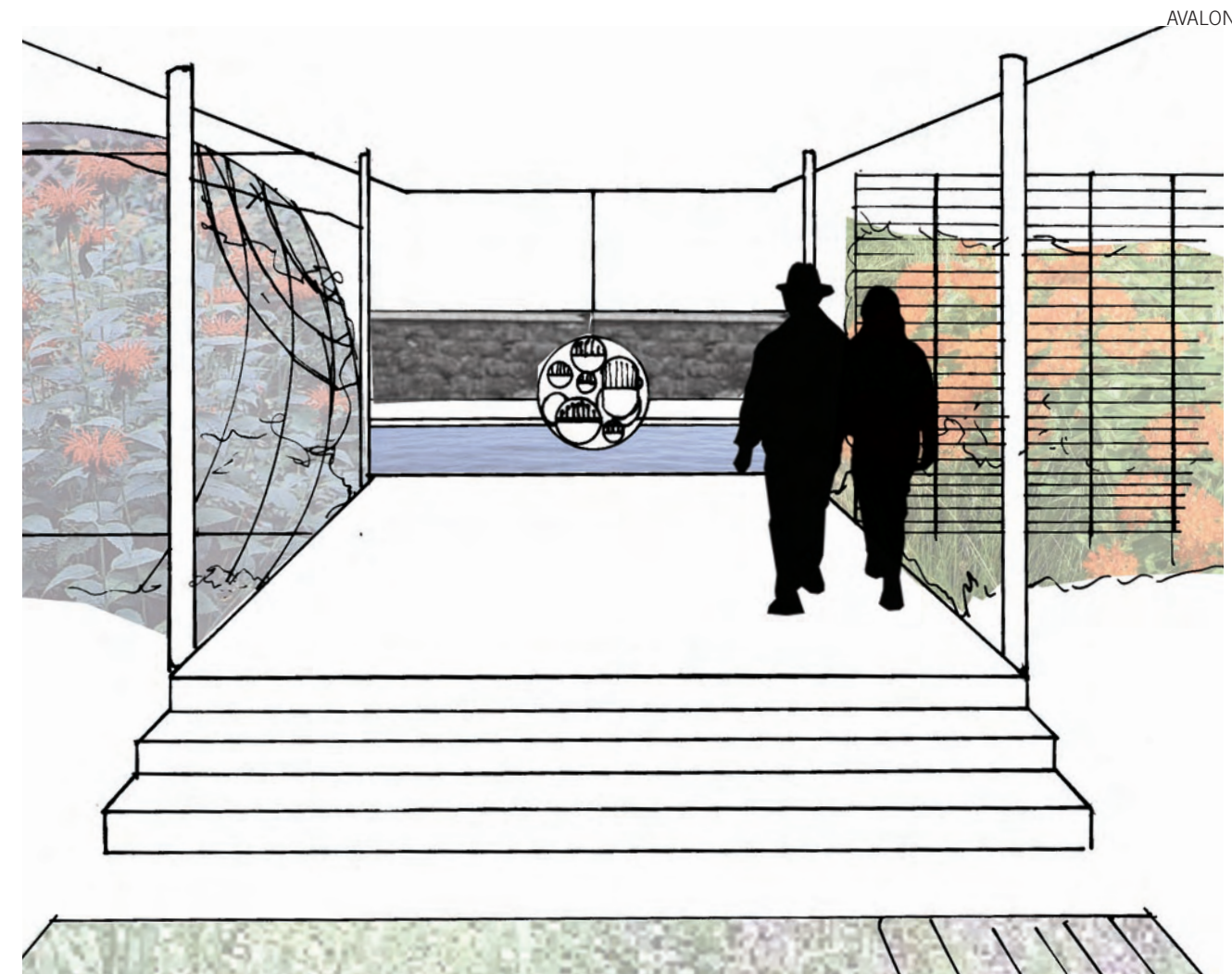
