

Directing Vision in the Landscapes and Gardens of Carlo Scarpa

Scarpa's work as a designer has been narrowly framed as that of an object-fixed architect. His fascination with rich materials, overly complex details, and often arcane references has overshadowed other aspects of his productive activities. Yet, there is another Scarpa who has yet to be fully explored. Landscape and garden art were intrinsic parts of Scarpa's productive activities, informing his choice of materials, the nature of his details, and the meaning of his references.



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Desiring Landscapes

The landscapes and gardens that Carlo Scarpa (1906–1978) designed are an important yet largely unexamined part of his oeuvre. Several revised surveys of architectural and garden histories evince this oversight, all of which now conclude with his gardens.¹ Surveys notwithstanding, recent and more focused studies, including essays on landscape theory, and exhibitions with accompanying catalogs on Scarpa's work have done little to alter the deficit.²

That Scarpa's landscapes and gardens have been all but invisible to researchers is more comprehensible once Scarpa and the things he designed are placed within the cultures of twentieth-century Italy and its architectural discourses. For many, Italy remains an unlikely locus for the study of modern architecture, let alone modern landscapes and gardens.³ Bauhaus-based modern architecture faced substantial resistance on the Italian peninsula between the wars, particularly during the Fascist period.⁴ Yet moments of individual brilliance, unencumbered by such nettlesome questions as to whether colonnades ought to be arcuated or trabeated, still occurred. Garden design however, remained largely an affair of restorations or historical re-creations for conservative clients. This changed little after World War II as architectural practice focused on reconstruction, building restoration, and town planning. Meanwhile, Bruno Zevi's zealotry for a "democratic" (read "anti-fascistic") "organic architecture" over the Siegfried Giedion-based International Style architecture and urbanism



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1. Fusina Camping, Fusina, Venice (1957). (Photo by author.)

2a. Regione Veneto Exhibition, Italia '61, Turin. (Photo by Paolo Monti.)

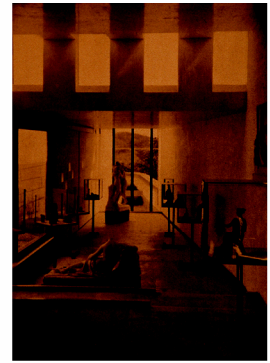
2b. Fondazione Querini-Stampalia, garden, Venice (1950–1963). (Photo by author.)



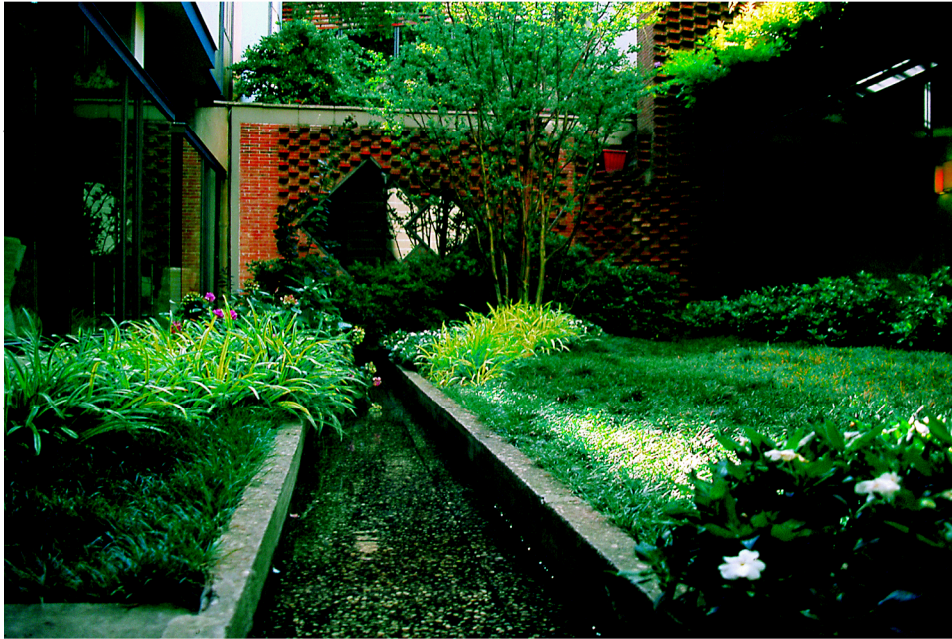
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- 2c. Museo di Castelvecchio, courtyard and garden entrance (1956–1973). (Photo by Antonio Martinelli.)
 3. Sculpture Garden, Padiglione Italia, XXXIVth Biennale, Venice (1952). (Photo by author.)
 4. Gipsoteca canoviana, Possagno, View of rocca at Asolo (1955–1957), from “Carlo Scarpa, *Ampliamento della Gipsoteca canoviana a Possagno*,” *Casabella continuità* 222 (1958): 11.
 5. Hotel Minerva, courtyard garden, Piazza Santa Maria Novella, Florence (1958–1961). (Photo by author.)
 6a. Balboni apartment, Venice (1963–1964), garden façade. (*Venezia e il Veneto*, 1994.)
 6b. Balboni apartment, Venice, garden façade (as it appeared in 1999). (Photo by author.)
 7. Fusina Camping, entrance pavilion and main allée. (Regione del Veneto.)

increasingly polarized Italian architectural discourse.⁵ Hence, garden and landscape design was (and for many continues to be) seen in Italy as a relatively *recherché* affair, associated with such out-of-date movements as the Milanese Novecento. More negative still, many of the owners of major private gardens sided with the Fascist regime and the subsequent semi-Fascist Italian monarchy and the Badoglio government.⁶ All of which helps explain why, until recently, there were virtually no professional or academic journals devoted to the study of gardens and designed landscapes in Italy.⁷ This complex cultural and political maelstrom notwith-

standing, Scarpa remains part of a small number of “landscapists” in postwar Italy that includes Pietro Porcinai and Gae Aulenti, who designed Italy’s earliest modern landscapes and gardens.⁸

