees enclosed spaces and complimented the structure provided by the architecture, walls and fences. Modern landscape architecture established a strong indoor-outdoor connection. A major objective of the modern landscape architect was to design the landscape to complement the architecture. Influenced by the works of architects such as Wright and Mies van der Rohe, the modernists sought to remove division between internal and external space, recognising that modern life took place as much outside as inside. Above all, the modern landscape was a ‘living space’ for people; outdoor places designed for human use. As Eckbo stated, people, not plants, are the important things in gardens. Every garden is a stage, every occupant a player (Eckbo cited in Treib 1997).
Chapter Four: Modernism in Canadian Landscape Architecture

1.32 Introduction

This chapter discusses the emergence of modern landscape architecture in Canada by focusing on the gardens and writings of J. Austin Floyd at key stages in his career. The chapter begins with a discussion of the landscape profession and garden design trends in Canada prior to World War II, focusing on the gardens and writings of Howard Dunington-Grubb, arguably Canada’s most prolific landscape architect of the premodern era. Next, the chapter traces J. Austin Floyd’s professional training at Harvard, where he was exposed to both Beaux-Arts and modernist design approaches, and his return to Canada, which coincided with the rise of modernism and increased discussions of modern garden design in Canadian landscape architectural circles. Following this the chapter examines a selected number of the modernist landscape architectural productions that came from Floyd’s professional partnership with Howard Dunington-Grubb and J. Vilhelm Stennson. The chapter concludes by exploring Floyd’s private practice and his involvement in some collaborative modern projects in Ontario.

1.33 The Landscape Profession in Canada before the 1950s

The history of Landscape Architecture in Canada is relatively recent, although the art of garden design in this country extends as far back as the seventeenth century. As early as 1653, monastery gardens were established in Quebec, and there were landscaped gardens in Nova Scotia as early as the 1790s (Crawford & Fife, 1999). Prince’s Lodge, Bedford Basin (Halifax) was the site of Canada’s oldest example of the English Picturesque landscape style. Designed by
Queen Victoria’s father, the Duke of Kent, for his mistress Julie de St. Laurent, the design incorporated a heart-shaped pool, a meandering path which spelled out “Julie,” a miniature lake and waterfall and secluded grottoes (Von Baeyer, 1984). Until the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the practice of gardening and garden design in Canada had remained intertwined, and at the turn of the century, both activities had been closely linked to goals of social reform and civic beautification. As Edwinna Vonn Baeyer reveals, conventional wisdom of this era was that poor environmental conditions were a threat to social order and that filthy surroundings were reflections of a declining moral standard (Von Baeyer, 1984).

During this period, landscape design responsibilities fell largely on homeowners and a group of dedicated amateurs and reformers intent on creating a landscape that emphasized both aesthetic enjoyment and social improvement. As Sue Donaldson points out, ‘individuals trained as horticulturists, engineers, surveyors, and farmers set out to address the problems which accompanied the creation of a landscape shaped by the blinding Victorian ideals of progress and prosperity’ (Donaldson, 1984, p.13). As the nineteenth century came to a close, gardening and landscape design became less attached to morality and civic responsibility; there was now increasing interest in designing landscapes for private enjoyment. As the need for proper creation of residential gardens and comprehensive planning of communities became apparent, amateurs gradually gave way to trained professionals. Frances Blue noted in her History of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA) that Frederick Law Olmsted Sr.,(1822-1903), a leading figure in the founding of landscape architecture in the United States, had a major influence on landscape design in Canada during this period (Blue, 1970). At the height of the public parks movement in the late nineteenth century, Olmsted was hired to design many public parks in
Canada, including High Park, Toronto (1873), the original Mount Royal Park in Montreal (1876), and Stanley Park in Vancouver (1888). By the early twentieth century, three of Olmsted’s former apprentices, Gordon Culham, Rickson Outhet, and Frederick G. Todd, had set up shop in Canada, offering their services to Canadians.

Despite the pioneering works of the aforementioned landscape architects, the profession did not make its mark on the Canadian residential landscape until the 1920s and 1930s. For the few Canadian landscape architects who wished to design residential gardens, work came mostly in the form of the grand estate gardens. The economic boom that had engulfed the country between the late 1890s and early 1920s brought great fortunes to individuals who expressed their wealth in the building of lavish estates. As Von Baeyer points out, by 1920, nearly every region of Canada boasted at least one estate garden. There was Sir William Van Horne’s “Covenhaven” near St. Andrews, New Brunswick (1890); automobile pioneer colonel J.S McLaughlin’s “Parkwood” in Oshawa, Ontario (1915); Mrs. Elsie Reford’s “Metis Park” on the Gaspe peninsula in Quebec (1919); Jenny and R.P Butchart’s “Benvenuto” near Victoria, British Columbia (1904); and Mrs. Otto Patridge’s “Ben-My-Chree” on the Taku Arm River in the Yukon (1898) (Von Baeyer, 1984). Although grand estate garden design grounded to a halt in the wake of the Great Depression of the 1930s, by the early 1940s, landscape architects had gained some public recognition thanks to professionalization and the landscape designs of an enthusiastic group of landscape architects including England-born Howard B. Dunington Grubb(1881-1965). It is in Grubb’s early gardens and writings that we find a plethora of evidence on garden design trend and philosophy in premodern Canada.
When Austin Floyd was training to be a landscape architect in the late 1930s, garden design and writing in Canada was dominated by a tall outspoken landscape architect called Howard Burlingham Dunington-Grubb. Born in York, England in 1881, and educated in architecture at Cornell University in New York, Grubb apprenticed for Thomas H. Mawson, one of England’s best known landscape designers, before immigrating to Canada with his wife, Lorrie Alfreda Dunington, in 1911 (Butts and Stennson 2012). Throughout his career, Grubb wrote extensively about trends in garden design, and many of his finest works for some of Ontario’s most affluent homeowners appeared in the pages of the *Canadian Homes and Gardens* magazine (*CH&G*). His gardens epitomized the traditional Beaux-Arts style that dominated the Canadian landscape in the Victorian period. Three classical design elements were particularly prominent in several of Grubb’s early landscape projects.

First, the layout of his gardens tended to be symmetrical and elements revolved around a central axis, as seen in the rose garden for H.B Wills residence (Shadowbrook) in Concord Ontario (1927-1929), shown in Figure 2.29. Second, Grubb used herbaceous borders screened by clipped hedges (mostly Japanese Yew) as in the garden he designed in 1933 for Mr. and Mrs. Kerby in Forest Hill, Toronto (Figure 2.30). Third, Grubb’s gardens always utilized some form of ornamentation (Figure 2.31), and a focus point (Figure 2.32) also evident in the garden for the Kerby’s garden. These three elements also characterized Grubb’s large scale public gardens, perhaps the finest example being the Oakes Garden Theatre (1935-1938) and the Rainbow Gardens at Niagara falls (1941), shown in (Figures 2.33—2.36). With their strong axes and symmetries, herbaceous borders, parterres, trimmed hedges, and central focus points, Grubb’s
gardens typified the Beaux-Arts inspired style of formal garden design in Canada before the mid 20th century.

**Figure 2.29:** Rose garden for H.B Wills residence (Shadowbrook) in Concord Ontario (1927-1929), showing axial and symmetrical layout. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, CCLAA, Guelph.

**Figure 2.30:** Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Kerby in Forest Hill, Toronto(1933). Herbaceous border with clipped hedge (Japanese Yew) purely for decoration. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, CCLAA, Guelph.
Figure 2.31: Garden for Mr. and Mrs Kerby in Forest Hill, Toronto (1933). White fence and trellis designed as ornaments. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, CCLAA, Guelph.

Figure 2.32: Garden for Mr. and Mrs Kerby in Forest Hill, Toronto (1933). Fountain as central focus point. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, CCLAA, Guelph.
Figure 2.33: Aerial view of Oakes Garden Theatre (1935-1938) and the Rainbow Gardens at Niagara Falls (1941). Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, CCLAA, Guelph.

Figure 2.34: Plan of Oakes Garden Theatre (1935-1938) and the Rainbow Gardens at Niagara Falls (1941), with list of plant materials. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, CCLAA, Guelph.
Grubb’s writings equally matched his classical garden design philosophies. Many of his articles which appeared in garden and architectural publications of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s reflected his Victorian garden design approach deeply rooted in historicism and romanticism. Writing about the use of ornaments in the garden during the 1930s, for example, Grubb referred his readers to history, arguing that “. . . there is nothing new about the decoration of wall areas. In the Moslem world and in Spain it has been the custom to decorate walls by means of design in tiles for a long historical period. . .” (Dunington-Grubb 1939, p.67-71). For Grubb, the garden was a simulated space to be admired and not necessarily to connect users to their immediate needs. In a discussion with Humphrey Carver, Grubb argued that “. . . in the garden, we have indeed left the real world and entered a world of fantasy and make-believe, where nature, under the control of art gives pleasure and rest and escape from today’s worries. . .” (Carver 1975, p.97).

Seen in this light, Grubb’s use of herbaceous borders and clipped hedges, for example, were to serve purely aesthetic purposes, rather than functional or sculptural roles. “If one wanted continuous beauty throughout the season,” Grubb argued, “nothing was comparable to a long, wide herbaceous border planned to color, but including all that the spectrum has to offer, set out approximately in the same order as nature provides.” (Dunington-Grubb 1926). By the late 1940s, increased immigration and urbanization had caused the size of the city lot to shrink considerably. These developments, coupled with the increasing influence of modernism in Canadian society in the early 1950s, meant a dramatic decline of the presence of the classical formal garden in the Canadian landscape.
1.35 J. Austin Floyd M.L.A: An Introduction

In August 1950, the *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada* (JRAIC) dedicated their entire issue to articles on modern landscape architecture. Contributions came from leading landscape architects from both sides of the border including J. Austin Floyd, Howard B. Dunnington Grubb, Thomas Church, Garrett Eckbo, Christopher Tunnard, Jack Nazar, and J. Vilhelm Stennson. The editor of the journal, Eric Arthur, a University of Toronto Architecture professor and a strong proponent of modernism, stated:

“The real designers of Canada, in every field, are neither standing still in the present nor walking back. They are moving forward. We have often wondered whether the same were true in Canada of the craft of the landscape architect. Tunnard, Church, and Eckbo are names that come immediately to mind, but they are in the United States. Who, we wondered, are their counterparts or disciples in Canada?...It is clear that the [Modern]revolution has taken place in the [Canadian] landscape field... The small garden has become worthy of the attention of the most distinguished practitioners of the landscape craft. The skilled ally for whom the architect has been looking, especially in the residential field has arrived.” (Arthur 1950, p.250).

Arthur might have overstated his claim about the arrival of the modern Canadian landscape architect, but his comments were not entirely unfounded. In the aftermath of the war, Modernism increasingly gained widespread popularity in Canadian society and design circles. It was during this period that many Canadian landscape architects embarked on a stylistic departure from the Beaux-Arts garden design trend that had dominated the prewar era. Among the most prominent of this new generation of landscape architects was J. Austin Floyd. His journey began in New Brunswick.

James Austin Floyd was born April 18, 1910 in Kings County New Brunswick. Floyd’s family moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba, in the early 1920s, where he began his education at Kelvin
Technical High School. Floyd was a gifted artist and wanted to pursue a career as a painter but his father, Titus Leonard Floyd, discouraged him, instead persuading his son to get a university education (Interview with Jim Floyd 2014). Perhaps to utilize his painting skills, Floyd enrolled in the architecture program at the University of Manitoba, but was dropped out of the program after his first year for “playing the class clown” (Jim Floyd 2008). Determined to stay in school, Floyd switched to studying agriculture, although his interest remained in architecture. In his final year undergraduate project, Floyd chose to do a topic that utilized both architectural and horticultural knowledge. Collaborating with his classmate, Mike Lyseki, and using resources from both the architecture school and the Department of Horticulture, Floyd prepared a set of guidelines for designing four gardens: Oriental, English, French, and Italian (Jim Floyd 2008). By the time he graduated in 1935, Floyd had already set his mind on pursuing graduate studies in landscape architecture. Since there were no landscape architecture schools in Canada at that time, Floyd applied to Harvard in 1938—based on his final year project—and gained admission with a scholarship. It is at Harvard that Floyd would meet some of the most impressionable proponents of modernism, who would shape his design thinking and style.

1.36 Early Years at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD)

When Austin Floyd entered The Graduate School of Design (GSD) at Harvard University in 1938, the school was undergoing a radical conversion to Bauhaus thinking. The two leading figures in this were Walter Gropius and Joseph Hudnut (Pearlman 2000). Prior to assuming office as the Dean of the School of Architecture in 1936, Hudnut had showed himself to be a strong proponent of modernist approach in design. He had earlier written the introduction to the American edition of Gropius’ book, The New Architecture and the Bauhaus, much to the chagrin
of his former colleagues at Columbia University (Pearlman 2000). In 1937, he invited Gropius to come and chair the Architecture Department, and to help him transform the newly amalgamated GSD, which included Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Town and Regional Planning, into a cohesive modernist powerhouse. Despite Gropius and Hudnut’s efforts to modernize the GSD syllabus, the Department of Landscape Architecture initially remained traditionalist, largely due to the leadership of Bremer W. Pond (Simo 2000). Pond served as both the chairman of the Landscape Architecture Department and Charles Eliot professor of landscape design history. The Beaux-Arts method formed the crux of Pond’s approach to design. His *Outline History of Landscape Architecture* (1936), which served as a guide to his history course, defined landscape architecture as ‘the art of arranging ground areas and objects upon them for human use and enjoyment and where the appearance of the result is worthy of consideration (Pond 1936, p.2).

During his first year, Floyd took Pond’s course, which included lectures on Ancient Greek temples, the Taj Mahal, parks of Olmsted and Vaux and Charles Eliot, country estate garden styles, and the contemporary designers Gabriel Guevrekian, Jacques Greber, and others. Dan Kiley was in his final year when Floyd began, and recalls how unpopular Pond’s history course was to the landscape architecture students: “One thing that set everybody back was that the history of landscape architecture course was so dull and so bad that we just hated anything to do with the past. . .it took me ten years to finally realize that something that was done before was good and interesting” (Simo 2000, p.31). From all indications, Floyd may not have disliked Pond’s history course as much as Kiley and his contemporaries did. On the contrary, Floyd may have taken Pond’s lectures seriously, and likely regarded his textbook with near reverence. Floyd’s scribbled personal notes in nearly every page of Pond’s book (shown in fig.5.7) are a
testament to the fact that he had some admiration for the works of the classical garden designers. This interest in historical works in the Beaux-Arts style may have influenced Floyd in some of his more classical works during the early part of his career. Barely a year into his graduate studies, World War II began and Floyd returned to Canada to serve his country. It would take six years before he would go back to Harvard to complete his studies.

Figure 2.35: J. Austin Floyd’s copy of Bremer Pond’s Outline History of Landscape Architecture, with Floyd’s personal notes. (Jim Floyd 2014).