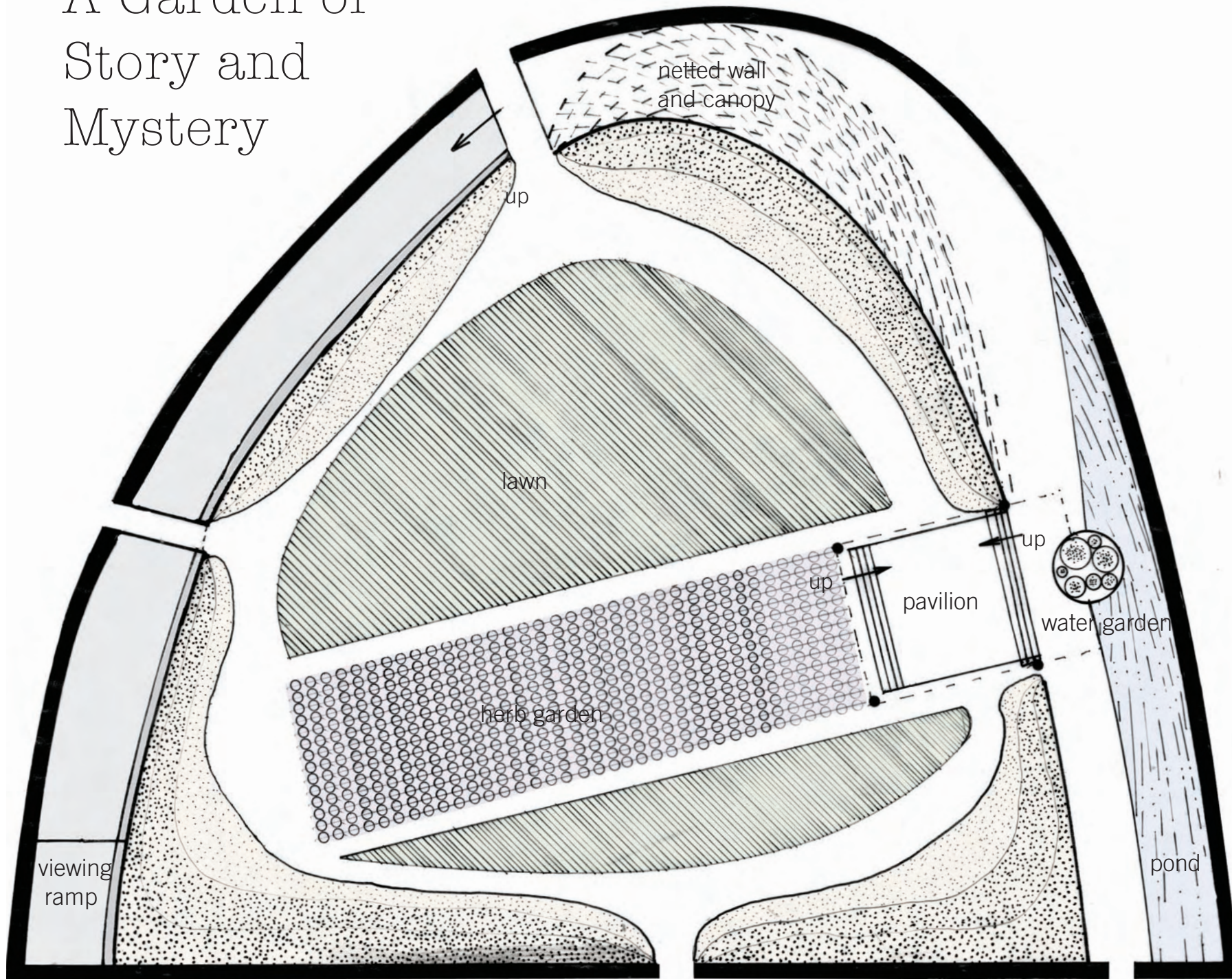
