



Inter-rupted History

Chicago's Graham Foundation was the host for a recent art installation entitled "Gardens as Inter-rupted History." Designed by landscape architect Eric Fulford, ASLA, an associate at Rundell, Ernst-berger & Associates in Indianapolis, the installation traces the many stages of an imaginary French landscape, spanning two centuries of actual history. The imagined site is illustrated in transformation from agricultural landscape to ornamental garden and then again to agriculture during the French Revolution.

Funded by a foundation grant, the project depicts the

transition of landscapes over time while mirroring the social and political changes of 17th-century France. It serves as an explanation for what is both vogue and vital to each of the many different stages in France's history, while demonstrating the periods in which ornamental design was allowed and encouraged. Inspired by the French gardens Chantilly, Sceaux and Vaux-le-Vicomte, the featured landscape is a compilation of several different sites and represents the typical French garden of the 17th century.

After extensive travel throughout the region and period research, Fulford

refined his unique vision of physical sites with additional consideration of historical facts from the societies in which they were born. Demonstrated in the work are the extremes of landscape development over the years, from the "gardens as leisure for the rich" attitude expressed during the Baroque period to the period of fierce patriotism that lives in the quote inscribed on the panel, "Jean Baptiste Henry, 18, journeyman tailor, convicted of having sawn down a tree of liberty, executed 6 September 1793." The illustrations and quotes, taken from the period, work together to capture the

essence of each significant stage in history. The three-dimensional installation of panels is organized around a single vantage point of the same landscape and stretches approximately eight feet in length. The lush illustrations were created with colored pencil and ink with a collage of fabric and paper. Part of an ongoing investigation into the effect of time on the landscape, Fulford's next illustrative exploration is entitled "Intended Landscapes: Private Visions in the Abandoned Century," focusing on the revitalization and reuse of abandoned landscapes.—
Patrick Baggatta

Eight-foot-long panel traces the history of a French landscape and includes musings on French history and the garden such as Derek Clifford's: "Gardens are a product of leisure . . . they cannot be considered in detachment from the people who made them and inhabited them."