1.37 The Bauhaus Method

The GSD that Floyd returned to in 1946 was radically different from the one he had left in 1939. Gropius was now firmly established and his forefront European ideas about architecture and its functional and social role were now deeply entrenched in the school’s syllabus. Students were now being taught both a progressive outlook towards the broad role of design, and a working method for designing in the modern world. To the former head of the Bauhaus, the Beaux-Arts
academic concern for architectural style was a tyranny and had to be overthrown. For Gropius, the genuine ability to create in response to a design problem rather than imitate a past style was what mattered most. As he pointed out at the beginning of his career:

‘My intention [at Harvard] is not to introduce a, so to speak, cut and dried “Modern Style” from Europe, but rather to introduce a method of approach which allows one to tackle a problem according to its particular conditions. I want a young architect to be able to find his way in whatever circumstances; I want him independently to create true, genuine forms out of the technical, economic and social conditions in which he finds himself instead of imposing a learned formula on the surroundings which may call for an entirely different solution’ (Gropius 1937, p.48)

In Gropius’ view, good design meant simple, elegant, geometric aesthetics that reflected the true functional nature of any artifact, whether furniture or garden. Gropius’ philosophy was rooted in the ideology of ‘form follows function’ which had been advanced by Louis Sullivan and later Frank Lloyd Wright. The idea was that successful design of anything did not necessarily have to be dependent on the form it took but the experiences derived from the forms of the design. Consequently, one needed to abandon centuries of historically evolved, but in a modern age, meaningless, traditional forms in design. For these reasons, Gropius worked hard to eliminate any form of historical emphasis in the GSD program. Architectural historian Jill Pearlman notes that Hudnut and Gropius effectively ‘purged’ the history books in the library of Robinson Hall (Pearlman 2000).

For Floyd and his classmates, this meant no more Beaux-Arts inspired landscapes and gardens with axes, symmetries, and focus points. Central to Gropius’ modernist agenda was interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to design, which he had emphasized during his days in Germany. Architects were to take a leading role in multidisciplinary teams that comprised of other allied design professions. Since amalgamation had already taken place, students from the
landscape architecture, architecture, and Town and Regional Planning programs were now taking studio courses together under one roof. This was certainly not the Harvard Floyd had left in 1939. Aside from Gropius, other instructors energized Floyd and his mates at Robinson Hall. Christopher Tunnard, a fellow Canadian-born who had taken up appointment as a visiting lecturer and a critic in 1938, helped to push the modernist agenda further in his students, including Floyd. Lawrence Halprin (B.LA 1944), who was Floyd’s roommate, recalled that Tunnard had emboldened him ‘to design well and make an aesthetically and socially better environment for people to live in and thus in the broadest sense improve the modern world (Halprin cited in Simo 2000, p.33).

Floyd found himself in the midst of an exciting intellectual environment that fostered experimentation and exchange of ideas. Rather than imitate past styles, design inspiration now came from varying contemporary sources—from furniture design to the plastic arts. But more importantly, Gropius promoted the idea that design had to serve a human purpose. For the aspiring landscape architects who sat in Gropius’ studio, this meant that good landscape design must engage and inspire the senses. It must strike a balance between aesthetic pleasure and functionalism. This human-centred approach to landscape design, above all else, would be the most important lesson that Floyd would carry throughout his work. Floyd excelled at Harvard and won a scholarship to travel to Europe during his final year. This was a fabulous opportunity for Floyd to see firsthand many of the grand gardens which he had studied in Pond’s class, and which had captured his imagination. At the graduation party, however, Gropius pulled Floyd aside and advised him not to go to Europe. Gropius’ reason was simple: ‘If you see the classical gardens in Europe you will forget everything that we have taught you about modern design’
Interview with Jim Floyd 2014). Floyd took Gropius’ advice and returned to Canada after his graduation.

1.38 Coming Home: Floyd and a Transforming post-war Modern Canada

By most accounts modernism arrived late in Canada and never really left (Mertins 1987). Although the movement had circulated in architectural circles in the 1920s and 1930s, initial Canadian reaction had been reserved and cautious (Mertins 1987). In October 1929, for example, an article titled A Canadian interpretation of the modern spirit, which appeared in the CH&G, described the room shown in Figure 2.36, as “striving to give adequate and artistic interpretation of the new style, in a manner suitable to Canadian life and Canadian tastes” (CH&G, October 1929, p. 14). The writer of the article stated, “. . . it is unfair to give a hasty decision, just as it is unfair to turn thumbs down at the modernists . . . Yet, I have seen no room done in the modernist manner in which I feel that I would want to try and live in. . .” (CH&G, October 1929, p.14). The writer’s comments typified Canadian attitude to modern design at the turn of the 20th century. As Robert Fulford remarks, ‘Canadians were not necessarily at peace with modern decoration’ (Fulford, p.24).

![Figure 2.36: A room in 1929 described as ‘Canadian interpretation of the modern spirit.’ (CH&G, October 1929, Volume 6, Number 10, p.28).](image-url)
To this hesitation was added the confusion and ambiguity that surrounded the word ‘modern’ in Canadian design circles during the 1920s and 1930s. A survey of advertisements for building materials and light fixtures conducted by the JRAIC in the 1920s had revealed that devices which used new technology or materials were advertised as modern despite their ornamentations (Gross, cited in Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada (SSAC) Bulletin Number 12, June 1987, p.11). In architecture, for example, the term ‘modern’ was “still not recognized according to its own set of internally coherent parameters but was largely defined by advances in other related fields (White 1995). It was not until after the Second World War before the booming economic climate created a fertile ground for modernism to flourish, and the movement became firmly entrenched in the design professions. As Rachel Gottlieb and Cora Golden reveal, in the aftermath of the war, increased consumer demand and federal government reconstruction policies combined to create opportunities for designers, and good design increasingly became recognized by both the media and the public as a necessary and positive development (Gottlieb and Golden 2001).

While the pioneer modernism of the 1920s and 1930s had been clinical and scientific in its rigorous enforcement of utility over aesthetics, the modernism of 1950 was now more inclusive and flexible. The objective of proponents of postwar modernism in North America was to make inexpensive, well designed products available to the masses (Gottlieb and Golden 2001). Not surprisingly, designers and manufacturers played on the desire for ‘modern living’ that was increasingly capturing the imagination of Canadians. On the airwaves and in the print media, industrialists linked their products to the term ‘modern,’ and translated them as real-world solutions to the needs of contemporary Canadian life. A survey of various advertisements
published in the *JRAIC* and *CH&G* in the 1950s charts the incidence of the designation ‘modern’ as applied to Canadian design. For example, Viking, a washer and dryer manufacturing company in Toronto branded its products as ‘Canada’s most modern, work saving laundry room’ (*CH&G*, Volume 33, Number 5, April 1956, p.56). H.A Lippert, a furniture company in Kitchener promoted its Artisan brand of tables and dining room chests as ‘modern space savers,’ while Gibbard, another furniture company in Napanee branded its bedroom furniture as ‘graceful and modern in design and tempo (*CH&G* Volume 27, Number 6, June 1950, p.57). The commercial for Lincoln automobile manufacturing company read, ‘let Lincoln show you what modern driving means,’ and its 1950s sedan was branded as, ‘designed for modern living, powered for modern driving(*CH&G* Volume 27, Number 6, June 1950, p.58). FIAT, a bathtub manufacturing company’s advertisement, nicely captured the astuteness of designers in the atmosphere of the ‘modern obsession’ in Canada:

Today, the pace of modern living is reflected in the design of modern homes…functional, labour saving, yet completely comfortable. Similarly, modern bathing turns to the efficient economy found in FIAT showers. A FIAT shower enhances the value--improves the appearance of your home…invites bathing the modern way. In your building plans, in your modernizing thoughts, include a FIAT shower. (*CH&G* Volume 27, Number 6, June 1950, p.5).

To bring modernism even closer to Canadians, an exhibition titled ‘Three Modern Styles’ was held at the Art Gallery of Toronto in September 1950 to showcase the development of ‘modern trends’ in painting, sculpture, furniture design and other forms of decorative art. One columnist described the exhibition as ‘the curvilinear phase of Art Nouveau. . .when artists and designers alike. . .cut down on ornament and reshaped the object itself. . .the emphasis on simple geometric and machine shapes as opposed to the shapes of nature’ (*CH&G* Volume 27, Number 6, June 1950. p.28). The show displayed works of modernists such as, Alvaar Alto, Joan Miro, and Walter Gropius (works shown in Figures 2.37--2.39) to Canadians.
Works displayed at the “Three Modern Styles,” exhibition held at the Art Gallery of Toronto from September 30th to November 5th 1950. (Figure 2.37) Chair designed by Eero Saarinen. (Figure 2.38) Cubist office designed by Walter Gropius. (Figure 2.39) Abstract painting by Joan Miro.  
(CH&G Volume 27, Number 6, June 1950, p.28)
Social commentators added their voice to the modernism crusade. In June 1950, for example, renowned author T.H. Robsjohn-Gibbings mounted a sustained ridicule of Victorian styles of architecture, while he offered compelling reasons for Canadians to do away with archaic styles of houses and furniture. He stated:

‘There are many reasons for building a modern house but the most important reason is that it will be your house. Whatever your ideas about the good life, the modern house will carry them out…it will be your good companion waiting to grant you every indulgence…No copy of a period house will do this for you….A period house or furniture is like someone’s cast off clothes. It doesn’t matter how good they were originally, they will never be quite right for you. Try wearing great-grandmother’s hoopskirt. It doesn’t matter how sentimental you feel about it, it will look ridiculous on you…You can’t be comfortable in great-grandmother’s hoopskirt. Why, then, try to get along in her choice of house using her kind of superfluous furniture?…Life in the 20th century is different. Today, we are seeking informality. We wish to be at ease, to be relaxed, to be, frankly, ourselves at all times. But to live this happy informal life we must have a house that will help us to achieve it. We must cut out all the [ornaments] that went with formal behavior. The bric-a-brac, the superfluous furniture…and the superfluous space all have to go’ (Robsjohn-Gibbings 1950, p. 34).

By the end of 1950, a vibrant and clear design consciousness rooted in modernism had firmly gained roots in Canada. As one columnist remarked, “...modern is no longer a mystery word in the field of art and design. Even the gravest of traditionalists can appreciate modern forms. . .” (CH&G 1950 Volume 27, Number 6, June 1950, p.28). Modernism had finally arrived in Canada.

It was in this transforming climate in Canada that Floyd returned after graduating from Harvard. Shortly after his arrival in 1946, he had worked briefly with John Layng, a Toronto architect and planner before taking up appointment as the assistant to the Director of Toronto’s Planning Board in 1948. In early 1950, Floyd accepted a position as a part-time lecturer in landscape design at the University of Toronto’s architectural program. Dunington-Grubb had been teaching
this course since the 1930s, and Floyd was hired as an alternate course instructor. A few years after he began his teaching career Floyd had a chance to design what would later turn out to be his first modern work: a garden for Mrs. Margaret Spaulding at 109 Park Road (Figure 2.40). Mrs. Spaulding had earlier contacted James Murray, a young modernist architect and a teaching colleague of Floyd at the University of Toronto, to design a custom house on her lot, located in a ravine at Toronto’s posh Rosedale neighborhood. In 1938, Murray had gained popularity by designing what was, arguably, Toronto’s first modernist home for James A. Daly, president of Maclean-Hunter (Leblanc 2009). Murray contacted Floyd to design the garden for the project and the collaboration between architect and the landscape architect created one of the first truly modern treatments of house and garden in Toronto. Not particularly fond of stylistic trends, Mrs. Spaulding wanted a house that was ‘warm and friendly in attitude…should welcome friends, many of them old, and make them comfortable at ease in a contemporary setting’ (JRAIC Volume 29, Number 2, November 1952 p.82).

To achieve this, Murray came up with an L—shaped house plan that faced the street and oriented the principal rooms to face the privacy of the garden. Floyd’s landscape plan (Figures 2.41 and 2.42) complemented Murray’s architecture. The garden generally consisted of three key areas. Floyd introduced informal and functional design elements on the side where the house faced the street (Area 1). The parking area, with crushed rock as surface material to improve both drainage and traction, was surrounded by red concrete block pavers that were divided by cedar strips. Wooden strips were commonly used by many of the modern masters, including Eckbo and Church, not only as visually appealing materials and expansion gaps for concrete slabs, but also for their low maintenance (Herman 2012). Towards the main entrance (Area 2b), Floyd
introduced some classical elements: a low Korean boxwood hedge separated the large quadrilateral-shaped groundcover from the back porch; raised flower beds were held in position by a low cedar hedge. Near the house (Area 2), where all the principal rooms converged, Floyd introduced architectural arrangement of terraces and plant material. A curvilinear grass area with a cherry tree merged seamlessly into the terrace made of red concrete block. Adjacent to the sitting area (Area 2a) sat two small v-shaped “natural” pools containing a bird bath that may have been inspired by Eckbo’s Koolish garden fountain court (1952) in Bel Air (Figure 2.43). In the areas more remote from the house (Area 3), Floyd utilized a more natural approach, by introducing rockeries, planting and trees.

Floyd’s plan generated some debate and criticism for lack of formal treatment of such features as the terrace steps, but he was defended by his teaching colleagues (Interview with Jim Floyd 2014). The University of Toronto’s architecture program had been among the first in Canada to be modernized, thanks to a pro-modern faculty that included notable architectural historian Eric Arthur and urban planner Anthony Adamson. The 1940s and 1950s reading lists for courses on town planning and modern architectural history and theory, usually taught by Adamson or Arthur included English modernists: Ralph Tubbs, Nicolaus Pevsner, F.R.S Yorke, and J. M Richards: American authors included Lewis Mumford, Sigfreid Giedion, and W. D Teague (University of Toronto, Academic Calendars for 1947—1955). In the 1950s, it was customary for the school to invite modernist proponents, including Floyd’s former teachers Gropius and Hudnut, as guest lecturers (UTA Director’s files, cited in Waldron 1998). Given the strong modernist leanings of the school, it was not surprising that a project like the Spaulding garden would garner
considerable attention in the architectural circles, even featuring on the front cover of the *JRAIC* in November 1952 (*JRAIC* Volume 29, Number 2, November 1952).

**Figure 2.40:** Spaulding garden (1952) fountain area with birdbath. J. Austin Floyd. *JRAIC*, November 1952.

**Figure 2.43:** Koolish garden. Fountain court. Bel Air, 1952. Garrett Eckbo. (Publishing.cdlib.org, 2014)
Figure 2.41: Plan of Spaulding garden (1952). J. Austin Floyd. (Library and Archives Canada, 2014)

Figure 2.42: Plan of Spaulding garden (1952). J. Austin Floyd. Area away from house showing rockeries and plantings. (Library and Archives Canada, 2014)

By 1954, job prospects for landscape architects were beginning to look bright in the wake of post war economic boom. Yet, for Floyd and many of his colleagues who were relatively new to the profession, establishing a private practice was challenging, if not impossible. The alternative route was to join an already established firm. Floyd chose to join Grubb and Stennson. A Beaux-Arts trained landscape architect who had graduated from Harvard GSD in 1931, Stennson worked at Grubb’s Sheridan Nurseries before becoming partner in Grubb’s firm. The Grubb, Stennson and Floyd partnership would only last for a year (1954-1955), but the friendship between Floyd and Grubb would last for the rest of their respective careers.