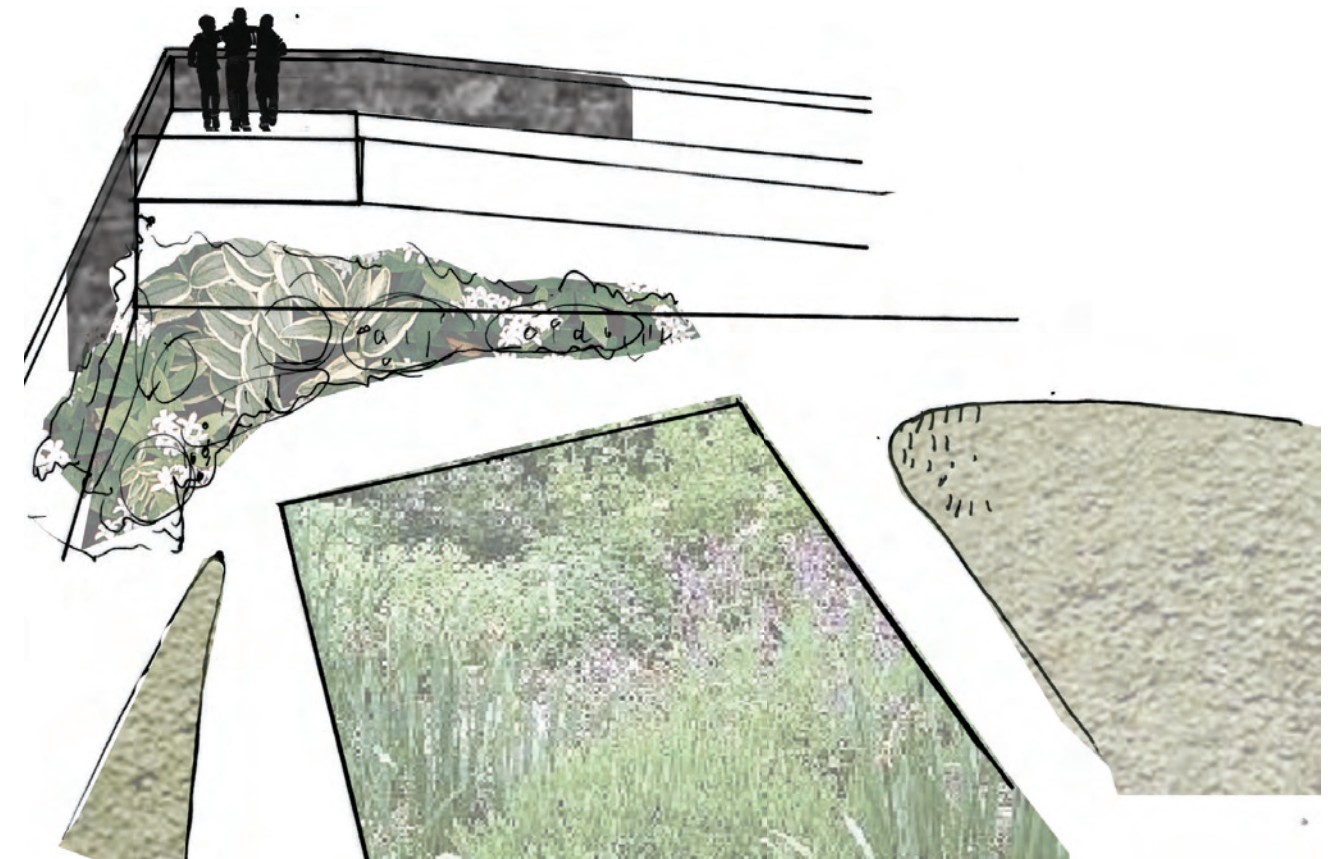