Scarpa further distinguished himself from Italian designers of his generation in that the landscapes, gardens, architecture, and the other design arts he practiced were intrinsically linked.⁹ That is to say, there is in Scarpa’s design activities—particularly his canonical architectural works—a pervasive landscape dimension that has remained submerged in the literature beneath a dense patina of an object-fixed and idiosyncratic architect, codified

since his death with the help of a few key architectural historians and publications. Chief among these is Francesco dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol’s *Carlo Scarpa: Opera completa* (Oc) which includes Sergio Polano’s “*Catologo delle opere*.” Rizzoli published the *Opera completa* to coincide with the first and only major retrospective exhibition (in Venice and Milan) of Scarpa’s oeuvre.¹⁰

A close review of the Polano catalog reveals that conventional building arts occupied the lesser part of Scarpa’s professional activities. Scarpa’s commissions for art installations, exhibition designs, and museological reorganizations are, by far, the



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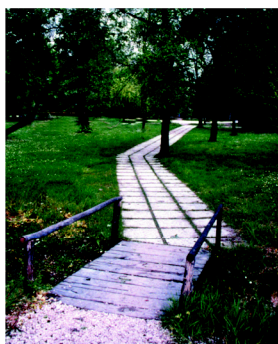
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most numerous project types in his oeuvre. Yet my aim is less to loosen Scarpa from the narrow appellation of “architect,” than it is to reinforce how his experience as an exhibition and landscape designer related to the canonical architectural works for which he is best remembered, and propelled by what Gio Ponti called “the landscape genesis of architecture.”¹¹ Through his designs of exhibitions, landscape gardens, and museological reorganizations, Scarpa conceived of the relation of landscape and architecture as “communicating vessels,” through the theme of “directing vision,” which he seemed to associate with the classical Chinese practice of “borrowed views.”¹²

I begin this brief account of Scarpa’s directing vision and borrowing views with Fusina Camping (1957, *Oc* 118), the first landscape he designed and built. (Figure 1.) While designing Fusina, Scarpa was simultaneously working on the early stages of the excavation and reconstruction of the Museo di Castelvecchio (1956–1973, *Oc* 116) and, intermittently, on the final version of the garden for the Fondazione Querini-Stampalia (1950–1963, *Oc* 138). (Figures 2b and 2c.) I conclude with the temporary landscape representing the Veneto that he designed for the Italia ‘61 exhibition in Turin (1961, *Oc* 137). (Figure 2a.) The Turin installation and the courtyard for the Museo di Castelvecchio are key to understanding the “communicating vessels” of landscape and exhibition design in Scarpa’s work. (Figure 2c.) One of the essential devices that Scarpa uses to realize this theme is the *parete interrotta* (inter-

rupted wall), which he uses at Fusina and in the temporary landscape of the Italia ‘61 exhibition in Turin.

Using Sergio Polano’s “*Catologo delle opere*” as a datum illuminates how others have quantified Scarpa’s artistic production.¹³ Polano cites only four landscape or garden entries, suggesting that they represent a relatively paltry portion of Scarpa’s productive activities. Fusina Camping, conflated with another landscape project, appears without commentary. Polano also conflates, in the accompanying commentary, the Biennale Sculpture Garden, XXVth Biennale, Castello Gardens, Venice (1952, *Oc* 94) with the exhibitions Scarpa designed for that year’s Biennale, despite it being the first Modern sculpture garden in Italy.¹⁴ (Figure 3.)

Hidden among Polano’s 238 entries are more than seventy-five designs for landscapes and gardens of varying types scattered across approximately fifty projects. Among these are Gipsoteca canoviana, Possagno (1955–1957, *Oc* 111, Figure 4); Project for Hotel Minerva, Piazza Santa Maria Novella, Florence (1958–1961, *Oc* 127, Figure 5); and the Balboni Apartment, Venice (1964–1974, *Oc* 152, Figure 6a and 6b).¹⁵ In most cases however, the landscape and garden dimension of the varied projects Scarpa designed were not specified in a client design brief. Typically, Scarpa did not design gardens in response to a client’s wishes; rather, he made them from his own longing, often in contradiction to the client’s agenda and budget.¹⁶

As an expression of this desire, Scarpa

designed a range of landscapes and gardens demonstrating influences from topics that were mythic, literary, painterly, and, of course, landscapes and gardens. His work in this area is organized in three essential types: gardens, monuments and squares, and landscapes. The designs include public parks, terrace and roof gardens, and landscapes that were permanent, temporary, and “borrowed.”

Landscapes of Desire: Permanent and Borrowed

Sergio Los calls the Fusina Campgrounds “a unique episode in the overall context of Scarpa’s work.”¹⁷ Fusina is not only Scarpa’s single foray into campground design — an aspect of landscape architecture that remains as undistinguished as it is unexamined — it is his only fully realized landscape. As it stands today and depending on the time of year, it may seem an unremarkable place. Fusina Camping, its official name, is a privately owned campsite for tents, trailers, and recreational vehicles. Programatically, Scarpa accommodated for the orderly parking of vehicles and services for campers’ needs. Yet, he designed Fusina less as a campsite than as a landscape, treating the buildings as *fabriques* in support of a larger idea in which the structure of the land is revealed through carefully planned vegetation. Vehicles are interlopers requiring camouflage. During the intervening decades, the rate of growth of camping vehicles has far outpaced that of the trees and shrubs along the *allées*, resulting in a less-than-complete screening of the parked vehicles

8. Fusina Camping, multipurpose building, stair to rooftop observation area. (Photo by author.)
9. Fusina Camping, central *allée*, view toward multipurpose building. (Photo by author.)
10. Fusina Camping, orchard with lagoon to far right. (Photo by author.)
11. Fusina Camping, service building, granite wash basins with cantilevered roof, limestone baths, and spiral stair to observation deck. (Photo by author.)
- 12a. Fusina Camping, bridge and chevron (zigzag) path. (Photo by author.)
- 12b. Suchou, Ku Yuan or I Yuan (The Garden of Rest), from Osvald Sirén's *Gardens of China* (1949).
13. Humphrey Repton's watercolor of the prospect of London and St. Paul's Cathedral from his proposed renovation of Lady Salusbury's garden, Brandsbury at Wilsden, Middlesex, published in his *Red Book*, March 14, 1789.

from the vistas along main paths. Moreover, the plants have not been well maintained in a design that requires only a modicum of pruning. Consequently, many of the finer points of Scarpa's original scheme are derelict or unintelligible. The entire site was recently slated for acquisition by the Azienda del Consorzio Trasporti Veneziano (ACTV) for the construction of a new ferry terminal that will demolish virtually all of Scarpa's landscape.