From the beginning, the partnership seemed a perfect match. All three men were familiar with the Beaux-Arts approach of landscape architecture and were knowledgeable in horticulture. Grubb had acquired his knowledge from working in Thomas Mawson’s office in England. Stennson had gone through the Beaux-Arts oriented syllabus at Harvard in the 1930s, and had worked for Grubb at his Sheridan Nurseries to acquire practical knowledge of plants. The only difference between the three men was Floyd’s modernist training— in addition to his Beaux-Arts background—from Harvard. While it may be difficult to determine the exact contribution of each partner in the firm due to lack of textual records, the landscape drawings of the three partners seem to suggest modernist forms tempered with some Beaux-Arts elements. An example could be seen in the 1954 garden for Mr. and Mrs. Basil Tippet (shown in Figures 2.42 and 2.43). One finds the absence of an axis, symmetry, and a focal point, while modernist elements, including an amoeba-shaped mirror pool with an architectural shelter, and a curvilinear lawn surrounds the
pool area. A paved concrete walk meandered its way from the residence and around the lawn to the pool area. Modern features were punctuated by Beaux-Arts-inspired perennial borders around the pool area and shelter.

**Figure 2.44 (left)** Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Basil Tippet (plan of mirror pool) 1954.

**Figure 2.45 (below)** Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Basil Tippet (perspective of mirror pool) 1954.

By Grubb, Floyd and Stennson. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, CCLAA, Guelph.
The 1955 garden for Mr. and Mrs. Manus at Toronto’s modernist area of Bridle Path had similar combination of traditional and modernist elements, although the latter was more evident. By the time Grubb, Floyd and Stennson started working on this project, the three partners had completely purged their designs of any axial or symmetrical elements, replacing them with sweeping curves and bold geometrical forms. For example, an interestingly curved asphalt driveway (Figure 2.46) divided the front yard into two areas of grass with trees that included honey locust, American elm, and sugar maple to provide shade. Unity and harmony was achieved by repeating the free flowing forms used in the front area of the house at the back yard (Figure 2.47).

A curved asphalt walk starts at the edge of the sun room and splits into two, with one part ending in a play area and the other part terminating in a circular(22.6m diameter) terrace partially surrounded by shrubs (Figure 2.48). The play area (Figure 2.49.) consisted of a play house (Figure 2.50.) in front of which was a rectangular-shaped pool surrounded by a concrete walk and line of pyramidal oak trees for both aesthetic effect and shade. Typical of a modernist project, new materials were utilized throughout this design; the terrace made of terrazzo—a new construction material during this period—with a pebbled concrete surface at the bottom of the steps leading to the terrace. Again, modernity was tempered by Classical elements that included 5 feet high clipped hedge, consisting of cedar on the north and south, and Japanese Yew on the west, which formed a border around the entire front yard.
Figure 2.46: Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Manus (1955). Perspective sketch of front entrance. Grubb, Floyd and Stennson. (Library and Archives Canada 2014)

Figure 2.47: Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Manus (1955). Perspective sketch of backyard. Grubb, Floyd and Stennson. (Library and Archives Canada 2014).
Figure 2.48: Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Manus (1955). Circular terrace at backyard. Grubb, Floyd and Stennson. (Library and Archives Canada 2014).

Figure 2.49: Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Manus (1955). The play area connected to circular terrace. Grubb, Floyd and Stennson. (Library and Archives Canada 2014).
By the end of 1955, the Floyd, Grubb, and Stennson firm was churning out designs that drew heavily from the modernist forms, particularly the zig-zag shape that featured in many of Church and Eckbo’s gardens. As Dorothee Imbert points out, the zig-zag or staggered boundary probably derived from the French cubist gardens of the 1920s, particularly Pierre Emile Legrain’s celebrated 1924 Tachard garden in La Celle-St-Cloud (Figure 2.51). In fact, Eckbo had been so impressed with Legrain’s garden that he had overlaid the photo to produce his own sketch (Figure 2.52) for further study (Treib 1997). Eckbo would later state:

> It blew my mind because of that little sawtooth edge, which you probably think is kind of silly, but it made me think about what a path is for. A straight path with straight sides is a linear movement through space, designed to get you from here to there as quickly as possible. It’s like a street or highway. But if you break the edge like that, you say that there is something along the side that maybe you should stay and look at. It was a form that came out of modern art. (Eckbo, cited in Treib 1997, p.24)

While it is difficult to ascertain whether the zig-zag path maximized its effect on movement in the gardens produced by the three partners, it is evident that the feature became a common form
in many of their works. In their garden for Mr. and Mrs. Harry Kohl (Figure 2.53), for example, the saw tooth shape formed a retaining wall with built in wooden benches extending to a shelter (with polyrein roof) at proposed north western side of the house. The other modernist feature was a curvilinear paved courtyard welcomed the visitor. Added to this was an amoeboid lawn at the north western side of the house which divided into concave and convex areas. Again, modernist forms were neutralized by Beaux-Arts elements that included a low hedge of alpine currant that enclosed the courtyard; broad leaved evergreens that dotted already existing cedar hedge at the presumed north end of the house. It is logical to suggest that in designing the garden for the Kohl’s, Floyd, Grubb and Stennson may have been easily inspired by Church’s Martin garden (Figure 2.54) in Aptos, California, designed and built in 1948.

Figure 2.51 (Above left) Pierre Emile Legrain, Tachard garden. La Celle-Saint-Cloud, France (1924). (Treib 1997); Figure 2.52 (Above right) Sketch of Tachard garden by Garrett Eckbo. (Treib 1997)
Figure 2.53. Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Harry B. Kohl (1954-55) by Grubb, Floyd and Stenson. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, CCLAA, Guelph.

Figure 2.54. The Martin garden (1949) by Thomas Church. (Treib 2003).
The Floyd, Grubb, and Stennson partnership ended abruptly in 1956, although Floyd and Grubb would continue to have a working relationship both in future collaborations, and as professors at University of Toronto. The exact reason why the partnership dissolved is unclear, although one factor often cited is that Floyd and Grubb may have had disagreements over design approach (Graham 1984; Adell 1981). Whatever may have caused the dissolution, Floyd gained invaluable work experience from his partnership with Grubb and Stennson, not the least was developing his own skills on how to seamlessly merge modernist forms with Beaux-Arts elements. Floyd also cemented his friendship with Grubb; a partnership that would later see them collaborating in future projects. To help ease the financial burden of starting on his own, Grubb allowed Floyd to borrow from their joint account to launch his private practice (Interview with Jim Floyd 2014).

1.40 Architectural and garden publications as mediums for disseminating modern landscape architecture in Canada.

Historians have recognized the critical role played by the popular press in developing the spatial project of modernity. For example, in Making the Modem, Terry Smith argues that a new visual appeal developed in the early 1920s based on the publication of fresh images of modem life that could be found in photographs in the public media (Smith 1994). Smith asserted that the repetition of such images structured a visual order, or a new way of seeing, that became essential to the formation of modernism in design. Beatrice Cololina, for example, contends that modem architecture only became public through its engagement with the media and through systems of mass communication: architectural publications, exhibitions and journals, which, though apparently ephemeral, are in many cases more long lasting than the buildings themselves (Cololina, cited in Harris 2012). Modern landscape architecture, too, became part of a system of
representation that included printing and graphic styles, dress and fashion, furniture and interior design. For instance, Diana Harris points out the symbiotic relationship that emerged between Thomas Church and publications such as *Sunset Magazine* and *House Beautiful* in the mid-twentieth century that served as an example of the collaborative relationship between the landscape architect and the media to promote modernism in landscape architecture. As Harris argues, landscape architects like Church engaged fully with the publishing industry and the hundreds of published photographs of Church's gardens became merchandising tools, helping to establish contemporary landscape design as a postwar consumer good (Harris 2012).

A similar relationship between landscape architects and the media to propagate the tenets of modern landscape architecture emerged in Canada in the aftermath of the war, although not to the same extent as what prevailed in the United States. The post-war economic boom had changed Canada dramatically, both in terms of economic development and living standards. Wartime industrialization particularly resulted in an astronomical growth of Canada’s manufacturing sector, allowing Canadians to become a world leader in new industries like car-building and chemical processing, while the 1947 discovery of oil in the province of Alberta put Canada on the map as a petroleum superpower (thecanadaguide.com 2014). As education became more affordable, more Canadians were likewise able to pursue careers in new sectors of the economy, such as science, finance, engineering, media, and government. As a 2002 report by the Canadian *Center for the Study of Living Standards* (CSLS) points out, the rapid economic growth of the post-war era resulted in improved standard of living for more Canadians (CSLS 2002). For the first time, more Canadians than ever could enjoy comfortable, middle class jobs and lifestyles in growing suburban communities, where families could live in single detached
houses with their own backyards. As increasing numbers of postwar Canadians suddenly found themselves with their own outdoor lots, few knew what to do with them, and fewer still knew who to ask for help. Many turned their attention to popular shelter and garden publications. While publications such as the CH&G magazine and the JRAIC catered to a national audience, others like the Western Home and Living (WH&L) magazine served regional readers. With their flashy black and white photos and bold headlines, these publications emphasized what was current, practical, and eyecatching in both home and garden design, and often offered professional and do-it-yourself advice to Canadian home owners. Many of the articles combined pictures, plans, and vocabulary to illustrate and describe specific projects.

Not surprisingly, landscape architects took a leading role in offering their professional expertise to anxious homeowners. Throughout the 1950s and well into the 1960s, Canadian landscape architects participated in a network of publicity focused on disseminating modern landscape design and postwar lifestyles that depended on the aforementioned architectural and garden publications. Although not a prolific writer, Floyd was part of this network. His own opinions regarding modern landscape architecture were registered in a series of articles he wrote throughout the 1950s. Earlier in 1949, Floyd had written an article titled Playground Surfacing, in which he had showed both his extensive knowledge and affinity for experimenting with landscape surfacing materials. The following year (1950), Floyd wrote another article in the JRAIC titled The Architect’s Garden versus the Gardener’s Garden, in which he advocated for a rational approach to landscape architecture, rather than adhere to a particular trend (formal or informal). Similar to what Eckbo had expressed a decade earlier, Floyd critiqued the false
distinction between the formal and informal styles that had divided garden traditions into two categories.

He stated:

‘[The formal gardener of the Victorian era] almost completely disregarded the functional use of plant material and considered it only for its decorative value. Great areas of garden were merely extensions of the architectural material into the landscape, and plant material was used only to add a touch of colour. The resultant effect was hard cold combinations of brick and stone, and the plant material used added little to the design…. [The informal gardener] went to the other extreme and used only plant material. They refused to incorporate any of the construction materials that had been used too freely by the architects, but in their endeavour to keep to what they considered the natural, they also ignored structural design and the garden became great conglomerations of horticultural varieties, and the functional use of plant material was disregarded’ (Floyd 1950, p.14).

Floyd believed in the functionality and necessity of using planting as elements of design in the garden. On the other hand, he did not believe in imposing an unproductive or wasteful planting in cases where architectural materials were more functional and suitable to the site. He stated:

“. . .man’s inherent love of nature causes him to want growing things around him and it is both a biological and fundamental principle that plant life is a necessity for mankind. . . .there are, fortunately, many cases where plant material can do a job more satisfactorily than architectural structure. . . there is nothing in architectural materials that can replace the silhouette of trees against the winter sky or the pattern of shadow cast by a tree on a terrace. . .,[on the other hand], even where space is not a problem, architectural materials are used near the house if they do the job better. Sunlight may be controlled by architectural means more readily than the past. The old fashioned pergola has been replaced by forms of lighter construction in wood and metal; having close relationship with the architecture often giving an interesting shadow pattern on the walls and ground surface’ (Floyd 1950, p.15).

For Floyd, the approach was to attend to method and utility by responding to site-specific and user needs using the most suitable design element—plant, architectural or a combination of both—and not necessarily following a tradition.
In 1954, Floyd wrote two articles that echoed many of the modernist themes that were being promoted by many of the American modernists, especially Church and Eckbo. The first, titled *Privacy in the Garden*, appeared in the JRAIC. His contention was that modern architecture had eliminated the wall between the house and the garden, and in the process had compromised the privacy of homeowners. Hence, there was a need for landscape architects to design gardens that ensured what he termed “visual privacy.” He stated:

> A new interest in outdoor living has stimulated the imagination of garden designers beyond the requirements of the horticultural enthusiast. An entirely new group of people have become conscious of the land outside the walls of the house. This is partially due to the excessive use of glass in present day architecture, which has opened the house to the garden and exposed to the home-owner the advantages, or disadvantages, which his landscape has to offer him. The old picket fence no longer does the job as well as it did in the past…it does not give the privacy needed in today’s garden. . . The present day requirement is more of a visual protection. . . a screen of either architectural material or plant material is necessary to give visual privacy’ (Floyd 1954, p.33).

Again, in creating this visual privacy, Floyd pointed out the potential of using planting design to attend to both matters of utility and aesthetics, while emphasizing the need for harmony and integration of garden with the house, He wrote:

> The privacy screen, be it architectural, plant material, or a combination of both, should be in keeping with the garden itself, should harmonize with the house, of which it is an integral part, and take on some of the character of the rooms within the house that are exposed to the garden’(Floyd 1954, p.34).

In the second article, titled *Your Backyard, Eden or Eyesore?* Floyd offered a comprehensive and systematic approach to converting a small backyard lot into a garden that met the demands of contemporary life. One could claim that this particular article was, in many ways, a manifesto of Floyd’s approach to designing small scale and backyard gardens. Thomas Church and Garrett Eckbo had earlier acknowledged the shrinking size of the city lot which, in their view, forced the landscape architect to be more imaginative in his design of the garden. Eckbo’s 1937 student
project (small gardens in the city), for example, had served as a model to demonstrate the
limitless possibilities of designing gardens on a small city lot. Similarly, Church’s book, *Gardens are for People*, had emphasized the need for the garden designer to be creative because,
as he put it, “more and more activities were being forced into smaller and more rigid properties,
and the landscape architect no longer had a choice between a functional or aesthetic approach”
(Church 1950, p.27). Drawing parallels from Church and Eckbo’s observations, Floyd opened
his article by urging the garden designer to plan his backyard garden in advance, particularly by
considering many potential opportunities of its limited space.

...most people use their backyards to some degree, but too few capitalize entirely on the
opportunities presented by the insignificant-looking plots of land behind their houses.
Today, however, more and more people realize that every backyard presents a score of
marvelous opportunities’ (Floyd 1954, p.15)

Rather than approach the garden with preconceived notions of style, Floyd argued, one was to
begin the design process by capitalizing on the genius loci of the site.

