



Language, Landscape and the Sublime is set within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in one of the UK's most spectacular landscapes. This part of the UK contains more protected landscapes than any other, ranging from its sublime coastline to the dark and brooding beauty of Dartmoor.

The symposium takes place June 29 and 30 at Dartington Hall and in parallel on June 30 at Sharpham House.

'As the world shrinks' says keynoter Prof. John Wylie 'distances are overcome and rendered insignificant, the near and far lose their salience as means of orientation and understanding... Yet, just as this happens, new distances are felt...between us and 'land' and 'nature' - a sense of separation, alienation and loss which it then becomes imperative - ethically, environmentally - to overcome.' In his talk, Wylie will posit 'the distant' as a hypothetical to help us through this almost circular conundrum and to move beyond landscape as a metaphor of apartness and alienation.

And so the tone is set for two days of probing, knowledge sharing, discussion and hands-on workshops. Artists and presenters from every continent (except Antarctica) join us to share their thoughts and sift their ideas. In addition to exploring landscape and language in its most contemporary guises, we also look again the fundamentals of what we have learned to think of as the quintessential 'English landscape'. We do this through the particular lens of the tricentennial of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, one of the UK's seminal landscape architects. For those of us who grew up in England, his design paradigm seems to be ingrained in us almost, it seems, from birth. Our rural idyll is made up of gently sloping open pastures dotted with sheep, the exquisitely-formed view corridor studded with the occasional mature oak trees and hazy disappearing horizons.



The event takes place across two sites. Dartington Hall reveals a broad range of landscapes across its 900-acre estate, including Grade 2* formal gardens designed largely in the 1930s and 1940s by owner Dorothy Elmhirst, mentored by famed writer and designer Henry Avray Tipping and later by the legendary Beatrice Farrand. The main courtyard (pictured below) at Dartington is the only known example of Farrand's work outside of her native USA. All the keynote events take place during Day 1, at Dartington. By way of introducing the second venue, Sharpham House, Dr Laura Mayer presents a keynote address on the aesthetic minimalism of Capability Brown as a foundational figure of the English landscape, and talks about how the language of taste was fundamental to the design revolutions of the 18thC. This language, she suggests, 'not only re-wrote the landscape as it had been known, but had a direct impact on social hierarchies'. Thus landscape becomes more than a mere metaphor of power and transcendence.



The courtyard at Dartington Hall © The Dartington Hall Trust

We are joined later on the first day by Hal Moggridge OBE, recognised as today's pre-eminent re-designer / re-constructor of the 18thC English country landscape in an early evening conversation with landscape architect Charlotte Rathbone.



Sharpham House and the River Dart © The Sharpham Trust

On the second day you have the option to spend the day at Sharpham House where the park attached to the house is attributed to Capability Brown. Most of the papers presented at Sharpham bear specific relevance to the site or topics addressing landscape; in the afternoon Hal Moggridge leads a walk within the park landscape of Sharpham House.



In addition to the more formal paper presentations, there is a wide choice of workshops include several walking explorations at Dartington and Sharpham. This includes Dartington's rare medieval deer park and a sound walk that layers invented and real narratives of the landscape on top of what our eyes can see. Artist Tim Brennan returns to Dartington after several decades during which he has created more than forty walks/discursive performances. He will explore that practice in the context of re-visiting the place where many of these ideas were first explored.

There are creative writing workshops at both sites: at Dartington led by poet Rhys Trimble, and at Sharpham by poets Camilla Nelson and Jonathan Skinner.

You can also help create a contemporary herbarium from plant material drawn from the kitchen gardens at Schumacher College; swim and write in the River Dart; participate in experimental performance; walk blindfold as a new way of reading and experiencing the world around you. Each venue also has an overnight participatory event, and there is a rolling programme of related films in our pop-up cinema.

Exhibitions include work from Cape Farewell, including Nessie Reid's The Milking Parlour project, Simon Lee Dicker's Weather Station, Grant Smith' Sound Camp and Natalie Joelle's Gleaning Now

In the mornings, the formal paper sessions represent a wide range of academic and creative disciplines, and include a number of short artist presentations.

If you arrive the evening before (which you'll likely do if you're coming from any distance) we are hosting an evening of readings curated by Mark Leahy and Camilla Nelson at the Barrel House pub in Totnes. Poets (so far) include Carol Watts and Elizabeth-Jane Burnett and there will be music from a local sound artist/performer. No advance booking - just come! (Tickets are £2.50 at the door.)



Registration at £165 remains open until the last remaining tickets are sold. These are now relatively few in number, so we would advise you to book sooner rather than later. You can book and find further details of the event at languagelandscape.info

Complementary to the conference is a 5-day residential workshop from June 20-24, led by artist Richard Povall and poet Fiona Benson with special guest artist Garry Fabian Miller. Transcribing Landscape takes place at Schumacher College and is part of their renowned short course programme. Special pricing is available for those wishing to participate in both. Find out more on the website.

Language, Landscape and the Sublime is produced by Richard Povall at art.earth, a family of arts and ecology organisations and individuals based at Schumacher College on the Dartington Hall Estate. For more information visit artdotearth.org and schumachercollege.ac.uk

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exploring ecological arts practice at

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