The campground is west-southwest of Venice on the coast of the mainland, four kilometers south of Palladio's Villa Malcontenta (1555–1560) at the end of the Via Moranzani, near the mouth of the Brenta Canal. The physical, spatial, and conceptual structure of Fusina Camping is part of a network of directed views consisting of the three buildings (or *fabriques*), *allées* of shrubs and trees, observation decks, *broli* (orchards) of fruit trees, *campi* (open fields), and a chevron-shaped (or zigzag) bridge and path. Two of the buildings — the entrance booth and the main multifunctional building — are pavilion like; the service building is a masonry utility core.

As originally built, the circular entrance pavilion had an umbrella-like wood roof structure; its facets hovered weightlessly above the cylindrical concrete base. A continuous wall of glass panels joined the roof and base permitting an unobstructed view through and from the pavilion to the surrounding landscape.¹⁸ (Figure 7.) The main *allée* that leads from the entrance pavilion borders the northwest edge of the site connecting the pavilion with the campsite's multipurpose building.

The multipurpose building occupies a hublike position within the structure of the campgrounds. (Figure 8.) Located at the end of the northern *allée*, it has a steel-frame structure clad in a combination of glass, wood, and metal panels divided into two major volumes, one of which is clad with hinged wood panels of oversized doors. Scarpa sited the

pavilion atop a meter-high concrete plinth that offers seats and tables for dining and is a locus of activity in the campgrounds.

The landscape's central *allée* lies perpendicular to the multipurpose building, intersecting it at the junction of its two volumes and ending at the lagoon. (Figures 9 and 16b.) The central *allée* consists of a continuous wall of meter-high shrubs; behind and adjacent to the shrubs is a continuous line of trees. At the end of the *allée*, there is a clear view across the lagoon to Tronchetto, to the south side of Giudecca, and farther east in the distance, to the Lido. Turning north, there is the chevron-shaped (or zigzag) path and bridge, directing the visitor back into the landscape. The bridge and zigzag path lead diagonally to the bar-like service building alongside a *brolo* (orchard) of fruit trees. (Figure 10.)

The service building is one of Scarpa's most Mies-like buildings, second only to the equally spare addition to the Gipsoteca canoviana in Possagno, which he designed concurrently with Fusina. The service building is a complex amalgam of two meter-high, brick, load-bearing walls housing alternating shower units and half-meter-high brick walls. The low walls are outfitted with sinks, mirrors, work areas, and low concrete basins for washing. (Figure 1.) Except for the showers, all of the services are outdoors, partially covered by metal roofing. (Figure 11.) Both the shower building and the main building are equipped with rooftop observation decks, accessed by prominently located steel stairs.¹⁹ (Figure 8.) The massing and location of the service building extends the overall rhythm of the *allées*.

The chevron-shaped path at Fusina is one of the earliest demonstrations of Scarpa's interest in Asian gardens, a study that probably began before World War II. (Figures 12a and 12b.) Among the first books Scarpa purchased on Asian art and culture are Noritake Tsuda's *ABC of Japanese Art* and Osvald Sirén's *Gardens of China*. Also in his library are Henry Inn's *Chinese Houses and Gardens* and Ito Teiji's *The Japanese Garden*. Scarpa's study of Asian gardens was more image based than textual, in part because he tended to respond to the world graphically and also because most of the books he owned on the subject were in English (Inn and Sirén for example).²⁰

Beyond the iconic reference to the chevron path/bridge, Scarpa's design for Fusina included another theme that is an essential part of classical Chinese garden art: "borrowed views." Borrowed views are introduced to garden literature in the seventeenth-century treatise on classical Chinese garden art, *Yuan yeh* by Ji Cheng. Scarpa knew the

Yuan yeh from excerpts published in Sirén's *Gardens of China*. Ji Cheng describes the art of borrowing views, not as a mere device but rather as a fundamental premise intrinsic to both the making and the experience of a garden.

Now the borrowing of views is the most important factor in gardens; such are borrowing from afar, borrowing from nearby, borrowing from above, borrowing from below, and borrowing in response to the seasons.²¹

All views in Chinese classical gardens are borrowed views. Stanislaus Fung argues that the notion of borrowed views is not a question of creating bipolar relations between fixed vantage points and distant objects; rather, it is a means of creating resonances between views through the idea of encounters or "events" in the garden. In the first chapter of the *Yuan yeh*, Ji Cheng explains,

"Borrowing" means: even though every garden distinguishes between inside and outside, in obtaining views it matters not whether they are far or near. A clear mountain peak rising up with elegance, purple-green, abode soaring into the sky — everything within one's limit of vision-blocking out the commonplace, adopting the admirable, not distinguishing between cultivated and uncultivated land, making all into a misty scene: this is what is called being "skillful and suitable."²²

On grade at Fusina, Scarpa presents the visitor with a landscape disguised as a campground, the focus of which is highly structured views ostensibly climaxing in a framed vista of industrial Venice. From the observation platform however, Scarpa interests the visitor less with the view of Venice than with the borrowed views of the lagoon and the varied history-laden landscape beyond the property lines of the campgrounds.