‘In planning your garden, first observe existing conditions and work from there. A tree or a
clump of trees may suggest a shady place to sit out; a change in grade may put steps into
your plan; and a low spot may start you thinking about pools. A pleasant view beyond the
garden may necessitate a very simple treatment of the garden so that it won’t compete with
the view. But a flat piece of land with nothing of interest around it may be even more easily
designed, because there will be nothing to hamper the designer’ (Floyd 1954 *Ibid*).

In this case, the functional connection between indoor and outdoor space was more or less
assumed to be less of a priority in the overall program of site design since this issue had already
been resolved by modern architecture. What mattered was to utilize modern architecture to
maximize both the functional and aesthetic potential of the garden. As Floyd put it, ‘…Architects
have solved much of the [connection between indoor and outdoor] problem by putting a picture
window on the back of the house to bring the garden, visually at least, into the house. This gives
the garden new importance and leaves it up to the landscape architect to put a feeling of spaciousness in the outside area—and make it beautiful, as well’ (Floyd 1954, p.16). How was this to be achieved? Floyd suggested experimentation with bold geometric shapes; curved and straight lines combined attractively in a way that offered the right amount of space for the increasingly varying number of activities in the garden. “The curved line gave a natural and beautiful effect and provided an illusion of spaciousness, while the straight line offered a feeling of orderliness and was practical for a small lot” (Floyd 1954, Ibid). Architectural features, such as fences, for example, were to be introduced in the garden for both aesthetic and functional purposes:

[For the reason of adding interest and privacy in the garden,] design has to depend partially on architectural, as opposed to horticultural, features. Architectural screens can form an effective background to accent the pattern of shrubs… These screens can form interest of their own through color, form or texture, and can be designed to act as wind-barriers’ (Floyd 1954, p17).

Floyd’s article was accompanied by pictures and a composite plan of one of his gardens showing practical ways in which one could apply his modernist design principles. Indeed, he summarized his example (Figure 2.55) as “. . .planned with an eye to beauty. . .and function” (Floyd 1954).

The garden had a terrace next to the back of the house, a patio further down, a grass area, a children’s play place, and a service section. A square shaped flower pool (Figure 2.56.) made of bricks helped to cool the immediate area and provided a setting for water lilies. Perhaps borrowing from both Church and Eckbo’s techniques, the terrace was set at 45 degree angle to the house, and had gravel pavers (Figure 2.57) separated by wood strips with pansies to form attractive pattern effect. Architectural fibreglass, a popular material during this era, was used as screen (Figure 2.58) to provide privacy and worked as effective backdrop for climbing vines. The children’s play area (Figure 2.59) was separated from the rest of the garden by change of
levels; floor area around sandbox is made of clay tile and concrete brick, and the cedar steps doubled as extra seating. In effect, Floyd’s example reflected the modernist philosophy of making the garden a “living space” that was both aesthetically pleasing and highly functional. As Church had pointed out, “[The garden] is not just to be landscaped in the accepted sense of the term, but made to produce living space, play space and work space. The job of the professional designer is to translate these requirements into a logical and intelligent plan which will produce the maximum in terms of use and beauty” (Church 1950, p.27).

Figure 2.55. Garden plan by J. Austin Floyd. (CH&G Volume 31, Number 7, July 1954)
Figure 2.56 (left) A square shaped flower pool with bricks to cool the immediate area
Figure 2.59 (right) The children’s play area. Floor area around sandbox is made of clay tile and concrete brick, and the cedar steps serves as extra seating. Garden by J. Austin Floyd. (CH&G, July 1954, Volume 31, Number 7, p.15)

Figure 2.58 (left) Architectural fibreglass used as fence to provide privacy and work as effective backdrop for climbing vines. Figure 2.57 (right) Gravel pavers separated by wood strips with pansies to form attractive pattern effect. Garden by J. Austin Floyd. (CH&G, July 1954, Volume 31, Number 7, p.15).
Aside backyard landscapes, Floyd wrote about large scale landscape design. In 1953, for example, Floyd’s piece on industrial landscapes shed light on a fundamental element in his design approach namely a belief in merging functionalism with aesthetic. Floyd began his article by proposing that “. . .an attractive approach, as well as provision for the comfort and enjoyment of those employed with the factory, should be the aim of industrial landscape design. . .” (Floyd 1953, p.111). He stated, “The trend of industrial development. . .has given the industrialist an opportunity to develop his property graciously. . . Utility of function, as well as a pleasurable aspect within and around the factory buildings, should be the object of the owner, now that such an aim is possible” (Floyd 1953, p112).

Pointing out both the functional and aesthetic contributions of planting design in the industrial landscape, Floyd stated:

Trees may be used aesthetically to create a setting for the building and, functionally, to create cooling shade from the hot summer sun. A deciduous tree, located strategically, may shade a solar window in the summer months, and then conveniently shed its leaves to allow the sun to enter during the winter. This principle may be applied to a long row of windows by having a line of trees casting shadow-patterns over them during the summer time, which may be pleasant to view as well as providing a cooler local temperature (Floyd 1953, p113).

Floyd observed that a common feature of modern industrial architecture was the horizontal form of the building which was often surrounded by a vast expanse of lawn that sloped gently away from the building. For Floyd, this called for a simple treatment of the grass area: it was to be devoid of any form of ornamentation and intrusion of planting beds or other features that added to maintenance work. Instead, one could avoid the high cost—both financially and physically—of keeping clipped hedges by edging the grass areas with brick or stone. Shrubs and trees were also to be used for their sculptural properties--rather than mere decorative--features to complement the modern forms of the industrial building. As he pointed out, “hedges may be
used advantageously to emphasize the clean, horizontal lines of the building.” Floyd offered various examples of plant species that could be used to achieve this effect; for a pyramidal or columnar shape, one could use the Lombardy poplar or pyramidal oak; for conical and compact, one could use the Chinese elm, pine or oak; for spreading effect, the maples and ashes were suitable; and for dwarf spreading, one could rely on the crabapples or hawthorns.

To demonstrate a practical application of his proposals, Floyd’s article was accompanied by a plan of an outdoor area of an industrial landscape. The plan showed a large terrace area made of yellow brick panel with red brick surround. A large curvilinear lawn extended from the terrace into the parking area. Planting beds on the terrace had shade trees (Chinese elm), and wooden seats ran along the edge of the terrace. The terrace took the form of a large curve that was punctuated by two zig-zag shaped edges at both the north and south ends. By this time, the modernist zig-zag and biomorphic forms were beginning to feature prominently in Floyd’s work. While Floyd’s message in this article was specifically meant for industrialists who wished to economize on the landscaping around their properties, its meaning offered a glimpse into his modernist design philosophy. His view was that functionalism should not be compromised by aesthetic concerns but reinforced by it. In Floyd’s view, this was achievable only through proper planning and attention to detail in design.

1.41 Modern works of Floyd’s contemporaries

By the late 1950s, the modernist impulses had become so powerful that former opponents to the movement, such as Dunington Grubb, were beginning to make concessions. Although not necessarily intending to promote a modernist agenda himself, by the mid 1950s Grubb had seen
the creative power in the modern promise not only of new form and style but also of design considerations relevant to contemporary life. Earlier in 1951, while on a tour of West Indies and South America, Grubb had visited Brazil to gather interesting data on architecture, and social mores (Dempsey 1951). In Brazil, he requested to meet modern landscape designer Roberto Burle Marx, and was invited by Marx to a reception at his home. Studying a non-objective painting by Burle Marx, in which the canvas was covered with whirling cogs, cart wheels and other mechanical shapes and forms, Grubb asked Marx what it represented. “It’s called two pregnant women,” Marx had responded, and gone on to introduce Grubb to the methods in which he produced his modern gardens (Dempsey 1951, p.17). Upon his return, Grubb showered praises on Burle Marx, and recommended Brazil as a ‘stimulating holiday destination for architects and designers (Dunington-Grubb 1952, p.63). By 1954, Grubb was showing some level of optimism to the modernist promise. For example, commenting on modernism’s call for severing ties with historical pattern making, Grubb stated, “the present impulse to discard tradition and break out into new ground seems to hold out exciting prospects for landscape architecture.” Grubb seemed to have acknowledged the reality and demands of modern life, and was beginning to accommodate the view that contemporary gardens should go beyond mere decoration.

The great landscape gardeners of the 18th century successfully solved the problem of how to handle areas running into hundreds of acres purely for pleasure and spectacular display…these men would not have continued along these lines if the area to be dealt with had shrunk to the size of the suburban lot. On such a site there is no hope of producing a convincing naturalistic effect’ (Dunington-Grubb 1954).

Indeed, Dunington-Grubb’s sentiments were succinctly captured by a piece that appeared in the October 1955 issue of the CH&GM. The article, interestingly titled, *Your home has changed… Your Backyard Has Changed Too*, revealed that Canadians no longer could afford the luxury of
large formal gardens that only served as romantic backdrops to their houses. Rather, the modern gardens were to be used and enjoyed in addition to their aesthetic values. The writer stated:

In the last 50 years, we Canadians have completely changed our ideas about our backyard gardens. At the turn of the century a garden was a thing of beauty to be seen and admired. . . . The formal gardens of yesteryears were beautiful showplaces. Guests walked about the lavishly blossomed beds, admired the picture and pattern and then returned to tea in the drawing room Today, although your garden may still be a beauty spot, its main purpose is to be used and enjoyed. (CH&GM October 1955, p.13).

Dunington-Grubb’s tolerant views of modernism also began to reflect heavily in his gardens of the late 1950s. In a garden he designed that appeared in the May 1957 issue of CH&G(showed in Figures 2.60 and 2.61), the clients wanted a new patio that offered privacy from their neighbors, allowed sunshine into the garden, and suited their formal house (CH&GM May 1957 p.17). Dunington-Grubb’s plan for this garden utilized architectural and planting elements for both aesthetic and functional effect. A softly curving design relieved the ruggedness of the concrete and brick walls of the house. Square-shaped box planters replaced the herbaceous border. The floor of the patio was laid in random-shaped concrete slabs and merged seamlessly with the edge of the lawn. Dunington-Grubb also tested new materials in this design. For example, wood and corrugated fibreglass were combined attractively to form an egg-crate roof. By the late 1950s, Dunington Grubb had also embarked on the stylistic departure from the Beaux-Arts gardens that he designed in the prewar era. His gardens now reflected the modernist style and he was now being influenced by the works of the American modernists, particularly Thomas Church. As Owen Scott points out, “so dramatic was Dunington Grubb’s change from Beaux-Arts to the modernist style of landscape architecture that he sometimes wrote on his sketches ‘my apologies to Mr. Thomas Church,’ because he felt he was copying their work to create his own designs” (Interview with Owen Scott 2014).
Figures 2.60 (above) and 2.61 (below). Terrace area of garden designed by Dunington-Grubb (May 1957). Softly curving design with square-shaped box planters and architectural fence to provide privacy.
Although his writing output was minimal compared to Floyd and Duntington-Grubb, Macklin Hancock was another Ontario landscape architect who contributed to introducing modernism into the Canadian landscape in the 1950s. Hancock completed a degree in horticulture at University of Guelph before heading to Harvard GSD in 1949 to study landscape architecture. Unlike Floyd, however, Hancock arrived at a time when Gropius’ tenure was ending. Yet, he was exposed to the Bauhaus teachings. Furthermore, Hancock studied under Hideo Sasaki, another student of Gropius who had opened his own multidisciplinary firm. While still a student at Harvard, Hancock assembled a team of landscape architects, engineers and planners to form Project Planning Associates Limited (PPAL), Canada’s first multidisciplinary design and planning firm with landscape architecture as its base.

While Hancock’s PPAL was predominantly involved in large scale landscape design and planning projects, they also designed a few residential gardens that highly exemplified the modernist style. A classic example was featured in the JRAIC in 1957, shown in Figures 2.62 and 2.63. In this garden one could see art deco influence through the artistic use of bold geometric shapes and forms. Two intersecting circles provided a large deep pool with a diving board, and a shallow wading pool, which can be roped off as a separate section. The pool was surrounded by a large surface terrace of paving brick within which was a smaller rectangular planting bed. A board and batten fence at the back enclosed the space, and a low dry stone retaining wall maintained the level of the terrace against a fall to the land on the left. Perhaps Hancock’s most important modernist project was the community of Don Mills, which he had started in 1952.
Figure 2.62 (above) Residential garden by Macklin Hancock’s PPAL (JRAIC September 1958)

Figure 2.63 (Below) Plan of residential garden by Macklin Hancock’s PPAL (JRAIC September 1958)
While Floyd, Grubb, and Hancock’s works drew attention to contemporary garden design, it was in the West Coast that the call for modern landscape architecture found its most assertive proponents. The region was perhaps more fertile ground for modernist experiments in design than the rest of Canada. By 1950, modernism had already penetrated west coast architecture. Cities like Vancouver and Victoria had been centres of industry and technology since the 1860s, and in the wake of the flourishing postwar economy, these urban centres increasingly became popular destinations for thousands of young and ambitious architects—both from within and outside Canada. Added to these factors were the desirable environmental conditions—warm climate and spectacular landscape—which, as Harold Kalman put it, ‘allowed technical innovation in building, challenged good designers, and forgave poor ones’ (Kalman 1994, p.541).

By the mid 1950s, Vancouver had developed a regional style of modern architecture—West Coast Style—with unique features designed to suit the picturesque landscape and relaxed outdoor lifestyle of British Columbians. As Rhodri Liscombe describes it:

The West Coast Style of architecture was commonly associated with ‘…mid-sized family homes that were built with local materials and innovative construction techniques. Each house is respectfully and dynamically sited on heavily wooded and usually mountain-side suburban lots to take advantage of views and sunlight…And most distinctly, post-and-beam construction methods eliminate the need for load bearing walls. In their place, transparent planes of glass capture breath-taking views of the city, neighborhood and garden, extending living space into nature and vice-versa (Liscombe 1997, p.75).

Since modern architecture emerged early in the West Coast, it is not surprising that landscape architects from British Columbia were among the first to call for a modernist perspective on landscape design. One such landscape architect was Cornelia Hahn Oberlander who had studied
with Floyd at Harvard in 1947. After graduation Oberlander had worked in the architects offices of Lou Kahn and Oscar Stonorov in Philadelphia, before working briefly with Dan Kiley, from whom she had learned the connection between landscape and ecology Oberlander 2012). In 1953, Oberlander moved to Vancouver with her husband and fellow Harvard mate Peter Oberlander. At the time Cornelia Oberlander arrived in Vancouver, modernism was still a new concept in city’s landscape architectural circles. As she recalled:

Modernism as I knew it was not yet the established norm and there was only one landscape architect in Vancouver. Everyone was concerned with garden-making in the English tradition. There were no schools of Landscape Architecture in Canada at that time. . . (Oberlander 2012)

In 1954, Oberlander pointed out that Canadian homeowners were not paying attention modern developments in garden design.