# A Garden of Story and Mystery



view from herb garden to pavilion and water garden



view from herb garden to viewing platform

The wall inspires an experience of boundary as well as of guidance; it both separates us from the outside and provides a reference to the change in topography. At the same time it encloses the space of the garden and guides one throughout the space. The Garden is a place of story and mystery; a juxtaposition of different elements to provide internal and external experience at multiple scales. At the scale of the landscape there is the ramp which provides a view across the estate and an intimate experience of the wall through touch, while the pond is the opposite, prompting one to look down into the water and into the space below the wall. At the scale of the garden, there is a dialogue between the heaviness of the wall to support plant growth and the ephemeral net which changes from wall to canopy and allows one to see the plants as a filter instead of as an object. At the human scale, the pavilion provides shelter and venue while the suspended water garden presents plants contained within glass vessels at varying heights for viewing by children and adults alike. The goal of the garden is to create a dynamic experience for both the gardener and the public.

# WRITTEN HISTORY, PERSONAL RECOLLECTION AND THE COMMUNAL SPACE OF THE GARDEN: THE HADSPEN PARABOLA

A garden is a place where the natural becomes sculpted, set aside and put on display. It is a haven of human experience through the personal acts of tending, of harvesting and of resting. In this garden, the presence of the wall both contains and measures the inside from the outside. Through the traditions of the cultural and horticultural ceremony of the garden, the typology of the enclosed garden emphasizes the sacredness of the place of the outdoor room. The garden acts as an extension of the architecture of the house, and perhaps even the origins of architecture itself. A sense ownership of an adjacent piece of land to one's residence can be created and fostered. Alternatively, the house can serve the garden as the infrastructure for growing and delighting in food and flowers. The new Garden at Hadspen uses its own history by erasing it and leaving only the wall as an inspiration for new gardens. In doing so, space is made for new work based on a historical relationship between residence and nature. In response to the influences of the past, my proposal for the Hadspen Parabola links a series of new physical human experiences to a historical sense of what it means to be in a garden. The mechanisms used to facilitate this are a set of recollections to the place of the garden, a reinterpretation of historical methods of practically making a garden, and a space for contemplation in the passage and calm of the garden. Perhaps the competition brief best describes this new look on a historical space by viewing it as a "blank canvas" for new input always with the residue of the personal history of the site invoked by the presence of the wall. The goal for the entry is to link the personal history of gardens everywhere to this space as a means for sustaining the garden in the future and making it a meaningful cultural space.



1. Entry gate into cleared garden, 2007



2. Hadspen in the 1890's

# NATURAL NAVIGATIONS:

It is only human to navigate our own existence in comparison to nature, or to place ourselves in the surrounding world. The garden can be seen as a generator of architecture through this mapping of nature in the selection of significant pieces of nature to tend. The space of the garden can facilitate many different personal navigations in many different configurations and with the lenses of different many cultures. In all cases, the significance of the garden is within its role to place oneself within the network of the natural world, and despite any differences in the garden typologies for each culture, the word garden can classify them all. The importance of the garden to architecture exists in almost every culture. In the case of the Hadspen Parabola, the historical garden aimed to serve as a both a functional kitchen garden as well as a spatial object of delight for the owners of the estate. As a functional cultivated landscape, a portion of the plantings were cared for as crops serving the kitchens of the estate and introducing a landscape which was measured and tended to according to production. This control over the natural creates a sense of stewardship over the land. On the other hand, the garden as a space of pleasure calls for a different approach to landscape, and is emphasized by the wall defining the garden as an object in the landscape. It is necessary to acknowledge both functions of the historical garden at Hadspen as both a productive and pleasurable landscape when creating a new garden.



3. Site and Context Plan

# ENCLOSURE AND PRESERVATION:

The Hadspen garden proposes an object relationship to the landscape. The garden becomes a microcosm of the surrounding landscape intensified so much by the benefits of the wall as a micro climate that the plantings become treasure. The wall not only defines this space as being sacred but at the same time retains heat and shelters plants in a way that enhances growing conditions and allows for the cultivation of very tender plants in the tradition of the herbaceous border. The applied geometry of the parabola to the wall as a mechanism to follow the path of the sun amplifies solar gains within the interior and optimizes the amount of thermal mass with sun exposure. Within this landscape, the strong topography of the land manipulates the boundary of the wall. From the interior, this undulation of the land within the space of the wall acts as a threshold to the exterior as the limits of the horizon change depending on the height of the land. In response to this idea of an enclosed garden, I have introduced a new topography; the slope of the ramp.