The classical Chinese concept of borrowed views is distinct from the borrowed views in the English picturesque in which there is often a clear demarcation between the ownership of the foreground and the distant view.²³ Scarpa's attitude toward borrowed views seems to fall somewhere between the atmospherics described in *Yuan yeh* and the picturesqueness described in Humphrey Repton's *Red Books*. (Figure 13.) That Scarpa thought of the views he constructed in a distinctly "picturesque" manner is clear from his brief explanation of a particular aspect of the Brion sanctuary. He made these observations during an informal slide

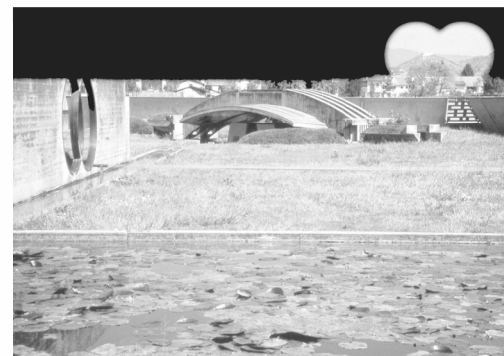
talk in Madrid, in the summer of 1978, which is his last known recorded public presentation. In the recording, his voice is often lost beneath that of the translator or obscured amidst the ambient noise from the lecture room and adjacent street. Typical of Scarpa's talks, he speaks in fragmentary sentences, often in an ironic or self-effacing manner, making the task of piecing together his thoughts into cohesive propositions still more difficult and, perhaps, inappropriate. This may be why so much of the recording was not published in the *Opera completa* and why that which was published often differs substantially from Scarpa's spoken words. It may be more useful not to assemble an artificial narrative from Scarpa's utterances but rather to listen to the general sensibility he reveals while discussing the conceptual agenda and design process for constructing views and directing vision at the Brion sanctuary (Figure 14):

I suddenly decided that, at this point here, there ought to be a water element that would interrupt the perspective. I like water very much, perhaps because I am Venetian. . . . At this point I thought of devoting part of the site to making a small "tempietto." . . . Having thought about this, I decided I needed an element in the background. Here there is a pure sky like there was today [here in Madrid], very beautiful. . . . At this location I felt the need of a dark value. From the first it seemed that the scheme called for a dark depression [in the ground] at this point, otherwise the perspectival value would not have had any sense. These are the reasons that I have made it this way.²⁴

Although it is not always clear what precisely Scarpa is describing as he refers to slides that are unseen by the listener, particularly after he has had a sip or two of "whiskey and soda" (which he refers to in English), the basis for his decisions is clear. More relaxed after his drink, Scarpa jokes with the audience and explains, more thoroughly, the process by which he constructed visually cohesive views at Brion. (Figure 15.) The views Scarpa constructs are assembled from values of light and dark, foreground and background, and natural and artificially produced color. Scarpa's description of constructing a landscape is uncannily similar to the process a landscape painter uses, building up a canvas with broad areas of color and values in the manner of the Venetian Renaissance practice of *colore*.²⁵ In the "communicating vessels" of Scarpa's mind, the



14. Brion sanctuary, prospect from above meditation pavilion looking toward reflecting pool, *prato*, and arcossium (1969–1978). (Photo by author.)



15. Brion sanctuary, view from meditation pavilion with rocca of Asolo framed in "view finder." (Photo by author.)

paintings of Venetian landscapes and the painterly construction of views of the Veneto seemed joined by the capillary action between representation and re-presentation — the melding of what André Breton called the "thick outside" and the "ineffable interiority" of landscape and architecture.²⁶

The observation decks at Fusina provide the prospect from which this capillary action between the interiority of the immediate landscape and the "thick outside" of the distant Veneto could take place. Above the canopy of trees, the overall structure of the campground's *broli* and *campi* communicates with borrowed views, distant and near. (Figures 16a and 16b.) The Venetian lagoon, bracketed between the mouth of the Piave River to the north and the Brenta Canal to the south, is Italy's great natural catch basin, collecting the waters of the fertile Po valley and the runoff from the snow-capped Dolomites. Standing on the observation towers, above the trees, the visitor sees the Veneto as a historical landscape and as a living and changing environment. The Brenta Canal, Palladio's Villa Malcontenta, and the flat fertile plain of the Veneto are icons of Renaissance land reclamation and the agricultural basis of the "Palladian landscape." The third parts of this triangulated composite view are the relatively new industrial centers of Mestre and Tronchetto, the manufacturing and shipping centers of postwar Venice.

Nascent in the earliest of Scarpa's landscapes are the essential ideas of constructing and directing vision for the visitor who is prompted to understand the building elements of a site as extensions of the landscape program, an inversion of the Wrightian ideal of extending the architecture into the landscape. The name *Fusina* is Venetian dialect for *fucina*, which translates to *forge* or *source*. Its name

intimates something of the history and nature of this site, suggesting that Fusina Camping is less a "unique episode" in Scarpa's oeuvre as Sergio Los suggests and rather a signpost of things to come.

Temporary Landscapes

Scarpa's "*Il senso del colore e il domino delle acque*," for the Italia '61 Exhibition in Turin is one of two temporary landscape gardens he designed. In *Carlo Scarpa: The Complete Works*, the title of this installation is translated narrowly as "The Sense of Color and the Rule of the Waters."²⁷ Yet, a translation more in keeping with the character and conceptual program of the installation would be "The Sense of Color and the Domain of the Waters," as the imagery and structure of Scarpa's temporary landscape demonstrates a desire to engage less "the dominion over the waters" than the variegated aqueous territory of the Veneto, past and present. Images of Palladian villas and common country houses (*cassone*) along with pastoral views were projected on a large screen as visitors walked through a collection of typologically unclear architectural spaces and elements, save for the central area, the *impluvium*. Although it was short-lived because Italia '61 commemorated the centennial of the unification of Italy, "*Il senso del colore e il domino delle acque*" was one of the most visited and is one of Scarpa's best-documented installations, its scant attention in the Scarpa literature notwithstanding. Much of the analysis of the Turin exhibit to date is limited to narrow discussions of its formal and material qualities.²⁸ Yet, the exhibit is seminal to what was then Scarpa's still emerging understanding of the synesthetic dimension of his work.