“ We have come to accept and and understand contemporary architecture, but of contemporary gardens we speak rarely; and people who have contemporary homes often refer to their gardens apologetically for they feel that they do not ‘fit in’ (Oberlander 1954, p.67).

She urged landscape architects to take a leading role in designing landscapes that utilized modern architecture to connect the house to the garden. She stated:

Today, we emphasize the importance of outdoor living. Our architects design houses with large windows and sliding doors to give us all the air and light we want. However, very often these houses fail to show any relation to their immediate surroundings, and here is the field where the landscape architect, with his knowledge of site planning and grading, ought to be able to make a major contribution (Oberlander 1954, Ibid).

Desmond Muirhead was more vociferous in bringing attention to the modern garden. Earlier in 1953, Muirhead had written an article in the newly published Western Homes and Living, titled
The Modern Garden, to both draw attention to modernist developments in British Columbia’s architectural circles and the need for landscape designs to parallel these developments. He wrote:

‘In recent years British Columbia has become a centre of progressive architecture, the scene of new trends in the development of contemporary home styles. At first these new designs were concerned only with the structure and form of the house itself, but with the emphasis on open plans and outdoor living we are beginning to realize that these new home styles demand a new concept of landscaping. Out of this is developing what may be called “the modern garden.” Designed for people and not for plants, the modern garden can be considered as a division of outdoor space for human use and enjoyment. It is a place where various living needs, once confined in the house, are integrated into a landscape both useful and, in its best examples, beautiful’ (Muirhead 1953, p. 23).

Like Floyd, Muirhead’s articles were also accompanied by pictures and plans of his gardens. Muirhead’s designs shared similar elements of the California Style gardens that were being promoted by Church and Eckbo. A classic example was his 1954-57 garden for Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Brown of Vancouver (Figure 2.64). With its free-flowing curves and Miesian overlapping planes, Muirhead’s garden plan recalled the work of Eckbo’s artistic composition of the Goldstone Garden of 1948 (Figure 2.65). A raised terrace (Figure 2.66) was oriented close to the house to take advantage of the shade provided by the walls of the building. Permanent wall seat of cedar (Figure 2.67) ran along the wall adjacent to the terrace. A wading pool (Figure 2.68) with water plants helped cool the entire terrace and patio area on hot days. Curved fences (Figure 2.69) were used to enclose the garden and provide privacy.

In these aforementioned examples of designs and writings of the modern garden, Floyd, Grubb, Muirhead, Oberlander, and many other members of the Canadian landscape architectural community functioned as conduits for the dissemination of a modernist approach to garden design, shaping and strengthening the discourse on modern landscape architecture in Canada. For this small group of landscape architects, it was time for Canadians to “update” their gardens to
meet contemporary life. Through their work, they hoped to spread their message: that garden and its component parts needed to be re-conceptualized—both in theory and in practice—not only according to the needs and aesthetic of modern life but also according to the possibilities afforded by modern architecture.

![Figure 2.64](image1.png)  
**Figure 2.64** Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Brown (1954-57). By Desmond Muirhead. (CH&G Volume 31, Number 6 June 1954 p.59)

![Figure 2.65](image2.png)  
**Figure 2.65** Goldstone garden. Site plan. Beverly Hills, 1948. By Garrett Eckbo. (Publishing.cdlib.org 2014).
Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Brown by Desmond Muirhead. **Figure 2.66 (left)** Raised terrace oriented close to house to take advantage of shade provided by walls. **Figure 2.67 (right)** Permanent wall seat of cedar along wall opposite to terrace. (CH&G Volume 31, Number 6 June 1954 p.59)

Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Brown by Desmond Muirhead. **Figure 2.68 (left)** A wading pool with water plants to help cool the entire terrace. **Figure 2.69 (right)** Curved fence used for fence to provide privacy. (CH&G Volume 31, Number 6 June 1954 p.59)
1.42 Floyd’s private practice

In 1956, Floyd began his private practice in a two storey apartment at 123 Lawrence Avenue near Bathurst. It was an ideal time for a private career. The mid 1950s held great promise for Toronto’s landscape architects. The city was growing and work was plentiful for aspiring landscape professionals, largely due to the successful establishment of Hancock’s PPAL. By the mid 1950s, PPAL was flooded with work from across the globe. Indeed, the firm became a major employer of young aspiring landscape architects both within and outside Canada. Bradley Johnson, who worked at PPAL, as a summer student recalled the excitement and confidence of this period:

…. the scope of the work at PPAL was good; it was really the kind of projects that landscape architects wanted to do…there were some really big things going on like the St. Lawrence Seaway… and…public parks. But we also did housing, community design, waterfronts and everything in between. So it was really wonderful to be working in a firm that was doing some of the things that landscape architects should be doing. That’s important. And I guess it gave everybody some confidence about the profession… So the atmosphere was certainly one of confidence. In working for that kind of firm we felt we were doing things, big things (Interview with Bradley Johnson 2014)

Owen Scott was also a student intern at PPAL during this era and expressed a similar sense of optimism and excitement:

Well, because of people like Macklin Hancock and his partners at PPL, we got engaged in pretty phenomenal projects all over the world, massive scale projects, University master plans, new town planning, etc. That was pretty exciting. Many of the landscape architects who were working in Canada at the time were engaged in residential scale projects (Interview with Owen Scott 2014).

Curiously, even in this promising climate, a major challenge for many newly established firms, like Floyd’s, was getting people to understand the work of landscape architects and the kind of services they provided. Michael Hough’s experience at the beginning of his private practice
paints a vivid picture of the misconceptions held by Canadians about the work of landscape architects in the 1950s:

I had just begun practice and was sitting in my first shiny new office together with a bunch of architects and landscape architects with clients on their minds!...My telephone suddenly rang. I jumped, and fumbled for the phone. “Er, Michael Hough Associates.” A female voice at the other end of the line asked “yes, do you deliver manure?” “No madam,” I said rather pompously, “we’re landscape architects.” “Oh!” said the lady at the other end, “I thought that’s what landscapers do! (Hough 2010, p.3).

Helen Kippax, who also had a private practice during this era, was often irritated by people referring to her as a garden designer rather than a landscape architect, “not because I am stuffy about the title,” she explained, “but because everybody immediately gets a picture of me prowling around the countryside with a spade in one hand and a plant in the other (Jo 1959, p.43).

To avoid being mistaken as a gardener, Floyd advertized his firm in the yellow pages as ‘J. Austin Floyd. M.LA. Harvard,’ and refused to buy a station wagon for his large family because, as Jim Floyd recollects, “he felt that if he drove up to somebody’s house in Forest Hill with a station wagon they would think he had a wheel barrow and a shovel at the back” (Interview with Jim Floyd 2014). Nevertheless, Floyd gradually managed to build a large clientele mostly in Toronto’s wealthy neighborhoods of Forest Hill, Rosedale, and the Bridle Path. One of Floyd’s first major gardens in his private practice was the Allan Gardens for the city of Toronto. Built between 1956 and 1957, Floyd’s garden was Beaux Arts in its use of axial and symmetrical layout, yet modernist in its artistic forms. His design (Figures 2.70 and 2.71) included a long, rectangular- shaped raised planting bed in front of the existing greenhouse. In the middle of the bed was a row of six pools with fountains carrying water from five levels. Floyd’s parterre gardens on both sides of the planting bed, and his symmetrical arrangement of pedestrian walkways recalled the grand estate gardens he had studied in Pond’s class, particularly, Walter
Maynard’s estate garden (Figure 2.72.) in New York designed in 1916 by Beaux Arts architect, Ogden Codman Jr. Drawing inspiration from modern art, Floyd’s giant sculptural fountains gave form to the garden.

**Figure 2.70 (above) and Figure 2.71 (Below)** Fountains at Allan gardens, Toronto. (1956) Picture taken in 1964. Designed by J. Austin Floyd. (Crawford 2014).
Figure 2.72 (Above) Aerial view of Allan gardens showing J. Austin Floyd’s fountains, Toronto. (Crawford 2014)
Figure 2.73 (Below) Plan of Walter E Maynard Estate garden, Long Island, New York.
Circa 1916. Designed by Ogden Codman Jr. (.oldlongisland.com 2014)
Following the success of Allan Gardens, the city hired Floyd to design a fountain for Queens Park in 1957(Figure 2.74). This time Floyd injected some modernist elements into the design. The fountain was a circular pool 45 feet in diameter, surrounded by a coping of blue glazed brick (a relatively new material during this era). In the centre of the pool the jets of water rose from a raised bowl 15 feet wide. The water itself gave form to the fountain rising 25 feet from the central jet, with three jets of 15 feet, and a ring of 65 jets rising 8 feet. Red, blue and green light in the fountain bowl changed every minute. Functionality was achieved through the design of a circular path around the pool for easy accessibility, and park benches for seating and relaxation around the pool. Floyd described the fountain as “modern in design but doing everything a traditional fountain does…”(McCarthy 1957, p.21).

*Figure 2.74. Sketch of fountain at Queens Park, Toronto(1957). By J. Austin Floyd. (Library and Archives Canada 2014).*
Another project in which Floyd combined both modernist and Beaux Arts elements in his work was the garden for Mr. and Mrs. Beattie (shown in Figure 2.75). In this design, Floyd used a herbaceous border to line the walls of the garden. The garden was furnished with a semi-circular fountain, and carpeted by areas of grass and flagstone paving. Modern elements included a simple layout and the use of Art Nouveau inspired mosaic for the fountain.

![Figure 2.75. Rendering of garden for Mr. and Mrs. Beattie, Toronto (1961). J. Austin Floyd. (Library and Archives Canada 2014).](image)

Beginning in the late 1950s, Floyd’s work became predominantly modernist in orientation. He rarely brought Beaux-Arts elements in his work, and the influences of Church and Eckbo became more evident in his gardens. Indeed, Church’s impact in Floyd’s gardens could be traced long before his private career. For instance, the zig-zag border and biomorphic forms, which Church used extensively, furnished many of Floyd’s gardens of the early 1950s. A typical example was a garden in which Floyd collaborated with Henry Fleiss—a popular Toronto-based modern
architect of this era---to design at Forest Hill Village in Toronto in 1950 (shown in Figure 2.76). Perhaps borrowing from Church’s Sullivan garden (shown in Figure 2.77), Floyd created a continuous zig-zag shaped plant box that ran along a fence on the southern and western sides of the garden.

Figure 2.76 (right) Garden at Forest Hill, Toronto (1950). Designed by J. Austin Floyd in collaboration with architect Henry Fleiss. (JRAIC 1950). Figure 2.77 (left) Sullivan garden by Thomas Church

Floyd’s north garden for Wymilwood (Figure 2.78), the student Union of Victoria College at the University of Toronto in 1954, also utilized some of Church’s techniques. Again, the zig-zag feature was used to separate the wall of the building and terrace area on one hand, and a stretch of lawn on the other. A crushed tile mulch was used as paving on the terrace, and brick edging surrounded the planting beds. In the garden for Mr. and Mrs. Kavan (Figures 2.79 and 2.80), Floyd combined the saw-tooth form with other architectural elements, including a rectangular
shaped pool, square-shaped poured-in-place concrete at 90 degrees to the main building, and a wooden deck patio.

Figure 2.78 North garden for Wymilwood, Victoria College, University of Toronto (1954) by J. Austin Floyd. (JRAIC 1954).
Figure 2.79 (above) Plan of garden for Mr. and Mrs. Kavan (1957-58 by J. Austin Floyd). (Library and Archives Canada 2014)

Figure 2.80 (Below) Perspective drawing of garden for Mr. and Mrs. Kavan (1957-58). (Library and Archives Canada 2014).
Church’s use of meandering biomorphic forms (Figure 2.81), also characterized many of Floyd’s small scale gardens, such as the one shown in (Figure. 2.82). The biomorphic shapes sometimes penetrated Floyd’s garden pools, such as for example, the pool designed in 1963 for Mr. and Mrs. E.B Kernaghan (Figure. 2.83) at King City, which seemed to have been influenced by Church’s celebrated kidney shaped pool for the Donnell gardens (Figure 2.84). In the Donell garden, Church took inspiration from nature, and used the biomorphic form to design a pool that appeared to mimic the Sonoma landscape. Perhaps Floyd utilized this idea in designing his pool for the Kernaghans. The pool seemed to follow the landscape in the background.

Figure 2.81(left) Bush Garden, Palo Alto(1953) by Thomas church. (Treib 2003).
Figure 2.82 (right) A small residential garden designed by J. Austin Floyd. (CH&G Volume 31 Number 7, July 1954.)
Figure 2.84 Pool designed for Donnell gardens by Thomas Church (1947-1949) by Thomas Church. (ahlp.org (2014))

Figure 2.83. Pool designed by J. Austin Floyd for E.B. Kernaghan residence, Township of King (1963). (Library and Archives Canada 2014)
The Church-inspired biomorphic forms continued to furnish many of Floyd’s small scale backyard gardens well into the late 1960s. The 1968 garden for Mr. and Mrs. Crang (Figure 2.85), for example, mimicked Church’s Baldwin garden at Woodside (Figure 2.86). Of particular notice was Floyd’s oval shaped terrace that welcomed visitors to its flagstone surface and kidney shaped lawn.

**Figure 2.85.** Garden terrace for Mr. and Mrs. Crang (1968) by J. Austin Floyd. (Library and Archives Canada 2014). Accession Number 82303/27, Location D841F9, Project number 63032.

**Figure 2.86.** Terrace at Baldwin Garden, Woodside, by Thomas Church. (Treib 2003)
1.43 Floyd’s specialized institutional gardens

While Floyd remained committed to designing residential gardens, there were larger scale commissions that began to trickle into his office in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Of the many institutional gardens designed during this era, two stood out; two gardens that justifiably deserve the titles of masterpieces of modern landscape architecture. These were the Fragrant Garden for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), and the Enchanted Garden for the Ontario Crippled Children’s Centre (OCCC), both in Toronto. In 1955, the members of the Garden Club of Toronto approached Floyd to design a garden that would allow the blind to enjoy the courtyard of the newly built CNIB. Working closely with Helen Kippax, Floyd came up with a gem. The Fragrant Garden of the CNIB (Figure 2.87) allowed the blind to connect to the outdoors through features that heightened their sense of smell, touch, and feeling. Two of these features are particularly worth noting as they reveal Floyd’s modernist (form follows function) approach to garden design. First, Floyd laid out the garden as a series of design features—raised rectangular planting beds with fragrant plant species (Figure 2.88), concrete walkways, gravel paths, and strategically located poplar trees—that formed a loop for the blind to find their way back to the main building.