4. View towards estate from just outside garden (1890's)

# EXPERIENCE AND DELIGHT:

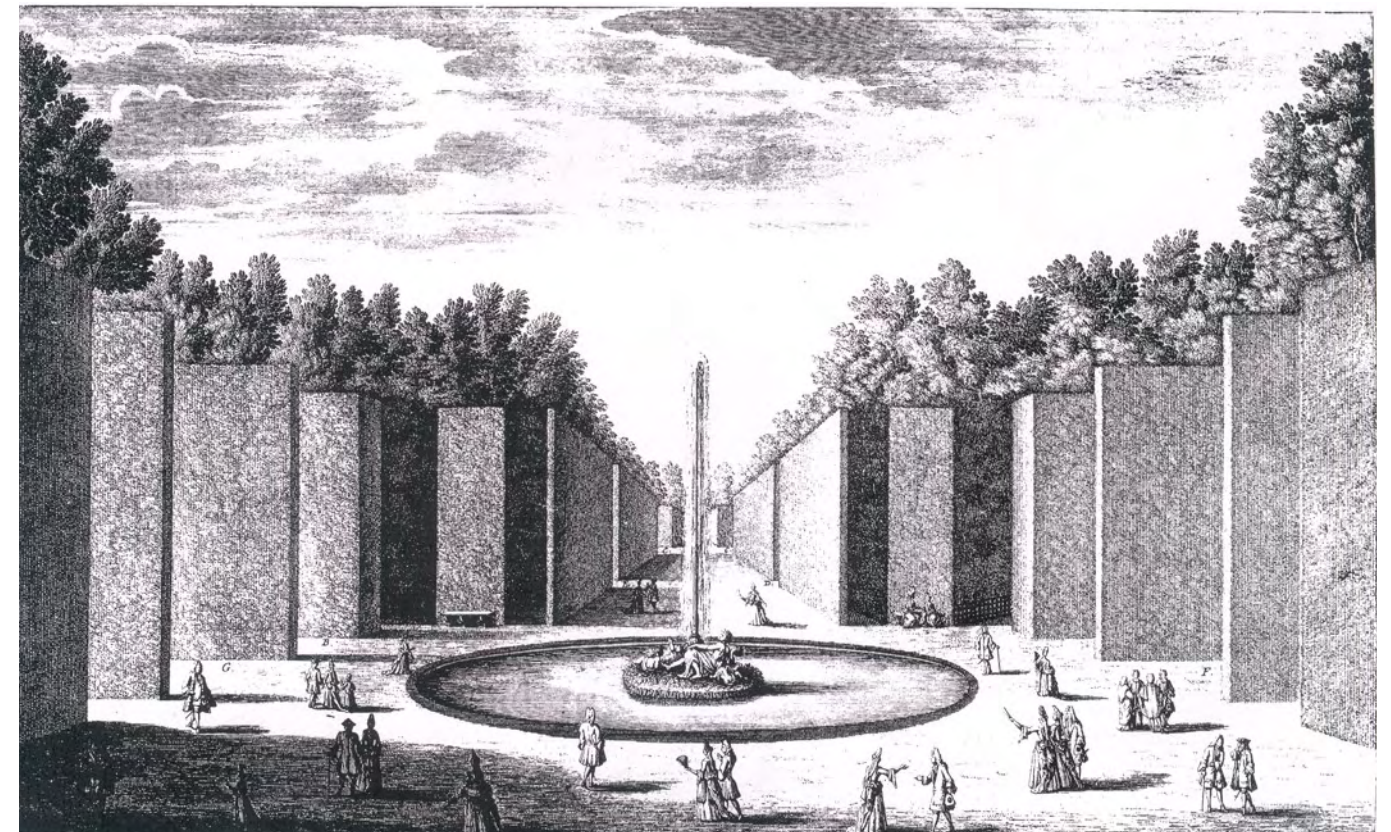
The experience of the ramp takes the passage of the perimeter wall and uses a new topography to guide one up along the wall. Instead of the land influencing the wall, the wall now inspires the topography. This ascent is subtle, the slope is not much more than the natural topography of the site. The final elevation of the ramp uses the wall as the guard for the ramp landing. This encourages one to touch the wall and break the visual boundary of the wall with a view back towards the estate, linking the garden back to the house. This also initiates topography as a device of the garden in encouraging a new viewpoint back into the garden. In a similar gesture, the pond is the opposite operation where there is a sloped excavation into the earth, which guides one deep into the foundations of the wall. Instead of an overall view of the land, this provides an intimate moment between the participant and the delicacies of the garden. In either case, an interaction of topography and the datum of the wall enhance a sense of the inward and of the outward that exists in an enclosed garden typology. These new topographies also reference the constructed terraces and ponds which existed at Hadspen in the 1890's; the manipulation of the topography is nothing new to the garden.