While designing the exhibit, Scarpa codified a wall type that became a staple in his visual and



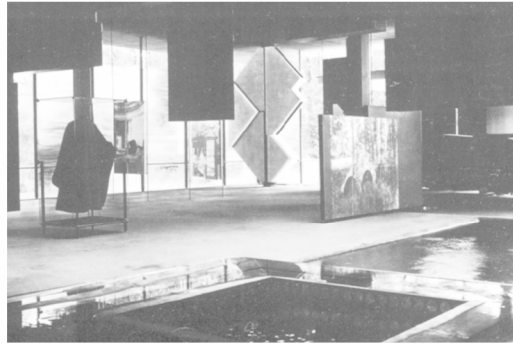
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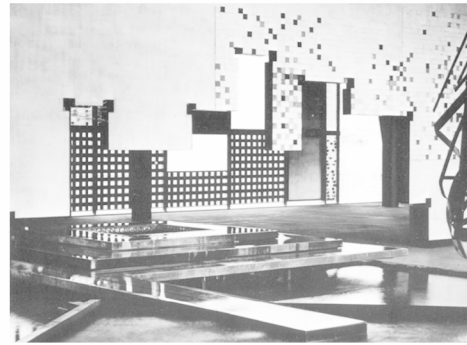
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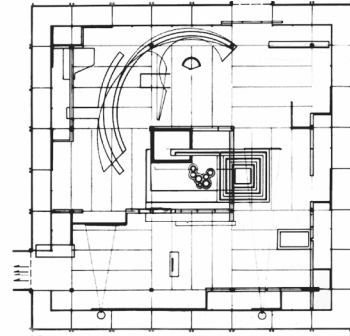
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16a. Fusina Camping, bridge at base of chevron path and allée of trees. (Photo by author.)

16b. Fusina Camping, end of central allée at lagoon with view toward Mestre. (Photo by author.)

17. Fondazione Querini-Stampalia, Venice, *parete interrotta*. (Photo by author.)

18. Regione Veneto Exhibition, Italia '61, Turin, interior. (*corticella*, (service area). Regione del Veneto.)

19. Regione Veneto Exhibition, Italia '61, Turin, plan. (Regione del Veneto.)

20. Regione Veneto Exhibition, Italia '61, Turin, "Steel Cloud," and reflecting basin. (Regione del Veneto.)

21. Regione Veneto Exhibition, Italia '61, Turin, reflecting pool, and *parete interrotta*. (Regione del Veneto.)

conceptual lexicon from this point forward. Pier Carlo Santini, in his review of the Turin exhibit, characterized the wall as "*interrotta*."²⁹ The "*parete interrotta*" is vital to understanding both the iconography of the Turin exhibition, and much of Scarpa's later works. (Figure 2a.) Scarpa most probably derived the character of the "interrupted wall" from his intense study of Paul Klee's drawings and paintings.³⁰

Scarpa's use of the *parete interrotta*, unlike his ubiquitous use of the echelon motif, tends to be quite precise. It seems to work as a specifically coded icon for Scarpa, announcing the landscape dimension of a particular work. While Scarpa was designing the Turin exhibit, he was simultaneously working on two of the most important commissions of his architectural career: the Fondazione Querini-Stampalia (Figure 17) and the Museo di Castelvec-

chio, both of which had significant garden programs. Moreover, the tiered copper reflecting pool from the Italia '61 exhibit was reinstalled in the garden of the Fondazione Querini-Stampalia (Figure 18), and a modified version of it is used in the garden at the Museo di Castelvecchio. Scarpa uses the *parete interrotta* in both the Querini-Stampalia and the Castelvecchio gardens—further evincing that, in his mind, these projects were conceptually and materially linked.

Scarpa's temporary landscape in Turin is part of a twentieth-century tradition of impermanent modern gardens, many of which were installed at exhibitions.³¹ (Figure 19.) In the provisional and "provincial" landscape of the Veneto at Turin, Scarpa created a composite of the panoramic view from the observation deck at Fusina. The exhibit represented the region of the Veneto, not through the conven-

tion of didactic dioramas typical of such installations, but through a concatenation of an analogous landscape that evoked the qualities of light, color, and material particular to the region, and literal images of the Veneto. To alert the visitor that this was less a representation of a landscape, but rather a landscape in miniature, Scarpa used simple techniques learned from designing the sculpture garden at the Padiglione Italia for the 1952 Biennale in Venice. Similar to the earlier garden, at Turin, he opened the building interior to the sky, creating an *impluvium*, thereby underscoring the sense of nature displaced.

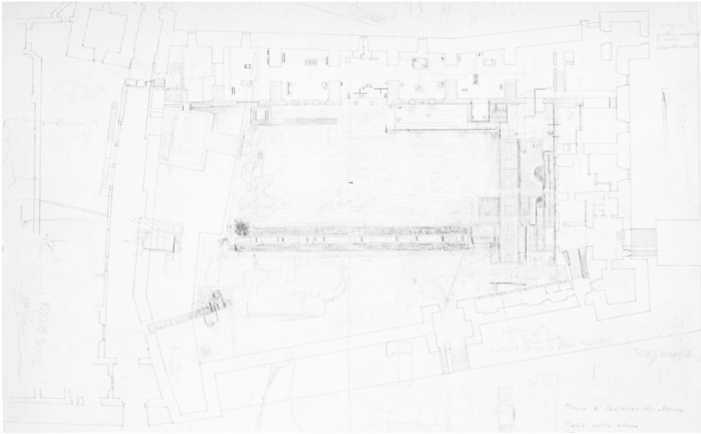
Considered in tandem with other projects that occupied Scarpa at this time in his career, the Turin exhibit marks a critical moment of maturity and synthesis in his work, wherein the design of landscapes and gardens, architecture, and exhibitions become



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virtually indistinguishable. The water in the reflecting pools and the light from the great Vanini chandelier dynamically charged the space, as Scarpa's large steel sculpture created an ominous presence, hovering cloudlike above the interior landscape. (Figure 20.) Yet, it is the distinctive, screenlike wall — the *parete interrotta* — that ironically holds the ensemble together, marking the space as a landscape.