Second, Floyd designed a fountain to orient the blind directionally and applied microclimatic design techniques of the English landscape architect Brenda Colvin, who found that air under a heavy shade tree was several degrees cooler than that in the shade of a building due to evapotranspiration (Graham 1981). This moisture, dropping down in a column, can be utilized to create a circulatory pattern if the tree is placed close to a warm wall. In the Fragrant Garden the north and west walls of the courtyard formed a suntrap, within which lay a fountain (Figure 2.89).
and nearby fragrant plants created the desired circulation of sweet aroma throughout the garden. This way the blind could enjoy a cool breeze and smell the fragrant plant species while taking a stroll in the garden. The fragrant garden was not just a modernist design but was also, at the time it was built, one of the first, and possibly the best, large scale institutional landscape projects for the blind in the world. In the October 1956 edition of *The Canadian Architect*, for example, the Fragrant Garden was described as the “first in the world to include in a single plan all of the modern manifold services for the blind and partially blind”(*The Canadian Architect*, October 1956 p.45). In sum, the Fragrant garden underscored Floyd’s modernist approach to garden design because it highlighted one of the fundamental characteristics of modern landscape architecture: designing the landscape in order to maximize its function to its users. In this particular case, Floyd compensated for the loss of sight by stimulating the sense of smell, touch and hearing to a heightened level of awareness.

![Figure 2.87 The Fragrant Garden at the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), Toronto (1956), designed by J. Austin Floyd.](ucalgary.ca 2014)
Figure 2.88. Raised rectangular planting beds with fragrant plant species at CNIB. J. Austin Floyd (1956). (ucalgary.ca 2014).

Figure 2.89. Fountain at Fragrant Garden (CNIB) designed by J. Austin Floyd (1956). (ucalgary.ca 2014).
Figure 2.89 (left) View of planting bed with fragrant species at CNIB.
Figure 2.90 (right) Blind couple touching sculpture at CNIB.

Figure 2.91 Blind residents at CNIB enjoying Floyd’s Fragrant Garden.
Following the success of the Fragrant Garden, Floyd was hired to design a garden for the Ontario Crippled Children’s Centre, located east of the CNIB. Floyd’s response was the “Enchanted Garden,” which comprised of four gardens, each of them designed specifically for a particular age group. The central feature of the enchanted garden was a forty foot bridge that led to a twenty foot by twenty foot mounted tree house (Figure. 2.92) designed to enable the crippled children to enjoy the spectacular view of the woods in the nearby valley on the site.

**Figure 2.92.** Rendering of ‘Tree House’ designed by J. Austin Floyd for the “Enchanted Garden” of the Ontario Crippled Children’s Centre 1959-1966 (O.C.C.C). (Library and Archives Canada 2014)

In sum, the Fragrant Garden and the Enchanted Garden were two design challenges for Floyd because they required him to meet unique and specific needs of his clients. In the end, it was
Floyd’s modernist educational training with emphasis on functionalism, coupled with his vision and artistic talents, which resulted in the creation of these two important modern gardens.

1.44 Collaborations with modern architects.

A major issue that emerged within the architectural professions during the modern era was the difficult relationship between modern architects and conservative landscape designers. As early as the 1930s, tensions had arisen between well known modern architects, who built houses based on cubistic and bold geometric shapes with an eye to form following function, and garden-makers, who did not know how to apply modernism to the garden. In 1932 for example, a conflict arose between renowned American Beaux-Arts landscape architect, Beatrix Farrand, and Swiss/American modernist architect, William Edmond Lescaze (1896-1969), during the construction of High Cross House, for the Dartington’s in Devon, England (Waymark 2003, p.94-95) Lescaze, influenced by Le Corbusier and the Bauhaus, had built the house in a typical international style manner, with cubistic forms and large square and ribbon windows. Problems developed when Farrand was hired to do the landscape design. Farrand’s proposed plan—with herbaceous borders alongside brick walls, clipped hedges, and rockeries—did not seem to fit the hard cubistic concrete architecture of Lescaze. In fact, Lescaze insisted on doing everything himself to save the fee of the landscape architect and ensure that ‘house, trees, shrubs, and site complemented each other (Waymark 2003 Ibid). In the end, the two designers had settled on Farrand’s ‘compromised garden’ which included rectangular beds on both sides of the house edged with bristles of young hedges, with paved paths, and flowers such as lilacs, forsythia, and delphiniums.
Such friction between architect and landscape architect also existed in Canada at the turn of the century. As Michael Hough noted during the early part of his career in the beginning of 1950s, “there was considerable nervousness among architects who hired landscape architects” (Hough 2010 p.3). Cornelia Hahn Oberlander had raised this issue in 1954 when she stated:

The contemporary architect is often reluctant to associate himself with a landscape architect, for he can rarely find one who will speak his language aesthetically….Our schools must start to train landscape architects who will be able to work in accordance with contemporary architectural principles and will understand the essential nature of teamwork’ (Oberlander 1954, p.34).

Nevertheless, many architects trained in the modernist tradition increasingly worked with landscape architects who shared similar modernist training and experiences. Floyd played an important role in these collaborative ventures. Between 1954 and 1970, he worked with many of Toronto’s modern architects to design some of the most iconic modern projects in Ontario. The most important among these projects were: The headquarters for the Ontario Association of Architects (O.A.A), in which Floyd shared landscape architectural responsibilities with Grubb, and in which the architect was John C. Parkin; The Inn on the Park in which Floyd worked with the architectural firm of Webb, Zerafa, and Menkes, and The Chatelaine Trend House in which Floyd worked with Jerome Markson.

1.45 The Headquarters for the Ontario Association of Architects (1954)

While Floyd was working with Grubb and Stennson, an opportunity arose again to design major modernist project. It was the landscape design for the headquarters of the Ontario Association of Architects (now occupied by the design offices of DTAH), and the architect was John C. Parkin. Like Floyd, Parkin had attended the University of Manitoba, and later went to the Harvard GSD to study architecture under Gropius’ Bauhaus regime. After graduation Parkin joined the firm of
John B. Parkin (no relations) in 1947 and led the firm to a tremendously successful practice that became known for its uncompromisingly rectilinear-shaped modern buildings (Kalman 1994, p.543). Simplicity was Parkin’s overarching design intention in what typically reflected an international style architecture--rectangular shaped, boxy, glass and brick building (Figure 2.93)

To soften Parkin’s hard geometric architecture, Floyd, Grubb, and Stennson’s landscape plan (Figure 2.94.) made extensive use of curvilinear forms. The layout of the southern part had elements arranged in a whiplash shape that recalled the art décor patterns of the early arts and craft movement. A sweeping curved area of grass—with dunbrick edging—separated a concrete pavement (square pattern) from a mosaic of grass, ground cover, and shrubs. An amoeboid pool was incorporated at the corner close to Park Road. By this time, the Thomas Church inspired zig-zag shape had already become a common feature in the designs of the three partners. At the north eastern part of the building, the concrete paving merged into zig-zag shaped wooden benches that were oriented 90 degrees to the property line. The final plan was altered slightly, including the amoeba-shaped pool which was changed to a square-shape pool. The O.A.A headquarters was critically acclaimed as a landmark modern building in Toronto in the press and architectural publications of the period. When the building opened at 50 Park Rd. in 1954, it created a considerable level of sensation. Ontario’s Governor General himself, Vincent Massey, showed up to herald the occasion.
Figure 2.93. The Headquarters of the Ontario Association of Architects (O.A.A). Designed by John C. Parkin (1954-55).

Figure 2.94 Study of landscape plan for the Ontario Association of Architects(O.A.A) by Grubb, Floyd, and Stennson (1954). Dunnington-Grubb and Stennson Collection CCLAA, Guelph.
1.46 Inn on the Park

In 1963, when the Four Seasons Hotels decided to build a second hotel at the corner of Leslie and Eglington in Toronto, they contacted Austin Floyd to do the landscape architecture. This time, Floyd was to collaborate with the newly formed architectural firm of Webb, Zerafa, and Menkes. Floyd’s design (Figures 2.95 and 2.96.) became one of the most significant modern courtyard landscapes in Toronto. The site was 12 acres and sloped from north to south gently up within the property line some twenty feet. The architects designed five buildings grouped to form a hexagonal courtyard with one side still open. Floyd utilized sweeping curvilinear shapes to both soften and contrast with the strong geometric forms of the architecture. He took reference from the wild landscapes of northern Canada--as evocatively painted by the Group of Seven a generation earlier--and combined modern design elements of including a large rectangular-shaped pool and granite walls, with plantings such as, tumbling junipers, masses of pines and birches, to create a familiar but exotic setting for public life in the hotel (North York Modernist Architecture 2009). The courtyard was one of the great centres of social life in North York with frequent weddings, conferences and bar mitzvahs (North York Modernist Architecture 2009). According to Austin Floyd this project was his most successful grading job and the project that ensured his career. It was his first large scale project and demonstrated on a broad spectrum his fluency in the modern idiom and his sympathy for site and structure. The courtyard was demolished in 2006.
Figure 2.95. Courtyard of the Inn on the Park. Designed by J. Austin Floyd in 1963 (nostalgia.wordppress.com 2014)

Figure 2.96. The Inn on the Park(Aerial view of Courtyard). Designed by J. Austin Floyd in 1963 (nostalgia.wordppress.com 2014)
1.47 Chatelaine Trend House

In 1945, the Arts & Architecture Magazine in the United States initiated a program called the ‘Case Study Houses’. The program aimed to shape the course of American architecture by exposing the public to modern architectural design and contemporary construction methods in an effort to create technologically based and affordable housing. Between 1945 and 1966, thirty six experimental prototype houses were built in Southern California by reknowned modern architects, including Charles Eames, Richard Neutra, Peter Koenig and Eero Saarinen. The houses became some of the most famous examples of modern architectural design in North America and the program served to introduce a generation to new ways of designing and constructing residential homes. Beginning in 1953, Canada initiated its own version of Case Study program called the "Trend House". As in the Case Study program, the design guidelines for the design of the houses were left up to the designers, who were selected from local firms, and were proponents of modern design.

In the 1960s Chatelaine magazine built two trend houses, one in Toronto and the other in Montreal. The Toronto house was built in the neighborhood of Bramalea Woods. The architect chosen was Jerome Markson, and the landscape architect was J. Austin Floyd. A key challenge for both the architect and landscape architect was to create a design that would protect the privacy of the occupants—both in their outdoor activities and their indoor movements—behind large picture windows. Working closely with Markson, Floyd proposed a design with a courtyard (Figures 2.96 and 2.97.). The courtyard-- was 14 by 18ft-- was surrounded by all the major rooms, and had a patio floor of exposed aggregate concrete panels and decorator stone. Simplicity was a major characteristic of Floyd’s design. Square concrete pavers with grass joints
were used as walkways throughout the building. Rectangular plant beds housed annuals, with rocks and pebbles placed in a bigger rectangular-shaped bed adjacent to the concrete slab of the foyer. A small circular pool was located at the corner of the courtyard, surrounded by a specimen tree(dwarf). Floyd punctuated the modernist forms with a low clipped hedge of *Thuja occidentalis*. Outside the courtyard, two square-shaped flower bowls attached to an angular shaped wooden bench sits inside an area with rocks and pebbles.

*Figure 2.97* Courtyard of Chatelaine Trend House By J. Austin Floyd, in collaboration with Jerome Markson. (bramaleablog.com 2014)
Figure 2.98 Plan of courtyard of the Chatelaine Trend House. By J. Austin Floyd. (Library and Archives Canada 2014).

1.48 Chapter summary

This chapter explored J. Austin Floyd’s career by reintroducing a selected number of his gardens during key stages of his professional life. The chapter began by looking at the landscape profession in Canada before the modern era, and particularly analyzed the garden designs and writings of Howard Dunington Grubb, one of the many landscape architects whose works epitomized the pre-modern era. The chapter traced Floyd’s Beaux-Arts and modernist educational training at Harvard GSD, and his return to Canada, which coincided with the rising popularity of modernism. Floyd’s early opinion of the modern garden—which became a topic of interest in Canadian landscape architectural circles during this era—was discussed, as well as his
first major work. The chapter then looked at Floyd’s partnership with Dunington Grubb and J. Vilhelm Stennson, and how it helped solidify Floyd’s stylistic oeuvre. Finally, the chapter looked at how Floyd applied his skills and experiences in private practice, and how he became involved in major collaborations with modern architects of that era. An attempt was made to situate these stages of Floyd’s career within the broader context of his social and professional environment, to show the emergence of the modernist style of garden design in Canada.

The chapter revealed that Floyd’s gardens were a reflection of his modernist educational training at Harvard University GSD, as well as his professional experiences. This was very evident in his institutional projects, particularly, the “Fragrant Garden” of the (CNIB), and the “Enchanted Garden” of the OCCC. These gardens were modernist in that they were functional—rather than decorative—in meeting the unique/specific needs of users of the garden. In his residential garden projects, Floyd was heavily influenced by the work of the pioneer American modern landscape architect, Thomas Church. Like Church, Floyd’s gardens borrowed from the modernist forms of architecture, particularly, the strong geometrical shapes such as the zig-zag, and meandering biomorphic forms. Lastly, the chapter showed that Floyd was not alone in his modernist approach to garden design, but was part of a group of landscape architects—particularly in Ontario and B.C—who helped introduce modernism to the Canadian landscape.
Chapter Five: Analysis and Conclusion

1.49 Analysis

James Austin Floyd’s gardens exhibited the simplicity, connectivity, and functionality that were common to many of the designs of the mid-century American modern landscape architects, particularly, Thomas Church and Garrett Eckbo. Floyd’s overarching design philosophy was to create gardens that utilized the genius loci of the site, and function in such a manner as to meet the specific needs of the users. But Floyd was not alone; he was part of a new breed of landscape architects whose works and ideas helped to introduce modernism into the Canadian landscape. Yet, Floyd was different because he was one of the few Canadian landscape architects who was comfortable designing in both modernist and Beaux-Arts styles, and which reflected in his gardens. As Jim Floyd points out, ‘Austin Floyd’s work was [Beaux-Arts] and modernism all wrapped up in one package’ (Interview with Jim Floyd 2014). Although his gardens were largely modernist, Floyd sometimes tempered them with some Beaux-Arts characteristics, ultimately maintaining a harmony of parts. This was confirmed in interviews with other landscape architects familiar with Floyd’s work. When asked if Floyd had any particular stylistic trend in his garden designs, Bradley Johnson remarked:

‘. . . I think Austin Floyd was a bit of both[modernist and Beaux-Arts]. . . He was at Harvard 12 years ahead of me. . . Before the war they were doing things like estates, big estate garden designs, then the whole profession moved from traditional estate planning into more [modernist approach]. . . ’ (Interview with Bradley Johnson 2014).

Owen Scott expressed a similar sentiment:

“ I think he was influenced by a lot of different things. The California School obviously was an influence on him because if you look at a lot of his work in the 1950s and 1960s
you can see the strong California style elements. He did have that Beaux-Arts influence because he grew up in that era so that was there, too. He started in that style (Beaux-Arts), but he wasn’t as flamboyant as Dunington-Grubb, for instance; he didn’t go for the Roman-Greek chapel style and what not ‘(Interview with Owen Scott 2014).