5. Lady in the Hadspen Garden (1890's)

# PERSONAL PILGRIMAGE:

The walk through the garden becomes recollection through experience; of the garden that was before, of the garden's of one's past, and of the smells, sights and sounds of nature. Personal history becomes the database of recollection for the passage of the garden. Within many different cultural histories, the garden has become a space of pilgrimage. The garden walk is a ceremonial passage within a sacred garden space. The original purpose of the enclosed garden to preserve special medicinal herbs and plants gives an alchemical purpose to the arrangement and passage of the garden. The celebration of these plants is enforced by the walk, which can be distilled into the architectonics of the gallery. The amount of "gallery" space is increased by the addition of new light wall structures to optimize path length surrounding these island walls which imitate the geometry of the original brick walls.

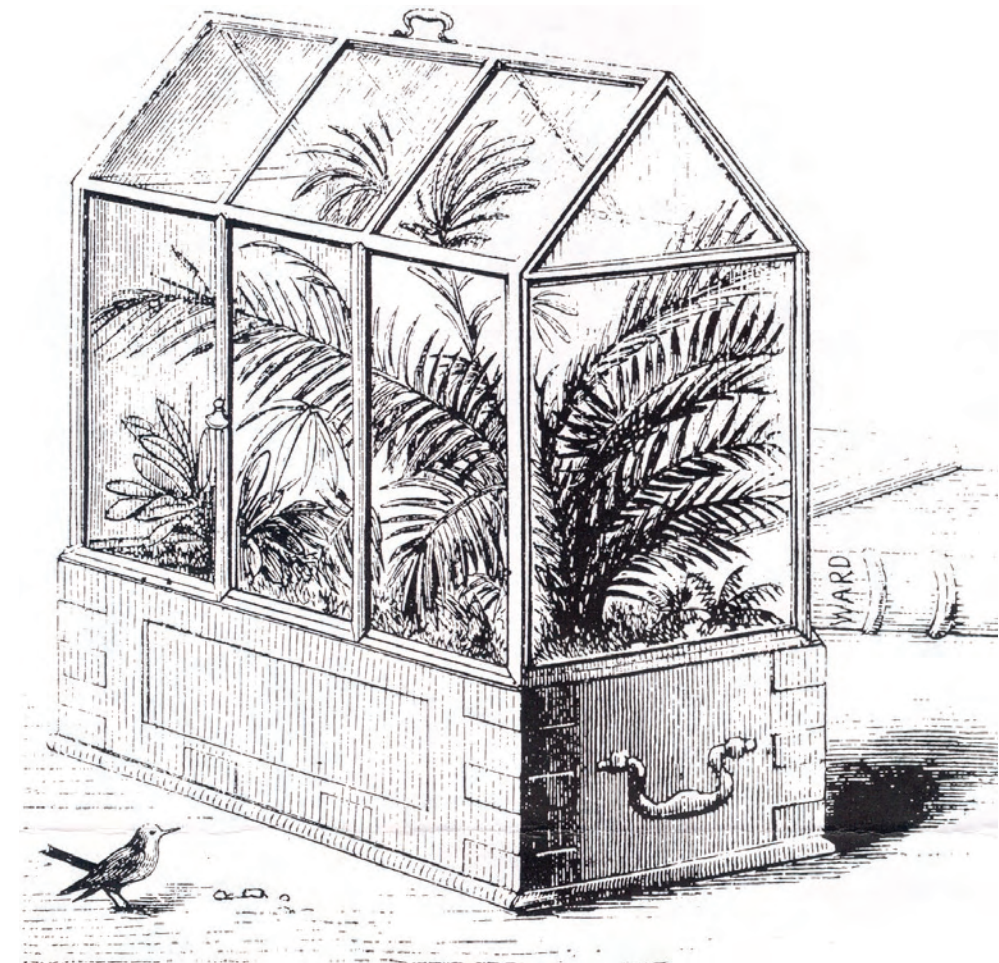


6. Illustration depicting the tradition of the garden walk (1700's)

# ALCHEMICAL INTERACTIONS:

These cultural recollections of the alchemy of gathering in the garden are to be amplified by the passage of the garden through the introduction of a vertical gallery of plantings which culminates at a small garden pavilion which displays the alchemical elements of the garden; herbs and water.

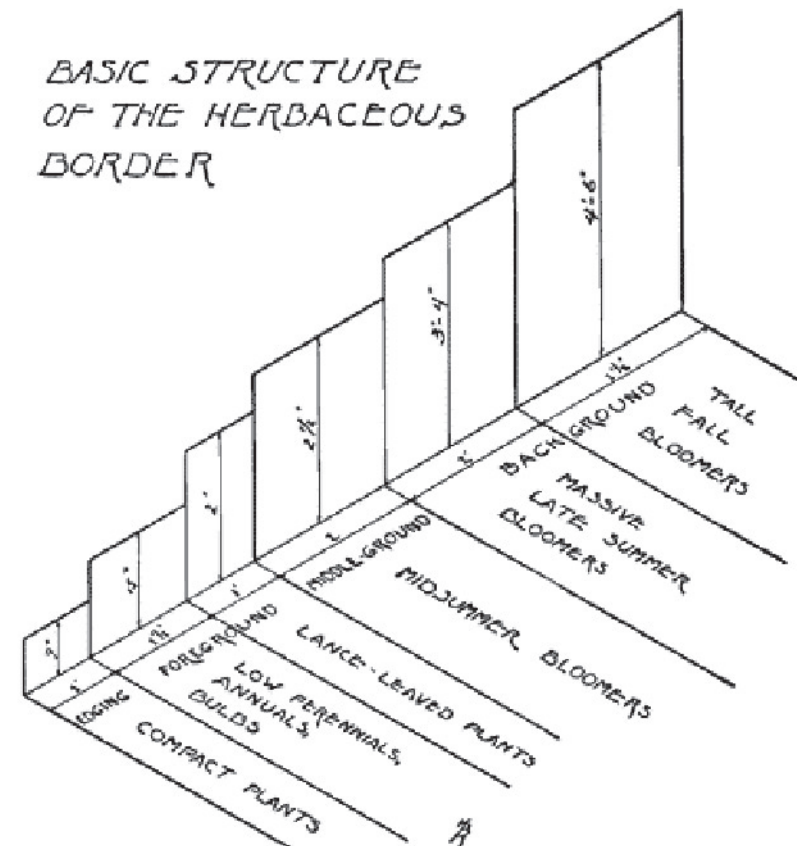
Rather than the walk occurring along the planting beds, the main path is placed between the plantings (supported by a light rope structure) and the wall. This allows one to occupy the space of the wall and create a vertical gallery of plantings, which can be viewed from both sides. Situated at the centre of these paths, the pavilion acts as a shelter for enjoying the garden and as a stage of interactions. This can be in the traditions of English garden rituals such as tea in the garden, or as an interaction with the garden itself; both the carpet of herbs which leads one into the pavilion and the suspended water garden become focal points of activity. The carpet of herbs takes on a pattern of rows of plantings and becomes as intricate as the plants themselves. The water garden is a series of glass bowls which hang together, taking the drainage water from the roof and using it as an automatic watering system for the water plants. The staggering of the bowls allows for the overflow of one bowl to serve the next and exhibit the water plants. This use of a glass container for plantings is inspired by the greenhouse, and more specifically the portable greenhouse which existed as a mobile container for rare plants. The traditions of the garden pavilion is present in many garden cultures and remains in the modern garden as an elegant, white structure referencing the greek and roman inspired pavilions which at one time permeated the English garden.