Writing of the exhibit while it was still standing, Pier Carlo Santini was among the first to recognize the landscape-like qualities of Scarpa's installation and the critical role that the walls played in defining the space, not simply volumetrically, but in terms of its character:

{In} this exhibit {Scarpa} has created an environment . . . that is immediate, highly suggestive and captivating. In the space of a relatively modest pavilion, Scarpa transposes the essential characteristics of nature, civilization and the art of the Veneto — coordinating them into a complex sequences of motives and effects to create an environment of extraordinary lyric power.³²

Santini continues:

The external wall is variegated, composed of portions that are dark and impermeable, some that are transparent and translucent while still other parts are made of thick polychromatic glass or of grillwork. Through such diversified weavings and gradations . . . of colors and transparencies, Scarpa has held constant, moderated and preserved the illumination of the environment, even at mid-day, making visible the {filmic} projection {of images}, persuasively inviting the tired visitor to stand quietly and rest for a moment. . . . Towards the interior the environment is enclosed, yet without being closed-in, by *interrupted walls* . . . that are suspended. In places the walls appear as a single element, in still others they are separated into two . . . interweaving with the space using sutures, tangencies, variations in thickness, and a variety of changing contours.³³

Santini concludes, "This wall is the key element of the spatial coordination {of this environment}." (Figure 21.)

Hortus Conclusus

The interrupted wall configuration Scarpa refined in the Turin exhibit is a key element in the fenestration of a number of important landscape-related works. These include the Fusina campgrounds (Figure 9), Istituto enologico (Figure 22), the garden at the Fondazione Querini-Stampalia (Figure 17), an interior wall in the administrative wing of the Castelvecchio, a garden wall at the Zentner House, the Casa Balboni (Figures 6a and 6b), and the Brion sanctuary. Scarpa designed all these works within the span of a decade. Unlike the echelon motif that Scarpa recontextualizes in various scales, sizes, and materials throughout his oeuvre as if to underscore the instability of its meaning, the *Parete Interrotta* seems to hold a particular association to gardens and landscapes for Scarpa.

In the Istituto enologico, the opening in the interrupted concrete wall creates borrowed views of the vineyards and the distant hills of San Michele all'Adige. At the Fondazione Querini-Stampalia, the wall separates the claustral garden from the service area while affording views of a marble scupper that passes through the wall, and co-opting the implied volume of the service area into the experience of



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26. Museo di Castelvecchio, view from within double-hedge walk toward the entrance to the Sala Boggian. (Photo by author.)

27. Museo di Castelvecchio, view from the Sala Boggian entrance looking back toward the end of the double-hedged path. (Photo by author.)

28. Museo di Castelvecchio, on the *piano nobile* of the Napoleonic wing, the Adige river to the right, looking toward Cangrande. (Photo by author.)

the main garden. (Figure 17.) At the Museo di Castelvecchio and the Banca Popolare di Verona, the wall is interior — part of the administrative offices — but faces and creates views into a garden (or intended garden in the case of the bank). Scarpa uses it again in the Reggia courtyard at the Museo di Castelvecchio where it supports a stair bordering the small claustral garden. (Figure 23.) At Il Palazzo, the Businaro Estate in Monselice, Scarpa's design sketches, held in Aldo Businaro's private collection, reveal that a *parete interrotta* was to have supported the main stair Scarpa designed but never built connecting the new threshing floor with the villa's *piano nobile*. Scarpa did build a window opening in the figure of a *parete interrotta* for an apartment he never completed. The apartment would have been, according to Businaro, occupied by Carlo and Nini Scarpa.³⁴

Scarpa uses the device of the *parete interrotta* in support of the theme of "directing vision" in one of his most visited and, until recently, least appreciated gardens, the courtyard at the Museo di Castelvecchio.³⁵ At the Castelvecchio, Scarpa invites the visitor to pause and reflect in the courtyard garden he constructs, the structure of which is intimately tied to that of the museum's interior. He does this first by attempting to segregate, albeit unsuccessfully, pedestrian and vehicular entrances. Scarpa's design drawings indicate that pedestrians were to enter via the new opening in the claustral wall Scarpa made and across the steel bridge he designed with the assistance of the Veronese engineer Tamanini. (Figure 24.) This point of entrance serves as a critical prospect in not only the visitor's appreciation of the garden but of the entire museological and museographical assemblage. Unfortu-

nately, Scarpa's intentions for separate entrances for vehicles and pedestrians were never carried through; most visitors enter and leave the complex crossing over the wooden drawbridge from the Corso Castelvecchio (the entrance Scarpa had intended for vehicles). Yet, it is the entrance from the steel bridge, across the excavated "vallo," or moat, that was to have begun a series of back-and-forth "weavings" and moments of interruption, often through long narrow spaces. This sequence that begins in the garden concludes only after descending the final set of stairs, exiting the museum, and re-entering the garden. The double-hedged walkway that today separates the car park from the sculpture lawn (*prato*) plays a critical role in this ensemble. Unfortunately, because of disease, the *taxus cerosus* were replanted in 1998.³⁶ It will be some time before they reach a height and girth that will support the kind of entrance Scarpa envisioned.