The presence of Beaux-Arts elements in Floyd’s gardens also confirms that he drew parallels from his American colleagues and predecessors, particularly, Thomas Church. For example, Church was a modernist who never abandoned his Beaux-Arts ideas, rather choosing to incorporate them in his designs whenever and wherever it they were needed. Indeed, the ability to seamlessly merge modernism with classicism in his gardens, was one of Church’s greatest legacies. This is understandable given that modernism in landscape architecture was perhaps more evolutionary—building on its Beaux-Arts past--than revolutionary—breaking from its classical roots. As Rueben Rainey demonstrates, “the Beaux-Arts approach was more subtle than the modernists made it. Rarely was any project entirely formal or entirely informal; almost always the rigidity of any scheme would need be softened by the particularities of the site and program’ (Rainey cited in Treib 2005, p.45).

Unlike his American contemporaries, however, Floyd did not theorize on garden design trends and approaches. Indeed, his work did not go beyond reiterating what had already been advanced by pioneering modernists including Tunnard, Church, and Eckbo. Instead, what Floyd did was to incorporate many of the design elements of the modern landscape architects of his era into his work and create his own style. In addition, Floyd actively promoted modern trends of garden design in Canada through his contributions in shelter and garden magazines. On the whole, the research showed that Floyd’s landscape architectural works—modernist style tempered with Beaux-Arts elements—developed out of three significant experiences; his educational training in both modernist and Beaux-Arts styles of garden design; his professional relationships and
influences both in Canada and United States; and the increasingly modernizing design climate of postwar Canada.

1.50 Educational training

A major factor that influenced Floyd’s work was his professional education, particularly his exposure to both the Beaux-Arts and modernist approaches to garden design at Harvard. More specifically, Floyd was directly influenced by two of his teachers--Bremer Pond and Walter Gropius--whose tenures lasted throughout Floyd’s years at Harvard. Although not a modernist, Pond believed in collaboration and may have passed it on to his students. Pond wrote that collaboration should be encouraged in design so that architects might become more “space conscious” and landscape architects more “form conscious (Simo 2000, p.34) Indeed, Melanie Simo suggests that Pond may have survived the modernist years at Harvard due to his experience in collaborating with architects. But Floyd’s modernist design philosophy, particularly his functionalist and collaborative leanings, owed much to Walter Gropius’ teachings than Pond. Gropius had moved to Harvard during the war and his teachings at the Bauhaus had led, in part, to the formation of the modernist movement in architecture – a conscious attempt to rethink and to explore ideas about building in the 20th century.

Although Gropius’ ideas were related more to architecture than landscape architecture, many of the landscape architecture students found Gropius’ philosophies applicable to their program. The biggest influence was the philosophy of form follows function. From this philosophy flowed the concept that successful landscapes not only depended on the form they took but also the interactions that the users derived from the form. Landscape architecture students, like Floyd,
believed that successful gardens should be ones in which every design element was geared towards enhancing the user’s experience, and in which there existed a balance between good aestheticism and functionalism. It was this philosophy, above every other idea, that had a profound and lasting effect on Floyd’s own career. It characterized his private and public gardens from his earliest design of the Spaulding Garden in 1952 to his later creations, such as the Inn on the Park and the Chatelaine Trend House, in 1963 and 1969 respectively. Floyd summarized the impact of his educational training in his design approach. He stated:

“We were taught (at Harvard) that form follows function and to solve a problem functionally with an eye to aesthetics and an interest in horticulture was always my aim. I always asked students, “Why did you do that?” If there was no real functional reason other than it looked good, then the design must be suspect (Graham 1981)

Floyd’s Bauhaus influence was shared by many Canadian architects who went to Harvard GSD during Gropius’ regime. Cornelia Hahn Oberlander, who was Floyd’s classmate at Harvard, expressed a similar view on functionalism and good aesthetics that was stressed by the Bauhaus syllabus:

. . . Walter Gropius, formerly of the Bauhaus in Germany, was then Head of Architecture at Harvard. My professors were Christopher Tunnard and Lester Collins who opened my eyes to Modernism, and I learned to design for present and future needs. From these teachers, I learned not only collaboration, but basic design principles of line in the Bauhaus tradition, as well as aesthetics, which is still expressed in my designs today (Oberlander 2012).

Similarly, Bradley Johnson, who attended Harvard in the 1960s, also expressed the lingering influence of the Bauhaus approach on GSD students even at a time when Gropius’ tenure was ending:

. . . We were doing rational design, I think Harvard . . . emphasized more rational approach, simple treatments. It was like any of the design fields at the time; going away from ornamentation and historical styles of any kind. We were designing based on rational approach to the specific site demands. . .
But Floyd had an added advantage: his extensive knowledge of plant material, which he had picked up in his undergraduate years at University of Manitoba, and from many years of working in nurseries. Jim Floyd recalls an incident which happened while Austin Floyd worked at York Nurseries in Toronto:

A lady came into the nursery yard and picked a maple tree because it had spectacular red colour. . . so Austin had it bundled up for her. . . the following year, the lady phoned the nursery and asked to talk to Austin. . . and she said you sold me the wrong plant here because the maple has colors different from the red that I saw. . . I don’t think you gave me the same tree…so Austin went up to see the tree and said that’s the same tree and asked the lady what she fed it. . . .she said well manure and lots of water. . . and Austin said you have to starve a maple tree to have it turn up the color you are seeking …so he understood the science of the trees enough to know how to design with them.(Interview with Jim Floyd 2014).

It was at Harvard, that students like Floyd learned, from their first year, how to build objects of everyday life. In a shared curriculum, they all designed landscapes, architecture and urban places, and underpinned their work with a design philosophy that they could feel confident in. In sum, Floyd’s early Beaux-Arts education, coupled with his Bauhaus training--deeply rooted in functionalism--characterized his career and was reflected in his gardens.

1.51 Professional Influences

Aside from his modernist educational training, Floyd was also heavily influenced by the works of his peers, as well as those who preceded him (both in Canada and abroad). For instance, Floyd’s partnership, and to a large extent, friendship with Grubb not only offered him invaluable experience but also the necessary networks to flourish in his career. Although their partnership did not last, Floyd and Grubb may have maintained a mutually beneficial relationship based on their common interests. For instance, both men seemed to have great interest in the experimentation of new materials in contemporary landscape architectural practice. Based on
this, it is logical to assume that through his association with Grubb, Floyd was able to sharpen his Beaux-Arts design skills—possibly through exchange of ideas with Grubb—and used it to occasionally temper some of his modernist works. One could also deduce that Floyd’s easy access to some of the new materials and techniques owed much to Grubb’s connections rather than Floyd’s own network. Pleasance Crawford points out that ‘the Grubbs had a lot of contact with industrial designers who were doing outdoor furniture and were using some really leading edge design in their own works’ (Interview with Pleasance Crawford 2014). Indeed, well before he became a popular landscape architect, Grubb and his wife were rubbing shoulders with the cream of Toronto’s high society (Butts and Stennson 2012). For example, Grubb was a member of Toronto’s Arts and Letters Club and he introduced Floyd into the Club. Through the club, both men had access to many of the city’s artists and designers, thereby giving them greater exposure to new trends in design.

Floyd also had a mutually productive relationship with many modern architects, which may have also helped improve his own skills and knowledge in contemporary design. It is possible that Floyd may have known some of these architects personally. For example, while there is no substantial evidence to show that Floyd and John C. Parkin had any contact before they collaborated in the O.A.A headquarters project, it is possible that the two men may have known each other. Parkin entered the Harvard GSD at the time when Floyd was preparing to graduate (1946). Since Gropius’s collaborative courses required all design students to share the same studio space, and since there were only few Canadian students in the design programs at GSD, it is possible that Floyd and Parkin may have known each other, making it easy to develop a working relationship once they were back in Canada. Floyd may have also found it easier to
collaborate with the modern architects of his day because of his modernist educational training—including the collaborative approach of the Bauhaus—and his genuine understanding of the vocabulary and approach of modern landscape design. A large part of modern landscape architecture was to design the landscape to both complement the architecture and fit contextually to the site. Floyd was very familiar with this philosophy, and it may have reflected in many of his collaborations, hence earning him respect from his architectural colleagues. As Jim Floyd pointed out, ‘the people that Austin Floyd had most respect from were architects because he taught them at the University of Toronto. . .and people like Raymond Moriyama are quoted as saying [Austin Floyd] was the first landscape architecture professor they could actually talk to about design. . .’ (Interview with Jim Floyd 2014).

Outside Canada, Floyd was heavily influenced by the works of the American modern masters, not the least were Thomas Church and Garrett Eckbo, whose gardens drew from biomorphic, zig-zag, and cubic forms, and were deeply rooted in functionalism. Indeed, one could claim, without a doubt, that the catalyst for the development of Floyd’s modernist style gardens—and by extension many of the gardens designed by Floyd’s contemporaries, including Grubb-- came from published illustrations of Church’s gardens in popular magazines such as Sunset and Better Homes and Gardens. Floyd described Church’s Donnell gardens as the “ultimate experience of every landscape architect.” He often used slides of Church’s gardens, such as the one shown in Figure 2.98, to teach his students at the University of Toronto. In fact, Floyd took great interest in the works of contemporary designers (both landscape architects and architects) including Roberto Burle Marx and Le Corbusier. Examination of Floyd’s collection at the National Archives showed that Floyd invested heavily in books, magazines and journals that featured
contemporary developments in landscape architecture, particularly the works of the modernists. Jim Floyd recalls asking Austin Floyd “why he spent so much money on design magazines—referring specifically to Sunset magazine and West Coast Living—and journals.”¹² Austin Floyd’s answer to Jim Floyd was simple: “If I learn something from these publications and I am able to incorporate them into my gardens successfully, I am sure earnings from one of those gardens could pay for nearly all the costs I have incurred from buying these magazines (Interview with Jim Floyd 2014).

![Figure 2.99 Lantern slide of Church’s designs used by Floyd to teach his students at the University of Tornto. (Library and Archives Canada 2014)]
To a large extent, Floyd’s modernist work was also nurtured by the times in which he lived. The post war period was a perfect time to explore the most advanced ideas in design and to test them out in the quickly developing Canada. The period ignited a massive surge of creativity and imagination in design of the built environment, and encouraged constructive collaborations between landscape architects and architects in Canada. Accompanying the booming postwar economy was an increasing pervasiveness of modernism in Canadian society. As modernism flourished in architecture and architects built modern houses, so too landscape architects called for modern landscapes. It was in this atmosphere that Floyd flourished. In short, momentous social forces caused modernism to flourish in Canadian society in the mid 1950s and throughout the 1960s, and this created a conducive atmosphere for the introduction of the modernist style of design, including landscape architecture. Floyd found fertile grounds to design his modernist style gardens because a modern sensibility had already permeated the Canadian cultural agenda.

Seen in this light, it is not surprising that Floyd was not a loner in his modernist approach to landscape architecture. Many other landscape architects, particularly those who practiced in Ontario and the West Coast, utilized the changing design climate to introduce modern gardens to Canada. Like their American contemporaries, the most potent vehicle which was used by Canadian landscape architects to promote modernism in the garden was shelter and garden publications.
1.52 Conclusion

This Thesis explored selected works of J. Austin Floyd and placed them within the larger context of the emergence of modern landscape architecture in Postwar English Canada. It concluded that Floyd’s work was largely modernist, but was sometimes tempered by Beaux-Arts elements. One can posit three possible factors that may have influenced Floyd’s work. The first factor was Floyd’s education at Harvard GSD, which exposed him to both Beaux-Arts and modernist approaches to design. Second, were the professional relationships and American influences that characterized Floyd’s career. In Canada, Floyd’s biggest influence may have been Dunington Grubb who can equally be regarded as contributing to the development of modern landscape architecture in Canada. Finally, Floyd practiced at a time when a modernist consciousness was becoming entrenched in Canadian design circles, in particular, and society in general. This development facilitated exploration of design ideas, and helped nurture Floyd’s work.

Floyd’s work, when seen retrospectively, no longer seemed the achievement of a singular landscape architect, but rather a “documentation” of landscape architectural history in Canada in the post war era. It is, in fact, the history of landscape architecture in Canada in the last fifty-five years which can be called the real protagonist of the work. Did Floyd leave a legacy? Not very much in terms of his work—most of his gardens have been demolished—but certainly in terms of impacting his contemporaries and employees with his functionalist design philosophy. Owen Scott for example, remarked that Floyd’s greatest legacy was his ability to design for all seasons, which he imparted to many of his contemporaries and students. Scott stated:
“...one of the things that Floyd did that I find quite interesting and sometimes I learned from was that he looked at all seasons, while most of us looked at the summer. So he designed for the winter and the summer and the spring and the fall, and every design that he did, if you took a photograph of it in all four seasons of the year, there would be something very exciting about it and something designed specifically for that season. So the forms of trees and snow and colors one against one another in the fall were the kinds of things he was really into, and I don’t remember anybody doing it to the same extent as he did. Certainly he introduced me to the idea of designing for all seasons... (Interview with Owen Scott 2014).

This fits within Floyd’s overarching design philosophy of functionalism—designing the landscape to maximize its function—in addition to aesthetics—to its users. If the professionals who have worked alongside Floyd suggest a certain characteristic or trait, then a conclusion can be made that he possessed that characteristic or trait. Likewise, if these particular characteristics or traits that Floyd possessed were taken-on by his peers, then a legacy can be said to have formed. Floyd’s legacy can then be measured by his reputation in the field and the diffusion of techniques and ideas to those who were familiar with his work.

Floyd also contributed to modernist approach to landscape architecture not only through his garden designs but also in his writings. Like Thomas Church, Floyd’ appeared to fit well within the Postwar urban aspirations of living the contemporary life that included acquiring a modern garden that fit well to contemporary needs. With his landscape architectural writings that discussed topics from foundation planting to industrial landscape design, Floyd became the amateur professional to many urban Canadians who knew little about landscape architecture. But more importantly, Floyd’s overarching message in his writings was to emphasize the importance of merging functionalism with aesthetic in landscape architecture. Nearly all of Floyd’s gardens have been demolished. Many of them were never featured in any document (academic or non academic). Only a few of his completed works have been photographed. Like many of his
Canadian contemporaries, Floyd did not photograph most of his work. Thus, tracking Floyd’s gardens presents a major hurdle to the landscape historian. What remains of Floyd’s work are his working drawings, a few renderings (by Stanley Wyatt), and some articles and photos that appeared in professional publications and garden magazines.