7. Movable Terrarium (1833)

# TECTONICS AND PATTERNS:

The tectonics of historical garden mechanisms and planting orders can be utilized to inform the rhythm of the modern garden. Historically, the grid of the cultivated landscape as present in the Agrarian garden, or in any production landscape uses dimensions of plant, and gardener for east access and prosperous growing conditions. The grid is determined by the size of the individual plant and the amount of land it will need for optimal growth. These dimensions are then added to the grid of the person; of the length of the reach of the gardener and the width of a path for passage without destroying fragile plants. When these two sets of data are combined, they create a graphic pattern on the landscape which, in the case of this design becomes a woven carpet of herbs leading to the pavilion. Other historical mechanisms utilized within this garden include the netted structure, which in its original uses is applied as a horizontal structure over a herbaceous border to support delicate plants. In this application, although the structure begins in much the same way as a horizontal net, the ropes morph into a wall and then into a canopy to support other types of plantings such as a ivy which is typically grown on the wall of enclosed gardens. The membranous structure allows for a light filtered experience of the garden. A new experience of the wall is introduced using historical mechanisms for supporting plants.



8. The historical planting order of the herbaceous border

# REVEALING AND CONCEALING: STORY AND MYSTERY IN THE GARDEN

The design of a modern garden is absolutely reliant on the history of the site and the existing cultural attitudes towards the enclosed garden. These can invoke a sense of place, of permanence and of repose. The essential act of cultivation, the alchemical nature of the kitchen garden and the sanctity of the ground of the garden itself is dependant on the physical and spiritual participation of the gardener and the community. The design of the inhabitation of the garden is just as important to the architecture of the garden to create a place, which can be maintained by means of a strong personal history to the community's inhabitants. The history of a garden is emphasized by the competition at Hadspen. An original garden was created, a wall was wrapped around it and the interior garden has since changed multiple times to finally be changed in the act of clearing the space of the garden. This clearing of the plants of the garden cannot possibly erase the history of the site which must now be acknowledged in a new proposal. The wall becomes the reminder of the past and future lives of the garden due to its resilience and permanence on the site. The act of clearing the space of the garden creates room for new work and a new interpretation of the meaning of that particular garden. In this way, the competition can be seen as a comparison of the historical and modern perspectives on what it is to be a garden and this dialogue between invention and history is the necessary fuel to create a relevant design for the space. The result of the interaction of modern materials and techniques with historical practices and customs creates a place of repose. Revealing and Concealing, or Story and Mystery create a dialogue between that which must be discovered in the garden and that which is remembered or told in either conversation or within one's own recollections.



9. Panorama of cleared site, 2007



10. Childhood in the garden, 1890's

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1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10 Hadspen Parabola Website.

6&7 "European Gardens: A Historical Atlas"

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