On your next visit, however, walk up the narrow street and enter through the side wall. Cross the steel bridge and stand atop it. Look to your left toward the cleft between the two buildings, at the center of which and floating between them is the much-discussed sculpture *Cangrande*. (Figure 25.) Take in the view of the garden as well. As you pass across the bridge and down the steps, turn to the left and walk the path between the hedges. Imagine them to be at a height just above your head. As you walk toward the entrance, envision the hedges slowly lowering. (Figure 26.) It is not the hedges that are lowering however, but the ground that is rising up beneath your feet. As you reach the end of the hedges, the museum entrance is visible to the left, framed on the left by the antique marble basin and pedestal Scarpa relocated to this position. (Figure 27.) At the center of the basin is a marble *bucranium*, the figure of a horned calf. The museum entrance is bracketed on the right by another fountain that Scarpa relocated as part of the entrance ensemble. Passing between the two fountains, one moves toward the main entrance, to the left of which is the jutting volume of the *sacello*. Upon entering, Scarpa directs the visitor to the left again, taking one on a path parallel to the double hedges.

At the end of this museological journey of paths, turns, and directed views, on the *piano nobile* of the Napoleonic wing, Scarpa reinforces the relation of garden and interior a final time. Before descending and exiting, the visitor is presented with a long narrow vista akin to the view within the double hedge. It is bracketed by the thick stone wall of the Napoleonic wing and newly dressed, heavy,

transverse room dividers. (Figure 28.) In a space in which views of the garden are obscured by a translucent curtain, the visitor is reminded of the garden, both by the view Scarpa constructs and by the path the visitor takes.

When next you visit the Museo di Castelvecchio (or any of Scarpa's works in which landscapes and gardens play a part), permit your imagination to walk with you. As you participate in the series of passages and interruptions that Scarpa has constructed, permit his landscape and building arts to direct your vision and your body, in ways that instruct as well as enrich.