The J. Austin Floyd Collection at the National Archives of Canada provides invaluable materials for future research, and indeed, in time may disprove certain assumptions proposed in this thesis. No single thesis or single research can fully cover the body of work of Floyd, and the other Canadian landscape architects discussed in this thesis. Thus, this research only serves as an exploratory purpose. Hopefully, it will rekindle an interest in the times, the work and the career of a landscape architect who contributed so substantially to the formation of modern landscape architecture in Canada.
Chapter Six: Limitations and Future Research

1.53 Limitations

The most crucial limitation to this research was time constraints. Historical research is notoriously time consuming, particularly when there is little literature on the subject. The research would have benefited from a longer time frame. As a result, the researcher selected only a few of Floyd’s most popular projects. While I admit they may not represent his work in general, they do represent a range of his most successful designs, and showcases his stylistic trends. Archival research did not allow the researcher control of how the subject was studied or information collected. Furthermore, the archival data was at times incorrectly catalogued, rarely digitized and often included major omissions and bias. Sometimes, a searchable database was not available and resulted in relying on the archivist to locate the necessary material. A significant limitation was the lack of textual records in the archives. The researcher was compelled to rely heavily on technical drawings to draw textual conclusions. This was a major limitation. Lack of photographs of Floyd’s numerous small scale residential work was a major limitation. Aside from Floyd’s major projects such as Inn on the Park, CNIB, and Spaulding Garden, there was little in the form of photographs that accompanied the drawings in the archives.
Four semi structured interviews followed an open and informal interview style and were largely dependent on the participants’ memory of events in question. The effect on memory can be harsh and some of the history recalled by informants was more than 50 years old. The researcher acknowledged that some events cannot be reasonably verified but it is assumed that informant’s version of events were factual. The live face-to-face process facilitated exploratory probing and in depth discussions, but also required the building of a rapport with the participant. In some cases, leading questions, preconceived ideas and checks or probes, on the researcher’s part, could have affected the validity of this study. More importantly, there are some landscape architects, such as Don Graham, who were Floyd’s contemporaries and whose experiences could have enriched this thesis as interviewees but could not be interviewed due to time constraints.

1.54 Future research

In the course of researching the career of J. Austin Floyd, additional topics have emerged that if studied would be beneficial to the profession of landscape architecture in Canada. The first area of potential research would be the study of other influential landscape architects whose careers equally contributed to the emergence of modern landscape architecture in Canada, chief among them are Howard Dunnington Grubb and Macklin Hancock. The work of landscape architects in other parts of the country, particularly in British Columbia, where the California style became increasingly popular, equally needs scholarly attention. Such research would shed light on a crucial era in the history of the profession.

Floyd’s career as a lecturer at the University of Toronto needs to be examined. Many of Toronto’s modern architects and landscape architects—some still practicing today--were Floyd’s
students at University of Toronto. It may be important to explore Floyd’s influence on these professionals. Floyd’s seven year career as Deputy Director for Toronto’s Planning Board warrants more scholarly attention than discussed in this thesis. For example, Robert Graham reveals that during Floyd’s tenure with the city he undertook a major study of the Toronto Islands that was not realized. The study called for hotels and apartments in the style of LeCorbusier: an Olympic-size regatta lagoon, a road from east to west and a system of public transportation. Floyd was a brilliant artist and he painted all his life. It would be worth investigating Floyd’s artistic works—which paralleled his career—to understand how it may have reflected in his gardens. In February 1981, an exhibition of Floyd’s artwork, titled, “In retrospect,” was held at the North York Civic Centre. An article in the Globe and Mail in 1981 reported that the preview party for this exhibition was attended by one Alex Darrell, a fellow artist and teacher of the Group of Ten, and a friend of Floyd.

Furthermore, Floyd was a member of Toronto’s Arts and Letters Club. The Club has been identified by art historians as having played an important role in the cultural life of Toronto in the twentieth century. It was a place frequented by many design professionals, including many members of CSLA. There is strong possibility that Floyd and many of his colleagues who went to the club may have been exposed to many different design ideas from other members. How this might have influenced Floyd’s work is a credible research question that should be explored. Certainly, more research and study are needed, not only to set out the full range of Floyd’s accomplishments, but also to understand a significant era in Canadian landscape architectural history.
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Figure 2.11

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Figure 2.28

Figure 2.29
Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection. Rose garden for H.B Wills residence (Shadowbrook) in Concord Ontario (1927-1929) [Photo]. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, (XL1MSA005062) CCLAA, Guelph.

Figure 2.30
Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection. Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Kerby in Forest Hill, Toronto (1933) [Photo]. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection (XL1MSA005062), CCLAA, Guelph.

Figures 2.31 and 2.32
Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection. Garden for Mr. and Mrs Kerby in Forest Hill, Toronto (1933) [Photo]. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection (XL1MSA005062), CCLAA, Guelph.

Figures 2.33 and 2.34

Figure 2.35
Jim Floyd. J. Austin Floyd’s copy of Bremer Pond’s Outline History of Landscape Architecture, with Floyd’s personal notes [Photo]. Jim Floyd.

Figure 2.36
A room in 1929 described as ‘Canadian interpretation of the modern spirit.’ [Photo]. Canadian Homes and Gardens, October 1929, Volume 6, Number 10.

Figures: 2.37--2.39:
Works displayed at the “Three Modern Styles” exhibition held at the Art Gallery of Toronto from September 30th to November 5th 1950 [Photo]. *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, Volume 27, Number 6, June 1950.

**Figure 2.40:**
Spaulding garden (1952) by J. Austin Floyd. Fountain area with birdbath [Photo]. *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, Volume 29, Number 2, November 1952, p.32

**Figures 2.41 and 2.42:**
Plans of spaulding garden(1952) by J. Austin Floyd [Photo of drawing]. The “J. Austin Floyd Collection,” Library and Archives Canada, Accession Number 82303/27, Location D647F2. Project Number 57094 (A).

**Figure 2.43**

**Figures 2.44 and 2.45**

**Figures 2.46 to 2.50**

**Figures 2.51 and 2.52**

**Figure 2.53**
Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection. Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Harry B. Kohl [Photo]. Dunington-Grubb and Stensson Collection, (XL3MSA001064) CCLAA, Guelph.

**Figure 2.54**

**Figure 2.55**
Garden plan by J. Austin Floyd [Photo]. *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, July 1954, Volume 31, Number 7, p.15.

**Figure 2.56-2.59**

**Figures 2.60 and 2.61**
(CH&G May 1957). Terrace area of garden designed by Dunington-Grubb [Photo] (CH&G May 1957 p.17).

**Figures 2.62 and 2.63**
(CH&G July 1957). Residential garden by Macklin Hancock’s PPAL [Photo]. (CH&G September 1958 p.32).

**Figure 2.64.**
(CH&G June 1954). Plan of Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Brown, Vancouver (1954-57) By Desmond Muirhead [Drawing].(CH&G Volume 31, Number 6 June 1954 p.59)

**Figure 2.65**

**Figures 2.66-2.69**
(CH&G June 1954). Plan of Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Brown, Vancouver (1954-57) By Desmond Muirhead [Drawing].(CH&G Volume 31, Number 6 June 1954 p.59)

**Figures 2.70 and 2.71**
(Pleasance Crawford 2014) Fountain at Allan Gardens designed by Austin Floyd [Photo] (1956). Photograph courtesy of Pleasance Crawford.

**Figure 2.72**
Aerial view of Allan Gardens with fountains designed by J. Austin Floyd (1956) [Photo]. Photograph courtesy of Pleasance Crawford.

**Figure 2.73**
Accessed Marc 23, 2014
Figure 2.74
Library and Archives Canada (2014). Sketch of fountain at Queens Park, Toronto(1957) [Sketch]. By J. Austin Floyd. (Library and Archives Canada, Accession Number 82303/27.

Figure 2.75
Library and Archives Canada (2014). Rendering of garden for Mr. and Mrs. Beattie, Toronto (1961). J. Austin Floyd. (Library and Archives Canada, Accession Number 82303/27, Location D648F6, Project number 61073.

Figure 2.76

Figure 2.77

Figure 2.78
JRAIC (2014). North garden for wymilwood, Victoria College, University of Toronto (1954) [Drawing].JRAIC, Volume 31 Number 2 1954 p.56

Figures 2.79 and 2.80
Library and Archives Canada (2014). Garden for Mr. and Mrs. Kavan (1957-58 by J. Austin Floyd) [Drawings]. (Library and Archives Canada, Accession Number 82303/27, Location D647F2, Project number 57101.

Figure 2.81

Figure 2.82
JRAIC (1954). A small residential garden designed by J. Austin Floyd [Photo]. (CH&G Volume 31 Number 7, July 1954, P.15

Figure 2.83
Library and Archives Canada (2014). Pool designed by J. Austin Floyd for E.B. Kernaghan residence, Township of King (1963) [Photo]. Library and Archives Canada, Accession Number 82303/27, Location D841F9, Project number 63032.

Figure 2.84

Figure 2.85
Library and Archives Canada. Garden terrace for Mr. and Mrs. Crang (1963) by J. Austin Floyd [Drawing]. Library and Archives Canada, Accession Number 82303/27, Location D847F8, Project number 68082.

**Figure 2.86**

**Figures 2.87-2.91**

**Figure 2.92**
Library and Archives Canada. Tree House. J. Austin Floyd’s “Enchanted Garden” of the Ontario Crippled Children’s Centre 1959-1966 (O.C.C.C) [Rendering]. Library and Archives Canada, Accession Number 82303/27, Location D840F6, Project number 58013.

**Figure 2.93**

**Figure 2.94**

**Figures 2.95 and 2.96**

**Figure 2.97**
Figure 2.98
Library and Archives Canada (2014). Plan of courtyard for Chatelaine Trend House (1964) by J Austin Floyd [Drawing]. (Library and Archives Canada, Accession Number 82303/27, Location D647F2, Project number 57101.

Figure 2.99
Library and Archives Canada (2014). Lantern slide of Church’s designs used by Austin Floyd to teach his students [Photo].
APPENDIX A

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF INTERVIEWEES

Jim Floyd OALA, APALA.

Jim Floyd is a landscape architect and the son of J. Austin Floyd. Jim worked with his father for about ten years before establishing his own firm, Floyd and Gerard in Toronto in the 1970s. He holds a BLA from the University of Toronto and is currently retired.

Bradley Johnson OALA, FCSLA, RCA.

Brad Johnson is a landscape architect who worked as a student intern for Project Planning Associates Limited (PPAL) in the late 1950s before establishing his own firm, Johnson Sustronk Weinstein + Associates in Toronto. Johnson holds MLA from Harvard and studied under Walter Gropius. As a landscape architect who began his career in the late 1950s and practiced through the 1960s, Johnson was familiar with J. Austin Floyd’s work and personally knew him as a senior fellow. Brad is a past president of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA), and a Member Emeritus of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects. He is currently retired.

Owen Scott OALA, FCSLA.

Owen Scott is a landscape architect who worked as a student intern for Project Planning Associates Limited (PPAL) in the 1960s. Scott holds MLA from University of Michigan. As a landscape architect who began his career in the late 1960s, Scott was familiar with J. Austin Floyd’s work and personally knew him as a senior fellow. Scott is a past president of the
Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA), and a Member Emeritus of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects. He is currently retired.

**Pleasance Kaufman Crawford**

Pleasance Kaufman Crawford is a Toronto-based landscape-design historian. She holds a BA from Oberlin College and BLA from the University of Toronto. For 25 years, she specialized in research, documentation, and assessment of Canadian cultural landscapes, often as a member of a multidisciplinary team of heritage professionals. She co-edited an anthology entitled Garden Voices: Two Centuries of Canadian Garden Writing (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 1995; Vintage Canada, 1997) and has served on the boards of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects, the Canadian Association of Professional Heritage Consultants, and the Friends of the Archives of Ontario.
APPENDIX B

RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
RESEARCH ETHICS BOARDS
Certification of Ethical Acceptability of Research
Involving Human Participants

APPROVAL PERIOD: December 20, 2013
EXPIRY DATE: December 20, 2014
REB: G
REB NUMBER: 13OC046
TYPE OF REVIEW: Delegated Type 1
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Burcher, Lise (burcher@uoguelph.ca)
DEPARTMENT: School of Environmental Design & Rural Development
SPONSOR(S): N/A
TITLE OF PROJECT: Modern Gardens in the Canadian Landscape

The members of the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board have examined the protocol which describes the participation of the human participants in the above-named research project and considers the procedures, as described by the applicant, to conform to the University's ethical standards and the Tri-Council Policy Statement, 2nd Edition.

The REB requires that researchers:
- Adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and approved by the REB.
- Receive approval from the REB for any modifications before they can be implemented.
- Report any change in the source of funding.
- Report unexpected events or incidental findings to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants, and the continuation of the protocol.
- Are responsible for ascertaining and complying with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements with respect to consent and the protection of privacy of participants in the jurisdiction of the research project.

The Principal Investigator must:
- Ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of facilities or institutions involved in the research are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.
- Submit a Status Report to the REB upon completion of the project. If the research is a multi-year project, a status report must be submitted annually prior to the expiry date. Failure to submit an annual status report will lead to your study being suspended and potentially terminated.

The approval for this protocol terminates on the EXPIRY DATE, or the term of your appointment or employment at the University of Guelph whichever comes first.

Signature: ____________________________ Date: January 7, 2014
L. Kutz, Chair, Research Ethics Board-Greengard

A. Papadopoulos, Chair, Research Ethics Board-HPES

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introduction

1. Can you please give me a background about yourself? Specifically, your education and your professional experience?

2. How did you come to know Austin Floyd? How long did you know him?

3. How would you classify your relationship with Austin Floyd?

Professional context

4. What was is like to be a landscape architect in Canada during the 1950s and 1960s?

5. Were there any common landscape architectural trends or styles, particularly in residential garden design that prevailed during this era?

Modernism

6. What were some of the design elements—in terms of form and function--present in Austin Floyd’s gardens that corresponded with the modernist style? Were there elements that stood out? Were there elements that contradicted the modern style?

7. Did you consider your own work in the 1950s and 1960s as reflecting the modernist style? If so, can you give me specific examples?

Influences

1. What do you think were some of the factors that influenced Austin Floyd’s work?

2. What was Austin Floyd’s professional circle like? How was his professional relationship with Mr. Dunington Grubb?

3. It has been suggested that Austin Floyd separated from Dunington Grubb over disagreement on design approach. Do you know anything about this?

4. What was Austin Floyd’s social circle like? Did you know any social or professional club that he was involved?
5. Austin Floyd was a painter all his life. Did you know about this? Can you tell me something about this?

6. What were some of the factors that influenced your own work during the era that you started practicing (1950s/1960s)?

**Legacy**

7. Do you think Austin Floyd was doing something in the field of landscape architecture that was different? If so, what was it?

8. Do you think Austin Floyd had a legacy in the field of landscape architecture in Canada? If so, What do you think was his greatest contribution?

9. Do you know any of Austin Floyd’s designs (gardens) in the 50s and 60s that still exists today?

10. Do you think the preservation and documentation of Austin Floyd’s work and those of his colleagues in the post war era would be of benefit to practicing landscape architects today?

11. Would you like to tell me anything additional about Austin Floyd’s work or your own work in the 1950s and 1960s that we have not covered?