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Notes

1. William J.R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture since 1900* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996), pp. 402–403; Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), p. 322; and Elizabeth B. Kassler, *Modern Gardens and the Landscape* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1984), p. 96.
2. See Simon Swaffield, *Theory in Landscape Architecture: A Reader* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp. 162–163. The cover features a detail of a Scarpa design drawing of the Brion garden. The essay to which the image relates however, focuses on “representing” landscape, not Scarpa’s landscape designs. Chief among recent exhibitions of Scarpa’s work are those at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (1999), the Museo di Castelvecchio in Verona, and the Centro internazionale di studi di architettura Andrea Palladio in Vicenza (CISA) (2000–2001). See Guido Beltrami, Kurt W. Forster, and Paola Marini, *Carlo Scarpa Mostre e Musei: 1944–1976/Case e paesaggi: 1972–78* (Milano: Electa, 2000). In particular, see Kurt Forster’s “Mappe d’invenzione: edifice e allestimenti de Carlo Scarpa,” pp. 3–24. Also see Marta Mazza, *Carlo Scarpa all Querini-Stampalia* (Venice: Cardo Editore, 1996). Mazza’s monograph provides the most-extensive research to date on any single Scarpa garden. Murphy’s essay, “Querini-Stampalia: un microcosmo veneziano” is the only one of the five essays that does not mention the garden. See pp. 45–47. Maria Pia Cunico, a leading authority on Venetian gardens, in “I disegni di Carlo Scarpa per il giardino Querini,” outlines the recent history of the site of the garden. See pp. 21–30. Also see Richard Murphy, *Carlo Scarpa & Castelvecchio* (London: Butterworth Architecture, 1991), p. 20.
3. Jane Brown’s *The Modern Garden* is a good example of this tendency. Although she includes the garden at the Villa Silvio Pellicio, Turin, by the English-born Russell Page, Pietro Porcinai is the only Italian-born garden designer included in her survey, save for a passing reference to Scarpa. Jane Brown, *The Modern Garden* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000), pp. 166–175.
4. See Dennis P. Doordan, *Building Modern Italy: Italian Architecture 1914–1936* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988); Richard Etlin, *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890–1940* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991); and Vittorio Gregotti, *Orientamenti Nuovi nell’architettura italiana* (Milan: Electa, 1969).
5. Zevi was the founder and most visible spokesperson for the *Associazione per l’architettura organica* (APAO). As *Metron*’s editor and a contributing writer, Zevi proselytized an alternative to the hegemony of the International Style codified by Philip Johnson, H.R. Hitchcock, and Siegfried Giedion. Gio Ponti, the editor of *Domus*, consistently represented a wider-ranging international scope whereas Ernesto Rogers, the postwar editor of the renamed *Casabella continuità*, seemed to search for a middle ground. See Richard S. Bullene, C.S.C., *Architetto-Cittadino: Ernesto Nathan Rogers* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1994).
6. Giorgio Galletti interview, Dumbarton Oaks, April 1999. Also see Andrea Oppenheimer Dean, *Bruno Zevi on Modern Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli), p. 25.
7. See the journal *Architettura del paesaggio: notare AIAP* (Firenze), edited by A. Tagliolini. Also see “Architettura del paesaggio: la scuola di specializzazione di Genova, Università degli studi di Genova,” in *Quaderni di architettura* 3 (Genova: Sagep, 1984).
8. Although Page and Pinsent were active garden designers in the early twentieth-century in Italy, their gardens were not, for the most part, an extension of the Modern Movement idiom.
9. See George Dodds, *Landscape and Garden in the Work of Carlo Scarpa* (doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2000), pp. 87–114.
10. Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: Opera completa* (Milan: Electa, 1984), pp. 97–149.
11. Gio Ponti, *Amate l’architettura: l’architettura è un cristallo* (Genoa: Società Editrice Vitali e Ghianda), pp. 112–113.
12. André Breton, *Communicating Vessels*, Mary Ann Caws and Geoffrey T. Harris, trans. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), *passim*.
13. Dal Co and Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa*, pp. 97–149. The Polano catalogue is, to date, the only comprehensive, albeit incomplete, compilation of Scarpa’s productive activities. The 238 entries in the Polano catalogue represent a minimum of 256 discrete projected and executed works variously attributed to Scarpa. Polano conflated several projects into a single entry, explaining the discrepancy between the two numbers.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
15. Scarpa designed the small courtyard garden for the Hotel Minerva while he was still finalizing the design for the garden of the Fondazione Querini-Stampalia. The redesign of the Balboni apartment responds to two important natural features that bracket the building back and front: the Grand Canal, and an existing nineteenth-century garden. The number of garden and landscape projects is impossible to fix as access to the Scarpa archive remains problematic. In 2002, the Carlo Scarpa archive, controlled by Tobia and Afra Scarpa since Carlo Scarpa’s death, became public property. Approximately twenty thousand drawings and twelve thousand other objects are now being cataloged and digitized under the aegis of the Regione del Veneto. The decision regarding the final disposition of the Scarpa archive and the location of a new study center remains unclear at present. See Carlo Fabrizio Carli, “Scarpa, un atto di fede nell’architettura: a Roma schizzi e disegni del grande progettista veneziano,” *Il Giornale*, Jan. 13, 2003: 23. Also see Martina Zambon, “Le memorie di Scarpa rimangono nel Veneto: Confermata Treviso come sede dell’archivio storico Vicenza potrebbe invece ospitare il centro Studi,” *Corriere Del Veneto* (November 29, 2003): 16.
16. See, for example, the Galleria Nazionale della Sicilia, Palazzo Abatellis, Palermo (1953–1954) where Scarpa surprisingly transformed the existing stone courtyard into a geometric *prato*.
17. Sergio Los, *Carlo Scarpa: An Architectural Guide* (Venice: Arsenale Editrice, 1995), p. 45.
18. See Andrea de Eccher and Giulia Del Zotto, *Veneia e il Veneto: L’Opera di Carlo Scarpa* (Milan: Clup Guide di Città Studi Edizioni Redazione, 1994), pp. 54–57. The effect of the roof and glass, as it was originally built, was similar to the effect of the continuous glass wall and wood roof of the church at Borca di Cadore Church, ENI Vacation Village, Dolomites (1959, Oc 129) with Eduardo Gellner.
19. The treads of the stairs are removed.
20. Scarpa’s study of oriental gardens was probably more eidetic than scholarly, in part because he naturally tended to respond to the world graphically. During the German occupation of Venice, Scarpa spent many late-night hours with Eduardo Gellner, studying the gardens of Spain, particularly of the Alhambra, published in various German folios which Gellner owned, as well as the Wasmuth Portfolio of Frank Lloyd Wright’s work. Gellner, an Italo-German student of Scarpa’s and future collaborator on the ENI Vacation Village Church in Borca di Cadore, translated the German text for Scarpa. See Franco Mancuso, *Edoardo Gellner: Il mestiere di architetto* (Milan: Electa, 1996), pp. 37–41.
21. Stanislaus Fung, “Here and there in Yuan ye,” *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes* 19/1 (Jan.–March 1999): 44. Also see Ji Cheng, *The Craft of Gardens*, Alison Hardie, trans. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).
22. Fung, “Here and there in Yuan ye,” p. 36.
23. Humphrey Repton’s design for Brandsbury at Wilsden in Middlesex appropriates a distant view, not of another designed *landskip*, but, more startlingly, of the city of London and Wren’s dome of St. Paul’s cathedral.
24. Carlo Scarpa, *Recording of Madrid Lecture* (Transcribed and translated by George Dodds, 1999). All translations are by the author unless otherwise noted.
25. See George Dodds, “Desiring Landscapes/Landscapes of Desire: Scopic and Somatic in the Brion Sanctuary,” *Body and Building: On the Changing Relation of the Body to Architecture*, in George Dodds and Robert Tavernor, eds. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2002), pp. 238–257.
26. André Breton, *Communicating Vessels*, p. 139.
27. Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa: The Complete Works*, Richard Sadleir, trans. (Milan: Electa, 1985), p. 123.
28. A recent pamphlet by Fabrizia Franco is a modest exception. See Fabrizia Franco, *Carlo Scarpa: Padiglioni espositivi (1950, 1954, 1961)* (Milano: Edizioni Unicopli, 1998), pp. 65–89.
29. Pier Carlo Santini, “Italia ‘61, La mostra delle regioni,” *Comunità* 90 (1961): 160.
30. *Botanical Gardens, Section of Ray-Leaved Plants* (1926) is one of several likely sources for the *parete interrotta*, published in *Paul Klee, de l’art moderne* (1948), a copy of which Scarpa had in his library. See *Paul Klee on Modern Art*, Findlay Paul, trans. (London: Faber and Faber, 1948), p. 38. The drawing is a composite of linearly generated figures, many of which consist of a series of echelons. Scarpa adopted an echelon motif early in his career, ultimately approaching a kind of figural cliché about which he often joked. Yet, the *parete interrotta* is distinct from the ubiquitous echelons that Scarpa used at all scales and in a myriad of materials.
31. Among these are Le Corbusier’s *l’Esprit Nouveau Pavilion* and Gabriel Guévrekian’s garden, both for the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* at Paris. Rose describes a number of temporary gardens and temporary garden elements. See James Rose, in “Modular Gardens,” *Creative Gardens* (New York: Reinhold, 1958), pp. 16–37.
32. Pier Carlo Santini, “Italia ‘61, La mostra delle regioni,” *Comunità* 90 (1961): 153. Also see Maria Antonietta Crippa, *Carlo Scarpa: Theory, Design, Projects*, Marina Loffi Randolin, ed., Susan Chapman and Paola Pinna, trans. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1986), p. 87.
33. Santini, p. 160.
34. Aldo Businaro, interview, 1998, Monselice.
35. In 2001, the Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche awarded their Premio Internazionale Carlo Scarpa per il Giardino to the garden and buildings of the Castelvecchio.
36. Architetto Alba Di Lieto, Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona, interview, 1999. Scarpa’s original drawings indicate *taxus bacata* multiple times. Yet, the director of the museum during Scarpa’s tenure there, Licisco Magagnato, refers to them as *taxus cerosus* (Magagnato 1982, 33). Magagnato also claimed however, that the Castelvecchio garden is not a garden. See Dal Co and Mazzariol, *Carlo Scarpa*, p. 159.